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1. Prime Minister Modi flags off 6th Vande Bharat train in Maharashtra (Dec. 11, 2022)

Prime Minister Modi flags off 6th Vande Bharat train in Maharashtra

Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is on a two day (11-12 December 2022) visit to Maharashtra , Goa and Gujarat inaugurated a number of projects in Maharashtra including the 6th [Vande Bharat Express train](#) on 11 December 2022.

Important Highlights of PM Modi's Maharashtra Visit

- He inaugurated the 6th Vande Bharat Express which will run on Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh)-Nagpur (Maharashtra) route. This is the second Vande Bharat express in the state after the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Vande Bharat express. Vande Bharat is an indigenous semi-high speed train developed by Indian Railways. Government proposes to run 75 Vande Bharat express trains in the country by 15 August 2023.
- He inaugurated the 'Nagpur Metro Phase I', and laid the foundation stone of 'Nagpur Metro phase- II' at Khapri Metro Station. The Phase I has been developed at a cost of Rs 8650 crore while the Phase II will be developed at a cost of more than Rs 6700 crore.
- He inaugurated the [Hindu Hrudaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg](#) connecting Nagpur and Shirdi. Built at a cost of ₹55,000 crore, it is one of the longest expressways in the country that passes through 10 Maharashtra districts, including Amravati, Aurangabad and Nashik.
- He also inaugurated Rail projects worth ₹15,000 crore, AIIMS Nagpur, Nagpur and Nag river pollution abatement project, Centre for Research, Management and Control of Hemoglobinopathies, **Chandrapur**, Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering and Technology (CIPET), **Chandrapur**,

Governor of Maharashtra: **Bhagat Singh Koshiyari**

Chief Minister of Maharashtra; **Eknath Shinde**

2. Congress leader Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh (Dec. 11, 2022)

Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh

Former Congress state chief **Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu** was sworn in as the **17th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh** on 11 December by **Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar** in Shimla.

Important facts

- **Mukesh Agnihotri** was sworn in as the **Deputy Chief Minister**. He is a resident of Nadaun in Hamirpur district of Himachal Pradesh.
- Two days after the Congress wrested power from BJP winning **40 seats** in the **68-member Assembly**, the Congress leadership on 10 December named Sukhu as the next CM.

- Law graduate Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, a **four-time MLA** from **Nadaun** constituency in Himachal Pradesh and head of the Congress's election committee in the state, began his career in student politics.
- Another possible candidate for the post was state unit chief and wife of late party leader Virbhadra Singh, **Pratibha Singh**.
- Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu was the general secretary of the Himachal Pradesh unit of the Congress-affiliated National Students' Union of India (NSUI). Later, he became the president of NSUI.
- For the first time he won the assembly elections in **2003** from Nadaun in Hamirpur district. He then retained the seat in 2007 but lost it again in 2012 and won it again in 2017 and 2022.

About Himachal Pradesh

- It was made the eighteenth state of India on **25 January 1971** under the Himachal Pradesh State Act, 1971.
- Himachal Pradesh is also called the **Land of Gods**.
- Himachal Pradesh is part of the **Shivalik range of the Himalaya Mountains**.
- **Major rivers and dams**- Sutlej (Bhakra Dam, Gobind Sagar Reservoir, Koldam Dam), Vyas (Pandoh Dam, Maharana Pratap Sagar Reservoir), Ravi (Chamera Dam), Parvati
- **Major Lakes**- Renuka, Revalsar, Khajjiar, Dal, Beas Kund, Dasaur, Brighu, Parashar, Mani Mahesh, Chander Tal, Suraj Tal, Kareri, Sarolsar, Govind Sagar, Nako Lake
- **National Parks**- Great Himalayan National Park, Pin Valley National Park, Khirganga, Inderkilla and Simbalbara National Parks
- Capital- **Shimla**
- Governor- **Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar**
- Ex-Chief Minister- **Jai Ram Thakur**
- Legislative Assembly seats- **68**
- Rajya Sabha seats- **3**
- Lok Sabha seats - **4**

3. Tamil Nadu becomes first state to launch its own Climate Change Mission (Dec. 11, 2022)

Tamil Nadu becomes first state to launch its own Climate

Tamil Nadu has become the first state in India to launch its own **Climate Change Mission**. Launching the state climate change mission at the Tamil Nadu climate change summit on 9

December 2022, Tamil Nadu chief minister **M K Stalin** said that the state will achieve carbon neutrality much ahead of the **national target of 2070**. The Tamil Nadu Climate Summit was held in **Chennai** from 8 and 9 December 2022.

Carbon neutral refers to the removal of the same amount of **carbon dioxide** from the atmosphere by various means as the amount of carbon dioxide which is released in the atmosphere leaving a Zero balance or zero carbon.

Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission

- The state government announced the launch of the Tamil Nadu Climate Change Mission in the 2021-2022 budget with an outlay of Rs 500 crore to undertake climate change management and mitigation activities.
- The state government established Tamil Nadu Green Climate Company, a special purpose vehicle to implement three major nature conservation projects namely **Green Tamil Nadu Mission, Tamil Nadu Wetlands** and **Tamil Nadu Climate Change**.
- The Tamil Nadu climate change mission will be implemented at the district level and it will be coordinated and implemented by **climate officers** appointed at the district level.
- The Tamil Nadu government has appointed former director of United Nations Environment Programme **Erik Solheim** as its advisor for the climate change mission.
- During the climate summit a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Resources Institute, Anna University and the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management were signed on the occasion, to help the government establish **10 smart villages, 25 green schools** and achieve blue flag beaches.

4. India's largest and fourth business jet terminal commissioned at Cochin International Airport (Dec. 10, 2022)

India's largest and fourth business jet terminal commissioned at Cochin International Airport

Kerala Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the country's first and biggest charter gateway - the Business Jet Terminal -- at the Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) on 10 December 2022. Cochin airport has become the 4th airport in India after Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad with dedicated private Jet terminals.

According to the CIAL Managing Director, S Suhas "The Business Jet Terminal is going to be India's first Charter Gateway, which will serve as a platform to integrate business jet service, tourism and business conferences,

The business jet terminal inaugurated today was built at a cost of 40 crore rupees by renovating the old domestic terminal. It covers an area of 40,000 sq feet with comfortable lounges, customs and immigration counters, a business centre and other modern facilities.

Cochin International Airport was the first airport in the world to run on solar power. It is the largest airport in Kerala and the seventh largest in India.

International Airports in Kerala

Kerala has the highest number of operational international airports in India. It has 4 international airports. They are:

- Trivandrum International Airport ,
- Cochin International airport ,
- Calicut International Airport and
- Kannur International Airport.

5. Solar Electric Hybrid high speed ferry launched in Goa (Oct. 13, 2022)

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways **Sarbananda Sonowal** launched a **Solar-Electric Hybrid High Speed Ferry** and inaugurated a floating jetty project at Panaji, Goa on 13 October 2022.

The Solar-Electric Hybrid High Speed Ferry project is funded by the government of Goa at a cost of over 3.9 crores and has a carrying capacity of 60 passengers.

The floating jetty has been funded by the Inland Waterways Authority of India, the three jetties commissioned were built at a project cost of Rs. 9.6 crores. The jetties are solid concrete structures that float on water, are easy to install and have minimal environmental impact in their construction.

Speaking on the occasion the minister said that the project is likely to boost the tourism sector in the state.

First Solar Powered Ferry in India

The first solar powered ferry in India, Aditya was launched in 2017 in Kerala. It was built by the NavAlt Solar and Electric Boats for the Kerala State Water Transport Department.

6. PM Modi to inaugurate Goa's 2nd airport, Mopa International Airport on 11 December 2022 (Dec. 10, 2022)

PM Modi to inaugurate Goa's 2nd airport, Mopa International Airport

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will formally inaugurate Goa's **second international airport at Mopa** on 11 December 2022, According to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) the Prime Minister during his visit to Goa on 11 December will address the valedictory function of the [**9th World Ayurveda Congress**](#) and later, will inaugurate the Mopa International Airport.

Mopa International Airport will be the **second** Airport of Goa after the Dabolim **airport** which is a civil enclave in a military airbase named INS Hansa. Mopa airport will be the **first cargo carrying airport of Goa**. The Mopa airport will become **fully operation from January 5, 2023**.

The Mopa International Airport has been developed at a cost of around Rs 2, 8700 crore by the **GMR Infrastructure** which also has the right to operate the airport for 40 years with an option of additional 20 years.

The airport has been built on the theme of sustainable infrastructure and has a solar power plant, green buildings, LED lights on the runway, rainwater harvesting, state-of-the-art sewage treatment plant with recycling facilities, among other such facilities.

Goa Chief Minister: **Pramod Sawant**

7. India's first carbon neutral farm inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinnari Vijayan at Aluva, Kerala (Dec. 10, 2022)

India's first carbon neutral farm inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinnari Vijayan

Kerala Chief Minister **Pinnari Vijayan** on 10 December 2022 inaugurated Kerala's State Seed Farm located in **Aluva, Ernakulam** district. It is the first farm in India which is [carbon neutral](#).

The farm practices carbon-neutral farming which involves absorption of all the carbon that gets released during various agriculture practices in the soil itself.

The farm avoids using fossil fuels, energy-consuming equipment, and chemicals during cultivation by practicing mixed farming, keeping native breeds of goat, chicken, ducks and cows and producing vermicompost.

Mixed farming involves the cultivation of crops and raising of livestock.

How the farm is made carbon neutral

- The main crop in the farm is high-yielding paddy and a variety of this crop is grown including njavara, rakthashali, Japanese violet, chottadi, and pokkali. By mixing five different varieties there is reduction in attacks by pests and diseases thereby avoiding the use of pesticides completely?
- Farming of goats, cows, chicken, ducks, bees, fish, vermicompost and azolla has also helped in cutting down waste generation. Converting agriculture waste into compost provides fertiliser for the fields as doe's cow dung. The ducks and hens in the farm help in controlling pests.
- The animals on the farm are fed fodder, grass, hay and barn, all of which are produced at the farm. To become completely carbon-neutral, the farm has solar panels on the roof which helps in meeting the need for power.

8. PM Modi to inaugurate 1st phase of Mumbai-Nagpur Super Expressway (Dec. 10, 2022)

PM Modi to inaugurate 1st phase of Mumbai-Nagpur Super Expressway

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **Phase-I** of the **Mumbai-Nagpur Samruddhi Mahamarg** (Super Communication Expressway) on 11 December.

Important facts

- The **520 km-long Phase I** is part of the total **701 km Super Expressway project** linking the state capital Mumbai with Nagpur, passing through **10 districts**.
- Built at a cost of around Rs 55,000 crore, it is one of the **longest greenfield six-lane expressways** in the country.

- It will reduce the travel time between the two cities from the current 16 hours to just eight hours.
- The Prime Minister will also dedicate the first phase of the **Nagpur Metro** and ride from Freedom Park Metro Station to Khapri Metro Station and lay the foundation stone for the second phase of the project costing around Rs 15,000 crore.
- PM will later flag off the **Nagpur-Bilaspur service of Vande Bharat Express** at Nagpur Railway Station and lay the foundation stone for other rail projects worth around Rs 1,500 crore.
- He will dedicate the state-of-the-art **AIIMS Nagpur**, built at a cost of over Rs 1,575 crore to the nation and lay the foundation stone of the **National Institute of One Health Nagpur**, to be built for over Rs 110 crore.
- He will inaugurate the **Centre for Research Management and Control of Hemoglobinopathies**, and dedicate the Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology, in Chandrapur.
- He will lay the foundation for the Rs 1,925 crore river **pollution abatement project** in Nagpur, under the National River Conservation Plan.

9. KCR launches Bharat Rashtra Samithi party after ECI approves name change of TRS (Dec. 9, 2022)

KCR launches Bharat Rashtra Samithi party after ECI approves name change of TRS

The Telangana Chief Minister and president of the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi, **K Chandrasekhar Rao** formally launched the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) on 9 December 2022 in Hyderabad.

The [Election Commission of India \(ECI\)](#) on 8 December 2022 had approved the change of name of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) as Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS).

The change in the name of the party is seen as an attempt by K Chandrasekhar Rao to make his party play a bigger role at the national level and emerge as a national party.

K Chandrasekhar Rao formed the TRS in **2001** to fight for the formation of a separate state Telangana out of undivided Andhra Pradesh.

Political Parties in India

Under the **Representation of People's act 1951** the Election Commission of India (ECI) facilitates and regulates political parties in India. According to the ECI, the recognised political parties in India are of two types. They are either regional or **state political parties** or **national parties**.

Criteria to be a National Political parties

As per the guidelines of the ECI Political Parties and Election Symbols, 2019 handbook, a political party would be considered a national party if:

- It is 'recognised' in four or more states; or
- If its candidates polled at least 6% of total valid votes in any four or more states in the last Lok Sabha or Assembly elections and has at least four Member of Parliament in the last Lok Sabha polls; or
- If it has won at least 2% of the total seats in the Lok Sabha from not less than three states.

National political parties in India

The Election Commission of India has recognised the following parties as National Party's till date. They are:

Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP), Congress(I), Bhajan Samaj Party(BSP), Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India(Marxist),Nationalist Congress Party(NCP),Trinamool Congress and National People's Party (NPP).

NPP received national party status on June 7, 2019.

Chief Election Commissioner: **Rajiv Kumar**

10. BJP to form new government on 12th December after landslide victory in Gujarat (Dec. 9, 2022)

BJP to form new government on 12th December after landslide victory in Gujarat

The **BJP**, which registered a record-breaking victory in the **Gujarat assembly elections**, will form its government in the state on December 12 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Important facts

- The BJP will form the government after a landslide victory in Gujarat to retain power for a record **seventh term**.
- Every second person who voted in this election voted for BJP. The party got **52.5% of the vote**, which is **3% more** than the last time.
- Congress became the biggest loser with **27.3 percent votes** which was around 41 percent last time and Aam Aadmi Party's biggest gainer with **12.9 percent vote** share.
- 14 out of the total 33 districts of Gujarat gave all seats to BJP while the party lost both seats of the Porbandar district.
- The results also showcased the support of scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes to the party since out of 40 seats reserved for SC and ST 34 went in favour of BJP.

Gujarat

Total Seats 182

BJP	INC	AAP	OTHERS
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156	17	5	4
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