

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

17th & 18th December 2023

DESCRIPTIVE

❖ International Migrants Day - December 18

- International Migrants Day is observed on December 18 to recognise the contributions of migrants and highlight the challenges they face.
- The day sheds light on the socio-economic realities of migrants around the world.
- The theme for International Migrants Day 2023 is “Act Today”.
- Over 281 million people were international migrants in 2020, according to a United Nations report.
- It added that over 59 million people were internally displaced by the 2021 end
- On 4 December 2000, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) proclaimed December 18 as International Migrants Day.

❖ PM Modi inaugurates 2nd Edition of Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the second edition of Kashi Tamil Sangamam 2023 at Namoo Ghat in Varanasi.
- He will be on a two-day visit to his parliamentary constituency.
- Apart from launching many development projects worth around 20 thousand crore rupees.
- The Prime Minister will also flag off the Kanyakumari - Varanasi Tamil Sangamam train.
- The second edition of Kashi Tamil Sangamam will end on 30th December.
- The first edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam was organized from 16th November to 16th December 2022, by the Ministry of Education working as the nodal agency.

➤ Leveraging the experience of the first edition, IIT Madras will be acting as the implementing agency in Tamil Nadu and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) in Uttar Pradesh.

❖ **PM Modi inaugurated Surat Diamond Bourse in Gujarat**

➤ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated the newly Built Diamond Bourse, the World's largest corporate office hub in Surat, Gujarat.

➤ It will emerge as a global centre for trading of both “rough and polished” diamonds as well as jewellery.

➤ The newly built Diamond Bourse will be the World's largest and most modern centre for international diamond and jewellery business.

➤ Earlier, the Prime Minister inaugurated the New Integrated Terminal Building of Surat Airport.

➤ The new terminal building is equipped to handle 1,200 domestic passengers and 600 international passengers during peak hours with annual handling capacity increasing to 55 lakh passengers.

➤ The new building is also equipped with various sustainability features i.e. double insulated roofing system, rain water harvesting and a solar power plant among others.

➤ The upgraded terminal building aims to enrich the passenger experience with the rich and traditional woodwork of the old houses of the ‘Rander’ region of Surat City.

❖ **Global coal demand expected to decline by 2026: IEA report**

➤ Global coal demand is expected to decline by 2026, according to the latest edition of the International Energy Agency's (IEA) annual coal market report.

➤ The first time that the report has predicted a drop in global coal consumption over its forecast period.

➤ While this decline is expected to be due to a shift towards renewables and plateauing demand from China, India would remain the “driving force” for the fuel until that year.

➤ The global demand for coal rising by 1.4% in 2023, surpassing 8.5 billion tonnes for the first time.

➤ This increase however masks stark differences among regions.

➤ While demand in the European Union and United States is expected to drop 20% each, it is expected to rise 8% in India and 5% in China in 2023 due to demand for electricity and diminished electrical generation from hydropower.

❖ **Akash missile system destroys 4 targets simultaneously during Air Force exercise**

➤ India has strongly demonstrated the firepower of its Akash surface-to-air (SAM) weapon system, where a single firing unit simultaneously engaged and destroyed four unmanned targets during the recent Exercise Astrashakti 2023.

➤ The Akash, with a range of up to 25 km, is a short-range surface-to-air missile primarily used for protecting vulnerable areas and points from air attacks.

➤ India has become the first to demonstrate the capability of engaging four targets simultaneously at such ranges by command guidance using a single firing unit.

➤ The missile system is among the key platforms that India is exporting to friendly foreign countries.

❖ **Bangladesh crushes UAE to win U-19 Asia Cup**

➤ Wicketkeeper-batsman Ashiqur Rahman Shibli continued his impressive form with a second century in five matches as Bangladesh secured a resounding 195-run victory over UAE to claim the Under-19 Asia Cup in Dubai.

➤ Opting to bat after winning the toss, Ashiqur played a stellar innings, smashing 12 fours and one six on his way to a score of 129 from 149 balls.

- Bangladesh posted a formidable total of 282/8.
- In response, UAE faltered, folding up for 87 in 24.5 overs, and Bangladesh emerged victorious in the eight-nation tournament with a perfect record of five wins from five games.
- For Bangladesh, Ashiqur finished with 378 runs from five innings at 126.00 to be adjudged both player of the match and series.

❖ **Kothari clinches maiden senior national snooker title**

- Sourav Kothari of Petroleum Sports Promotion Board (PSPB) won his maiden Senior National 15-Red snooker title, beating Paras Gupta of Uttar Pradesh 6-2 in the final.
- 90th National Billiards & Snooker Championships at the Nehru Indoor Stadium in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- Primarily a billiards player, Kothari is a former National billiards champion, and last month finished runner-up to his PSPB colleague Pankaj Advani in the IBSF world billiards final in Doha.
- Kothari was in splendid form in this 15-Red snooker competition, defeating Advani in the round-of-32.
- Kothari beat Md Hussain Khan (RSPB) 5-0 in the semifinals and prevailed over Gupta 58-46, 72-34, 0-64, 59-25, 61-54, 21-57, 64-8, 64-25 in the final.

❖ **Union Sports Minister Shri Anurag Singh Thakur declares the Para Khelo India games closed**

- Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur said that the Khelo India Para Games have proven to be a catalyst that has sparked a fire of inclusion across the nation and athletes painted the playing arenas with not only their wins but also their "stories, spirit and unwavering passion".
- Thakur was speaking at the closing ceremony of the Khelo India Para Games in Delhi.

- Haryana topped the medal charts with 105 medals, followed by Uttar Pradesh, who got 62 medals.
- Third place was bagged by Tamil Nadu with 42 medals.
- The action on final day also saw Kerala clinch a stupendous 7-0 win against Tamil Nadu in CP football with Y Jaya Surya scoring 3 goals while 4 goals were scored by A Growth.
- In table tennis, in the men's Class-4 category, Sumit Sehgal of Haryana defeated Ramesh Chaudhary of Gujarat 3-0 (11-8, 11-7, 11-8) in the final to clinch gold medal
- Over 1450 para athletes from 32 states and Union Territories participated in the prestigious Khelo India Para Games which saw events in seven disciplines.
- **Other scores:**
- Gajanan Parmar (MP) beat Shashidhar Kulkarni (KNT) 3-1 (11-9, 11-8, 7-11, 13-11) in the Men's Class-8 category.
- Raj Aravindan Alagar (TN) beat Pawan Kumar Sharma (UP) 3-0 (11-2, 11-7, 11-7) in the Men's Class-5 category
- Poonam (CHD) beat BhavikaKukadiya (GUJ) 3-1 (11-6, 7-11, 11-7, 11-5) in the Women's Class-6 category
- Baby Sahana (TN) beat PruthviBarve (MHR) 3-0 (11-3, 11-6, 11-3) in the Women's Class 9-10 category
- Prachi Pandey (UP) beat Dhvani Shah (GUJ) 3-0 (11-3, 11-6, 11-2) in the Women's Class 7 category.

❖ Piyush Goyal launches LEADS 2023 to catalyse logistics sector growth

➤ Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal unveiled the **Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2023** at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

➤ The launch event marked a pivotal moment in India's vision for robust economic growth and underscored the pivotal role the logistics sector will play in achieving ambitious targets.

➤ Addressing the audience at Bharat Mandapam, Minister Piyush Goyal emphasised the transformative potential of LEADS.

➤ The logistics sector will be a cornerstone in our endeavour to take India to a 10x level from 3.5 trillion to 35 trillion by 2047 that is the collective mission.

➤ LEADS 2023 is expected to address key challenges faced by the logistics industry, fostering seamless connectivity across states and optimizing the movement of goods.

❖ ICICI Prudential Life Insurance and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank forge Bancassurance Partnership

➤ ICICI Prudential Life Insurance and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB), a leading small finance bank, have entered into a bancassurance partnership for the distribution of life insurance products.

➤ Under the partnership, Ujjivan SFB, will offer the entire suite of ICICI Prudential Life's customer-friendly protection, long-term savings and retirement products to its customers through its extensive network of 700+ branches across 26 states and Union Territories.

➤ Life insurance is a critical component of any financial plan and therefore ICICI Prudential Life has developed a suite of products to suit the various life-stage requirements of customers.

❖ **Kuwait ruling emir Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah dies at age 86**

- Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Sabah died at aged 86, according to the royal court, just over three years after assuming power in the U.S.-allied Gulf oil producer.
- Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, 83, who has been Kuwait's de facto ruler since 2021, when the frail emir handed over most his duties, was named as Sheikh Nawaf's successor.
- Sheikh Nawaf became emir in September 2020 following the death of his brother, Sheikh Sabah, who had ruled for more than a decade and shaped the state's foreign policy for more than 50 years.

❖ **LIC to play key role in achieving 'Insurance For All by 2047'**

- LIC will play a significant role in achieving 'Insurance For All' and to meet that objective it is planning to launch a product especially designed for rural areas.
- The focus would be how to cover maximum rural masses who actually need insurance.
- Rural share will also go up to our total business kitty.
- He said to achieve the objective of 'Insurance For All by 2047', LIC will play a very significant role and in that direction the insurer has already started working.

❖ **Sandeep claims MRF Formula 2000 crown**

- Sandeep Kumar and Chetan Surmineni won the MRF Formula 2000 and 1600 titles as the curtains came down on the fourth and final round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship 2023 at the Madras International Circuit.
- Also picking up the National titles in their respective categories were Gurunath Meiyappan (Race Concepts, Indian Touring Cars), Deepak Ravikumar (Performance Racing, Indian Junior Touring Cars) and T.S. Diljith (DTS Racing, Super Stock and Formula LGB 1300).

- The championship battle in the MRF Formula 2000 went down to the wire.
- Sandeep did just enough to pick up crucial points and pip Arya Singh by three points to claim the crown.
- Incidentally, both the MRF 2000 races were won by Aditya Swaminathan.

❖ **Bhutan to have massive green city along Assam border**

- Bhutan plans to build a massive “international city” in an area of over 1,000 sq. km. on its border with Assam.
- Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck announced to applause from a packed audience of 30,000 at the Changlimathang stadium in Thimpu .
- Pitching the project as an “economic corridor connecting South Asia with Southeast Asia via India’s northeastern States”.
- The Government of India for agreeing to build the first India-Bhutan railway line to Gelephu, which would also connect with roadways and border trading and crossing points into Assam and West Bengal.

❖ **Indian Armed Forces Officers Honoured with ‘Golden Owl’**

- All 3 Indian Armed Forces officer, who underwent the Command & Staff college (DSDC) in Sapugaskanda, Sri Lanka, were honoured with the ‘Golden Owl’ for outstanding performance.
- Ranil Wickremesinghe, President and the Commander in the Chief of the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka presented at the awards during the Graduation ceremony of DSDC Course No.17 at Nelum Pokuna Mahinda Rajapaksha Theatre in Sri Lanka.
- He also presented the Commandant’s Honours and Golden Pen award during the event.
- The three Indian Officers were; Major Rohit from the Indian Army, Lieutenant Commander Sunay Sharma from the Indian Navy, Wing Commnader S Mahajan from the Indian Air Force.

➤ The 3 Indian officers topped their respective wings amongst fellow student officers from over 10 countries.

➤ The 'Golden Owl' award serves as a testament to the officers' exceptional analytical skills, strategic thinking, and potential for future leadership.

➤ The award recognizes the most outstanding Sri Lankan Student officer and foreign student officer of each Wing.

❖ **Anand Marriage Act implemented in Jammu & Kashmir, gives recognition to Sikh Marriage rituals**

➤ The Jammu & Kashmir administration has taken a significant step by framing detailed rules for registration of marriages under the Anand Marriage Act.

➤ This Act provides statutory recognition to the marriage rituals of Sikhs, addressing their longstanding demand to separate their marriages from the Hindu Marriage Act.

➤ The historical roots of the Anand Marriage Act date back to 1909 when the British Imperial Legislative Council passed legislation recognizing the Sikh wedding ceremony, Anand Karaj.

➤ The Act aimed to acknowledge and respect the customs and practices of the Sikh community.

➤ The newly formulated "Jammu and Kashmir Anand Marriage Registration Rules, 2023" outline the procedures for Anand marriages.

➤ Under the new rules, tehsildars within their territorial jurisdiction will serve as registrars for Anand marriages.

➤ Sikh couples are allowed to apply for registration within three months of solemnizing their marriage.

➤ However, if the formalities are completed after this deadline, a late fee will be applicable.

❖ DRDO Successfully Tested High-Speed Flying-Wing UAV Under Project “Ghatak”

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully carried out a flight trail of an indigenous high- speed tailless flying-wing stealth Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) from the Aeronautical Test Range, Chitradurga, Karnataka.
- This Drone has been developed for India’s secret unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) program called ‘Ghatak’.
- This UAV is called as Autonomous Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator (FWTD). This was designed and developed by the Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), a premier DRDO laboratory located in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- DRDO carried out the maiden flight of this aircraft in 2022, followed by six more trials in various developmental configurations using two in-house manufactured prototypes.
- The aircraft is designed and manufactured with indigenously developed lightweight carbon Prepreg composite material.
- **About Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO):**
- **Chairman** – Samir Vankatpati kamat
- **Headquarters** - New Delhi
- **Established in** – 1958.