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1. President presents National Awards on International Day of Persons with Disabilities (Dec. 3, 2022)

President presents National Awards on International Day of Persons with Disabilities

President **Droupadi Murmu** on December 3, conferred the **National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** for the year 2021 and 2022 on the occasion of [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) at a function in New Delhi.

Important facts

- The program was organised by the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**
- Social Justice and Empowerment Minister **Dr. Virender Kumar** presided over the function.
- On this occasion, President Murmu presented annual national awards to individuals, institutions, organisations and states and districts doing remarkable work for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- The National **Awards for 2021** were given to **25 individuals**, institutions and organisations.
- The National **Awards for 2022** were presented to **29 individuals**, institutions and organisations for their outstanding achievements and work done towards the empowerment of persons with disabilities.
- These awards were given in various categories including Sarvshresth Divyangjan, Shresth Divyangjan, Shresth Divyang Bal and Balika, Sarvshrestha Vyakti working towards the empowerment of Divyangjan and Sarvshrestha Rehabilitation Professional worker.
- This award is presented by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities**, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment every year on the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities i.e. 3rd December.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment - **Virendra Kumar**

2. Scientists revive nearly 48,500-year-old 'Zombie Virus' from bottom of frozen lake in Russia (Dec. 3, 2022)

Scientists revive nearly 48,500-year-old 'Zombie Virus'

French scientists have warned of the onset of another outbreak after they **revived a 48,500-year-old zombie virus** buried under a **frozen lake in Russia.**

Important facts

- It has broken the previous record of a **30,000-year-old virus** discovered by the same team in Siberia in 2013.
- This report is published in the **New York Post**.
- The new research was prepared by **Jean-Marie Alempic**, a microbiologist at the **French National Center for Scientific Research**.
- It has been said in the report that due to the survival of this zombie virus, a more devastating situation can arise in plants, animals and humans.
- Scientists have expressed the possibility of another epidemic like corona due to the survival of this virus.

Threat of melting glacier

- According to the report, due to **global warming**, permanently frozen ice is melting, which covers a quarter of the **northern hemisphere**.
- This has a destabilising effect on organic matter that has been frozen for millions of years, including **deadly microbes**.
- Research has shown that part of this organic matter includes revived cellular microbes (prokaryotes, unicellular eukaryotes) as well as viruses that have been dormant since prehistoric times.

What is a Zombie Virus?

- **Zombie virus** is the term given to a virus that is frozen in ice and therefore dormant.
- Research mentions **13 viruses**, each of which has its own genome.
- It is called **Pandoravirus Yedoma** which is 48,500 years old and has the ability to infect other organisms.
- It was discovered at the bottom of a lake in **Yukechi Alas in Yakutia, Russia**.
- All of the zombie viruses have the potential to be infectious and hence pose a health danger.
- Scientists believe that epidemics like **Covid 19** will become more common in the future.

3. Horticulture Cluster Development Programme (Dec. 3, 2022)

Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

The Union **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** has prepared a **Horticulture Cluster Development Program (CDP)**, for which a meeting was held on November 30 under the chairmanship of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister **Narendra Singh Tomar**.

Important facts

- The implementation of the CDP will focus on the overall development of horticulture in the country.
- Horticulture is the branch of agriculture that deals with garden crops, generally fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants.

About Horticulture Cluster Development Programme

- The Nodal Agency of CDP is the **National Horticulture Board (NHB)**.
- Aim of CDP is to improve exports of targeted crops by about 20% and create cluster-specific brands to enhance the competitiveness of cluster crops.
- Its objective is to promote the Agriculture sector in the country and to increase the income of the farmers by giving them a reasonable price for their produce.
- It will support integrated interventions to enhance the competitiveness of targeted clusters.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has identified **55 horticulture clusters**.

4. First 'Divya Kala Mela' for divyang artist starts in New Delhi (Dec. 2, 2022)

First 'Divya Kala Mela' for divyang

The Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment **Dr. Virendra Kumar** inaugurated the **Divya Kala Mela** in Kartavya Path (earlier known as Raj Path) at India Gate, New Delhi on 2 December 2022. Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Pratima Bhowmik was also present on the occasion.

The mela is being organised by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities** under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from 2 -7 December 2022.

Dr. Virendra Kumar said that Divya Kala Mela will be organized across the country.

The Mela s aims to provide a great platform for the products and craftsmanship of Divyang artisans, craftsmen and artisans from across the country.

Around 200 Divyang artisans, artists and entrepreneurs from 22 states and union territories will showcase their products and skills in the fair.

5. Russia refuses to give Pakistan 30-40 percent discount on crude oil (Dec. 2, 2022)

Russia refuses to give Pakistan 30-40 percent discount on crude oil

On 1 December, **Russia denied Pakistan a 30-40 percent discount on Russian crude oil** after the Pakistani delegation demanded a reduction in the price during talks in Moscow.

Important facts

- Earlier this week, a **Pakistani delegation** demanded oil concessions during talks in **Moscow**.
- Pakistani officials said that they should also be given oil with a discount of 30-40 per cent on the price like India.
- Pakistan's official delegation was on a three-day visit to Moscow starting on the 29th of November.
- Russia also promised to consider **Pakistan's demand** and to share its mind later on through diplomatic channels.
- Russian crude oil can be processed in Pakistan's refineries, and in the past one private refinery had used Russian crude oil to deliver finished products.
- Russia can offer crude at the rates it is providing to its large client countries, which are reliable and sound economies, at a suitable time.

6. Govt approves Production Linked Incentive scheme for drones and drone components (Dec. 2, 2022)

Linked Incentive scheme for drones and drone components

The government has approved the **[Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) scheme](#)** for **drones and drone components** for implementation during **2022-23 to 2024-25** with an outlay of **120 crore rupees** on 2 December.

Important facts

- The scheme is being implemented by the **Ministry of Civil Aviation**.
- The objective of this scheme is to incentivize the manufacturing of **drones and drone components** in the country with a focus to make the indigenous' industries globally competitive.
- Support under the scheme will be provided only to companies engaged in the manufacturing of drones and drone components in India.
- As per the guidelines, the minimum annual sales turnover to claim the benefit of PLI should be **Rs 2 crore for drones** and **Rs 50 lakh for single component segment** for MSMEs and startups.
- **Non-MSMEs** must have an annual sales turnover of **Rs 4 crore** for drones and **Rs 1 crore** for components segment.

- **Empowered Group of Secretaries** chaired by the Cabinet Secretary will monitor the scheme.

7. Supreme Court seeks government's response on 'Project Great Indian Bustard' conservation programme (Dec. 2, 2022)

'ProjectGreat Indian Bustard'

The Supreme Court on November 28 sought the government's response on developing a conservation program called '**Project Great Indian Bustard**' to address the crisis faced by the critically endangered bird species.

Important facts

- A public interest litigation was filed in the country's top court, in which an appeal was made to give directions to **save the Godavan i.e. Great Indian Bustard bird.**
- In fact, many Great Indian Bustards or Godavan have died due to **criss-crossing of power transmission lines** in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- While hearing the petitions filed in this context, the court sought answers from the government and advised to start Project Great Indian Bustard.
- The Supreme Court has advised to start '**Project Great Indian Bustard**' on the lines of '**Project Tiger**' for the rescue of an endangered bird Great Indian Bustard.

About Great Indian Bustard

- It is considered India's most **critically endangered bird** species and especially found in **Rajasthan and Gujarat.**
- It is one of the heaviest flying birds **endemic to the Indian subcontinent.**
- It is the state bird of Rajasthan.
- These birds are on the verge of extinction, with barely 50 to 249 surviving, according to a 2021 report by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).**
- It is a large bird with brown-and-white feathers with black crown and wing markings. It is one of the heaviest birds in the world.
- Its habitat is Arid **grasslands.**
- IUCN Status - **Critically Endangered.**
- Listed in Wildlife Protection Act's **Schedule 1.**
- The cause of the decline in numbers is Hunting, Intensification of agriculture, Power lines.

8. India assumes the Presidency of the UNSC for December month 2022 (Dec. 1, 2022)

India assumes the Presidency of the UNSC for December month 2022

According to the External Affairs Ministry, India has assumed the **Presidency** of the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) for the month of **December 2022**. India will be the President of the UNSC for one month as the 2 year term of India as a non-permanent member of the UNSC ends on 31 December 2022.

India became the non -permanent member of the UNSC on 1 January 2021. During **its 2 year terms** India has become the President of the UNSC for the second time . Earlier it became President in August 2021.

According to the External Affairs Ministry during India's Presidency two key events are scheduled in the UNSC.

There will be a debate on “‘Maintenance of International Peace and Security: New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism’ and others will be on “Threats to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts: Global Approach to Counter Terrorism - Challenges and Way Forward”.

Both the sessions will be chaired by the **External Affairs minister S. Jaishankar**.

India has been elected **8 times** as a non-permanent member of the UNSC. India has been elected **in 1950, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1984, 1991, 2011 and 2021**.

The UNSC consists of **15 members**. China, US, Russia, France and the United Kingdom are permanent members. Rest 10 non-permanent members are elected for a period of 2 years.

At present the UN has **193 member countries**.

9. India to assume chairmanship of Wassenaar arrangement on 1 Jan 2023 (Dec. 1, 2022)

India to assume chairmanship of Wassenaar arrangement on 1 Jan 2023

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has announced that India will assume Chairmanship **of Wassenaar Arrangement** (WA) on 01 January 2023 for a period **of one year**.

At the 26th annual Plenary of the WA held in **Vienna, Austria** on 30 November-01 December 2022, Ambassador Eoin O'Leary of Ireland handed over the Chairmanship to Ambassador Jagdeep Majumdar, Ambassador and Permanent Representative to UN and International Organizations in Vienna.

India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) on 08 December 2017 as its **42nd Participating State**.

Wassenaar Arrangement

The Wassenaar Arrangement was established in July 1996 at **Wassenaar, Netherlands**. It is a voluntary export control regime of **42 member countries**. The member countries

exchange information on transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies.

The main aim of the Wassenaar agreement is to discourage its member countries from exporting conventional weapons and dual-use goods and technologies to countries which are a threat to global peace.

The WA Plenary is the decision-making and governing body of the Arrangement. It is composed of representatives of all Participating States who normally meet once a year at **Vienna, Austria.**

External Affairs' Minister : S.Jaishankar

10. G-20 Finance Ministers meeting to be held in Bengaluru in February 2023: Nirmala Sitharaman (Dec. 1, 2022)

G-20 Finance Ministers meeting to be held in Bengaluru

The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced that **Bengaluru, Karnataka** will host a meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors in February 2023. India assumed the Presidency of the G-20 on [1 December 2022.](#)

She announced this at the **Vananam Startup Inclusivity Summit** in Bengaluru.

Mr Sitharaman has asked the Start-ups to utilise this event to showcase their profile to the visiting international guests. The Finance Minister said, different cities in India have been selected to host [G-20-related meetings](#) next year.