

Today in History on 23 DEC

➤ 1921: Vishwa-Bharati University inaugurated.

Officially, Vishwa-Bharati International University was inaugurated in Shantiniketan in 1921. The idea of Vishwa-Bharati was to create a space for the meeting of races through the exchange of scholars and the study of each other's histories and cultures.



➤ 1902: Chaudhary Charan Singh, the fifth Prime Minister of the country, popular as the leader of farmers, was born in Hapur, Uttar Pradesh. This day is celebrated as 'Kisan Diwas' in the country.

Chaudhary Charan Singh (23 December 1902 - 29 May 1987) He was the farmer politician and fifth Prime Minister of India. He held this post from 28 July 1979 to 14 January 1980. Chaudhary Charan Singh lived his entire life in the dignity of Indianness and rural environment. In February 2024, it was announced to honor him with Bharat Ratna. He has been considered the leader of farmers. The Zamindari Abolition Bill prepared by him was based on the welfare principle of the state. On July 1, 1952, the Zamindari system was abolished in UP due to him and the poor got rights.

➤ 1922: BBC radio begins daily news broadcasts.

The British Broadcasting Company, as the BBC was originally called, is formed in 1922 by a group of major wireless manufacturers, including Marconi. Daily broadcasts by the BBC begin in 1922 at Marconi's London studios, 2LO in the Strand. John Reith, a 33-year-old Scottish engineer, is appointed general manager of the BBC in late 1922.



➤ 1672: Astronomer Giovanni Cassini discovers Saturn's moon Rhea.

Rhea was discovered by Giovanni Domenico Cassini on 23 December 1672 using a 10.4 m (34 ft) telescope built by Giuseppe Campani. Cassini named the four moons he discovered (Tethys, Dione, Rhea, and Iapetus) Sidera Lodoicea (Louis's stars) in honor of King Louis XIV. Rhea was the second moon of Saturn discovered by Cassini, and the third moon discovered around Saturn overall.



➤ 2000: The name of West Bengal's capital Calcutta was officially changed to Kolkata.

The name was changed during the tenure of former Chief Minister Buddhadeb. Professor Debashish Chowdhury of Bangabasi College's history department said that on 23 December 2000, former Chief Minister of West Bengal Buddhadeb Bhattacharya officially changed the name of West Bengal's capital Calcutta to Kolkata.



Important NEWS on 23 DEC

➤ Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025: India's Automotive Milestone

The Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 will take place from January 17-22 across Delhi NCR, marking India's growing role as a global hub for mobility. With over 1,500 exhibitors and an expected 500,000 visitors, the event is set to become the world's second-largest auto show. Key automotive giants such as Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors, and BYD will showcase new models, with a focus on electric vehicles (EVs), hybrid technologies, and alternative

fuels. In its second edition, the expo promises to build on the success of the inaugural 2024 event, reinforcing India's commitment to sustainable mobility and engineering excellence.



➤ India and France Collaborate to Establish World's Largest Museum

The Ministry of Culture, in partnership with France Museums Développement (FMD), has launched an ambitious project to develop the Yuga Yugeen Bharat National Museum as a global cultural landmark. Spanning approximately 1,55,000 square meters across the North and South Blocks in New Delhi, the museum will celebrate India's civilizational history and serve as a cornerstone of the Central Vista Redevelopment Project.



➤ Masali: India's First Border Solar Village

Masali, a village in Gujarat's Banaskantha district, has become India's first 'solar village' located near the border, marking a significant achievement in the country's renewable energy initiatives. Situated 40 kilometers from the Pakistan border, this milestone follows India's broader efforts to make border areas more energy-efficient and self-sustaining.



➤ Centre, ADB Sign \$42 Million Loan for Coastal Protection in Maharashtra

The Central government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a \$42 million loan agreement to bolster coastal and riverbank protection in Maharashtra. This initiative aims to enhance the resilience of coastal communities and ecosystems by employing hybrid approaches, such as offshore reefs, rock protection works, and nature-based solutions like beach and dune nourishment. Advanced technologies, including remote sensing and climate change impact predictions, will improve shoreline management while addressing issues in tourism and fisheries sectors.



➤ Reappointment of Dr Shankar Prasad Sharma as Nepal's Ambassador to India

Nepal's President, Ram Chandra Paudel, has officially reappointed Dr Shankar Prasad Sharma as the Resident Ambassador of Nepal to India. Along with Sharma, the President also appointed Netra Prasad Timilsina as the Resident Ambassador of Nepal to Malaysia. These high-profile diplomatic appointments, made under Article 282 (1) of Nepal's Constitution, follow recommendations from the Council of Ministers.



➤ Salman Khan Named Brand Ambassador for Kho Kho World Cup

The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has officially appointed Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup, which will be held in New Delhi from January 13 to 19, 2025. This event will see the participation

of teams from 24 countries and is set to boost the global profile of Kho Kho.



➤ Chennai-Born Caitlin Sandra Neil Crowned Miss India USA 2024

Caitlin Sandra Neil, a 19-year-old Indian-American teenager born in Chennai, India, has been crowned Miss India USA 2024 at the annual pageant held in New Jersey. A second-year student at the University of California, Davis, Caitlin aspires to leave a positive impact on her community, with a focus on women's empowerment and literacy. She aims to become a web designer while pursuing careers in modeling and acting.



Current affairs MCQS on 23 DEC

Q.1. Which country is the host of the 12th Para Athletics World Championship in 2025?

- (a) Myanmar
- (b) Russia
- (c) India
- (d) China

Answer: (c) India

India will host the Para Athletics World Championships 2025, the first time the event will be held in the country. The event will be held from September 26 to October 5 at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which will also host the World Para Athletics Grand Prix in March 2025. This will be the 12th edition of the championship and the fourth time it will be held in Asia, with over 1,000 athletes from over 100 countries participating. The event is a key precursor to the Los Angeles Paralympic Games 2028 and aims to promote inclusivity and awareness about disability in India. India's success in para athletics includes 17 medals, including six gold, at the 2023 World Championships in Kobe.

Q.2. Who has recently been awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 for Hindi?

- (a) Kamala Tripathi
- (b) Arun Kumar
- (c) Arundhati Roy
- (d) Gagan Gill

Answer: (d) Gagan Gill

The Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 was announced at a press conference organised by the Sahitya Akademi. This year the award is being given to Gagan Gill for Hindi and Easterine Kier for English. The awards for Bengali, Dogri and Urdu will be announced later. The writers will be honoured on 8 March 2025. The awards for 21 languages have been announced in the executive board meeting chaired by Sahitya Akademi President Madhav Kaushik. Academy Secretary K. Srinivas Rao said that the languages for which the award is being given include eight poetry collections, three novels, two story

collections, three essays, three literary criticisms, one play and one research book.

Q.3. Recently, which country has decided to study laser-equipped satellites to deal with space debris in collaboration with Indian startups?

- (a) America
- (b) Japan
- (c) China
- (d) Maldives

Answer: (b) Japan

India and Japan are collaborating to tackle space debris using laser-equipped satellites. Japan's Orbital Laser and India's InSpaceity have partnered to explore commercial opportunities in debris removal leveraging advanced laser technology. Japan and India have joined hands to tackle the growing challenge of space debris, marking a significant collaboration in the space sector. This partnership, centered around laser technology and space debris removal, also extends to lunar exploration, reflecting their commitment to joint space efforts.

Q.4. Who has recently won the title of 'Miss India USA 2024'?

- (a) Caitlin Sandra Neil
- (b) Ketaki Raut
- (c) Shaliga Bhatnagar
- (d) None of the above

Answer: (a) Caitlin Sandra Neil

Chennai-born Indian American teenager Caitlin Sandra Neil has won the annual beauty pageant 'Miss India USA' 2024 held in New Jersey. Caitlin (19) is a second-year student at the University of California, Davis. Speaking to the media, she said, "I want to leave a positive impact on my community and focus on women's empowerment and literacy."

Q.5. Recently, astronauts of which country have set the record for the longest space journey (9 hours)?

- (a) America
- (b) China

- (c) Russia
(d) Britain

Answer: (c) Russia

Two Chinese astronauts aboard the Tiangong space station have set a new world record for the longest spacewalk, breaking a record that had stood for more than 23 years. According to the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA), astronauts Cai Xuzhe and Song Lingdong completed nine hours of extravehicular space activity.

Q.6. Recently, in which country the Indian Army has unveiled an AI incubation center for future warfare?

- (a) Bengaluru
(b) Chennai
(c) Delhi
(d) Surat

Answer: (a) Bengaluru

The Indian Army has launched the Indian Army AI Incubation Centre (IAAIC) in Bengaluru, a significant step towards modernising its operations and enhancing its technological capabilities. In a virtual inauguration led by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi, the initiative aims to revolutionise the operational capabilities of the Army through Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Q.7. Recently, Shankar Sharma has been appointed as the ambassador of which country to India?

- (a) Sri Lanka
(b) Myanmar
(c) Nepal
(d) Bhutan

Answer: (c) Nepal

Nepal President Ramchandra Paudel appointed Dr Shankar Prasad Sharma as Nepal's Ambassador to India. According to a notice issued by the President's Office, Sharma has been appointed to this post for the second time on the recommendation of the Council of Ministers. His previous term was from March 2022 to July 2024.

Q.8. Recently who has been awarded the National Tansen Samman 2023?

- (a) Pandit Swapan Choudhary
(b) Ravindra Joshi
(c) Mrinal Garg
(d) None of the above

Answer: (a) Pandit Swapan Choudhary

Pt Swapan Choudhary, renowned tabla player from Kolkata was awarded the 'National Tansen Samman' for the year 2023. Sanand Nyas Sansthan of Indore was given the 'Raja Mansingh Tomar Samman' for the year 2023. These awards were given during the Tansen Music Festival 2024 held in Gwalior, which was organized to commemorate the centenary year of the great musician Tansen. The 'Tansen Award' is the highest national music award in Indian classical music instituted by the Government of Madhya Pradesh. Pt Swapan Choudhary expressed his gratitude to the state government for this prestigious honor.

Q.9. Recently who has been appointed as the Managing Director of SBI?

- (a) Arun Kumar Sahu
(b) Mayank Joshi
(c) Ram Mohan Rao Amara
(d) None of the above

Answer: (c) Ram Mohan Rao Amara

The Government of India has appointed Rama Mohan Rao Amara as the new Managing Director (MD) of State Bank of India (SBI) for a period of three years. His appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) and comes following the recommendation of the Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB). Amara will take over the position previously held by CS Shetty, who took over as SBI Chairman in August. With his extensive experience in various roles within SBI, Amara is set to lead the bank through crucial phases of growth and development.

Q.10. Who has recently been made the brand ambassador for Kho-Kho World Cup 2025?

- (a) Salman Khan
(b) Abhishek Bachchan
(c) Akshay Kumar
(d) Deepika Padukone

Answer: (a) Salman Khan

The Kho-Kho Federation of India (KKFI) roped in Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as the brand ambassador to promote the first edition of the Kho-Kho World Cup. The Kho-Kho World Cup will be held in New Delhi from January 13 to January 19, 2025. On the occasion, Salman Khan expressed his happiness for the first Kho-Kho World Cup and also recalled his association with the sport. The mega star praised the initiative of hosting the World Cup in the national capital and said he is thrilled to see the sport spreading across the world.

Q.11. Which country has recently conferred royal honour on Indian educationist Arun Kapoor?

- (a) Myanmar
(b) Nepal
(c) Bhutan
(d) Maldives

Answer: (c) Bhutan

Indian educationist Arun Kapur, known for his contributions to education in India, Bhutan and Oman, has been honoured by Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyal. At the 117th Bhutanese National Day celebrations held at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimpu, Kapur was presented with the prestigious red scarf and the title 'Dasho', a rare honour usually given to senior Bhutanese officials. This is another milestone in his long-term association with Bhutan's educational development.

Q.12. Who has recently been honoured with UNEP's Life Time Achievement Award 2024?

- (a) Madhav Gadgil
(b) Sanjay Murthy
(c) Anand Neelkantan
(d) None of the above

Answer: (a) Madhav Gadgil

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has honoured eminent Indian environmentalist Madhav Gadgil with the Lifetime Achievement Award. This is the highest environmental honour of the United Nations. Gadgil has now joined the Hall of Fame along with other prestigious award winners like David Attenborough and Joan Carling.

Q.13. Who has recently received the 'highest honour' of the US Navy?

- (a) Robert Downey
(b) Tom Cruise
(c) Brad Pitt
(d) None of the above

Answer: (b) Tom Cruise

Hollywood actor Tom Cruise was awarded the US Navy's top civilian honour for his outstanding contribution to the Navy and Marine Corps with Top Gun and other films. The Navy thanked the action hero who it said has raised public awareness and appreciation of our highly trained personnel and the sacrifices they make while in uniform.

Q.14. Recently, 'Masali village' of which state has become the country's first border village to run on solar energy?

- (a) Bihar
(b) Gujarat
(c) Goa
(d) Madhya Pradesh

Answer: (b) Gujarat

Masali village, located near the border in Gujarat's Banaskantha district, has become India's first 'solar village', marking a significant milestone in the country's renewable energy initiative. Located 40 km from the Pakistan border, the milestone follows India's wider efforts to make its border areas more energy efficient and self-reliant. The project, with an investment of ₹1.16 crore, will see solar panels installed on 199 rooftops, ensuring 100% solar power generation for the village. The development

reflects India's commitment to renewable energy and rural electrification.

Q.15. What is the rank of India in the recent Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024?

- (a) 37th
- (b) 38th
- (c) 39th
- (d) 42nd

Answer: (c) 39th

India is ranked 39th in the 2024 Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) by the World Economic Forum, improving from 54th position in 2021, which was later revised to 38th due to a change in methodology. The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance under schemes such as Swadesh Darshan, PRASAD and supports central agencies for development of tourism infrastructure. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the Advantage Healthcare India portal (www.healinindia.gov.in) to assist international patients seeking medical treatment in India. Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat shared this information in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha.