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1. PM Modi to inaugurate National Youth Conference in Karnataka on 12 January 2023 (Dec. 22, 2022)

Karnataka Chief Minister **Basavaraj Bommai** has announced on 21 December 2022 that the **26th National Youth festival 2023 will** be held in the twin cities of **Hubballi-Dharwad**. The chief minister said that the National Youth Festival will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 12 January 2023.

The National Youth Festival is organised by the **Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports**, in collaboration with **one of the State Governments**.

The National Youth Festival is organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand which falls on 12 January.

The first National Youth Festival was started in 1995 as a major activity under the programme of National Integration Camp.

The 25th National Youth Festival was organised in **Puducherry**.

Swami Vivekananda's birthday on January 12 is always celebrated as **National Youth Day** and **12-16 January** every year is observed as the National Youth Week.

2. India-Indonesia Investment and Business Forum meeting held in Port Blair (Dec. 21, 2022)

A meeting of the Joint Task Force Committee of "India-[Indonesia](#) Investment and Business Forum" to identify new areas of cooperation, develop infrastructure, tourism, trade and connectivity to enhance business relations was held in **Port Blair**, Andaman and Nicobar on 20 December 2022.

This is the second meeting of the Task Force Committee. The first meeting was held in the Indonesian Capital of **Jakarta** on November 25, 2019.

Indonesia's **Sabang port in Aceh** is around 90 nautical miles from Andaman and Nicobar Islands. India is keen to expand trade and tourism with Indonesia.

The meeting with Indonesian delegates was attended by Andaman and Nicobar Lieutenant Governor **D K Joshi**, Director for South and Central Asian Affairs of the Indonesian government, Jatmiko Heru Prasetyo.

During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Indonesia in 2018, he called for a Joint Task Force Committee from both sides to boost bilateral investments.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs Indonesia is the **second largest trading partner of India** amongst the ASEAN (Association of SouthEast Asian Nations). Singapore is the largest trading partner of India amongst ASEAN countries.

India is one of the **largest buyers** of coal and crude palm oil from Indonesia and imports minerals, rubber, pulp & paper and hydrocarbons reserves. India exports refined petroleum

products, commercial vehicles, telecommunication equipment, bovine meat, animal feed, agriculture products, steel and plastics to Indonesia.

3. Sun Temple at Modhera, Vadnagar town Rock cut sculpture, Unakoti added to tentative list of UNESCO heritage sites (Dec. 20, 2022)

UNESCO heritage sites

The Union Ministry of Culture announced on 20 December 2022 that **Vadnagar town ,Gujarat, Sun Temple Modhera**, Gujarat and **Rock Cut Sculptures and reliefs of the Unakoti,Tripura** have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO's world heritage sites.

The submissions were made by Archaeological Survey of India, which is responsible for the conservation and preservation of Indian monuments.

With the addition of these three sites, UNESCO has **52** proposals in the tentative list of India.

According to UNESCO, countries are encouraged to submit their Tentative Lists which mentions the properties which they consider to be cultural and/or natural heritage of outstanding universal value and therefore suitable for inscription on the World Heritage List.

The newly included sites in the tentative list;

Vadnagar

Vadnagar also known as Chamatkarpur, Anandpur, Snehpur and Vimalpur is located in the Mehsana district in Gujarat. The city has been mentioned in the Puranas as well by the Chinese traveller, Hieu-en-Tsang (7th century). Vadnagar is famous for its Buddhist sites, torans, a pair of 12th century Solanki-era columns, 40 feet tall and built in red and yellow sandstone to celebrate a war victory.

Sun Temple, Modhera and its adjoining monuments

Modhera is known for the Sun temple situated on the bank of the Pushpavati River. The temple was built after 1026-27 CE during the reign of Bhima I of the Chalukya dynasty. Modhera village is the first solar powered village in the world.

Rock-cut Sculptures and Reliefs of the Unakoti

Unakoti is famous for its massive stone and rock-cut sculptures that have been carved out from the hillside in the Kailashahar Subdivision of Tripura. Surrounded by lush greenery, this place is also a Shaivite pilgrimage site dating back to the 8th or 9th centuries CE.

Unakoti literally means 'One Less Than a Crore'. According to Hindu mythology Lord Shiva once spent a night here en route to Kashi. He was accompanied by 99, 99,999 gods and goddesses. He had asked his followers to wake up before sunrise and make their way towards Kashi. Unfortunately, none awoke, except for Lord Shiva himself. Before he set out for Kashi alone, he put a curse on the others turning them to stone. And that's how the site got its name

Indian sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List

There are 32 cultural, 7 natural, and 1 mixed property in the 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites in India. In 2021 **Dholavira**, an Indus Valley site in Gujarat and **Rudreswara temple**

(Ramappa Temple) at Palampet, Warangal, and Telangana were the 40th and 39th sites respectively.

The first Indian sites to be included in the UNESCO list were **Ajanta, Ellora Caves, Taj Mahal** and **Agra Fort** in 1983.

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).

- It seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, Science and Culture.
- Headquarters: **Paris, France**
- Director General: **Audrey Azoulay**
- Founded: 16 November 1945 in London, United Kingdom
- The organisation has 193 members and 11 Associate members.

4. Gaya and Nalanda of Bihar selected by Union Government for development under Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme (Dec. 19, 2022)

Gaya and Nalanda of Bihar selected by Union Government

Gaya and **Nalanda** in Bihar has been included by the Government of India under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme. **Punaura Dham in Sitamarhi** District of Bihar has been selected for development under the PRASHAD Scheme of the Government of India.

This information was given by the Union Tourism Minister **G. Kishan Reddy** in the Lok Sabha on 19 December 2022.

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Government of India launched Swadesh Darshan scheme in 2014-15 for integrated development of **theme based tourist circuits** for eg Buddhist circuit, Ramayana circuit, desert circuit etc. It was later revamped and re-launched as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 with the focus on developing sustainable **and responsible tourism destinations**.

The Central government provides assistance to the State /Union Territories government to develop the tourism Infrastructure.

Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)

The Government of India launched the PRASAD scheme in the year 2014-2015 under the Ministry of Tourism. This scheme focuses on developing and identifying pilgrimage sites across India for enriching the religious tourism experience. Under this scheme the Central government provides assistance to the state government.

5. Gujarat CM unveils Urban G20 logo, website and social media handle (Dec. 19, 2022)

Gujarat CM unveils Urban G20 logo, website and social media handle

Chief Minister of Gujarat **Bhupendra Patel** unveiled the logo, website and social media handles of the Urban-20 conference in Gandhinagar on 19 December 2022. The ceremony was attended virtually by the Union Minister for Urban Development and Urban Housing Hardeep Singh Puri.

Urban 20

The UNESCO heritage city **Ahmedabad** will host the Urban 20 meetings as part of G 20 meetings between February to July 2023.

In July 2023, the U20 mayor's summit will be held in Ahmedabad to discuss urban development issues.

The Urban 20 will provide a platform for the G20 cities to facilitate discussions on important issues of urban development including climate change, social inclusion, sustainable mobility, affordable housing, and financing of urban infrastructure to propose collective solutions.

Indian Presidency of G 20

India officially assumed the Presidency of G20 on 1 December 2022 from Indonesia. The summit meeting of the Head of the States and the leaders of the G20 is scheduled to be held in September 2023 in New Delhi.

To prepare for the summit meeting a series of meetings is to be held by India.

The first meeting was the G-20 Sherpa meeting held in Udaipur in the first week of December 2022.

G-20

The G-20 was founded back in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis.

The Group of Twenty (G-20) comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and the European Union.

The G-20 members represent around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

6. Latvia host Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) summit at Riga (Dec. 19, 2022)

Latvia host Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) summit at Riga

Latvia hosted the 3rd summit meeting of **the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF)** on 19 December 2022 in **Riga**. The summit meeting has been convened on the Initiative of the Prime Minister of Latvia **Krišjānis Kariņš**, with the support of the United Kingdom.

The JEF was founded in 2015 after the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit meeting in Wales in 2014. It comprises Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The JEF has been set up to prepare a high readiness force which can respond to crises in the High North and Northern Europe (caused by Russian aggression).

The summit meeting of the JFF was held virtually on 25 February 2022 after the invasion of Ukraine by Russia. The second Summit was hosted by the United Kingdom in London on 15 March 2022.

The third summit was dominated by the aggressive war of Russia in Ukraine and consequent changes in the security climate in the North Atlantic, Baltic Sea and the High North regions. They agreed to provide further assistance to Ukraine in its fight with the Russians.

Latvia

Latvia lies in North Eastern Europe and is one of the three Baltic countries. The other Baltic countries are Lithuania and Estonia.

It is called Baltic country as it lies along the Baltic Sea.

Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union and it became Independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

Capital: Riga

Currency: Euro

Prime Minister: **Krisjanis Kariņš**

7. 22nd National Athletics Championship of Blinds commences in New Delhi (Dec. 14, 2022)

The 22nd National Athletics Championship for the Blind commenced at the **Thyagaraj Stadium** in **New Delhi** on 14 December 2022. The biennial championship is being organised by the Indian Blind Sports Association from 14-16 December 2022.

The event was inaugurated by Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture **Meenakshi Lekhi**. She also launched the first book of the IBSA, **Play the Dots**. The first copy of the book was handed over to Arjuna Awardee and first Indian blind athlete to take part in the Rio Paralympics 2016, **Ankur Dhama**.

A total of 59 (31 for men, 28 for women) international and indigenous games will be organized at the State and Institution level under three categories – T11, T12, and T13.

A record number of 550 visually impaired athletes along with officials from different states including Tripura, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra, UP, West Bengal, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, M.P, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Chandigarh will take part in the championship.

Indian Blind Sports Association (IBSA)

Indian Blind Sports Association (IBSA) was founded in 1986 to develop and promote sports for blind youngsters.

It is the sole Indian Affiliate of the International Blind Sports Federation, the apex sports organization for blind sports in the world. It is also affiliated to the Paralympic Committee of India.

Chairman: **Radhika Bharat Ram**

Headquarters: **New Delhi**

8. India and Sri Lanka to launch ferry service between Kankesanthurai port and Pondicherry in January 2023 (Dec. 18, 2022)

India and Sri Lanka to launch ferry service between Kankesanthurai port and Pondicherry

According to the Sri Lankan Ports, Shipping, and Civil Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva a passenger ferry service between **Kankesanthurai** port in Jaffna district and **Karaikal ports** in Puducherry will start in January 2023.

The Minister said that passenger transport services will also be started from **Thoothukudi (Tamil Nadu)** to Colombo in Sri Lanka in near future.

He said that till now no firm conclusion has been reached about starting the ferry service between **Thalaimannar (Sri Lanka)** and **Rameshwaram (India)**.

Ferry Service

The ferry service between Tamil Nadu and the Northern part of Sri Lanka which is dominated by Sri Lanka Tamils was disrupted in 1980's due to the civil war in Sri Lanka. After the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009, efforts were made to revive the old transportation link between the two countries.

In 2011 a memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the two countries to start ferry service between the two countries.

In 2018 India provided \$45.27 million for upgrading the **Kankesanthurai** harbour into a commercial port.

Benefits of the Ferry service

The ferry services will make travel to Sri Lanka easier from south India, thus providing a boost to tourism in Sri Lanka, which is suffering from its worst-ever economic crisis. Indians are the largest source of tourists to Sri Lanka.

They will also strengthen the cultural bonds between the two regions with linguistic similarities.

Boost to religious tourism

Tamils from Sri Lanka who are Hindus often visit India for religious purposes. The majority Sinhalese population of Sri Lanka are Buddhist and frequently visit the Buddhist tourist places in India.

Similarly many Tamils from India visit the temples of Sri Lanka .The ferry service will make travel easier for pilgrims from both nations.

India is separated from Sri Lanka by a narrow channel of seas formed by the Palk Strait and Gulf of Mannar.

9. 63rd session of the IHRC inaugurated in Lucknow (Dec. 18, 2022)

63rd session of the IHRC inaugurated in Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Transport, **Daya Shankar Singh** inaugurated the two day (18 and 19 December) 63rd Session of the **Indian Historical Records Committee (IHRC)** in **Lucknow** on 18 December 2022.

The two days' Session will comprise Inaugural and Business Session on the first day and Academic Session on the next day. A total of 24 papers based on the original sources of post 1600 of Indian history will be presented by the Scholars on various aspects of history.

About IHRC

The Indian Historical Records Committee (IHRC) is an all India Forum of creators, custodians and users of records which was set up in 1919 to advice the Government of India on all issues connected with the management of records and their use for historical research.

The **National Archives of India**, New Delhi is the Secretariat of Indian Historical Records Committee (re-designated Indian Historical Records Committee in 1911). The IHRC is **headed** by the Union Minister of Culture and comprises 134 members including agencies of the Government of India, nominees of the Government of India, representatives from the State/UT Archives, Universities and Learned Institutions.

Union Minister for Culture: **G.Kishan Reddy**

10. India win's Women's FIH Nations Cup 2022: qualifies for the Pro League 2023-24 (Dec. 18, 2022)

India win's Women's FIH Nations Cup 2022

The Indian women Hockey team led by Captain [Savita Punia](#) beat **Spain** 1-0 in the final to win the inaugural **FIH Nations Cup** played at Valencia, Spain on 17 December 2022. The winning goal was scored by **Gurjit Kaur** of India.

The inaugural FIH Nations cup was held in **Valencia, Spain** from 11-17 December 2022.

With this win the Indian team coached by **Janneke Schopman**- has qualified for the FIH Pro League 2023-24.

India and Spain had played in the FIH women's Hockey Pro League 2021-22 season as replacement teams after pull-outs by Australia and New Zealand due to COVID-19 related issues.

India finished third in the 2021-22 FIH Pro League. The team did not qualify for the ongoing 2022-23 Pro League season.

FIH Nations Cup

Top 8 ranked teams which are not part of Women's FIH Pro League were invited to play in the FIH nation's cup. The winner of the Nation's cup will be promoted to the 2023-24 season of the FIH Pro League.

World's top ranked 9 teams are invited to play in the FIH Pro League.

In the Nations Cup 8 teams were placed in two groups.

Group A consisted of Spain, South Korea, and Italy.

Group B consisted of India, Japan, Chile and South Africa.

India remained unbeaten in the tournament.

FIH

FIH (Fédération Internationale de Hockey) is the governing body of men's and women's International hockey.

Headquarters: **Lausanne, Switzerland**

President: **Mohammad Tayyab Ikram**

Members: 137 countries