

Current Affairs search results for tag: national

1. International News (Dec. 12, 2021)

1. Mount Semeru erupted in Indonesia

- Mt Semeru (3676 m above sea level) is the biggest mountain on the island of Java.
- Semeru is one of the most active volcanoes in Indonesia and a part of a chain of volcanic mountains stretching from northern Sumatra to the Lesser Sunda Islands.

2. Suu Kyi sentenced to four years in prison

The military junta ruling Myanmar has sentenced the deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi for four years for incitement against the military and breaching COVID-19 rules,

3. US to diplomatic boycott Beijing winter olympics

The US has announced a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in China because of concerns about China's human rights record especially its treatment of Uighur muslim in Xinjinag provinces, a move that has been heavily criticised by Beijing.

- However American sports persons will participate in the winter olympic games.
- Following the US announcement, New Zealand and Australia also announced a diplomatic boycott of the games though their athletes will be participating in the games.
- **Canada will join the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia** in a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics over human rights concerns, **Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on December 8.**

4. ADB to provide loan to India

Government of India and Asian Development Bank(ADB) has signed two agreement for loan to projects in India

- ADB will provide a \$125 million loan to improve access to safe and affordable drinking water supply and citywide inclusive sanitation services in Dehradun and Nainital cities in the state of Uttarakhand.
- It will also provide a \$150 million loan to provide access to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable housing for the urban poor in the state of Tamil Nadu.

5. India amongst the most unequal countries in the world

As per the '**World Inequality Report 2022**' by **World Inequality Lab**, which aims to promote research on global inequality dynamics. India is among the most unequal countries in the world, with rising poverty and an 'affluent elite'.

- **Distribution of Wealth:** In India, the top 10% and top 1% hold 57% and 22% of the total national income respectively while the share of the bottom 50% has gone down to 13%.
- **Gender inequality:** The share of female labour income share in India is equal to 18% which is significantly lower than the average in Asia (21%, excluding China) & is among the lowest in the world. Although, the number is slightly higher than the average share in the Middle East (15%).

6. Nicaragua cut its diplomatic relation with Taiwan

- The Central American country Nicaragua has become the latest country to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favour of China.
- The decision was praised by China, which demands that any country that wants diplomatic relations with it must cut existing ties with Taipei.
- However, Taiwan sees itself as a democratically-governed, independent country, though it has never formally declared independence from the mainland.
- Before Nicaragua, the Pacific Island nations of Kiribati and the Solomon Islands were the latest countries to cut ties with Taiwan in favour of China in 2019.

Capital of Nicaragua: **Managua**

President of Nicaragua: **Daniel Ortega**

Capital of Taiwan: **Taipei**

7. UN General Assembly Grants Observer Status To International Solar Alliance

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has granted Observer Status to International Solar Alliance (ISA), India's Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations.
- A total of 108 countries participated in the Assembly, including 74 Member Countries and 34 Observer and Prospective Countries, 23 Partner Organizations and 33 Special Invitee Organisations.

2. National News (Dec. 12, 2021)

1. Ram Nath Kovind inaugurates centennial year celebration of the PAC

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the centennial year celebration of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the Central Hall of Parliament on **4th December**. The PAC is one of the most powerful financial committees of Parliament.
- The Committee on Public Accounts is the oldest Parliamentary Committee and was first constituted in 1921.
- The Committee consists of 22 Members, 15 Members are elected by Lok Sabha and 7 Members of the Rajya Sabha are associated with it.

2. PM inaugurated Vyasi Hydroelectric Project

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the 120 MW Vyasi Hydroelectric Project, built over Yamuna river at the cost of over 1,700 crore rupees.
- Located in Dehradun district and **operated by Uttarakhand Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited**, the Vyasi power project is a run-of-the-river scheme on the Yamuna.

3. India's first privately build Cryogenic Engine

- Hyderabad based Skyroot Aerospace successfully tested Dhawan1, thus making it country's first privately developed, fully cryogenic rocket engine.
- The Cryogenic engine has been named after Satish Dhawan, who was the third chairman of ISRO. He pioneered the development of advanced space launch capabilities of India.
- It runs on two high performance rocket propellants — liquid natural gas (LNG) and liquid oxygen (LoX).

4. 57th Raising Day of BSF held at Jaisalmer

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah addressed the 57th Raising Day celebrations of the Border Security Force in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

5. Anemia in Children: leading to child growth failure

According to the 5th report of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) of 2019-2021, a higher proportion of children aged 6 to 59 months have been found to be anaemic compared to NFHS-4 (2015-2016).

Highlights:

- The share of anaemic children in NFHS-5 (2019-21) increased by 8.5% points compared to NFHS-4 (2015-16) and was closer to levels of NFHS-3 (2005-2006).
- In 30 out of 36 states/UT's one half the children in age group 6-59 months are found to be anaemic.
- Assam, Mizoram and Chattisgarh recorded the highest increases.
- Gujarat had the highest share of children (79.7%) who were anaemic.

6. Russian President Visit to India

Russian President **Vladimir Putin visited India on 6th December for the 21st India - Russia Annual summit with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.**

- first in-person meeting between Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi after their meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Brasilia in November 2019.
- After their meeting in New Delhi both the **country issued a Joint Declaration titled "India-Russia: Partnership for Peace, Progress and Prosperity"**
- The two countries signed **28 agreements, including 9 government-to-government agreements** and those that spanned areas of defence, space, finance, power, culture, scientific research, education and health among others.

7. Maitri Diwas

India and Bangladesh celebrate 6 December as Maitri diwas to commemorate the recognition of the day when India recognised Bangladesh as an Independent country.

- The war to liberate Bangladesh began on December 3, 1971 and ended with the signing of the Instrument of Surrender by Pakistani General A.A.K. Niazi on December 16.

8. India Crosses Covid Vaccination Milestone

- Half of the eligible population(18 Years and above) in the country is now fully vaccinated against COVID.
- In total, 85% of the eligible adult population has now received the first dose, while 50.35% are fully vaccinated.

9. Government has constituted Tribal Advisory Council in all states having Scheduled Areas

Tribes Advisory Council (TAC) have been constituted in 10(Ten) states having Scheduled Areas there namely Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan.

10. India adds Ghana and Tanzania in the list of “at-risk” countries

Countries in Europe, including the U.K., and South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Hong Kong, Singapore, Tanzania and Israel have been placed in the “at risk” category.

- Passengers from “**at-risk” countries** have to follow additional COVID-19 testing and quarantine measures.

11. Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and 12 others killed in Chopper Crash

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and 12 others killed in Chopper Crash

India’s first ***Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Laxman Singh Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat, an army Brigadier, Lieutenant, Wing Commander, Squadron Leader and 7 others were killed in a chopper crash in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu.***

- The helicopter Mi-17-V5 had taken off from Sulur Air Force base in Coimbatore ,Tamil Nadu to the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, Tamil Nadu to address the faculty and student officers of the ‘Staff Course’.

IAF has ordered tri-service investigation into chopper crash

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has ordered a tri-service investigation led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Training Command, in the Mi 17 V5 chopper crash in Tamil Nadu.

Black box of the ill-fated chopper has been recovered by the investigation team.

12. Cabinet Nod for Ken-Betwa River Linking Project

The Union Cabinet approved the funding and implementation of the Ken-Betwa river interlinking project. It is the first out of the 30 projects of the National Perspective Plan for interlinking of rivers.

Highlights-

- Benefit Water Starved Districts of the Bundelkhand region of MP and UP like Panna, Tikamgarh, Chhatarpur, Sagar, Damoh, Datia, Vidisha, Shivpuri and Raisen of Madhya Pradesh, and Banda, Mahoba, Jhansi and Lalitpur of Uttar Pradesh,
- The total cost of the project Rs 44,605 crore at the 2020-21 price level. The Centre would fund Rs 39,317 crore for the project, with Rs 36,290 crore as a grant and Rs 3,027 crore as a loan.
- The project is slated to irrigate 10.62 lakh hectares annually, provide drinking water supply to 62 lakh people and generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.
- The project will partly submerge the Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh and affect the habitat of vultures and jackals, which is the major environmental and wildlife concern hindering the progress of the project for all these years.

- The two states signed a tripartite agreement with the Centre on World Water Day (22nd March) to finally implement this ambitious project.

13. Human Rights Violation Data by Ministry of Home Affairs

According to data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the Rajya Sabha on 8th December 2021, around **40% of human rights violation cases** lodged annually by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in the past three financial years till this October 31 **were from Uttar Pradesh.**

- ***Current Chairman of the NHRC : Justice Arun Kumar Mishra***

14. Bills on Assisted Reproductive Technology, surrogacy passed

- The Rajya Sabha passed two Bills to regulate and supervise assisted reproductive technology clinics and surrogacy on December 8.
- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill, 2021 was passed by the Lok Sabha on December 1. It was passed by a voice vote in the Upper House

15. Only 56% Funds of Poshan Abhiyaan Used

- State Governments and Union Territories utilized only 56% of the total funds released under the Poshan Abhiyan or Nutrition Mission in the past three years.
- Out of a total amount of Rs, 5,312 crores disbursed by the Centre between financial years 2019 to 2021, a sum of Rs 2,985 crores was utilized.

16. International flights to be resumed after 31st Jan. 2022

Directorate General of Civil Aviation announced on 09th December that full resumption of international flights stands postponed at least till January 31, 2022.\

17. Government of India extends PMGAY-G till March 2024

The Government of India has extended the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin(PMAY-G) beyond March 2021 till March 2024 so as to provide financial assistance for the construction of the remaining 155.75 lakh houses under the scheme.

18. Rajya Sabha passes Pharma Education Bill

Rajya Sabha passed the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Amendment) Bill, 2021 which amends the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research Act, 1998.

19. No proposal under consideration to scrap Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

Stating the Government of India position ,Law Minister Kiren Rijiju informed the Lok Sabha that the section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code(IPC) 1860 which deals with sedition in sub-judice before the Supreme Court and the government has no intention of scrapping the section.

20. India co-chairs Global Methane Initiative Steering Leadership Meeting

A Steering Leadership meeting of Global Methane Initiative (GMI) has been held virtually in which the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Coal, V.K. Tiwari as the Vice Chairman of this global initiative informed the participants about the work being carried out by India to mitigate the emission of methane.

3. India to supply medicines to the Afghan people (Dec. 12, 2021)

- The Government of India has joined Qatar, the UAE, Turkmenistan and Pakistan that have sent humanitarian support to Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.
- India has sent medical relief material to the Indira Gandhi Children Hospital in Kabul.
- This is the first time that India has sent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan after the Taliban took over Kabul by dislodging the government of President Ashraf Ghani in August.
- The medical relief material will be handed to the WHO (World Health Organisation) in Kabul as the Indian does not recognise the Taliban government in Kabul led by Habitullah Akhunzada .
- The relief material was sent back by special Kam Air flights that had brought 10 Indians and 94 Afghan minority community members from Afghanistan to India.
- As part of the **Operation Devi Shakti**, which was launched in August to evacuate Indians and Afghan minority community members from the strife torn country, the Government has evacuated a total of 669 people from Afghanistan. This includes 448 Indians who were working on various projects and businesses and 206 Afghan nationals.

4. G-7 Foreign and Development Ministers Meeting (Dec. 12, 2021)

- The United Kingdom, which is currently the chairman of the Group of 7 countries, hosted the foreign ministers meeting of the member countries at Liverpool in England .
- It will be held on 11-12 December 2021.
- The meeting was held in the midst of concern that Russia is going to attack Ukraine which is denied by Russia.
- The Foreign Ministers of **India, European Union, Australia, South Korea, along with representatives from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)** will take part in G-7 foreign ministers as guests.

G-7 or Group of Seven

- It is a group of the wealthiest, industrialised and liberal democracies in the world.
- It includes United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United States, Canada
- Russia was made a member of the group in 1998 but was expelled in 2014 after its occupation of Crimea ,which is a part of Ukraine.

History of G-7

- In 1975 France hosted the first summit meeting which was attended by 6 leaders of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan, Germany and the United States.
- In 1976 Canada was made the member of the group and it was converted into G-7
- Russia was made a member of the group in 1998 and it was converted into G-8 but Russia was expelled in 2014 after its occupation of Crimea ,which is a part of Ukraine.

Forthcoming Summits

- The current Chairman of the group is United Kingdom
- The 48th Summit meeting 2022 will be held in Germany
- The 49th Summit meeting 2023 will be held in Japan
- The 50th Summit meeting 2024 will be held in Italy

5. India International Science Festival 2021 (Dec. 12, 2021)

- The 7th India International Science Festival 2021 (IISF) was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Jitendra Singh .
- **The Festival is being held at Panaji, Goa from 10-13 December 2021.**
- **Theme of the IISF : "Celebrating Creativity, Science, Technology and Innovation for a prosperous India .**
- IISF 2021 is being organised jointly by the Ministry of Earth Science, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, in collaboration with Vijnana Bharati.

6. Vice President Inaugurates exhibition on 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' in Hyderabad (Dec. 12, 2021)

- The Vice President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated an exhibition on 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' (EBSB) in Hyderabad city on 12 December 2021.

- Exhibition has been organised by the Regional Outreach Bureau, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. This exhibition would highlight the various interesting aspects of the paired states of Haryana and Telangana like art forms, cuisine, festivals, monuments, tourism spots etc,
- The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) programme was launched by the Prime Minister on 31st October, 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- The Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme is a unique initiative by the Government to promote the spirit of national integration and to strengthen the fabric of emotional bonds between the people of our country.
- Every State and UT in the country would be paired with another State/UT for a time period, during which they would carry out a structured engagement with one another in the spheres of language, literature, cuisine, festivals, cultural events, tourism etc.
- At present Haryana is paired with Telangana .

7. Prime Minister inaugurates Saryu Nahar National Project (Dec. 12, 2021)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the ₹9,800 crore Saryu Nahar National Project in Balrampur district of Uttar Pradesh .
- The 6,623-kilometre-long canal system will provide assured water for irrigation of over 14 lakh hectares of land to the benefit of about 29 lakh farmers of nine districts in the region – Bahraich, Shravasti, Gonda, Balrampur, Siddharthnagar, Basti, Sant Kabir Nagar, Gorakhpur, and Maharajganj.
- Five rivers—Ghagra, Saryu, Rapti, Banganga, and Rohini—have been interlinked under the project to ensure optimum usage of water resources of the region.
- The Saryu Nahar National project was started in 1978.
- Union Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

8. Punjab approach Supreme Court on BSF jurisdiction in the state (Dec. 12, 2021)

- Punjab has filed a suit in the Supreme Court against the Centre's move to increase the limits of jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF) from 15 km to 50 km along the India-Pakistan International Border.
- The State has filed an original suit challenging the October 11,2021 notification issued by the Union Home Ministry extending the Central force's area of jurisdiction, calling it a breach of the federal form of governance under the Constitution.
- **The border area with Pakistan and Bangladesh is guarded by Border Security Forces(BSF)**

Background to the Issue

- October 11, 2021, the Centre invoked section 139(1) (i) of the BSF Act, 1968 to authorise the force to undertake search, seizure and arrest within a larger 50 km stretch, instead of the existing 15 kms, from the international border in Punjab, West Bengal and Assam.
- In Gujarat, which shares a border with Pakistan, the same limit was reduced from 80 km to 50 km, and in Rajasthan, it was kept unchanged at 50 km.
- Section 139 (1) (i) of the BSF Act, 1968 empowers the Central Government to confer powers and duties on members of the force in respect of any Central Acts for the purposes specified therein.
- According to the Central government it was done for better and more effective control on trans-border crimes in conjunction and co-operation with the State Police.
- Later the BSF chief Pankaj Kumar said that the jurisdiction of the BSF was increased in these states to curb illegal infiltration from Bangladesh which was causing a demographic change in the border district of these States creating a security threat to these states and to India.
- However, Punjab and West Bengal governments have opposed the move and said that it was an encroachment on state rights by the central government.
- The Punjab legislative Assembly passed a resolution against this move of the center .

Supreme Court's Original Jurisdiction

There are certain type of cases which only the Supreme Court of India can hear ,which is called the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court

Article 131 of the Indian Constitution provides for the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court

Only the Supreme Court shall hear the following cases :

- (a) any dispute between the Government of India and one or more States; or
- (b) dispute between the Government of India and any State or States on one side and one or more other States on the other; or
- (c) dispute between two or more States, if the dispute involves any question of law or fact.

9. UN General Assembly Grants Observer Status To International Solar Alliance (Dec. 11, 2021)

- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** has granted **Observer Status to International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, India's Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations.
- A total of **108 countries participated in the Assembly**, including 74 Member Countries and 34 Observer and Prospective Countries, 23 Partner Organizations and 33 Special Invitee Organisations.
- The launch of the ISA was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and former French President Francois Hollande in November 2015, at the 21st session of the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Paris, France.
- In 6 years, the International Solar Alliance has become an example of positive global climate action through partnerships to benefit global energy growth and development.

Observer Status

Observer status is a privilege granted by some organizations to non-members to give them an ability to participate in the organization's activities. Observer status is often granted by intergovernmental organizations (IGO) to non-member parties and international nongovernmental organizations (INGO) that have an interest in the IGO's activities.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

The United Nations General Assembly is one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, serving as the main deliberative, **policymaking**, and **representative organ of the UN**.

Responsibilities of UNGA includes:

- preparing the UN budget
- appointing the non-permanent members to the Security Council
- appointing the Secretary-General of the United Nations
- receiving reports from other parts of the UN system
- making recommendations through resolutions.

It also establishes numerous subsidiary organs to advance or assist in its broad mandate.

Headquarters: **New York, United States**

President: **Abdulla Shahid**

Convened: **10 January 1946**

India's Permanent Ambassador to the UN, T S Tirumurti.

International Solar Alliance

The **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** is an *alliance of 124 countries initiated by India, most of them being the sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.*

The primary objective of the alliance:

- to work for efficient consumption of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- to endorse clean energy, sustainable environment, public transport and climate

Formation: **30 November 2015**

Headquarters: **Gurugram, Haryana, India**

Director General: **Ajay Mathur**

10. PM Modi Addresses Democracy Summit (Dec. 11, 2021)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in a virtual address on 10th December 2021 at the Summit for Democracy, hosted by U.S. President Joe Biden, that Democracies should jointly deal with social media and cryptocurrencies.

The PM further added that, we all need to constantly improve our democratic practices and systems. And, we all need to continuously enhance inclusion, transparency, human dignity, responsive grievance redressal and decentralization of power.

In this context, today's assembly provides a timely platform for furthering cooperation among democracies. India would be happy to share its expertise in holding free and fair elections, and in enhancing transparency in all areas of governance through innovative digital solutions. We must also jointly shape global norms for emerging technologies like social media and cryptocurrencies, so that they are used to empower democracy, not to undermine it.

For more information about the Democracy Summit, see news of 10th December.