

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 14, 2021

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - has won two awards for undertaking the highest number of non-communicable disease (NCD) screenings in the country and conducting the third highest number of wellness sessions from the Centre.**
- ✓ The awards were presented by the minister of state for health and family welfare Mansukh Mandaviya during the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav campaign in New Delhi on December 13.
- ✓ The State undertook the highest number of NCD screenings (29,88,110) and the third highest number of wellness sessions (85,514) during the course of the campaign.
- ✓ Mission director, National Health Mission, Tamil Nadu, Dr Darez Ahmed, and Director of Public Health and Preventive Medicine Dr T S Selvavinayagam, received the award for NCD screening and for wellness sessions, respectively
- ✓ The Health Department's field team from Achanakkal Health Sub-Centre (HSC) - Coonoor block in the Nilgiris district received the award for the best performing HWC-HSC team in Tamil Nadu for 2021-2022.
- ✓ To celebrate 75 years of Independence, the Government of India conducted the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav campaign from November 16 to December 12
- ✓ The campaign was implemented in Tamil Nadu under the name of "Sudhandhirathin Amirtha Peruvizha" a celebratory event for Universal Health Coverage Day.

- **Puducherry – marks Saturdays as 'Pink Licence' days**
- ✓ According to Transport minister of Puducherry Chandra Priyanka, the 'pink licence' days are observed to issue driving licences to women and girl students.
- ✓ Priyanka who is the only woman representative in the territorial assembly
- ✓ The purpose of earmarking Saturdays for issue of the licences to women was to ensure expeditious availability of the licences.

NATIONAL

- **On December 13, Lok Sabha - passed a bill to rectify errors that had crept into the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Act**
 - ✓ Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman asserted that the retrospective provision made in the bill was only to “correct the errors” in the law as pointed out by judiciary.
 - ✓ The NDPS (Amendment) Bill, 2021 was passed by a voice vote and some amendments moved by opposition members were rejected by the House.
 - ✓ The “error” crept in when the NDPS Act was amended in 2014 to allow better medical access to narcotic drugs, and removing state barriers in transporting and licensing of essential narcotic drugs.
-
- **Rajya Sabha – approves a bill that proposes to amend the salaries and services acts of the judges of the Supreme Court and high courts**
 - ✓ The bill was meant to seek clarity over the age of retired high court and Supreme Court judges and determine when they can receive enhanced pension.
 - ✓ The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on December 8
 - ✓ It seeks to amend the High Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1954 and the Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act, 1958.
 - ✓ The Rajya Sabha returned the bill to the Lok Sabha after a discussion on December 13 since it is a money bill.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Dubai - has become the world’s first government to turn 100% paperless**
- ✓ This was announced by the Emirate’s Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
- ✓ The Crown Prince has pointed out the savings of 1.3 billion Dirham (\$350 million) and 14-million-man hours due to the initiative
- ✓ All internal, external transactions and procedures in the government of Dubai are now 100% digital and managed from a comprehensive digital government services platform.

PERSONALITIES

- **Tesla CEO Elon Musk - was named Time magazine’s “Person of the Year” for 2021**
- ✓ During this year, Musk’s electric car firm ‘Tesla’ become the most valuable carmaker in the world and his rocket company ‘SpaceX’ reached the edge of space with an all-civilian crew.
- ✓ Musk is also the founder and CEO of SpaceX, and leads brain-chip startup Neuralink and infrastructure firm The Boring Company.

- ✓ Tesla's market value went over \$1 trillion this year, making it more valuable than Ford Motor and General Motor, combined



- ✓ In April, NASA granted Musk's rocket company SpaceX an exclusive contract to put United States astronauts on the moon for the first time since 1972
- ✓ In October, Musk's wealth grew massively after car-rental company Hertz said it planned to buy 100,000 Teslas for its customers
- ✓ Though electric vehicles comprised just 0.43% of all vehicles in operation in the US in the first half of this year, Tesla commanded roughly two-thirds of that market
- ✓ With the Times honour, Musk has now joined the elite company which also includes Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.
- ✓ Born in Pretoria, South Africa, Musk moved to the US to attend Stanford University as a PhD candidate, but dropped out.
- ✓ He co-founded internet mapping service Zip2 and e-payment company PayPal, which were then sold to Compaq and eBay, respectively.
- ✓ Last year, US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris were named as the Person of the Year by Time magazine.
- ✓ The first ever Times Person of the Year was Charles Lindbergh, whom the editors selected in 1927 to commemorate his historic first solo transatlantic airplane flight over the Atlantic

DEFENCE

- **India - has successfully test-fired a long-range Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo (SMART) off the coast of Balasore from Wheeler Island, Odisha on December 13**
- ✓ It has a far greater range than 20-40km range conventional torpedoes to target enemy submarines
- ✓ The medium-range supersonic missile carries a torpedo, parachute delivery system and release mechanisms



- ✓ The successful test-firing of the mission was monitored by tracking stations (radars, electro-optical systems) along the coast and the telemetry stations including down range ships.
- ✓ India had last tested a Supersonic Missile Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) on October 5, 2020
- ✓ SMART is a missile-assisted release of lightweight Anti-Submarine Torpedo System used for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) operations
- ✓ Before this, a series of successful test-firing of the Extended Range Pinaka rocket system (Pinaka-ER) was carried out over a span of three days.
- ✓ On December 11, the DRDO and the Indian Air Force (IAF) had flight-tested the indigenously made helicopter-launched SANT (Stand-off Anti-tank) missile from Pokhran ranges
- ✓ The weapon can neutralise targets in a range up to 10 km
- ✓ This was the third in the series of indigenous stand-off weapons to be tested in recent times, after the Long-Range Bomb and Smart Anti-Airfield Weapon (SAAW)
- ✓ On December 8, the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) had tested an air version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur off the Odisha coast.
- ✓ The missile was test-fired from supersonic fighter aircraft Sukhoi 30 MK-I
- ✓ On October 22, the DRDO had flight-tested various systems of Abhyas, its high-speed expendable aerial target (HEAT), in Chandipur, off the coast of the Bay of Bengal in Odisha.

AWARDS

- **India's Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu - was crowned the 70th Miss Universe in the Israeli Red Sea resort town of Eilat on the night of December 12, 2021**
- ✓ 2020 Miss Universe Andrea Meza of Mexico crowned Harnaaz as her successor
- ✓ The contest was hosted by US TV personality Steve Harvey
- ✓ The pageant was watched by an estimated 600 million viewers in 172 countries
- ✓ A model, actor, "closet singer", writer of Punjabi couplets, Harnaaz is the third Indian to win the title after actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.

21-YR-OLD FROM PUNJAB WINS IN '21

Photo: Benjamin Askinas

➤ Harnaaz Kaur Sandhu (21) was born in Chandigarh, and studied in Shivalik Public School and the city's Govt College for Girls. Her **father is a businessman & mother a gynaecologist**. She has a brother

➤ Used to work with her mother at med camps on women's health & menstrual hygiene, according to her Miss Universe delegate bio. A 'strong advocate for women's empowerment', she **loves writing Punjabi couplets, riding horses and playing chess**

➤ The model won Chandigarh Times Fresh Face in 2017, Femina Miss India Punjab two years later & LIVA Miss Diva Universe this Sept. She has acted in two Punjabi films and is **pursuing a master's degree in public administration**

Harnaaz after winning the crown ➤



- ✓ India's Urvashi Rautela, actor and Miss Universe India 2015, was in the selection committee of the 2021 pageant.
- ✓ PM Modi led the nation in congratulating the winner.
- ✓ A 21-year-old from Punjab, Harnaaz beat a field of about 80 contestants at a pageant that included traditional displays of national costumes, swimwear and a series of questions to test their public speaking skills.
- ✓ Paraguay's Nadia Ferreira, 22, finished second, and South Africa's Lalela Mswane, 24, came third.
- ✓ Harnaaz is doing her master's degree in public administration.
- ✓ Harnaaz will now move to New York City and live there during her "reign" as Miss Universe and become a spokesperson for causes championed by her and the Miss Universe Organisation.
- ✓ Harnaaz started modelling at a young age of 17 and won multiple pageant titles along the way.
- ✓ She has also starred in Punjabi films like Yaara Diyan Poo Baran and Bai Ji Kuttange.
- ✓ Harnaaz was the winner of Chandigarh Times Fresh Face in 2017 and Miss Max Emerging Star India 2018
- ✓ In 2019, she won the title of Femina Miss India Punjab and was among the top 12 contestants at Femina Miss India 2019.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **National Energy Conservation Day – December 14, 2021**
- ✓ The day focuses on making people aware of global warming and climate change and promotes efforts towards saving energy resources.

- ✓ Energy conservation means reducing the consumption of energy by producing or using less of it.



- ✓ The Energy Conservation Act in the country was passed in 2001, to raise awareness about the need to make sustainable use of energy among citizens and curb unnecessary energy consumption.
- ✓ It was implemented by the Energy Efficiency Bureau (BEE) in the country since 2001.
- ✓ BEE is a constitutional body that works under the Government of India and helps in the development of policies and strategies to reduce the consumption of energy.
- ✓ BEE organises national energy conservation awards at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi to recognise and reward organisations and industrial units for achieving energy utilisation and conservation targets.
- ✓ The awards were started in 1991 and given by eminent dignitaries of the Government of India to industries, buildings, transport institutions and appliances sectors
- ✓ Theme 2021 - 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Energy Efficient India' and 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav: Clearer Planet.'
- ✓ In 2020, the theme was 'Conserve Energy and Save the Future'
- ✓ This year, the ministry of power, under the theme of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', is celebrating Energy Conservation Week from December 8 to 14.
- ✓ The celebrations will include three major activities- the National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA) for Industries, the National Painting Competition for school children and the National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards (NEEIA).
- ✓ The Centre has taken several initiatives to conserve energy which include the Standards and Labelling by BEE programme and the Energy Conservation Building Codes (ECBC) in 2007 to promote energy efficiency in the building sector.
- ✓ On this day, the Gram UJALA programme will be conducted by The Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL)

- ✓ Under the programme, LED bulbs (BEE star labeled appliance) will be distributed at a reduced price of Rs.10/- across 2579 towns and villages in five states, namely Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka.

➤ **Universal Health Coverage Day - December 12**



- ✓ The Day is observed every year to raise awareness about having strong and resilient world-class health systems across the globe
- ✓ The reason behind observing the day is to highlight access to quality, affordable health care for international development and the inequalities among the various sections
- ✓ On December 12, 2012, the United Nations General Assembly moved a resolution to urge nations to expedite the progress of universal health coverage (UHC).
- ✓ The United Nations declared December 12 as International Universal Health Coverage Day in 2017.
- ✓ Theme 2021 - 'Leave No One Behind When It Comes to Health: Invest in Health Systems for All.'

➤ **International Mountain Day - December 11**



- ✓ The Day is observed annually to highlight the necessity of protecting mountains and ensure sustainable development in them.

- ✓ To highlight the importance of Mountains, the United Nations declared the year 2002 as the UN International Year of Mountains.
- ✓ The first international Mountain day was celebrated the following year, 2003.
- ✓ Theme 2021 - 'Sustainable mountain tourism'
- ✓ According to the United Nations, mountain tourism attracts around 15-20% of global tourism.
- ✓ Mountains are home to 15% of the world's population and host about half of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

➤ **UNICEF Day - December 11**



- ✓ The Day is observed every year to raise awareness about saving children's lives by helping them to fulfill their wishes.
- ✓ On December 11, 1946, the United Nations General Assembly announced the creation of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).
- ✓ It was formed under the 57 (I) resolution of the United Nations General Assembly with its headquarters at USA's New York City.
- ✓ The Fund is created to provide assistance for the health, nutrition, education, and welfare of children during World War II.
- ✓ Later in 1953, UNICEF became a permanent agency of the United Nations
- ✓ The words International and Emergency were dropped from the official name but the acronym was continued and the agency was renamed as United Nations Children's Fund
- ✓ UNICEF's major objective is to protect children all across the world and provide access to basic rights like good education, food, sanitation, vaccination, etc.
- ✓ This year's theme is, "to help children to recover from interruption and learning losses experienced through the pandemic in the last two years".
- ✓ The agency works as per the decisions of 36 members of its executive board, who were elected for a three year term

➤ **Human Rights Day - December 10**



- ✓ This day is celebrated to raise awareness about people’s social, cultural and physical rights and to ensure the welfare of every individual.
- ✓ It encourages nations to create equal opportunities for everyone and address the issues of inequality, exclusion and discrimination
- ✓ On this day in the year 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- ✓ Available in more than 500 languages, it is the most translated document in the world.
- ✓ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a milestone document, which proclaims the inalienable rights that everyone is entitled to as a human being - regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status
- ✓ This year’s Human Rights Day theme is “Equality, Reducing inequalities, advancing human rights.”
- ✓ The Human Rights Council comprises 47 elected United Nations Member States

