**4 December Current Affairs**

1. **The Indian Government has launched the SRESTHA Scheme:**

The Government of India is to launch SRESTHA Scheme for the Scheduled Caste students.

The scheme will provide quality residential education to the students.

**Salient Features:**

* This Scheme is to be launched on Mahaparinirvan Divas.
* The Scheme is a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.
* The scheme will be implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
* This scheme aims the meritorious students of Scheduled Caste. It will also help to control the drop out of students from courses 9 to 12.
* The scheme will provide high quality residential schooling.
* To implement the scheme, NITI Aayog has recognized reputed non – public residential facilities in aspirational districts.
* The Government of India has estimated that the scheme implementation will require Rs. 300 crores.
* The scheme is expected to help more than 24,800 students in next five years.

**About Mahaparinirvan Divas:**

It is the death anniversary of Dr. B R Ambedkar, the Father of Indian Constitution, is celebrated as Mahaparinirvan Divas in the country. It falls on December 6. The SRESHTA Scheme is to be launched on the same day.

Scheme as a part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav:

The scheme is to be launched as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations. It is a GoI initiative to celebrate 75 years of independence. The celebrations under the programme was started in March 2021 and it is to go on till 15th August 2022.

2. **Gita Gopinath has become the first Deputy Managing Director of IMF:**

Recently, the Indian American, Gita Gopinath has become the first Deputy Managing Director of International Monetary Fund. She is the first Indian to take up the top role in the organisation. First Deputy Managing Director is the second top post in IMF next to the Managing Director.

**Let’s know about Gita Gopinath:**

* Gita Gopinath was the first female Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund.
* She was born in Kolkata in 1971. She completed her graduation in University of Delhi and her masters in Washington University and PhD in Princeton University.
* In 2018, she was appointed the Chief Economist of the IMF.
* She named the worldwide recession of 2020 due to COVID-19 as “The Great Lockdown”.
* In 2021, she was named the First Deputy Managing Director of IMF. It is number 2 position in the organisation.

**Awards received by her:**

She was awarded with the Parvasi Bharatiya Samman in 2019 by the President of India. The Parvasi Bharatiya Samman is presented on the Parvasi Bharatiya Divas (9 January). It is the highest award presented to the overseas Indians.

**Position of Deputy Managing Director in IMF:**

IMF is managed by the Managing Director, First Deputy Managing Director and deputy managing directors. The First Deputy Managing Director in the IMF takes lead on conducting surveillance, flagship publications and oversee researches.

**Role of Gita Gopinath in IMF:**

Under Ms. Gopinath’s leadership, the IMF has contributed in multilateral surveillance through World Economic Outlook. Her plan to end COVID-19 crisis by vaccinating the world at feasible cost was a huge success.

**About IMF:**

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution, headquartered in Washington, D.C., consisting of 190 countries.

It claims to be "working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world."

It was formed in 1944, started on 27 December 1945.

3. **The SpaceX launched fifty satellites:**

Recently, the SpaceX launched fifty satellites. These satellites are to join the Starlink mega constellation. The satellites were launched on Falcon 9 rocket.

Key points of the launch:

* SpaceX launched 48 Starlink satellites and two Earth Observation satellites called Blacksky Global.
* The Blacksky Global is building a satellite constellation which is capable of providing images of any part of the earth. It is a constellation of 60 satellites.
* The satellites were launched from Florida. Florida is situated in USA.
* The Starlink constellation aims to provide internet access to the Earth on a large scale. It is consisted of 1600 satellites.

**What is Starlink?**

The SpaceX Starlink constellation is being built to provide high – speed internet coverage. As of December 2021, SpaceX has launched 1,900 broadband satellites. This is in 2021 alone. It has approval to launch 30,000 more satellites.

What is special about this launch?

This launch carried upgraded version of the Starlink satellites. These satellites are equipped with laser – based systems. These systems allow the satellites to communicate with each other in the orbit and also with the ground stations.

Raptor Engine Crisis in the launch:

The SpaceX CEO Elon Musk shortly before the launch announced that the company may face bankruptcy due to Raptor Engine Crisis. Raptor is a massive engine of SpaceX. It is to be used to propel the next generation launch system of SpaceX called “STARSHIP”. Starship is to take people to space.

Raptor engines have twice the power of the Merlin 1D engines. The Merlin 1D engines are used to power Flacon 9 rockets.

Propellant used in Raptor engine is liquid methane.

The Raptor Engine crisis is to affect the subsequent launches of SpaceX.

4. **Astronomers discovered Ultra Short Planet GJ 367b:**

Recently, the astronomers found GJ 367b, a small planet that is circling a dim red dwarf star. The star is 31 light years away from the sun.

**Key Points of GJ 367b:**

The GJ 367b is a rocky planet. It is 70% the size of the earth. And it is 55% the mass of the earth. This makes GJ 367b one of the lightest known exoplanets.

The planet completes its orbit in 7.7 hours. Thus, it is called the Ultra Short Period Planet.

The planet is dominated by an iron core. It is because of this reason the planet has high density.

The planet has a disproportionately large core. The core is made of iron and nickel. This particular property of the planet is similar to Mercury. Also, it is this property of Mercury that differentiates it from the rest of the planets in solar system.

TESS and HARP helped in identifying GJ 367b:

TESS is Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite. The GJ 367b was identified using the data provided by TESS. TESS revealed the super short orbital period of GJ 367b.

Also, HARPS (High Accuracy Radial Velocity Planet Searcher) helped the researchers to calculate the mass of the planet. HARPS is an instrument installed on a 3.6 metre telescope located in European Southern Observatory in Chile.

5. **Nizamuddin Basti Project gets 2 UNESCO Heritage Awards:**

Recently, the UNESCO presented two Heritage Awards to the Nizamuddin Basti Project. The project was awarded for its conservation efforts. It was awarded with the Special Recognition for Sustainable Award and Award of Excellence.

**What is Nizamuddin Basti Project?**

The project restored more than 20 historic monuments located around 14th century Sufi Saint Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya.

The Nizamuddin area consists of Humayun Tomb and Battashewala Tomb and tomb of a 16th century poet Rahim (Khan Khana). These regions were segregated and damaged. They were also renewed by the Nizamuddin Basti Project.

The project was started in 2007 by the Aga Kahn Trust for Culture, Archaeological Survey of India, Delhi Urban Heritage Foundation and the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

**What are the Objectives of Nizamuddin Basti Project?**

The Nizamuddin Basti Project is an Urban Renewal Project. It successfully unified the segregated zones of the seven-century old settlement of the Nizamuddin Basti and its surrounding 70 acres.

It is for the integration of socio – economic development, conservation and environmental development objectives in these areas.

It unified three major sites namely Sundar Nursery, Nizamuddin Basti and Humayun Tomb.

**About Humayun Tomb:**

Humayun Tomb was commissioned by his first wife Bega Begum. It was declared a World Heritage Site in 1993. Since then, it has undergone extensive restoration work. The tomb is placed in the centre of a thirty-acre garden called “Char Bagh”. The last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was captured by the British in Humayun Tomb in 1857.

6. **International Day of Persons with Disabilities:**

Every year, United Nations and several other organisations spread all over the world celebrate the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3.

This year, the day is celebrated with the following theme:

**Theme:** “Leadership and participation of persons with disabilities toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-COVID-19 world”.

**Background of celebration:**

The International Day of Persons with Disability was first proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992.

It aims to promote well-being and rights of the persons with disabilities and increase the awareness of situation of persons with disabilities in social, political, economic and cultural life.

Why the need for International Day of Persons with Disabilities?

There are more than 1 billion persons with disabilities in the world. Of these 80% live in developing countries.

Of the disabled persons in the world, 46% are older than 60 years.

The persons with disabilities are among the hardest hit by COVID-19.

Steps taken by the United Nations:

In 2006, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted. The other major United Nations frameworks that included disabilities as a major part are as follows:

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal:

* New Urban Agenda.
* Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development.
* Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities with Humanitarian Action.
* Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Sustainable Development Goals:**

The following goals include disabilities as a major part in their agenda:

Goal 4: Inclusive and Equitable Quality of Education.

Goal 8: To promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth. This is to be achieved by providing productive employment to all men, women and persons with disabilities.

Goal 10: To reduce inequality.

Goal 11: To make human settlements, cities safe, inclusive and sustainable.

Goal 17: To strengthen and revitalize global Partnership for sustainable development.

United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy:

It aims to support implementation of Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, SDGs, Agenda for Humanity and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. It was launched in June 2019.

7. **Anju Bobby George wins Woman of the Year Award:**

Recently, the Indian Athlete Anju Bobby George has won the Woman of the Year Award from World Athletics. She has won the award for grooming young girls to take up sports.

**What are Anju’s achievements?**

* She is the gold medalist of 2005 IAAF World Athletics Finals.
* She was the first Indian athlete to win bronze medal in long jump at the World Championships in Athletics held in 2013 in Paris.
* In 2004 Olympics, she finished at sixth.

**Awards received by Anju:**

* Anju was awarded the Arjuna award in 2002, Padma Shri in 2004, Khel Ratna in 2003.
* In 2021, she won the BBC lifetime achievement award in the category of Best Athlete.

**Why is Anju felicitated with Woman of the Year Award?**

In 2016, she formed a sports academy for young girls. Through this she has helped India to become advance in sports and also inspire more women to follow her footsteps. She is also presented with the award for advocating gender equality.

Let’s know about Anju Bobby George:

* Anju was born in Cheeranchira village in Kottayam, Kerala.
* She was born in Kochuparambil family, an orthodox family.
* She developed interests into athletics from her father. She started her career with Heptathlon. Later she won medals in Delhi Junior Asian Championship, South Asian Federation Games (held in Nepal), Commonwealth games held in Manchester and also won gold medal at the Asian Games held in Busan. She is married to Robert Bobby George. George is a former national champion in triple jump and Anju’s coach too. Currently, Anju is the Chairperson of TOPS (Target Olympic Podium Scheme) and also the Executive member of Khelo India project.

8. **Dam Safety Bill**

Recently, the Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat had introduced the bill in Rajya Sabha on 1st December, 2021. The Dam Safety Bill (2019) was passed by the Lok Sabha on 2nd August 2019. After China and USA, India is the 3rd largest dam-owning nation in the world.

The bill aims to inspect, survey, maintain and operate dams in the country. Because most of the dams are more than 100 years old.

Salient Features:

* The bill constitutes two national bodies. They are National Committee on Dam Safety and National Dam Safety Authority.
* The National Committee on Dam Safety will evolve policies and recommend regulations related to dam safety.
* The National Dam Safety Authority implements the policies framed by the National committee. Also, it will provide technical assistance to the State Dam Safety Organisations.
* The functions of these committees and authorities are restricted at state level and are similar to that of the national committees and authorities.

**Constitutional validity:**

* According to Entry 17 of State List, the states are eligible to make laws on irrigation, water supply, canals, embankments, drainage, water power and water storage.
* According to Entry 56 of the Union List, the Parliament is allowed to make laws on regulation of river valleys and interstate rivers.
* Article 252 allows the Parliament to make laws on subjects in State list if two or more states pass resolution requiring a law. In this issue, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh have passed resolution asking for a law on dam safety.

**Functions of the bodies in the bill:**

The functions of National Dam Safety Authority and National Committee on Dam Safety are as follows;

* To resolve issues between State Dam Safety Organisations.
* To assess the potential impact of dam failure.
* To supervise dam rehabilitation programmes.

9.  **Rural Development Ministry signed a MoU with Flipkart**

Recently, Ministry of Rural Development of Government of India (MoRD) and Flipkart has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM).

**Key Features:**

MoU between ministry & Flipkart will help in empowering local businesses and self-help groups (SHGs) by bringing them into the e-commerce fold.

Partnership is in line with the DAY-NRLM’s objective of strengthening the capabilities of rural communities for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

Thus, it provides further momentum to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of an Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

**Part of Flipkart Samarth Program:**

This MoU is a part of the Flipkart Samarth program.

It was signed with the aim of providing skilled & underserved communities of weavers, craftsmen, and artisans with national market access using the Flipkart marketplace. It will also provide them with dedicated support for knowledge and training.

Flipkart Samarth programme seeks to break entry barriers for local communities by providing time-bound incubation & support with onboarding, marketing, business insights, cataloguing, account management, and warehousing.

It will increase avenues for business and trade inclusion as well as help in creating & sustaining better livelihood opportunities.

**What is DAY-NRLM program?**

NRLM is a poverty alleviation project, which is implemented by Ministry of Rural Development. This project focuses on promoting self-employment and organization of poor across rural India. It seeks to organize the poor into Self Help Groups (SHGs) and make them capable for self-employment.

**Background of DAY-NRLM:**

Ministry of Rural Development had restructured the ‘Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) in 1999 and launched Swarnajayanti Grameen Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) in order to promote self-employment among rural poor. SGSY has now been remodeled to NRLM. NRLM was launched in 2011 with a budget outlay of $5.1 billion.

**What is Flipkart Samarth Program?**

Flipkart Samarth program was launched in the year 2019 as a sustainable and inclusive platform for empowering underserved domestic communities & businesses by providing them opportunities and livelihoods. It is currently supporting the livelihoods of more than 950000 artisans, weavers and craftsmen in India.