

pravahini

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

18 DEC - 24 DEC



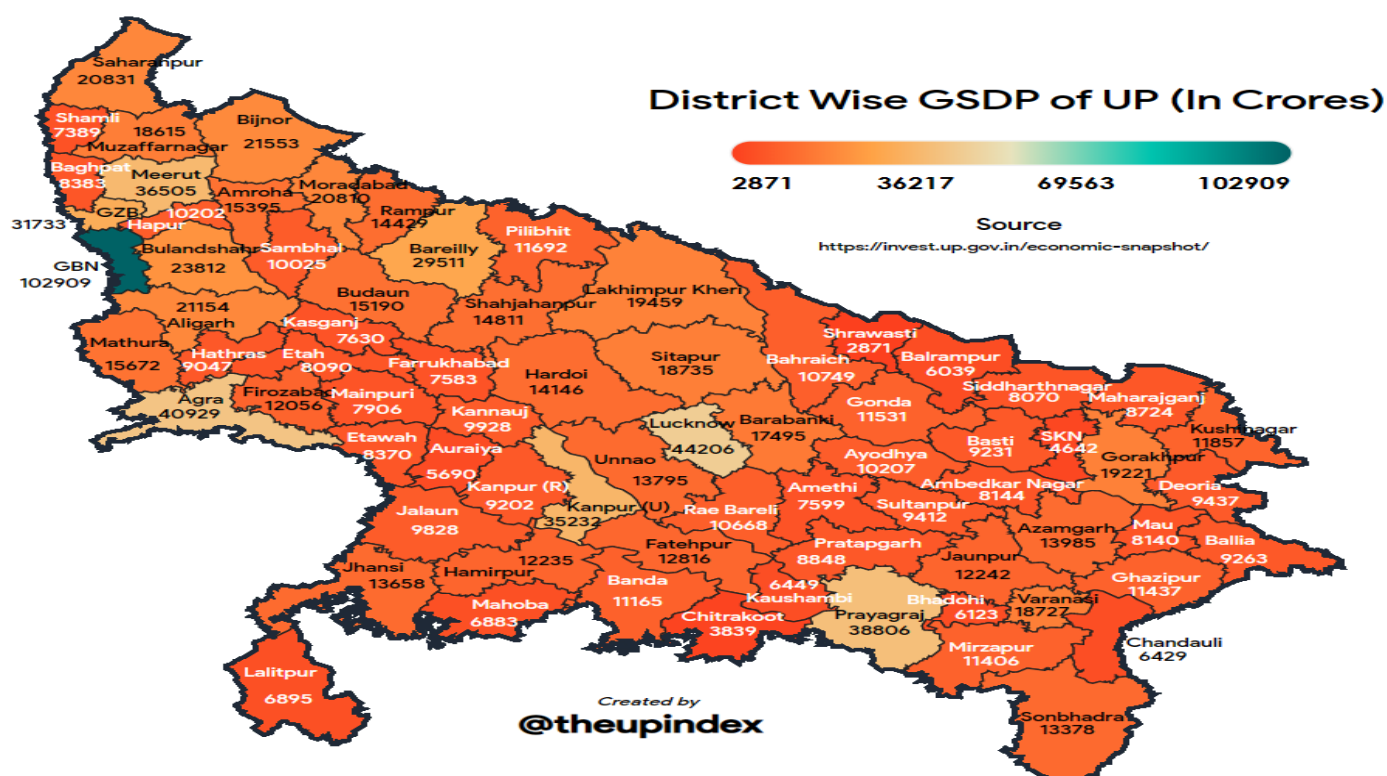
MRP ₹ 50.00



1. Uttar Pradesh becomes the second largest state economy of the country.

In a major milestone achieved by the Yogi Adityanath government, Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the second largest economy of India after Maharashtra in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) share.

- The report is in the form of creative graphics and is based on Sensex and CSLA (Credit Lyonnais Securities Asia).
- In the context of GDP share, UP has outpaced states such as Tamil Nadu (9.1 per cent), Gujarat (8.2 percent) and West Bengal (7.5 per cent). States like Karnataka (6.2 per cent), Rajasthan (5.5 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (4.9 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh (4.6 per cent) are significantly behind UP.
- Currently, the state is exporting goods worth nearly Rs 2 lakh crore. The loan-deposit ratio of banks has increased from 42-43 per cent to 56 per cent, while work is being done to increase it to 60 per cent. UP is now a revenue surplus state, with 56 percent of its population employed. Moreover, around 96 lakh micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) units have been established in the state.



2. Union Minister Shri Kiren Rijiju launches India's maiden winter scientific Arctic expedition.

The Honourable Union Minister, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Sh Kiren Rijiju, flagged off India's first winter scientific expedition to the Arctic from the MoES headquarters in New Delhi on December 18, 2023. Indian scientific expeditions to the



Arctic during the winter (November to March) will allow researchers to conduct unique scientific observations during polar nights, where there is no sunlight for nearly 24 hours and sub-zero temperatures (as low as -15 degrees Celsius). This will aid in expanding understanding of the Arctic, especially climate change, space weather, sea-ice and ocean circulation dynamics, ecosystem adaptations, etc., which affect weather and climate in the tropics, including monsoons.

- The decision to facilitate winter expeditions to the Arctic comes after an in-person review of India's Arctic activities by Sh Rijiju at Himadri, Ny-Ålesund, Svalbard in the Norwegian Arctic, in June 2023.
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3. Lok Sabha passes three criminal law Bills.

Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita which will replace the Indian Penal Code, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita which will replace the Code of Criminal Procedure and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam which will replace the Indian Evidence Act.



Few significant points from each statute;

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

- Definition of child introduced
- Transgender included in definition of 'gender'
- Electronic, digital records included in definition of document
- New chapter on offense against woman and child introduced
- New chapter on 'inchoate offenses' (attempt, abetment and conspiracy) introduced

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

- Scope of declaring proclaimed offenders increased. Earlier only 19 offences were included which did not include rape cases. Now all offenses with punishment for 10 years or more included
- Arrest of offenses with punishment of less than 3 years offense with prior nod of senior police officers
- 15 days police custody is allowed for the first 40/60 days of the detention period and this will not be a ground for refusal of bail
- In-absentia trial introduced
- Electronic FIR introduced
- Preliminary Inquiry introduced in offenses punishable from 3 years to less than 7 years

Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam

- Electronic record included in definition of 'document'
- Statements received electronically included in definition of 'evidence'
- Added more standards for considering electronic, digital records as primary evidence laying emphasis on its proper custody, storage, transmission, and broadcast
- Added more kinds of secondary evidence to include oral, written admissions & evidence of a skilled person to examine documents which cannot be conveniently examined by court
- Established the legal admissibility, validity, and enforceability of electronic or digital record as evidence.

4. 19th December:- Goa Liberation Day

The day known as "Goa Liberation Day" is set aside to remember the year 1961 when the state was freed from Portuguese domination. As the golden sun rises over the stunning state of Goa on this exceptional day, there is a sense of pride and



independence in the air. Goa's Liberation Day is a historic occasion that is associated with resiliency and liberty. It's a time to rejoice and reflect on how the Goan people came together to promote unity and freedom. Every year, Goans come together to joyfully commemorate this historic day, which symbolizes the triumph of the populace's will over the oppressive rule of colonialism.

Goa, Daman and Diu Liberation Day will be observed with great pomp and enthusiasm on Tuesday, December 19. On this day in 1961, the Indian Army captured Goa, which had been under Portuguese rule for some 451 years. Goa was also somewhat influenced by the Indian independence movement of the 19th century, though not significantly. In the 1940s, a small number of Goan citizens participated in Satyagraha.

Goa Liberation Day is very important as it marks the official liberation and integration of Goa into the Indian Union in 1961, after centuries of Portuguese colonial rule. This day, which represents the unwavering struggle of the people for freedom, opens a significant period in Goa's history.

5. The Indian Armed Forces have been given the Golden Owl Award in Sri Lanka.

Three Indian Armed Forces officers enrolled in the prestigious Command and Staff Course at Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) in Sri Lanka have demonstrated exceptional performance and have been awarded the coveted "Golden Owl" award for their great work. The award, which was given by President Ranil Wickremesinghe of Sri Lanka, honors their remarkable accomplishments in analytical abilities, strategic thinking, and leadership potential.

Importance of golden Owl

The "Golden Owl" award is highly significant because it represents the highest achievement for military officers enrolled in the DSCSC course. It recognises the awardees' capacity to succeed amid their global peers in addition to praising them for their skill in joint operations and higher command. The award is evidence of the officers in the Indian Armed Forces' commitment and expertise.



International Collaboration and Recognition

The collaboration between the Indian Armed Forces and the Defence Services Command and Staff College in Sri Lanka is a testament to the strong ties and mutual respect between the two nations. The success of Indian officers on foreign soil not only enhances bilateral relations but also showcases the global recognition of the caliber and professionalism of the Indian Armed Forces.

6. ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 mission has been honored with the Prestigious Leif Erikson Lunar Prize.

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has been awarded the prestigious Leif Erikson Lunar Award for its unprecedented Chandrayaan-3 mission.

- The award, provided by the Investigation Museum in Husstrand, Iceland, recognises ISRO's extraordinary contribution in understanding lunar exploration and astronomical events.
- Indian Ambassador Balasubramanian Shyam received this prestigious award on behalf of ISRO.



Chandrayaan-3 mission:

- The 'Chandrayaan-3' was launched on 13 July 2023 by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

- It was launched by LVM 3 from Satish Dhawan Space Center, Sriharikota.
- It included Lander (Vikram) and Rover configuration (Pragyan).
- Chandrayaan-3 consisted of an indigenous Lander Module (LM), a Propulsion Module (PM) and a Rover aimed at developing and demonstrating new technologies required for interplanetary missions.
- Chandrayaan-3 landed successfully on the surface near the moon's southern pole on 23 August 2023.

About Leif Erikson Lunar Prize:

- Establishment - 2015
- The Leif Erikson Lunar Prize is provided by the Investigation Museum to celebrate extraordinary achievements in lunar exploration.
- Leif Erikson is considered to be European, who reached the US continent 400 years before Christopher Columbus.
- This award is given every year in his name.

7. The Ministry of Textiles launched the “Paat-Mitro” application to facilitate jute farmers.

To provide important information about MSP and agronomy to jute farmers, the Ministry of Textiles launched “Paat-Mitro” - a mobile application, developed by The Jute Corporation of India Limited (JCI) during ‘Jute Symposium’ here today. Smt. Rachna Shah, Secretary,



Ministry of Textiles launched the application which is available in 6 languages.

The application can be freely downloaded from Google Play Store and all the functionalities are made available to the users free of cost. In addition to, the latest agronomic practices and Minimum Support Prices (MSP); Jute Gradation Parameters, Farmer-centric schemes like ‘Jute-ICARE’, weather forecasts, JCI’s

Purchase Centers' locations, Procurement Policies are also made available in the app. Farmers will also be able to track the status of their payments for the raw jute sold to JCI under MSP Operation. Latest technology features like Chatbot are included for their queries through this mobile application "Paat-Mitro".

The 'Jute Symposium' was organized to create awareness and popularize Jute based technical textiles with special emphasis on Jute Geotextiles. The event was attended by representatives from different ministries, research institutes.

8. The Sahitya Akademi Award for the year 2023

Tamil author Rajasekaran (Devibharathi), Telugu writer T. Patanjali Sastry, and Malayalam litterateur E.V. Ramakrishnan has been announced as recipient of the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Awards for the year 2023. This year, the Sahitya Akademi Awards recognised nine poetry books, six novels, five short story collections, three essays, and one literary study for their outstanding contributions.



The awards, spanning 24 languages, were recommended by a distinguished jury and approved by the Executive Board of the Sahitya Akademi. The selection criteria included books first published between January 2017 and December 31, 2021.

9. PM looks forward to welcoming French President Emmanuel Macron as Chief Guest at 75th Republic Day

India's 2024 Republic Day chief guest is France's President Emmanuel Macron. Being invited as the chief guest at Republic Day celebrations is the highest honor a country accords in terms of protocol.



Why is being India's Republic Day chief guest an honor?

Being invited as the chief guest at Republic Day celebrations is the highest honor a country accords in terms of protocol. The chief guest is front and center in many ceremonial activities which have over time become a part of the fabric of the event and the run-up to it.

So how is the Republic Day chief guest chosen?

The process starts nearly six months in advance of the event. Ambassador Manbir Singh had said all kinds of considerations are taken into account by the MEA before extending the invitation.

The most central consideration is the nature of the relationship between India and the country concerned. Invitation to be the Chief Guest of the Republic Day parade is the ultimate sign of friendship between India and the country of the invitee.

10. 23rd December- National Farmers Day

India observes National Farmer's Day on December 23 of each year to honor the farmers who are the backbone of our country. It's a day to honor their abundant fruits that grace our dinners, their ceaseless efforts, and the sweat and sun they labor



under. But before we enjoy the results of their labor, let's examine the theme, background, and significance of this momentous day in more detail. The day is observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of Mr. Choudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister.

Theme: Cultivating the Future: Innovation and Sustainability in Agriculture

This day holds special importance as it commemorates the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, the ex-Prime Minister of India (1979-1980). During his short time in office, Singh launched various welfare initiatives focused on improving the well-being and empowerment of farmers. Recognising his contributions, the Government of India officially declared December 23 as National

Farmers Day in 2001, acknowledging Singh's remarkable transition from a farmer to the leader of the nation.

11. Dalai Lama inaugurates first International Sangha Forum at Bodh Gaya, Bihar.

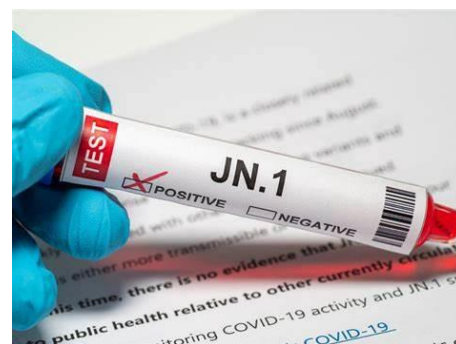
In order to attend the first International Sangha Forum's opening session this morning, His Holiness the Dalai Lama drove the short distance from Ganden Pelgyeling Monastery to the International Convention Centre in Bodhgaya (ISF). At the door, he was greeted by the organizing committee members. He stopped to see several Mönpas from Arunachal Pradesh celebrating his arrival by dancing on the lawn before heading inside.



This program is very important as the environment around us is changing, especially distraction due to climate change. Buddhist teaching can be implemented to control natural disasters. Gautam Buddha said centuries back that nature reacts to your actions.

12. A new variant of covid-19.

A new variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 is rising to prominence in the U.S. as winter illness season approaches its peak: JN.1, yet another descendent of Omicron. JN.1 was first detected in the U.S. in September but spread slowly at first. In recent weeks, however, it has accounted for a growing percentage of test samples sequenced by labs affiliated with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), surpassing 20% during the two-week period ending Dec. 9. By some projections, it will be responsible for at least half of new infections in the U.S. before December ends.



The World Health Organization (WHO) on Dec. 19 declared JN.1 a variant of interest due to its "rapidly increasing spread." But the agency has not labeled JN.1 a variant of concern—that is, a new strain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus with potential for increased severity; decreased vaccine effectiveness; or substantial impacts on health care delivery.

There is no evidence to suggest that JN.1 can cause worse symptoms or spread faster than the variants already in circulation.

Symptoms may include fever, running nose, sore throat and headaches.

Most patients experience mild upper respiratory symptoms that typically improve within 4 to 5 days.

13. The World Health Organization (WHO) prequalified the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine

The World Health Organization (WHO) prequalified the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccine, which was created by the University of Oxford and is produced by the biotechnology business company Serum Institute of India. This was a major milestone in the fight against malaria. Declared on December 21, 2023, the vaccine satisfies WHO requirements for safety, effectiveness, and quality.



Prequalification for Global Access

A critical first step in ensuring the vaccine's greater accessibility is the WHO's List of Prequalified Vaccines. Prequalification enables financing support for deployment by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and is a requirement for vaccine purchase by UNICEF, the UN entity dedicated to protecting children's rights. The vaccine's fitness for the intended demographic, its compatibility with other goods, and its adherence to operational guidelines for presentation and packaging are all taken into account in the WHO evaluation.

Efficacy and Impact

The R21/Matrix-M vaccine has demonstrated high effectiveness, reducing malaria cases by an impressive 75 percent over one year in clinical trials. This success surpasses the performance of previous vaccines, providing renewed hope in the fight against the mosquito-borne disease. Serum Institute's capacity to produce hundreds of millions of doses annually is a crucial factor in ensuring widespread availability.