

December-15

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The Crown Prince of Dubai, Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, launched the Dubai Audio Library, **the largest Arabic audio library in the world.**
 - It is an initiative undertaken by the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) of Dubai in collaboration with the website Bookshare.org.
- ❖ **India** retains its position as the **world's top recipient of remittances** this year with its diaspora sending \$80 billion back home. India is followed by China, Mexico and the Philippines and Egypt.
- ❖ **Australia surpassed Qatar** to become the **world's leading exporter of the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) for the first time.**
 - The LNG is Australia's third-largest export commodity behind coal and iron ore.

NATIONAL

Lt Governors, Administrators empowered to Set Up Special Courts

- ❖ **The Lieutenant governors (LGs)** and the **administrators of Union territories** have been empowered by the central government to **designate civil courts as special courts** to adjudicate contracts relating to infrastructure projects.
- ❖ This comes under Section 20B of the Specific Relief Act, 1963 (47 of 1963).
- ❖ According to this the state government, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High court, can designate
 - one or more civil courts as special courts within the local limits of the area to exercise jurisdiction

and to try a suit under this Act in respect of contracts relating to infrastructure projects.

INTERNATIONAL

Legislation to ease labour shortage - Japan

- ❖ The Japanese parliament (National Diet) approved a new law allowing foreigners into the country to ease labour shortages from April 2019.
- ❖ It creates two new categories of visas for blue-collar workers in sectors facing a labour crunch,
 - **1st Category** – Workers (Limited skills) who can stay for up to 5 years but cannot bring family members.
 - **2nd Category** - More skilled foreigners who can bring relatives and might eventually be eligible for residency.

Armenia Parliamentary elections

- ❖ Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was re-elected after winning the country's snap election by a landslide victory.
- ❖ The bloc led by Pashinyan's Civil Contract party had 70.45 per cent of the total vote.
- ❖ Pashinyan became the prime minister in May after spearheading weeks of peaceful anti-government rallies that ousted veteran leader Serzh Sarkisian.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Karnataka Nuclear Reactor Sets Global Record

- ❖ The pressurized heavy water reactor (PHWR) at Kaiga in Karnataka has become the world's longest running reactor without a shutdown.
- ❖ The indigenously designed Kaiga-1 unit has been under continuous operation from May 13, 2016, completed a continuous run of 941 days.
- ❖ The earlier record of 940 days of continuous operation was held by a British reactor called Heysham-2, Unit-8 reactor, which set the benchmark in 2016.
- ❖ In October, the unit set a new world record for continuous operation of a PHWR (When it completed its 895th day of continuous operation).
- ❖ The previous record for a PHWR was set in 1994 by Canada's Pickering unit 7, with an unbroken run of 894 days' operation.



RANK	DAYS	PLANT NAME	TYPE
1	941	Kaiga 1 (India)	PHWR
2	940	Heysham-2 (UK)	AGR
3	894	Pickering-7 (Canada)	PHWR
4	859	Torness-1 (UK)	AGR
5	825	Torness-2 (UK)	AGR

Home Ministry launches Twitter account

- ❖ The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has launched Twitter account @CyberDost to spread awareness about the cybercrimes and normal precautions to be taken.
- ❖ It is aimed at enhancing people's basic knowledge about cybercrimes and precautions to be taken for prevention.



STATES

Science and Technology Innovation fund

- ❖ The Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has approved 50-crore rupees to Science & Technology Innovation (STI) Fund for assistance in research and development.
- ❖ Assistance up to Rs. 50-lakh will be provided to UGC (University Grants Commission) and AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) recognized central and state universities and colleges.
- ❖ The assistance will be for a maximum period of 3 years.
- ❖ It aims to develop latent talents, encourage creativity research and development in strategic fields in the knowledge-based ecosystem.

- ❖ The state government had earlier announced similar assistance under the Biotechnology Policy and IT Policy.
- ❖ Gujarat government's S&T Department has identified Gujarat Council of Science and Technology (GUJCOST) to implement the scheme.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS AND EVENTS

Vice-Chair of UN Panel of Auditors - Rajiv Mehrishi

- ❖ The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Rajiv Mehrishi was elected as Vice-Chair of United Nations (UN) Panel of Auditors at its annual meeting held in New York.
- ❖ In this meeting the CAG of UK was also appointed as the Chair of Panel for another term (2019).
- ❖ The next meeting will be held in in Bonn, Germany in November-December 2019.

United Nations Panel of Auditors

- ❖ It was established by the UN General Assembly Resolution in 1959.
- ❖ Its main objectives are to further co-ordination of audits for which its members are responsible and to exchange information on audit methods and findings.
- ❖ It is made up of members of UN Board of Auditors and external auditors of Specialized Agencies of UN and of International Atomic Energy Agency.
- ❖ Currently, it is chaired by the CAG of UK and consists of 11 countries.

First Indian received honorary doctorate from ESCP biz school

- ❖ Bharti Enterprises chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal has received ESCP Europe's highest honour 'Doctor Honoris Causa'.
- ❖ He has been awarded for his innovative entrepreneurship and contribution towards philanthropy in the field of education.
- ❖ Thus, Mittal has become the first Indian to be honored with this recognition in ESCP Europe's near 200 years history.
- ❖ Established in 1819, the ESCP Europe is the world's first business school, founded by a group of economic scholars and businessmen.

SPORTS

World record of highest score on first-class debut

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh batsman Ajay Rohera scored 267 unbeaten on his first-class debut against Hyderabad while playing the Ranji Trophy match in Indore.
- ❖ He also became the highest individual scorer for Madhya Pradesh surpassing J P Yadav's 265.
- ❖ He broke Amol Muzumdar's 25-year-old world record of highest score on first-class debut which Amol set against Haryana at Faridabad back in 1994.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Universal Health Coverage Day – 12 December

- ❖ The International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) was observed throughout the world on 12 December every year.
- ❖ It aims to mobilize diverse stakeholders to call for stronger, more equitable health systems to achieve universal health coverage, leaving no one behind.



- ❖ The theme for the 2018 UHC Day is: “Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action.”
- ❖ The United Nations proclaimed 12 December as International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) by a resolution in 2017.

International Day of Neutrality – 12 December

- ❖ December 12 has been observed as the International Day of Neutrality.

- ❖ It is celebrated by the United Nations to ensure neutrality among nations and abstention of a state from all participation in a war.
- ❖ The UN General Assembly declared the Day of December 12 to be seen as International Day of Neutrality on February 2, 2017.
