

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. Manipur Pledges to Combat Drug Menace on International Drug Day ( June 26, 2024 )**

The International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking was observed across Manipur.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Theme: **“The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention.”**
- Manipur, bordering Myanmar, has struggled with drug abuse for many years.
- A pledge to eradicate the drug menace was made during the observance.

#### **State Government and Police Actions:**

- Report by J.J. Thokchom highlights the state government's observance in Imphal.
- Manipur Police marked the day with a bike rally in **Imphal City**.
- The rally was flagged off by **Chief Minister N. Biren Singh**.
- Chief Minister linked the current crisis in Manipur to the BJP-led State Government's anti-drug campaign.
- 297 persons involved in drug use have been arrested since the campaign's **launch in 2018**.
- Chief Minister emphasized the government's commitment to continuing the campaign against drugs.

#### **State Narcotics and Affairs of Border Report:**

- 18,664 acres of poppy fields destroyed in the last seven years as part of the anti-drug campaign.
- Poppy seeds contain opium, which is a key source for many narcotics.

### **2. Annual Ambubachi Mela Celebrates at Kamakhya Temple in Assam ( June 22, 2024 )**

The Ambubachi Mela, renowned in Assam, commenced today at Kamakhya temple. It will continue until the 26th of this month.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Thousands of devotees have gathered to participate in this significant event.
- The festival honors the annual menstruation of goddess Kamakhya, symbolizing fertility and womanhood.
- During the Ambubachi Mela, the gates of Kamakhya Temple remain closed.

- The temple gates are scheduled to reopen at 9:08 p.m. on the 25th of this month.
- Elaborate arrangements have been made by the Kamrup Metro District administration for the devotees.

### **Other Festivals of Assam**

- Bihu Festival:
  - Significance: Most important festival of Assam celebrated by all Assamese.
  - Types: Bohag Bihu (spring festival), Kaati Bihu (crop festival), Magh Bihu (harvest festival).
- Me-Dum-Me-Phi Festival:
  - Importance: Ahom festival for ancestor worship.
  - Date: Annually on January 31st.
  - Customs: Includes colorful processions and traditional attire.
  - Belief: Essential for social harmony and preventing crises in Assam.
- Baishagu Festival:
  - Celebrated by: Boro Kacharis tribe in Assam.
  - Date: Mid-April, marking the Bodo New Year.
  - Features: Colorful celebrations, traditional musical instruments like Khawbang, Jotha, Gogona.
  - Conclusion: Culminates in community prayer called "Garjasali."

### **About Assam:**

- It is a state located in the northeastern region of India.
- It is bounded by Bhutan to the north, Arunachal Pradesh to the east, Nagaland to the northeast, Manipur to the southeast, Mizoram to the south and West Bengal to the west.
- Wildlife: Contains Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park and Nameri National Park.
  - Language: Assamese
  - Formation (as a state) - 26 January 1950
  - Capital - Dispur
  - Chief Minister - Himanta Biswa Sarma
  - Governor - Gulab Chand Kataria
  - Rajya Sabha - 7 seats

- Lok Sabha - 14 seats
- Official river - Brahmaputra

### **3. Assam Secretariat Becomes India's First Eco-Friendly State HQ ( June 20, 2024 )**

The Assam secretariat has made history as India's first eco-friendly state government headquarters, inaugurating a 2.5 Megawatt (MW) solar power project on the Janata Bhawan campus in Dispur, Guwahati, Assam.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Costing Rs 12.5 crore, this grid-connected rooftop solar plant enables the entire complex to operate solely on solar energy.

#### **Financial and Environmental Impact**

- Implementation of the solar power project is projected to save Rs 30 lakh per month in electricity costs.
- This initiative underscores Assam's commitment to sustainable practices and reducing carbon footprint.

#### **Energy Efficiency Measures**

- Automatic disconnection facilities for power are scheduled from 8-9 pm, with exceptions for critical areas like the home, finance, and Chief Minister's secretariat.
- This measure aims to optimize energy usage and promote responsible electricity consumption.

#### **Policy Changes**

- Effective July 2024, ministers and officials residing in official quarters will assume responsibility for their electricity bills, ending a long-standing practice.
- This policy shift aligns with efforts to enhance fiscal discipline and promote accountability in energy consumption.

#### **Consumer Benefits**

- The Assam Power Distribution Company Ltd (APDCL) plans to reduce power tariffs by Re 1 per unit starting April 1, 2025.
- This reduction is expected to benefit consumers across the state, making electricity more affordable and accessible.

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  - Official river - **Brahmaputra**

#### **4. Assam CM Inaugurates Janata Bhawan Solar Project ( June 17, 2024 )**

On 16 June, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the Janata Bhawan Solar Project in Guwahati.

##### **An Overview of the News**

- This project features a 2.5-MW power generation capacity with a grid-connected rooftop and ground-mounted solar PV system.

##### **Financial and Energy Details**

- Electricity Generation: The system is expected to yield an average of 3 lakh units of electricity monthly.
- Investment: The project required an investment of 12.56 crore rupees.
- Payback Period: The investment is projected to be recovered within 4 years.
- Savings: Monthly savings are estimated at approximately 30 lakh rupees.

##### **Environmental Impact**

- Carbon Emissions: The solar plant will reduce carbon emissions by 3,060 metric tonnes annually.
- Lifespan: The solar plant has a lifespan of 25 years.

## **Significance**

- First in India: **The Assam Secretariat Complex becomes the first-ever civil secretariat in the country to rely entirely on solar-generated electricity.**

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## **5. Coca-Cola India and Hockey India form first partnership for National Women's Hockey League ( May 11, 2024 )**

Anandana, Coca-Cola India Foundation has announced its first collaboration with Hockey India for the National Women's Hockey League 2024-2025, marking the inaugural edition of the tournament.

### **An Overview of the News**

- The partnership aims to grow women's hockey by focusing on key aspects such as providing specialized coaching, training equipment, nutritional support and organizing camps and competitions to facilitate development.
- The partnership is in line with Coca-Cola India's #SheTheDifference campaign, which is dedicated to celebrating, empowering, and supporting women.

### **About National Women's Hockey League 2024-2025:**

- The first phase of the tournament started on April 30, 2024, and is scheduled to end on May 9, 2024, in Ranchi, Jharkhand.
- The league consists of eight teams: Haryana, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bengal, Mizoram, Manipur, and Odisha.

- These teams secured the top eight positions in the 14th Hockey India Senior Women's National Championship 2024, to be held in Pune, Maharashtra, from March 13 to 23, 2024.

## **6. Indian diplomat Abhay Thakur appointed as the next envoy to Myanmar ( March 27, 2024 )**

Senior Indian diplomat Abhay Thakur has been appointed the next Ambassador to Myanmar and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced the appointment on March 26.

### **An Overview of the News**

- Thakur, a 1992-batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), is currently serving as an Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- He previously held the position of **Sous-Sherpa** (deputy representative) for the G20 process during India's chairmanship.
- Thakur's appointment underlines India's diplomatic engagement with Myanmar.

### **Important times for India-Myanmar relations:**

- Timing of appointment: Given the current circumstances, Thakur's selection as India's envoy to Myanmar is significant.
- Political unrest: Mass violent protests are taking place in Myanmar following the military coup on February 1, 2021, advocating for the restoration of democracy.
- India's stand: India advocates restoring "inclusive federal democracy" in Myanmar through dialogue and constructive engagement among all stakeholders.

### **Strategic Neighborhood Bond:**

- Geographical proximity: Myanmar shares a 1,640-km-long border with several northeastern Indian states, including Nagaland and Manipur.
- Strategic Importance: Myanmar holds strategic importance as one of the neighboring countries of India.

### **Engagement in Global Diplomacy:**

- Participation: Thakur participated in the G20 Development Working Group meeting in Brasilia as an Officer on Special Duty (G20).

## **7. Champawat and Pithoragarh districts included in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme to promote tourism ( Sept. 23, 2023 )**

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has included two frontier districts of Uttarakhand, Champawat, and Pithoragarh, in the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme.

### **An Overview of the News**

- The objective of the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme is **to promote tourism activities and develop these areas from a tourism point of view, providing basic facilities to visitors.**
- As part of the Swadesh Darshan scheme, Gunji, a place in Pithoragarh district, is set to take up development work in the tourism sector, with an allocated budget of Rs 75 crore.

### **Swadesh Darshan Scheme:**

- Swadesh Darshan Scheme is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
- It aims **to develop theme-based tourism circuits while enhancing the potential of India's tourism sector.**
- The scheme is aligned with other national programs such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Skill India, and Make in India to harness the potential of tourism for employment generation and economic growth.

### **15 theme-based circuits under Swadesh Darshan:**

1. Buddha Circuit: Covers important Buddhist pilgrimage sites in states like Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
2. Coastal Circuit: It aims to promote India as a "Sun, Sea and Surf" destination covering the states along the coastline.
3. Desert Circuit: Focuses on showcasing the deserts of India including the Thar Desert, Kutch and areas like Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh.
4. Eco Circuit: Develops eco-friendly and natural destinations in states like Kerala, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, Mizoram and Jharkhand.
5. Heritage Circuit: Preserves and promotes cultural heritage at UNESCO World Heritage sites in many states.
6. North East Circuit: Promotes tourism development in the North Eastern states.
7. Himalayan Circuit: Extends to the northern border states including Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and the North-East region.
8. Sufi Circuit: Celebrates Sufi practices and cultural heritage.
9. Krishna Circuit: Focuses on religious tourist destinations.
10. Ramayana Circuit: Centers around places associated with the stories of Lord Rama, mainly in Uttar Pradesh.
11. Rural Circuit: It aims to revive rural economies and provide an authentic Indian experience to tourists.
12. Tirthankara Circuit: Jain Tirthankaras and their teachings are commemorated through various pilgrimage sites across the country.

- Wildlife Circuit: Focuses on wildlife tourism, especially in states like Assam and Madhya Pradesh.
13. Pradesh.
14. Tribal Circuit: Provides insight into the tribal traditions of India, covering states like Chhattisgarh, Nagaland and Telangana.
15. Spiritual Circuit: Attracts spiritual tourists, focusing on states like Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Bihar, Rajasthan and Puducherry, which are known for their spiritual significance.

## **8. Assam Governor unveils 'Sarpanch Samvad' mobile app ( Sept. 16, 2023 )**

Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria unveiled the 'Sarpanch Samvad' mobile application developed by the Quality Council of India (QCI) at Raj Bhavan.

### **An Overview of the News**

- QCI launched 'Sarpanch Samvad' as an initiative with the goal of connecting approximately 2.5 lakh Sarpanches (village heads) from across India.
- It serves as a comprehensive platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and promoting collaboration among Sarpanches.
- This initiative enables Sarpanches to showcase the developmental activities taking place in their respective villages, gain knowledge of best practices, and network with fellow Sarpanches across the country.

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## **9. Neeraj Mittal appointed as Secretary, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) ( Sept. 7, 2023 )**

Neeraj Mittal was appointed as Secretary in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

### **An Overview of the News**

- Neeraj Mittal is a 1992-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer.
- He is currently serving as the Principal Secretary in the Department of Information Technology, Tamil Nadu.
- Prior to this, he worked as Senior Advisor in the World Bank Group and as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
- He is replacing K Rajaraman, who is now the chairman of the International Financial Services Centers Authority (IFSCA) in Gujarat.

## **S Krishnan will head the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology**

- S Krishnan, a 1989 batch IAS officer, was appointed as the new Secretary of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Krishnan currently holds the post of Industries Secretary in the Tamil Nadu State Government.
- His appointment comes after the retirement of the previous secretary Alkesh Kumar Sharma on August 31.

## **Important appointments and changes in the Ministries and Departments of the Government of India**

- **VL Kantha Rao**, who was earlier holding the post of Additional Secretary in the Department of Telecommunications, has been selected as the **Secretary in the Ministry of Mines**.
- Former Secretary, the Ministry of Mines, **Vivek Bhardwaj** will now hold the role of **Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of Panchayati Raj**.
- **Umang Narula** has been designated **Secretary in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs**, bringing his broad administrative experience to this vital portfolio.
- **Arunish Chawla**, a 1992 Bihar cadre IAS officer, is set to take charge as the **secretary of the Department of Pharmaceuticals** within the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers from November 1, 2023.
- **Chanchal Kumar** of the 1992 batch and Bihar cadre has been appointed as **Secretary in the Ministry of Development of the North Eastern Region**.
- **Vumlunmang Vualnam**, a 1992 Manipur cadre IAS officer, has been assigned the role of **Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation**. He previously served as Additional Secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs under the Ministry of Finance.

## **10. Vumlunmang Vualnam assumes the role of Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India ( Sept. 1, 2023 )**

Vumlunmang Vualnam officially begins his tenure on September 1, 2023, in the role of Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Government of India.

### **An Overview of the News**

- Vualnam takes over the position after the superannuation of **Rajeev Bansal, who retired on August 31, 2023.**
- Vualnam is a distinguished **Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the 1992 batch.** He is part of Manipur cadre.
- Throughout his career, Vualnam has held various important roles in the Central Government. These include serving as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, and Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Corporate Affairs.
- He has also held important roles in the Government of Manipur. These posts include Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare Department and Director of Transport.
- Vualnam has also contributed internationally as an advisor to the Executive Director at the World Bank.

### **About the Ministry of Civil Aviation**

- It acts as the central authority responsible for the development and regulation of civil aviation in the country.
- One of its primary roles is to formulate national policies and programs aimed at guiding the development and management of civil aviation.
- Beyond policy formulation, it also oversees various aspects of aviation, including airport facilities, air traffic services, and transportation of passengers and cargo by air.
- Additionally, the ministry is tasked with administering and enforcing the provisions set forth in the **Aircraft Act of 1934 and the Aircraft Rules of 1937.**
- The Ministry of Civil Aviation is also responsible for the administrative oversight of the Commission of Railway Safety.