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IAS/KAS/ACF/PSI/VA/AO/PDO



MONTHLY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER-2024

NEWS-INSHORTS

- High-Risk Food Category -FSSAI
- Asia's first water transport service
- The 16th of the Conference of the Parties (COP16)
- country's first vertical lift rail bridge
- 'Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav
- The fastest humanoid robot is STAR-1
- PM e-VIDYA initiative
- World Bank's "International Debt Report 2024
- Madhav Gadgil among UNEP's 2024 'Champions of the Earth
- The Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) telescope was inaugurated in Hanle, Ladakh.
- 'Brain Rot' was chosen as the Oxford Word of the Year 2024



KARNATAKA/INDIA/INTERNATIONAL-CURRENT AFFAIRS



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December: 2024

- Government **scraps windfall tax** on petrol, diesel, and aviation fuel exports
 - The windfall tax was introduced in July 2022 when the Russia-Ukraine war and Western sanctions lead to surging crude oil prices, hugely profiting oil companies
 - A windfall tax is a type of tax that governments impose on companies or industries that make unexpectedly high profits, often due to circumstances beyond their control, such as a sudden rise in prices or demand
- **World's Longest Driverless Metro System**
Launched in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia-
- FSSAI classifies packaged drinking water as **'High-Risk Food Category'**
 - These products will now be subject to mandatory inspections and third-party audits
 - High-risk food categories, such as **dairy products, meat and poultry, seafood, eggs, and ready-to-eat foods**, require stringent safety measures due to their higher contamination potential.
- Asia's first water transport service **'Uber Shikara'** launched on Dal Lake in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir
- The 16th of the Conference of the Parties (COP16) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will take place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, from 2 to 13 December 2024.
 - Theme **Our Land. Our Future.**



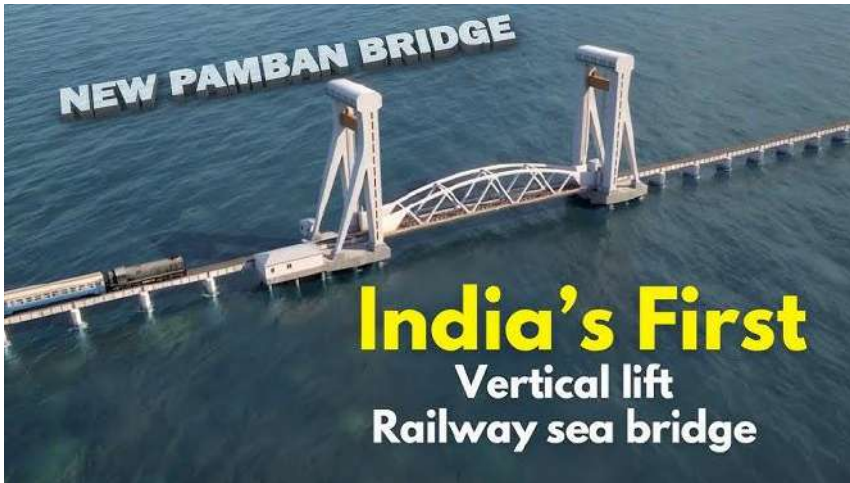
UNCCD
COP16
Riyadh | 2024

- **World Soil Day**- 5th December

- The day was first recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences in 2002, which was supported by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United States (FAO)
- UNGA designated December 5, 2014, as the first World Soil Day.

- **The New Pamban Bridge** in Tamil Nadu, India is the country's first vertical lift rail bridge

- The bridge is **2.07 kilometers long** and has a **72-meter vertical lift** section
- Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL), a public sector undertaking under Indian Railways, built the Pamban Bridge




- **Indian hockey team beat Pakistan** in finals to win the Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2024 in Muscat, Oman

- Govt **launched 'Anna Chakra'** platform to optimise PDS supply chain

- Developed in partnership with the World Food Programme and IIT-Delhi
- The system leverages advanced algorithms to optimize foodgrain movement across the country's logistics network

- PM Modi to inaugurate '**Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav**'

- To showcase the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the eight northeastern States.
- The eight northeastern states — Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim — are often referred to as the 'Ashtalaxmi' or eight forms of prosperity.

- Former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet will receive the 2024 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development
 - This policy aligns with the Indian Space Policy 2023, aiming to integrate private sector participation in space activities
- **The fastest humanoid robot is STAR-1:** Chinese humanoid robot developer, Robot Era, has demonstrated "STAR1," a humanoid that is faster than Tesla's "Optimus" and "Atlas" from Boston Dynamics.
- **PM e-VIDYA initiative** : Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launches India's first sign language DTH channel.
- World Bank's "**International Debt Report 2024**" highlights a worsening debt crisis for developing nations, with 2023 marking the highest debt servicing levels in two decades, driven by rising interest rates and economic challenges.
- India has been chosen to Chair the **68th Session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)**.
 - CND is the main policy-making body for global drug-related issues under the UN. It monitors global drug trends, supports balanced policy-making, and oversees major drug conventions.
 - CND operates under the UN Economic and Social Council and governs the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
 - This is India's first time chairing the CND, showcasing its growing leadership and commitment to global issues.
- India's **first "Trackers Dog Squad Training Centre"** at Bandipur Tiger Reserve where Belgian Malinois dogs will be taught to sniff poachers, prevent wildlife crimes, and tackle human-animal conflict, setting a national benchmark in conservation efforts.
 - Karnataka Forest Department has launched this initiative.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Bima Sakhi Yojana, an initiative of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)

- The scheme is targeted at women aged **18 to 70 who** have passed class 10 and want to become **volunteer insurance agents**

- **Madhav Gadgil among UNEP's 2024 'Champions of the Earth'**

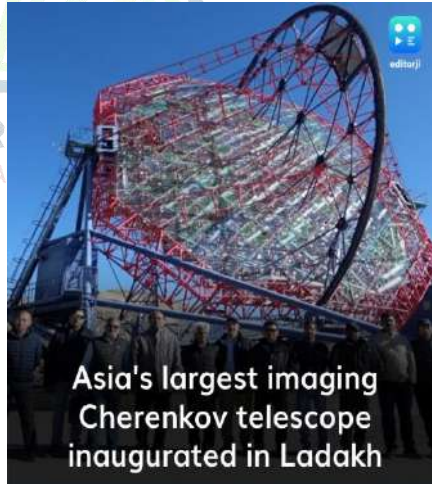
- The 2024 Champions of the Earth award was given to **six environmental leaders**, including Indian ecologist Madhav Gadgil. The award is given by the United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**)
- Highest honour that the United Nations confers in the field of environment for lifetime contributions to ecology and nature conservation
- What is Madhav Gadgil committee: Also known as the **Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP)**, was an environmental research commission established in 2010 by the Ministry of Environment and Forests of India

- Gujarati writer **Himanshi Indulal Shelat** has been selected for the **Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskara 2024**

- The award carries a cash prize of ₹5 lakh, a silver medal, and a citation.


- The **Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE)** telescope was inaugurated in **Hanle, Ladakh**. Positioned at an altitude of about 4.3 kilometres

- Hanle provides an optimal location for the telescope due to its high elevation and clear skies, making it ideal for studying high-energy gamma rays. MACE is the
- Asia's largest imaging Cherenkov telescope globally and is a significant advancement in the **field of gamma-ray astronomy**



- The Indian Army has successfully installed Optical Fibre connectivity at Siachen and Daulet Beg Oldie (DBO). **Siachen, being the world's highest and coldest battlefield**, is strategically important due to its location between Pakistan and China

- **The Nubra River originates from the Siachen Glacier.** The Nubra River is a tributary of the Shyok River, which then joins the Indus River
- The Japanese Encephalitis (JE) virus, a member of the **flavivirus family**, is named after Japan, where the disease was first identified. It primarily affects rural and agricultural areas across Asia and is transmitted through **Culex mosquitoes**.
- The Diplomatic Conference for the adoption of the **Design Law Treaty (DLT)** was held in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**, under the auspices of the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**. This treaty aims to streamline and harmonize procedures for registering industrial designs globally, promoting a more predictable and user-friendly environment for intellectual property protection
- The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) has issued 1.4 million Ayushman Vay Vandana cards to senior citizens **aged 70 and above as of 2024**. This initiative aims to enhance healthcare access for vulnerable elderly populations
- **Singapore** emerged as the largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to India in the July-September 2024 quarter, **contributing 50%** of the total USD 13.6 billion inflows, which marked a 43% increase compared to the previous year.
- Donald Trump, the US President-elect, has **nominated Kash Patel**, an Indian-American lawyer and investigator, as the next FBI director. Known for his dedication to exposing corruption and safeguarding justice, Patel is the **second Indian-American to be nominated to Trump's cabinet, after Jay Bhattacharya**, who was chosen to lead the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- **Arjun Erigaisi** has become the second Indian to reach the prestigious 2800 Elo rating in classical chess, joining Viswanathan Anand in this elite category. Ranked world number four, Arjun is the 16th player in history to achieve this milestone, as recognized by FIDE
- UNESCO has recognized **West Bengal** as a leading destination for heritage tourism due to the state's significant growth in religious, heritage, and tea tourism.

- Srinagar has been recognized as a **"World Craft City"** by the World Crafts Council (WCC) for its rich 4,000-year-old heritage in craftsmanship, including shawls, carpets, and papier mache
- Ratapani Tiger Reserve, located near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, has been designated as India's 57th tiger reserve.
 - This marks Madhya Pradesh's 8th tiger reserve
 - Highest Number of Tiger reserve in India
 - Karnataka has 5 Tiger reserve
- The term **'Brain Rot'** was chosen as the Oxford Word of the Year 2024, reflecting a 230% surge in its usage between 2023 and 2024. Defined as "mental deterioration caused by overconsumption of trivial or low-quality online content."
 
- The **'Nano Bubble Technology'** was launched in New Delhi's National Zoological Park by Union Minister of State for Forest, Environment, and Climate, Sh. Kirti Vardhan Singh. **This innovative technology aims to clean and purify water**, ensuring the health of aquatic animals by preventing issues such as foul smells, algae buildup, and discolouration.
- The Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY), launched in February 2024, aims to revolutionize rooftop solar adoption in India. The scheme targets **10 lakh installations by March 2025** and a **milestone of 1 crore installations by March 2027**
 - Rajasthan is the state in India with the largest renewable energy capacity
- **Adani Defence** delivered its second Drishti-10 Starliner surveillance drone to the Indian Navy, marking a major advancement in India's maritime security and self-reliance in defence technology. Manufactured at Adani's Hyderabad facility, the Drishti-10 drone boasts 36-hour endurance, advanced ISR capabilities,
 - It is **India's first domestically-developed** unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).

- World Soil Day is celebrated annually on **December 5** to promote sustainable soil management and food security. Established by the Food and Agriculture Organization, it was endorsed in 2013 and first observed in 2014. The 2024 theme, "**Caring for soils: measure, monitor, manage,**" emphasizes the importance of accurate soil data for informed decision-making.
- Veronica Michelle Bachelet, former **President of Chile**, has been honoured with the **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development 2024**. Her work in advancing human rights, promoting peace, and advocating for gender equality has earned her this prestigious recognition.
- The GSEC will be **Google's second such centre in the Asia Pacific**, after Tokyo, and fifth globally.
 - Google has signed an agreement with the Telangana government to establish the Google Safety Engineering Centre (GSEC) in Hyderabad.
 - This specialized international cybersecurity hub will focus on advancing cybersecurity capabilities, fostering skill development, and creating employment opportunities.
- Gorakhpur will host India's first Integrated Waste Management City-cum-Learning Centre by September 2025. Situated in Suthni village, Sahjanwa, the 40-acre facility will process 700 tons of waste daily, transforming dry and wet waste into charcoal and Bio-CNG.
 - This initiative is backed by a ₹300 crore investment from NTPC, reflecting a significant step toward sustainable waste management and energy generation.
- According to **the India Skills Report 2025**, Karnataka ranks third in employability among states in India, with an employability rate of 75%
 - Maharashtra ranks **first with 84%** employability, followed by Delhi (78%), Karnataka (75%)
 - Released by Wheebox in December 2024, in collaboration with the following organizations: Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Taggd, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and Association of Indian Universities (AIU)

- **Saudi Arabia** has been selected to host the 2034 FIFA World Cup, making it the first time the tournament will be held in the Middle East since Qatar hosted it in 2022.
- **India's first human gene** therapy, developed by CSCR at CMC Vellore, targets **Hemophilia A**, a genetic disorder causing blood clotting issues. The therapy, using lentiviral vectors, successfully reduced the annual bleeding rates to zero for five participants, eliminating the need for repeated injections.
- **Dommaraju Gukesh** became the youngest chess world champion in 2024 at the age of 18. He defeated the defending champion, Ding Liren, in a tough three-week-long match in Singapore. Gukesh's victory shattered the previous record held by Garry Kasparov, making him the youngest to ever win the World Chess Championship.
- **21st livestock census** at the government veterinary hospital in Radaur, Haryana. The livestock census, which is conducted **every five years**, aims to collect detailed data on domestic animals and poultry through a state-wide door-to-door survey.
 - Initiated in 1919, this census plays a crucial role in helping the government formulate and implement policies for the livestock sector, making it an essential tool for agricultural development and planning in the state
- Andhra Pradesh is **pioneering India's first statewide skill census**, aiming to map skill gaps and strengths among its workforce.
 - Building on the success of a pilot project in Mangalagiri, this initiative will cover 3.5 crore working-age individuals across 1.8 crore households.
 - By aligning existing skills with industry demands and addressing youth unemployment, the census seeks to boost job creation and economic development.
- **world's largest and most detailed high-resolution 3D foetal brain atlas**



- IIT Madras developed DHARINI, a groundbreaking high-resolution 3D atlas of the foetal brain. This revolutionary tool maps over 5,000 brain sections and 500 brain regions during the crucial second trimester of pregnancy
- Arvind Panagariya, the Chairman of the **16th Finance Commission**, highlighted concerns regarding the Centre's growing dependence on cesses and surcharges, which are not shared with states as part of the divisible pool of revenue.
- India's **first diabetes biobank** has been set up in Chennai through a collaboration between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF). The facility is designed to collect, process, and store biological samples, aiding advanced research on diabetes causes, variations, and related disorders.
- India has become **the first country to define standards for 'green steel,'** setting an emissions cap of 2.2 tonnes of CO2 per tonne of steel produced. Along with this, a star-rating system was introduced to classify steel producers based on their emissions performance
 - India is the **world's second-largest** producer of crude steel with a total production of about 120 million tons per annum (MTPA).
 - China is the **world's largest producer of steel**
- The **'Jalvahak' scheme** was launched to promote long-haul cargo
 - transportation on major rivers like the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Barak.
 - The scheme specifically targets cargo owners who transport goods over 300 km using inland waterways, making it a cost-effective and environmentally friendly alternative. As part of the launch, Minister Sonowal flagged off three cargo ships and two barges from Kolkata's GR Jetty, signalling the commencement of regular cargo services on National Waterways 1 and 2.
 - This initiative is expected to reduce road congestion and promote the efficient use of inland water transport in India.
- The United Kingdom has officially become the **12th member** of the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)**, making it the first European nation to join the trade bloc.

- The CPTPP includes key countries like Canada, Japan, Australia, and Mexico, among others.
- This milestone follows Britain's exit from the European Union (Brexit) as it seeks to build new global trade partnerships and expand its economic influence beyond Europe.
- **'Kisan Kavach,'** developed by DBT scientists, is an anti-pesticide suit designed with oxime fabric that neutralizes common pesticides. Comprising trousers, pullovers, and face covers, it protects farmers from neurotoxic pesticide exposure during spraying activities.
 - Inspired by PPE kits, this innovation prioritizes the health and safety of agricultural workers, reducing risks associated with prolonged pesticide contact.
- Uber introduced the **'Moto Women'** bike taxi service in Bengaluru as a pilot program to enhance safety and inclusivity in urban mobility.
 - This initiative caters exclusively to female riders and drivers, providing a secure and empowering transportation option
- India marked a significant achievement in wildlife conservation with the **first-ever satellite tagging** of a **Ganges River Dolphin in Assam**. This effort, conducted by the MoEFCC, Wildlife Institute of India, Assam Forest Department, and Aaranyak, aims to study the dolphin's habitat and migration patterns
- **China** set a new global spacewalk record with two astronauts, **Cai Xuzhe and Song Lingdong, completing a nine-hour extravehicular activity (EVA) outside the Tiangong space station**
- India has ranked **39th** in the World Economic Forum's Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, marking a significant improvement from 54th place in 2021.
- **Masali, located in Gujarat's** Banaskantha district, is India's first border solar village. Situated just 40 kilometres from the Pakistan border, the village has achieved the remarkable feat of generating 100% of its electricity through solar power



- The **2025 Para Athletics World Championships** will be hosted in New Delhi at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.
 - This marks **the first time India is hosting** this prestigious event, scheduled from September 26 to October 5, 2025.
 - Additionally, Delhi will also host the World Para Athletics Grand Prix earlier in the year, from March 11 to 13, 2025.
- ISRO is set to launch the **SpaDeX mission** in December 2024 aboard PSLV-C60, aiming to demonstrate in-space docking technology using two small spacecraft, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target).
 - This achievement will position India as the fourth nation to master space docking, a critical capability for advanced space missions.
 - The mission's objectives include demonstrating autonomous rendezvous, docking, and undocking technologies, as well as power transfer and payload operations.
 - SpaDeX will play a vital role in advancing ISRO's future endeavours, including the Bharatiya Antariksha Station (BAS) and satellite servicing missions.
- **Rwanda declared** the end of its first-ever **Marburg Virus Disease (MVD)** outbreak after no new cases were reported during a 42-day observation period. The outbreak, which began on September 27, 2024, resulted in 66 confirmed cases and 15 fatalities. Marburg virus, previously known as Marburg hemorrhagic fever
- In 2024, India's foreign exchange reserves surpassed \$700 billion, making it the **4th largest globally**. This reflects the country's strong economic performance and its ability to attract substantial foreign investments over the past decade.

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Year Book -2023



Monthly Current Affairs



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