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1. 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2023 website launched to start online registration (Oct. 13, 2022)

The website for the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention was jointly launched on 13 October 2022 by the External Affairs Minister, **Dr. S. Jaishankar** and the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**.

The launch of the PBD website (pbdindia.gov.in) marks the commencement of online registration for participation in the PBD Convention 2023.

Pravasi refers to the Indians who are working abroad (Non Resident Indians) or persons of Indian origin who have taken up the citizenship of other countries.

17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention

- The 17th PBD Convention is being organized from 08-10 January 2023 at **Indore, Madhya Pradesh**, in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh.
- The 17th PBD Convention will be held in a physical format after a gap of four years. The last PBD Convention in 2021 was held virtually during the Covid pandemic.
- The **theme** of PBD Convention 2023 is "**Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal**".
- The PBD Convention 2023 will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on 09 January 2023.
- The **Youth PBD** will be held on 08 January 2023, in partnership with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- On 10 January 2023, President Droupadi Murmu will confer Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards and preside over the Valedictory Session.

Who organizes the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is organised by the **Ministry of External Affairs** in partnership with a **state government** and an **Industry body**, either Confederation of Indian Industry(CII) or Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry(FICCI) . It is normally organised on 9 January.

Significance of 9 January

- On this day in 1915 the greatest pravasi of India , Mahatma Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 from South Africa to India .
- His ship **SS Arabia** docked in Bombay (now Mumbai) on 9 January 1915.To honour and celebrate the occasion the government of India decided to start Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in 2003.

2. Maharatna Coal India to set up 1190 MW Solar Power Project in Rajasthan (Oct. 13, 2022)

The Government of India owned [Maharatna Company](#), Coal India Limited (CIL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Rajasthan Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd (RUVNL),

for setting up a 1,190-MW solar power plant in the Bikaner district of Rajasthan on 13 October 2022. The plant will be installed in a 2,000-MW solar park being developed by RVUNL in **Poogal, Bikaner**.

RVNUL CMD R K Sharma and Technical Director of Coal India Limited, V Reddy signed the MoU in the presence of Union Minister of Coal **Prahlad Joshi** and Chief Minister of Rajasthan **Ashok Gehlot** in Jaipur.

Recently the e-commerce giant [Amazon](#) announced to set up its first solar plant in Rajasthan.

Rajasthan as an attractive destination for solar power

Rajasthan with Thar Desert is suitable for generation of solar power using the desert's intense heat. Furthermore, in comparison to the rest of the country, the state is thinly populated. Solar power plants in less populated areas enable clean energy to reach isolated communities that do not have access to electricity.

Rajasthan has the **world's largest solar plant** with a capacity of 2,245 MW in **Bhadla of the Jodhpur district** of the state.

In March this year the state government announced two new solar parks of 1,800 MW to be developed in the Jaisalmer and Bikaner districts of the state.

For the 800 MW project in Jaisalmer RNVUL was the developing agency while the 1,000 MW solar power project in Bikaner will be developed by Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation in the first phase.

Private solar project developer **Rays Experts** also announced in May this year that they will develop the **world's largest solar park in Rajasthan with a capacity of 3000 MW**. The project will be set up in Bikaner.

3. PM Modi flags off Vande Bharat Express train from Una in Himachal Pradesh (Oct. 13, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the country's **fourth Vande Bharat Express train** from **Una railway station in Himachal Pradesh** on 13 October 2022.

Important facts

- The train will run between **Amb Andaura, Una in Himachal Pradesh and New Delhi**.
- The train will help in promoting tourism in the region and provide a comfortable and fast mode of travel.
- The travel time from Una to New Delhi will now be reduced by **two hours**.
- This is the fourth Vande Bharat train to be introduced in the country and is an improved version as compared to the earlier, which is much lighter and capable of reaching higher speeds in a shorter duration.

Features of Vande Bharat 2

- It will be equipped with more advancements and improved features like **0 to 100 Kmpl** speed in just **52 seconds**, maximum speed up to **180 Kmph**, lesser weight of **392 tons** instead of **430 tons**, and WI-FI facility.
- The new Vande Bharat will also have **32-inch LCD TVs** which were 24 inches in the earlier versions.
- The 15 percent more energy efficient AC with the dust free clean air cooling of the traction motor will make travel more comfortable.
- The facility of side recliner seats which is being provided to the executive class passengers will now be made available for all classes.

About Vande Bharat Express Train

- The first Vande Bharat Express was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **15 February 2019**.
- These trains have a self-propelled engine which can save diesel and reduce electricity usage by up to **30%**.
- The first Vande Bharat Express was manufactured by **Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai**.
- It was manufactured under the '**Make in India**' programme, at a cost of about Rs 100 crore.
- Currently, two Vande Bharat Expresses are operational - first between New Delhi and Varanasi and the second from New Delhi to Katra.
- These trains can achieve a maximum speed of **160 kmph**.
- In the Union Budget for **2022-2023** the government has proposed the development and manufacture of 400 new Vande Bharat trains in the next three years.

4. PM Modi lays foundation stone of two hydropower projects in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh (Oct. 13, 2022)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of **two hydroelectric projects in Chamba, Himachal Pradesh** on 13 October 2022.

Important facts

- These two hydroelectric projects are **48 MW Chanju-III Hydro-Electric Project and 30 MW Deothal Chanju Hydro-Electric Project**.
- These projects will generate more than **270 million units** of electricity annually and Himachal Pradesh is expected to generate an annual revenue of about **Rs 110 crore**.
- He also launched **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-III** in Chamba.

- Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)-III, about **3125 km** of roads will be upgraded in the state.
- Under this phase, about **Rs 420 crore** has been approved by the central government for the upgradation of **440 km** of roads in 15 border and remote blocks of the state.

5. President Droupadi Murmu flags off Kolkata-Agartala express train (Oct. 13, 2022)

President **Draupadi Murmu** flagged off the **Agartala-Khongsang Janshatabdi Express** and **Agartala-Kolkata Express** from **Agartala Railway Station** on 13 October 2022.

Important facts

- These trains connecting Tripura to Assam, West Bengal and Manipur will help boost connectivity and tourism in the Northeast region.
- The President is on a three-day visit to Tripura and Assam.
- President Murmu inaugurated the **Tripura Judicial Academy** and laid the foundation stone of the **National Law University, Tripura**.
- The President will later inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for various projects of the Union Ministries of Electronics and Information Technology and the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and the Government of Assam.
- This will include a supercomputer facility at **PARAM Kamrup** and a facility for design and development of high powered microwave components at **IIT Guwahati**.
- The President will also lay the foundation stone of the Regional Institute of Medical College and Hospital at Dhubri, National Institute of Virology (NIV) at Dibrugarh (Assam) and Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh).

About Tripura

- Capital - **Agartala**
- Governor - **Satyadeo Narain Arya**
- Chief Minister - **Manik Saha**
- State Bird - **Green Imperial Pigeon (Ducula aenea)**
- State Tree - **Agar (Aquilaria malaccensis)**
- State Flower - **Nageswar (Mesua Ferrea)**
- Borders - **Bangladesh, Mizoram and Assam.**
- connected with the rest of India - by NH-44 that runs through Assam, Meghalaya, North Bengal, Kolkata and other parts of India.

No. of Districts - **08**

6. First Sanctuary for 'Slender Loris' to be set up in Tamil Nadu (Oct. 12, 2022)

India's first sanctuary for the endangered species, **Slender Loris** was notified by the Tamil Nadu government on 12 October 2022. The first 'Kadavur Slender Loris Sanctuary' will be set up in the Karur and Dindigul districts of the state, in about 11,806 hectares of land.

Slender Loris

Slender Loris are small nocturnal mammals that are arboreal in nature as they spend most of their life on trees. These look like monkeys and are about 25 cm long and have long, thin arms. They weigh around 275 grams. They are mainly found in **India and Sri Lanka**.

Apart from insects they are also known to eat leaves, flowers, slugs and sometimes eggs of birds. The species acts as a biological predator of pests in agricultural crops and benefits farmers. The nocturnal mammal is listed as an endangered species as per the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUNC).

Sanctuary for Slender Loris

A total of 11,806 hectares of forest areas in the Karur and Dindigul districts of Tamil Nadu have been identified as important habitats for Slender Loris. The Kadavur Slender Loris sanctuary will cover Veda sandur, Dindigul East, and Natham taluks in the Dindigul district and Kadavur taluk in the Karur district of Tamil Nadu.

7. NGT fines Delhi government Rs 900 crore for its failure in 'solid waste management' (Oct. 12, 2022)

The [National Green Tribunal](#) (NGT) in an order passed on 12 October 2022 has ordered the Delhi government to pay **Rs 900 crore** as environmental compensation for improper management of solid municipal waste, stating that "citizens cannot be faced with an emergency situation due to lack of governance."

The NGT bench heard by **Justice Adarsh Goel** held the Delhi government responsible for not taking remedial steps to deal with the solid waste at the three landfills sites of Delhi- Ghazipur, Bhalswa, and Okhla .

The Bench said that there was continuous emission of methane and other harmful gases along with groundwater contamination which posed a direct threat to the environment and people of Delhi.

The Bench directed the Delhi government to deposit the fine amount in a separate account which will be used by the Delhi Chief Secretary to for restoration of the environment by remediation of waste and other measures.

The NGT is monitoring compliance of Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and other environmental issues by states and Union territories.

National Green Tribunal

- It deals with cases relating to the environment protection and conservation of forest.
- It was set up in 2010 under the National Green Tribunal Act 2010.
- The Tribunal is not bound by the procedure laid down under the **Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, but is **guided by principles of natural justice**.
- **New Delhi** is the Principal Place of Sitting of the Tribunal and Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata and Chennai are other four places of sitting of the Tribunal.

Chairperson : Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel

8. Bengaluru-Mysuru superfast Tipu Express train renamed as Wodeyar Express (Oct. 12, 2022)

A popular train on the **Bengaluru-Mysuru** route, **Tipu Express** was renamed as '**Wodeyar Express**' by the Ministry of Railways on 9 October.

Important facts

- The name is given to the **Wodeyar dynasty** that ruled the Kingdom of **Mysore** from the late **1300s to the 1950s**.
- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) **MP Pratap Simha** had written a letter to the Railway Ministry regarding the renaming of the train.
- Karnataka Chief Minister **Basavaraj Bommai** also appreciated the move.
- The Wodeyar Express, named after the Mysore royal family, covers a distance of **two and a half hours** from Bengaluru to Mysuru, which is faster than any other express train.
- It has two stoppages at **Mandya and Kengeri**.

9. Anurag Thakur inaugurates Water Sports Centre in Himachal Pradesh (Oct. 12, 2022)

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports **Anurag Singh Thakur** has inaugurated a **Water Sports Centre** in **Koldam Barmana, Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh** on 9 October.

Important facts

- The water sports centre, a first of its kind in Himachal Pradesh, has been jointly started by Sports Authority of India (SAI) and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC).
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also exchanged between **SAI and NTPC** during the event.
- It has been jointly initiated by **Sports Authority of India (SAI) and National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC)**.

- The centre will be dedicated to training athletes in water sports such as **rowing, canoeing and kayaking.**
- The centre will select 40 players who will take part in rowing, kayaking and canoeing. The centre is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and will also provide hostel and training facilities to boys and girls.

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**
- Chief Minister- **Jai Ram Thakur**
- Legislative Assembly seats- **68**
- Rajya Sabha seats- **3**
- Lok Sabha seats - **4**

10. Central government appoints Chief Justices of Rajasthan, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir Ladakh High Court (Oct. 11, 2022)

The Union Ministry of Law and Justice on 11 October 2022 announced the appointment of the new Chief Justices for the High Courts in Rajasthan, Karnataka, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Union Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju informed that **Justice Pankaj Mithal** has been appointed as Chief Justice in the Rajasthan High Court here. He was earlier the Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

Justice Prasanna B Varale has been appointed as the Karnataka HC's Chief Justice. He was the senior most judge of the Bombay High Court.

Justice AM Magrey was elevated as the Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court. Justice AM Magrey was earlier the Judge of the Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh High Court.

The government has announced the appointment after the Supreme Court collegium had recommended their appointment.

Procedure for the appointment of High Court Chief Justice

- Under article 217 of the Indian constitution the Chief Justice of a High Court is appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.
- The Chief Justice of India consults two senior most Judges of the Supreme Court and other Judges who are conversant with the affairs of the concerned High Court.
- The Chief Justice of India will send the recommendation to the Union Minister of Law, Justice.
- The Union Minister of Law, Justice then obtains the views of the concerned State Government. After receipt of the views of the State Government, the Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, will submit proposals to the Prime Minister, who will then advise the President as to the selection.
- As soon as the appointment is approved by the President, the Ministry of Law and Justice announces the appointment and issues necessary notification in the Gazette of India.

| High Court | Seat of High Court | Additional Bench | Sanctioned number of Judges |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Karnataka | Bengaluru | Hubballi-Dharawada, Kalaburagi | 62 |
| Rajasthan | Jodhpur | Jaipur | 50 |
| Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh (It is a common High Court of the Union Territory of Jammu And Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh) | Srinagar and Jammu, | | 17 |