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### **Current Affairs:- December 12 – December 21, 2018**

- Sascha Bajin, coach of the world number five Naomi Osaka, has become the first-ever recipient of the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Coach of the Year Award.
  - Manipur Government honored AIBA World Women Boxing Gold medalist MC Mary Kom with the title “*Meethoileima*” (par excellent queen).
  - The government has appointed Shaktikanta Das as the new RBI governor. He is the 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.
  - International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) is celebrated globally on 12 December. The theme for the 2018 UHC Day is- "*Unite for Universal Health Coverage: Now is the Time for Collective Action*". Note: International Day of Neutrality is also organized on 12 December.
  - The Delhi High Court ordered a ban on the sale of online medicines by e-pharmacists across the country.
  - CAG has announced that Comptroller and Auditor General Rajiv Mehrishi has become the Vice-Chair of the UN Panel of Auditors. The United Nations Panel of Auditors consists of External Auditors of the United Nations and its agencies. Currently, the panel is chaired by the Comptroller and Auditor General of the UK, Sir Amyas Morse.
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- Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered in October 2018 at his country's Istanbul consulate, has been named Time magazine's "Person of the Year" alongside several other journalists.
  - As per the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2019, Sweden has topped the list while India was on 11th position.
  - Manika became 1st Indian to win the 'Breakthrough Table Tennis Star' award at the prestigious International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) Star Awards in Incheon, South Korea. India coach Massimo Costantini won Table Tennis Star Coach award.
  - Steel Authority of India's Hockey Academy clinched the 115th All India Aga Khan Gold Cup hockey tournament held at Major Dhyhan Chand hockey stadium in New Delhi.
  - The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$60 Million Loan Agreement in New Delhi to continue financing riverbank protection works, renovation of flood embankments, and community-based flood risk management activities in critically flood-prone areas along the Brahmaputra River in Assam.
  - Producer-director Brijendra Pal Singh was appointed as the new president of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII). He succeeds veteran actor Anupam Kher.
  - National energy conservation day was celebrated on 14th of December.
  - Ministry of Power has launched the ECO Niwas Samhita 2018, an Energy Conservation Building Code for Residential Buildings (ECBC-R). It aims to benefit the occupants and the environment by promoting energy
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efficiency in design and construction of homes, apartments and townships.

- Akademik Lomonosov, the world's first "floating" nuclear power plant (FNPP) for installation in remote areas, has been started and brought to 10% of its capacity, Russian state-run atomic energy corporation Rosatom announced.
  - The government has constituted a seven-member panel to select managing directors of public sector insurance companies. The panel would be headed by Banks Board Bureau (BBB) chairman B P Sharma.
  - Noted English author Amitav Ghosh has been honoured with Jnanpith Award for 2018, an award for outstanding contribution to literature. Ghosh, one of the most prominent contemporary Indian writers, is known for a series of novels such as "Shadow Lines", "The Glass Palace", "The Hungry Tide", and Ibis Trilogy -- "Sea of Poppies", and "River of Smoke". Note: Krishna Sobti was awarded the 53rd Jnanpith award in Hindi Language. Amitav Ghosh has become the first English author to be honoured with the award.
  - India announced a \$1.4 billion package for the Maldives to meet its immediate budgetary as well as some medium-term requirements.
  - The indigenously developed Kaiga Atomic Power Station in Karnataka has set a new world record, with one of its units operating uninterrupted for more than 940 days.
  - The UN Climate Conference 2018 was held recently in Katowice, Poland. In the meeting ministers of 200 nations finally reached consensus on rules to implement the 2015 Paris climate agreement. The Paris accord aims to limit the rise in global atmospheric temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial revolution levels.
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- Producer Ashok Amritraj was honoured with the French Knight of the National Order of Merit.
  - Star Screen Awards 2018 were announced recently in Mumbai. Alia Bhatt won Best Actor for her performance in Raazi and Ranveer Singh was given best actor award for Padmaavat.
  - Indian-American Shree Saini has been crowned Miss India Worldwide 2018 at a pageant India's Mandeep Kaur Sandhu, who hails from Haryana, was crowned Mrs. India Worldwide 2018.
  - Philippines' Catriona Gray has been crowned Miss Universe 2018, becoming the fourth woman from the country to win the title.
  - Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe was sworn in as Prime minister of Sri Lanka by President Maithripala Sirisena.
  - Bhupesh Baghel becomes the new Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.
  - Congress party has chosen Kamal Nath as the chief minister of Madhya Pradesh. He replaces outgoing Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
  - K Chandrasekhar Rao was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Telangana, for the second time.
  - Zoramthanga was sworn in as Mizoram Chief Minister.
  - In Hockey, Belgium has claimed their first ever World Cup title. They defeated the Netherlands in the final of the Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
  - PV Sindhu made history, becoming the first Indian to win the season-ending BWF World Tour Finals tournament.
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- Jammu and Kashmir has become the first state in the country to enact a law banning sexual exploitation of women “by those in positions of authority, having a fiduciary relationship or a public servant”, Under Section 354E of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC).
  - The Congress party has picked Ashok Gehlot as Chief Minister of Rajasthan. Sachin Pilot will be the deputy CM of Rajasthan.
  - The Central government has appointed advocate Madhavi Divan as the Additional Solicitor General (ASG) to represent it in the Supreme Court. Divan is the third woman to be appointed as ASG in the top court. Senior advocate Indira Jaising was the first woman to be appointed as the ASG.
  - Indian film ‘Period. End of Sentence’ has made it to the Oscar shortlist in the Documentary Short Subject category.
  - UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan declared 2019 as the Year of Tolerance, an extension of the Year of Zayed which has run this year.
  - Actress Sonam Kapoor, a vegan, has been named People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India's Person of the Year for 2018.
  - India has been ranked 108th in World Economic Forum (WEF) gender gap index 2018, same as 2017. Iceland topped the list.
  - The UN’s (United Nation) International Migrants Day (IMD) is observed every year on 18th December to protect the rights of migrant workers and members of their families. The theme for this year's IMD is ‘Migration with Dignity’.
  - NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog unveiled its comprehensive national Strategy for New India titled ‘Strategy for New India @75’, which defines clear
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objectives for 2022-23. Note: NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman- Rajiv Kumar, CEO- Amitabh Kant.

- Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel has resigned amid pressure on his government over his support for the UN global compact on migration.
  - Assam government has announced three schemes for the welfare of farmers. The schemes are the Assam Farmers' Credit Subsidy Scheme (AFCSS), Assam Farmers' Interest Relief Scheme (AFIRS) and Assam Farmers' Incentive Scheme (AFIS). Under AFCSS, whatever amount of loan the farmers took from banks and whatever amount they repaid, 25% of the money will be reimbursed by the state government.
  - India's largest cancer institute, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has been launched at Haryana's Jhajjar area.
  - Senior bureaucrat Pranab Kumar Das has been appointed as chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), the apex policy-making body for indirect taxes.
  - The International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced that Serbia's Novak Djokovic and Romania's Simona Halep have been named the 2018 ITF World Champions.
  - IDFC Bank and non-banking financial company (NBFC) Capital First has announced the completion of their merger. The merged entity to be called IDFC First Bank, subject to shareholders' approval. Following the merger, the board of IDFC Bank approved the appointment of V Vaidyanathan, founder and chairman of Capital First Ltd, as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the merged entity.
  - Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh released his book titled "*Changing India*" at an event in New Delhi.
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- The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the “Asiatic Lion Conservation Project” to protect and conserve the population of Asiatic Lion and its associated ecosystem. The total budget of the project for 3 years amounts to around Rs 9784 lakh.
  - International Human Solidarity Day was observed on 20th December.
  - The US regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has retained the highest aviation safety ranking for India. FAA formally confirmed that India's International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) rating remains 'Category 1'.
  - Gujarat has emerged as the best-performing state in the Startup Ranking 2018.
  - W V Raman has been appointed the new coach of the Indian women's cricket team.
  - The government will infuse an additional Rs.41,000 crore into cash-starved public sector banks (PSBs). The outlay will go up from Rs. 65,000 crore to Rs.1,06,000 crore in the current financial year to propel economic growth. This is in addition to the Rs.2.11 lakh crore bailout package announced by the government in October 2017.
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