

News Digest

NATIONAL

Nation Celebrates First Veer Bal Diwas on 26th December 2022

Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi led the nation in commemorating the first "Veer Bal Diwas" (Brave Children's Day) at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium in Delhi on 26th December 2022. The day is dedicated to remembering the martyrdom of Sahibzada Baba Zorawar Singh Ji and Baba Fateh Singh Ji, the sons of Guru Gobind Singh. The PM addressed the gathering, calling Veer Bal Diwas, a day of inspiration and a reminder of the strength of the country's young generation. He also paid tribute to the Veer Sahibzades, Gurus, and Mata Gurbani and spoke about the bravery of the Veer Sahibzades in the face of Aurangzeb's tyranny. The Prime Minister also highlighted the importance of determination and bravery in the young generation and their role in shaping the destiny of the nation.



Election Commission Proposes Remote Voting for Inter-State Migrants

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has proposed the introduction of "remote voting" for domestic migrants using a modified Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) that can handle up to 72 multiple constituencies from a single remote polling booth. This initiative, if implemented, could lead to a social transformation for migrants and allow them to connect with their roots, as they often do not enroll at their place of work due to frequently changing residences. The Commission has invited recognized national and state political parties to witness the demonstration of the prototype on 16th January and has solicited written views from parties on related issues, including changes to legislation and administrative procedures, by 31st January 2023. Based on feedback and demonstrations, the Commission will decide on the implementation of remote voting.

MeitY Launches 'Stay Safe Online' and 'G20-DIA' Campaigns

As part of India's G20 presidency, the Ministry for Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) has launched the 'Stay Safe Online' campaign and the 'G20 Digital Innovation Alliance' (G20-DIA). According to Minister for Electronics & Information Technology Shri. Ashwini Vaishnaw, the objective of the 'Stay Safe Online Campaign' is to raise awareness among citizens to stay safe in the online world due to the widespread use of social media platforms and the rapid adoption of digital payments. The objective of G20-DIA is to identify, recognize, and enable the adoption of innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by startups, from G20 nations as well as the invited non-member nations, which can address the needs of humanity in the critically important sectors of Agri-tech, Health-tech, Ed-tech, Fin-tech, Secured Digital Infrastructure, and Circular Economy.

Task Force Calls for Dedicated Mission to Propel Growth of AVGC Sector

The Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic (AVGC) Task Force has called for the creation of a National AVGC-XR Mission to promote the growth of the AVGC sector in India through a budget outlay. The Task Force has also recommended the launch of a "Create in India" campaign that focuses on content creation for India and the world. In order to make India a global hub for AVGC, the Task Force has suggested establishing an International AVGC Platform, a Gaming Expo, and a National Centre of Excellence (COE) for the AVGC sector. The COE will provide access to local industries and promote local talent and content, while regional COEs will be established in collaboration with state governments. The Task Force has also recommended developing the talent ecosystem by introducing AVGC-focused undergraduate and postgraduate courses and standardising admission tests, as well as establishing AVGC Accelerators and Innovation hubs in academic institutions.

Indian Army Unveils First 3D Printed Staff Accommodation

The Indian Army has inaugurated its first 3D printed dwelling unit at Ahmedabad cantonment. The unit was constructed by the Military Engineering Services (MES) in collaboration with MiCOB Pvt Ltd using the latest 3D Rapid Construction Technology in just three weeks. The disaster-resilient structures comply with green building norms and Zone-3 earthquake specifications, and will be instrumental in meeting the growing accommodation needs of Army personnel. The army has already used 3D printing technology in the construction of permanent defences and overhead protection for operations, and these structures are being validated for use in all terrains, including Ladakh.



INTERNATIONAL

Pushpa Kamal Dahal Takes Charge as Nepal's PM for Third Time

Pushpa Kamal Dahal, also known as Prachanda, has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Nepal for the third time. He has the support of 165 lawmakers in the 275-member House of Representatives. Bishnu Paudel of the CPN-UML, Narayanकाजी Shrestha of CPN (Maoist Center), and Rabi Lamichhane of Rashtriya Swatantra Party were also appointed as Deputy Prime



Ministers and took the oath of office and secrecy. Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi congratulated Prachanda and expressed a desire to strengthen the friendship between India and Nepal.

Benjamin Netanyahu Re-elected as Israel's Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu has been re-elected as Israel's Prime Minister. Netanyahu's cabinet, which includes the Religious Zionism and Jewish Power parties, received 63 of 120 parliamentary votes. Netanyahu has repeatedly pledged to promote tolerance and pursue peace. He told parliament that "ending the Israeli-Arab conflict" was his top priority, along with thwarting Iran's nuclear programme and building up Israel's military capacity. Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi congratulated Netanyahu and said he is looking forward to strengthening their strategic partnership.



India, Cyprus Sign Several Agreements Including One on Defence Cooperation

India and Cyprus have signed several agreements, including one on defence and military cooperation, during External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar's visit to Cyprus. The two countries also signed a Letter of Intent on Migration and Mobility Partnership, which aims to facilitate the mobility of students, academics, businessmen, and professionals while also combating irregular migration. Meanwhile, India has welcomed the signing of the Framework Agreement on the International Solar Alliance by Cyprus, expressing belief that cooperation in the field of renewable energy will increase as a result.

ECONOMY

India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement Comes Into Force

The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) has come into effect from 29th December 2022. It was signed in April this year and ratified on 21st November. India will benefit from preferential market access provided by Australia in various sectors, while Australia will receive preferential access to India in raw materials and intermediaries. The ECTA is expected to create an additional 10 lakh jobs in India, increase investment opportunities and exports, and facilitate movement of professionals between the two countries. It will also eliminate double taxation on IT services in India.

2 Key Initiatives to Take India's Urban Rejuvenation Journey to Next Level

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs has launched two key initiatives to take India's urban rejuvenation journey to the next level. (i) 'City Finance Rankings' aims to evaluate, recognise and reward ULBs (Urban Local Bodies) on basis of their strength across key financial parameters. (ii) 'City Beauty Competition' aims to encourage and recognise the transformational efforts made by cities and wards in India to create beautiful, innovative and inclusive public spaces. ULBs can benefit immensely by participating in the fiscal rankings as they will be able to self-evaluate their own performance vis-a-vis other cities, which can help them in self-improvement in future. Healthy competition amongst wards and cities would also encourage urban local bodies to improve their basic infrastructure, and also make the urban spaces beautiful, sustainable and inclusive.

SPORTS

World Mourns the Death of Football Legend Pelé

Football legend Pelé died on 29th December 2022 at the age of 82. The Brazilian national hero, who had been receiving treatment for cancer in recent years, was admitted to the Hospital Israelita Albert Einstein in São Paulo several weeks ago. Pelé was a transformative figure in sports and achieved a level of global celebrity that few athletes have known. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest soccer players of all time and was beloved by people of all backgrounds around the world.



Ahead of FIH World Cup, India Announces Cash Prize for Players and Support Staff

Hockey India has announced cash rewards for the Indian national team and support staff in anticipation of the upcoming FIH (Fédération Internationale de Hockey) Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar-Rourkela. The team members will receive INR 25 lakh (approx. \$3,380) each and the support staff INR 5 lakh (approx. \$675) each for a gold medal win, INR 15 lakh (approx. \$2,025) and INR 3 lakh (approx. \$405) respectively for a silver medal, and INR 10 lakh (approx. \$1,350) and INR 2 lakh (approx. \$270) respectively for a bronze medal. The decision was made during a virtual meeting on December 24th and aims to increase motivation for the team, which last won a World Cup in 1975.

PV Sindhu among Forbes' List of World's Highest Paid Female Athletes

Badminton player PV Sindhu is the only Indian athlete to appear on Forbes' list of the highest-paid female athletes in the world, coming in at 12th place. Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka tops the list, with Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Coco Gauff, and Jessica Pegula also appearing in the top 10. The list is dominated by tennis players, with Osaka and Serena Williams being the only women in the top 50 of Forbes' list of the highest-paid athletes overall. Sindhu, the 2016 Rio Olympics silver medalist, makes her earnings through tournament prize money and endorsement deals.



(Source: AIR/PIB)