

Current Affairs of December 2023

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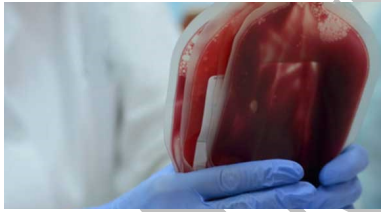
National

Union Home Minister Amit Shah Approves ₹1,658 Crore Recovery And Reconstruction Plan For Joshimath

- Joshimath, a town in Uttarakhand, faced severe challenges due to landslides and ground subsidence. The high-level central committee, led by **Union Home Minister Amit Shah**, approved a comprehensive recovery and reconstruction (R&R) plan amounting to **₹1,658.17 crore** to address the aftermath of these natural disasters.
- The **National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF)** will contribute ₹1079.96 crore through the Recovery and Reconstruction window. The state will provide ₹126.41 crore from its State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and an additional ₹451.80 crore from the state budget.

Blod+: India's First On-Demand Blood Platform

- Blod.in has unveiled its groundbreaking healthcare software and logistics platform, **Blod+**. This innovation aims to revolutionize blood management and delivery, addressing the **alarming issue of blood wastage** in healthcare facilities across the country.
- The platform's mission is to ensure that **hospitals have steady access to blood**, ultimately reducing wastage significantly. Blod+ has set new industry standards by significantly reducing the average sourcing time for blood.
- Blod+ surpasses industry norms, reducing the average sourcing time for blood from 6 hours to an average of **2 hours and 7 minutes**. This remarkable improvement ensures that critical patients receive timely access to blood, potentially saving countless lives.



RBI's Successful Withdrawal 97.26% Of ₹2,000 Banknotes In India

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has achieved a significant milestone in its monetary policy as it successfully withdrew **97.26 percent of the ₹2,000 banknotes** from circulation as of May 19, 2023.

- This move was initiated due to the fulfillment of its objective of introducing these notes, which was to meet the currency requirements of the economy after the withdrawal of legal tender status of all **₹500 and ₹1,000 banknotes** in circulation during the November-December 2016 demonetization.
- As of November 30, 2023, the total value of ₹2,000 banknotes in circulation has dwindled to ₹9,760 crore, representing a significant reduction from the initial ₹3.56 lakh crore.

Cabinet Approves Terms For 16th Finance Commission

- Recently, the Union Cabinet greenlit the terms of reference for the **Sixteenth Finance Commission (SFC)**. The SFC is slated to submit its comprehensive report by **October 31, 2025, covering a five-year period set to take effect on April 1, 2026**. The terms of reference also include a notable clause concerning the **disaster management fund**.
- The terms of reference, as released by the Cabinet, predominantly encompass constitutionally mandated provisions including the **distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the Central government and the states, principles governing grants-in-aid of state revenues from the Consolidated Fund of India, and measures to supplement resources for panchayats and municipalities in the states**.



India's Q2 GDP Soars To 7.6%, Outpacing Projections

- India's economy experienced a **remarkable growth of 7.6%** during the July-September quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24 (Q2FY24). This places India firmly as the **fastest-growing major economy globally**, as per the recent GDP data unveiled by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on November 30.
- The substantial uptick in GDP was primarily propelled by **robust performances in key sectors**,



including **manufacturing, mining, and construction**. Notably, government spending played a pivotal role in bolstering economic expansion during this period.

- The Q2 GDP growth surpassed both market expectations and the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) projections. The RBI had maintained a more conservative outlook, anticipating a **real GDP growth of 6.5%** for the fiscal year 2023-24.

PM Modi Launches LeadIT 2.0, Focusing On Inclusive Industry Transition

- On the sidelines of the 28th edition of the climate change conference, COP28, taking place in Dubai, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled **LeadIT 2.0** on Friday.
- The initiative, with a primary focus on an **inclusive and just industry transition**, aims to facilitate the co-development and transfer of low-carbon technology while providing financial assistance to emerging economies.
- The initiative seeks to bridge the technological gap by **promoting cooperation between nations** for the development and transfer of low-carbon technologies. The focus on inclusivity underscores the **importance of ensuring that emerging economies** have access to sustainable and environmentally friendly technologies.

PM Modi Proposes To Host COP33 In India In 2028

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** extended India's commitment to climate action by proposing to host the **UN climate meet (COP33)** in 2028. This offer was made during his address at the inaugural session of the **World Climate Action Summit at COP28** in Dubai.
- The Prime Minister outlined India's ambitious plans to triple its **renewable energy** capacity, develop alternative fuels like green hydrogen, and participate in the **Global Biofuels Alliance**. These initiatives demonstrate India's proactive steps towards a sustainable energy future



- Expressing gratitude for global support, Modi emphasized that the world recognizes the integral role of collective efforts in safeguarding humanity. He acknowledged that the support of the international community is crucial in bolstering India's climate initiatives.

3 Indian-origin women scientists among Australia's "Superstars Of STEM"

- **Three Indian-origin women** are among 60 scientists, technologists, engineers, and mathematicians who have been selected as **Australia's**



Superstars of STEM. This initiative aims to smash society's gender assumptions about scientists and increase the public visibility of females and non-binary people.

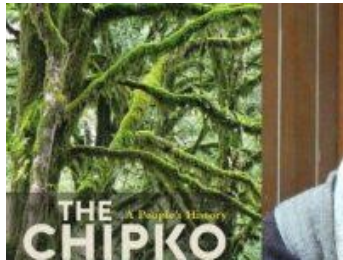
- This year among those recognised as Superstars of STEM include three Indian-origin women: **Neelima Kadiyala, Dr Ana Baburamani, and Dr Indrani Mukherjee**. Female scientists of Sri Lankan descent have also been chosen for distinction, in addition to Indians.
 - Every year **Science and Technology Australia (STA)**, which is the country's peak body in the sector and represents more than 105,000 scientists and technologists, supports 60 Australian experts employed in **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)** to become highly visible media and public role models.
 - The government intends to scale up the program, according to Australia's Minister of Industry and Science Ed Husic, who spoke at the event. The national STEM Program is currently being reviewed by the government, and it is intended to be scaled up even more
- ### India's Concerns Lead To Non-Signing Of COP28 Health & Climate Declaration
- India, a notable absentee from the list of signatories at the 28th UN Climate Change Conference (COP28), refrained from endorsing the **COP28 Declaration on Climate and Health**.
 - The primary point of contention arises from India's apprehensions about the practicality and achievability

of reducing greenhouse gas emissions for cooling within its healthcare infrastructure.

- India, facing significant healthcare challenges, expressed reservations about committing to the reduction of greenhouse gases for cooling applications within its healthcare facilities.
- A central objective of the declaration is a commitment to combating inequalities within and among countries. It stresses policies that accelerate the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, particularly **SDG3**, focusing on good health and well-being.

A book on Chipko Movement by Shekhar Pathak bags Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Prize 2022

- A book on the popular forest conservation campaign **Chipko Movement**, written by historian-activist **Shekhar Pathak**, was named the winner of the **Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay NIF Book Prize 2022**. Translated from Hindi by Manisha Chaudhry, “**The Chipko Movement: A People’s History**” was selected from a diverse shortlist of five books covering a wide expanse of modern Indian history and encompassing distinct topics and perspectives.
- The winner was selected by a six-member jury panel chaired by political scientist **Niraja Gopal Jayal**. The other jury members were entrepreneur **Manish Sabharwal**; historians **Srinath Raghavan** and **Nayanjot Lahiri**; former diplomat **Navtej Sarna**; and attorney **Rahul Matthan**.



Gajraj System: AI-Based Elephant Protection On Indian Railways

- **The Indian Railways** has initiated a pioneering step towards wildlife conservation by deploying the “**Gajraj system**,” an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solution designed to prevent elephant fatalities on railway tracks.
- This surveillance system is being implemented along a 700-kilometer stretch in forest areas to alert locomotive pilots of elephants’ presence on the tracks, thereby mitigating the risk of collisions.

- The system send Alerts to the train controller, station master, train drivers, and other stakeholders, when an elephant steps onto the track, the system detects the presence. The system proved notably effective in its initial deployment, with improvements based on field experience.

Nandan Nilekani, KP Singh, Nikhil Kamath On Forbes Asia Heroes Of Philanthropy List

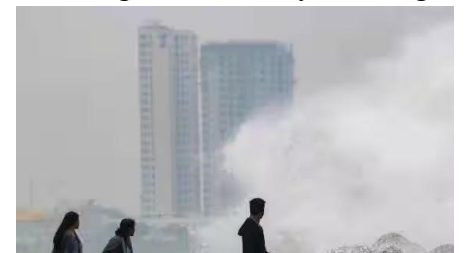
- Three prominent Indian business leaders – **Nandan Nilekani, KP Singh and Nikhil Kamath**, have earned a coveted spot on the **17th edition of Forbes Asia’s Heroes of Philanthropy list**.



- **Nadan Nilekani, co-founder and chairman of the renowned tech giant Infosys**, has been acknowledged for his substantial contribution of **Rs.3.2 billion (USD 38 million)** to his alma mater, **IIT Bombay**.
- **KP Singh, chairman emeritus at DLF**, made a remarkable move in August by divesting his remaining direct stake in the renowned real estate firm he once chaired. The divestment, amounting to **0.59% shareholding, generated a substantial Rs.7.3 billion**.
- **Nikhil kamat, co-founder of Zerodha**, is another notable name on the list. While the specifics of his philanthropic contributions are not detailed in the available information, his inclusion underscores the growing trend of business leaders across diverse sectors engaging in philanthropy.

Cyclone Michaung Likely To Enter Andhra Pradesh

- The deep depression looming over the Bay of Bengal has rapidly intensified, evolving into a **severe cyclonic storm** named ‘**Michaung**’ as per the latest update from the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).
- Cyclone Michaung is forecasted to make landfall near **Bapatla** on the morning of December 5, around



12 pm. Eight districts—**Tirupati, Nellore, Prakasam, Bapatla, Krishna, West Godavari, Konaseema, and Kakinada**—have been put on high alert.

- The IMD predicts the wind speed to escalate to severe cyclonic levels, with a maximum sustained speed ranging between 90-100 kmph, gusting up to 110 kmph. The impending cyclone is poised to **unleash heavy rains** across significant portions of **Tamil Nadu, southern Andhra Pradesh, and southern Odisha**.

PM Modi Announces Renaming Of Ranks In Indian Navy

- In a significant move, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** declared the Indian government's decision to revamp the ranks within the Indian Navy, aiming to eliminate colonial influences and infuse a distinct Indian cultural identity.
- The Prime Minister made this historic announcement during the Navy Day function held at the iconic Sindhudurg Fort in Maharashtra. The choice of venue itself underscores the commitment to embracing India's cultural roots, as Sindhudurg Fort holds historical significance tied to the Maratha empire.
- PM Modi emphasized that the restructuring of naval ranks is part of a broader initiative to shed colonial military legacies. The renaming process is intended to reflect India's rich cultural heritage, aligning the naval hierarchy more closely with indigenous traditions.

World's First Portable Hospital, 'Aarogya Maitri Cube', Unveiled In Gurugram

- India has unveiled the **world's first portable disaster hospital**, Aarogya Maitri Cube, a groundbreaking facility in Gurugram that can be airlifted and consists of **72 cubes**. This extraordinary endeavor is a component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious **"Project BHISHM"** (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri), unveiled in February 2022.
- The heart of this innovative disaster hospital lies in its **72 cubes**, each containing an array of **essential equipment and supplies**. Among these are



an operation theatre, a mini-ICU, ventilators, blood test equipment, an X-ray machine, a cooking station, food, water, shelter, a power generator, and more.

- One of the most remarkable features of the Aarogya Maitri Cube is its ability to handle a **wide range of severe injuries**. This include **40 bullet injuries, 25 major burns, around 10 head injuries, long limb fractures, spinal injuries, chest injuries, and spinal fractures**.

PM Modi Unveils Shivaji Maharaj Statue At Rajkot Fort In Maharashtra

- On December 4, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a historic moment by unveiling the statue of **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj** at Rajkot Fort in Maharashtra's Sindhudurg district.



- **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**, the visionary leader of the Maratha empire, was renowned for his strategic prowess in constructing coastal and sea forts. The unveiling ceremony highlighted his significant contribution to India's maritime history, with a special focus on the iconic **Sindhudurg Fort**.
- **Prime Minister Modi** shed light on how the **Maratha empire founder's seal** served as inspiration for the new naval ensign. This ensign was officially adopted last year during the commissioning of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier, **INS Vikrant**.

Bajaj Group Becomes Fifth Conglomerate To Breach ₹10 Lakh Crore In Mcap

- On **December 4, 2023**, the **Bajaj Group** achieved a significant milestone by surpassing **Rs.10 lakh crore in market capitalization**, making it the **fifth business houses to attain this feat**. This elite club already includes prominent names like **Tata, Reliance Industries, HDFC Bank and the Adani Group**.
- The market valuation of the Pune-based Bajaj Group has witnessed a remarkable **41% surge since April**, underscoring its robust performance in the financial landscape. Bajaj Auto emerged as a major contributor, posting a staggering **63% increase during the same period**.

Bharti Airtel Becomes The 8th Company To Surpass ₹6 Lakh Crore Mcap

- **Bharti Airtel**, one of India's leading telecommunications companies, achieved a significant milestone by becoming the **8th company** to surpass **Rs.6 lakh crore on December 4**.
- This surge was attributed to the positive market sentiment following the Bharatiya Janata Party's resounding victory in state elections. The company's stock witnessed a **2% increase** during Monday's trade, contributing to a **year-to-date gain of 28%**.
- Bharti Airtel joins the league of other Indian giants, including **Reliance Industries, TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, HUL, Infosys and ITC**, with a market capitalization exceeding **Rs.6 lakh crore**.

Kolkata Emerges Safest City For Third Year In A Row: NCRB Report

- In a recent report published by the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)**, **Kolkata** has emerged as the **safest city in India for the third consecutive year**. The city recorded the least number of cognisable offences per lakh population among metropolises, showcasing a remarkable feat in ensuring public safety.
- The NCRB data revealed that Kolkata reported **86.5 cases of cognisable offences per lakh people in 2022**. This marked a significant drop from the previous year's count of 103.4 cases, showcasing a consistent decline. In 2020, the number was higher at 129.5, indicating a positive trend in crime reduction.
- Following Kolkata in the rankings were **Pune**, with 280.7 cases, and **Hyderabad**, with 299.2 cases, of cognisable offences per lakh population. The report issued rankings after comparing 19 cities with over 20 lakh population, emphasizing the significant achievement of Kolkata in maintaining its status as the safest city.



India's Stock Market Surpasses \$4 Trillion Mark, Closing In On Hong Kong

- India's stock market achieved a significant milestone, surpassing a **market value of over \$4 trillion**. This development highlights the rapid growth of the world's fifth-largest equity market, closing the gap with a struggling Hong Kong. In less than three years, the market capitalization of companies listed on India's exchanges has surged by \$1 trillion.
- Having surpassed China as the world's most populous nation, India has also emerged as the fastest-growing major economy. The nation's political stability and robust domestic growth potential have positioned it as an attractive investment destination. Efforts to boost global investment in both capital markets and industrial production are underway.

Huma Qureshi Launches 1st Novel 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero'

- Bollywood actor **Huma Qureshi** has ventured into a new realm as an author, marking her debut with the fantasy fiction novel titled **'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero.'**
- The book was officially launched during the 12th edition of the Bangalore Literature Festival (BLF), adding a new chapter to Huma Qureshi's creative journey.
- 'Zeba: An Accidental Superhero' unfolds in a fantasy world, precisely spanning the years between 1992 and 2019. The narrative weaves around a make-believe kingdom and an evil king, with a central focus on a character named Zeba. This young girl possesses extraordinary superpowers and becomes the key player in the battle against the malevolent ruler, showcasing the triumph of goodness over evil.



Akshata Krishnamurthy Becomes First Indian To Operate Mars Rover

- **Dr. Akshata Krishnamurthy** becomes the First Indian to operate Mars Rover. With a special degree from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), of her



journey is a great example of not giving up on your dreams. Her work at NASA, especially with the Perseverance rover, is like a guide for other people who love space.

- This mission wants to find out more about Mars by collecting things from there. Akshata's job as a leader in the NASA team shows how much she knows about space and how much she loves exploring it.
- Akshata has been working with NASA for more than five years. She did some important tasks for different space missions, especially one called the Perseverance rover. This rover is on a mission to collect things from Mars, which will help us understand more about the red planet.

Gujarat's Garba Dance Enters UNESCO's 'Intangible Cultural Heritage' List

- Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel declared that the vibrant and culturally significant **Garba dance** has been officially recognized by UNESCO, earning a coveted spot on the "**Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.**"
- The Garba dance, deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of Gujarat, has long been a symbol of devotion to **Goddess Mother during the auspicious Navratri festival.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also commended the global acknowledgment of this traditional Indian dance form.
- With this inclusion, Garba joins a distinguished list of Indian cultural phenomena on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Notable mentions include **Ramlila, Vedic Chants, Kumbh Mela, and Durga Puja,** collectively enriching the world's appreciation of India's diverse and vibrant cultural heritage.

Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase I Expenditure Reaches Rs 4.10 Trillion: Update By Nitin Gadkari

- As of October 31, 2023, a total expenditure of **Rs 4.10 lakh crore** has been incurred under **Bharatmala Pariyojana Phase I (BPP-I),** according to Union Road Transport and Highways Minister **Nitin Gadkari.**



- The National Highways Authority of India (NHA) collected Rs 53,536.48 crore from 2020-21 until November 23, 2023, as user fees at toll plazas on national highways through FASTag.
- NHA has raised a significant amount of Rs 70,127 crore through the monetization of National Highways using Toll Operate and Transfer (TOT), Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvIT), and project-based financing modes.

Nirmala Sitharaman And Three Other Indians Secure Spots On Forbes' "World's 100 Most Powerful Women" Of 2023

- In the latest release of Forbes' annual list of "**The World's Most Powerful Women,**" four notable Indian figures have garnered recognition.



- These are : Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, HCL Corporation Chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra, Steel Authority Of India Chairperson Soma Mondal, and Biocon Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw.
- The top positions on the list are dominated by politicians, with Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, claiming the number 1 spot. Following her are European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde, US Vice President Kamala Harris, and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni.

Wax Statue Of Baba Ambedkar Installed In Jaipur Wax Museum

- In a significant tribute to the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar,** a wax statue has been unveiled at the **Jaipur Wax Museum, Nahargarh Fort.**
- Crafted with meticulous detail, the wax statue stands at an impressive **height of 5 feet 11 inches, weighing approximately 38 kg.** The sculpture faithfully replicates the **iconic image of Baba Saheb,** depicting him with the **Constitution book in hand and adorned in his signature blue suit.**

- With the inclusion of the **wax statue of Baba Saheb Ambedkar**, the Jaipur Wax Museum now boasts a **collection 43 wax figures of prominent personalities**. Notably, it holds the distinction of being the wax museum in the world situated within a “**heritage site**” – the historic Nahargarh Fort.

Supreme Court Upholds Abrogation Of Article 370: Key Judgement Highlights

- The Supreme Court’s landmark decision on December 11, 2023, upheld the Union Government’s 2019 move to abrogate the **special status of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) under Article 370** of the Constitution.



- The judgment, delivered by a Constitution bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, addressed key constitutional questions and outlined significant conclusions.
- The **Supreme Court validated** the Union Government’s decision to revoke the special status of J&K under Article 370, emphasizing that the state had no internal sovereignty. The court clarified that the concurrence of the State Government was not necessary, and Article 370 was deemed a temporary provision.

ITC becomes world’s 3rd most valuable tobacco company after London-based BAT sinks

- In a significant market shift, **ITC Ltd** has emerged as the **third most valuable tobacco company globally**, overtaking **British American Tobacco (BAT)**. The transition follows a sell-off in BAT shares, underscoring ITC’s dynamic business diversification.
- As of the latest trading day, ITC boasts a market capitalization of **\$68.6 billion**, outperforming BAT, which stands at **\$64.9 billion**. ITC’s stock has experienced a remarkable upward trend, gaining **34.7%** in one year and an impressive **125.5%** in three years.
- **ITC’s diversification** from tobacco to **FMCG**, hotels, papers, and **agri-products** has fueled investor confidence. The tobacco business now constitutes

only **37%** of ITC’s gross revenue but remains a significant contributor, constituting **78%** of the company’s profit before tax.

India’s Remarkable Climb To 7th Place In Global Climate Performance Index

- In a major leap towards sustainable practices, India has clinched the **7th position** in the latest edition of the **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)**. The announcement, made during the COP-28 in Dubai, solidifies India’s status as a top performer for the fifth consecutive year.
- India’s exceptional ascent is primarily attributed to its outstanding performance in renewable energy, surpassing other developing nations. This achievement is particularly notable, considering the comparative evaluation within the same timeframe.
- India shines in the greenhouse gas emissions category, boasting low emission levels and minimal travel-related impact. The focus on the food sector, a crucial component of the CCPI, significantly contributes to India’s remarkable standing.



PM Modi Retains Title Of World’s Most Popular Leader With 76% Approval: Morning Consult Survey

- In a recent survey conducted by US-based consultancy firm ‘**Morning Consult**,’ Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has secured the top position as the world’s most popular leader, boasting an impressive **approval rating of 76%**. This notable achievement places him more than 10 percentage points ahead of the next leader in the rankings.
- Modi has consistently held the top position, maintaining a **76% approval rating** in the September survey. This trend aligns with his previous rankings in **April (76%) and February (78%)**.



Rank	Leader	Approval Rating (%)
1	Prime Minister Narendra Modi	76
2	President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Mexico)	66
3	President Alain Berset (Switzerland)	58
4	President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Brazil)	49
7	President Joe Biden (United States)	40

Indian Parliament Face Security Breach 'Intruders Throw Smoke Bombs' At MPs

- Two unidentified individuals entered the chambers of the **lower house of India's parliament**, allegedly throwing smoke bombs, marking a significant security lapse. This incident occurred on the **22nd anniversary of a 2001 terrorist attack** on parliament that resulted in casualties.
- The two person entered the area where lawmakers were seated during the zero hour, releasing smoke canisters and filling the space with yellow smoke. The two persons, detained for the protest outside the Parliament are identified as—identified as Neelam (42) and Amol Shinde (25).

Lok Sabha Approves Additional Spending Of ₹58,378 Crore In Current Fiscal

- In a recent development, the Lok Sabha has given its approval for a net **additional spending of ₹58,378 crore** in the ongoing fiscal year, set to conclude in March 2024. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the government's commitment to fiscal prudence while maintaining a focus on social welfare programs.
- The gross additional spending sought by the government amounted to **over ₹1.29 lakh crore**, with a significant portion allocated to key areas. Notably, **₹13,351 crore** has been earmarked for the



fertilizer subsidy, demonstrating the government's support for the agricultural sector. Additionally, about **₹7,000 crore** is allocated for spending by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, emphasizing the importance of food security measures.

PM Modi Launches AI Summit At Bharat Mandapam In New Delhi

- The annual **Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence (GPAI)** Summit commenced at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on December 12, emphasizing crucial discussions on **AI safety** and development challenges.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his inaugural address, stressed the importance of **addressing ethical, economic, and social aspects** to build trust in AI. AI policymakers and industry experts were engaged in discussions, covering a broad spectrum of topics.
- Prime Minister Modi raised critical questions about **AI's impact on employment, global education curriculum**, and the need for standardized AI standards. He addressed concerns related to the misuse of AI, **invoking the idea of watermarking AI products** to distinguish generated content.

Mercer's Survey: Pune 2nd In India For Quality Of Living After Hyderabad

- In a recent release of the **Quality of Living Index 2023** by Mercer, a renowned global consultant for businesses, **Pune has secured the second-best position** in terms of 'quality of life' in India. The city trails just behind Hyderabad, marking a significant improvement from the previous rankings.
- The Quality of Living City Index by Mercer positions Pune at **154th**, with **Hyderabad slightly ahead at 153rd**, and **Bengaluru following closely at 156th**. Vienna (Austria), Zurich (Switzerland), and Vancouver (Canada) clinched the top three spots globally in that order, according to the 2023 index.
- The last release of these rankings occurred in 2019, where **both Pune and Hyderabad shared the 143rd position**. The rankings for 2023 highlight the continuous endeavors aimed at improving the city's infrastructure and raising overall living standards.

PM Modi Unveils Varanasi's Swarved Mahamandir, World's Largest Meditation Center

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** marked a historic moment on Monday as he inaugurated the **Swarved Mahamandir in Umaraha, Varanasi**. The temple derives its name from the Swarved, a spiritual text authored by **Sadguru Shri Sadafal Deoji Maharaj**, the eternal yogi, and founder of Vihangam Yoga.
- This newly constructed meditation center stands tall at **seven floors**, accommodating an impressive **20,000 devotees** at a time for meditation. The Swarved Mahamandir is a mesmerizing architectural marvel, seamlessly **blending traditional and modern design elements**.
- Intricate marble carvings adorn its structure, and towering **lotus-shaped domes** reflect the rich cultural heritage of Varanasi. The seven-floor superstructure stands as a testament to the city's spiritual legacy while embracing contemporary aesthetics.



Air India Unveils New Uniforms For Cabin, Cockpit Crew Designed By Fashion Designer Manish Malhotra

- **Air India**, the national carrier, recently revealed its revamped uniforms for **cabin crew and pilots**, designed by renowned **fashion designer Manish Malhotra**. The grand unveiling took place on **December 12**, adding a touch of glamour and sophistication to the airline's image.
- The female cabin crew will sport **ready-to-wear ombre sarees**, skillfully crafted with intricate **gharokha patterns and adorned with the Vista**, the new Air India logo icon. This neo-traditional look is paired with blouses and blazers, adding a modern touch to the ensemble. Notably, the ready-to-wear sarees can also be optionally paired with comfortable pants, providing greater flexibility for the crew to express their individual styles.
- In addition to the uniforms, the designer curated footwear for the cabin crew. Female crew members will wear **dual-tone (black and burgundy) block heels**, while male cabin crew will opt for comfortable black brogues. The uniforms also include pearl

earnings and sling bags for female cabin crew, adding to the overall polished look.

Shah Rukh Khan Tops UK's List Of World's Top 50 Asian Celebrities Post Success Of Pathaan And Jawan

- As 2023 draws to a close, **Shah Rukh Khan** is poised to achieve a remarkable feat as the **first leading man from the modern era** to deliver **three massive Bollywood blockbuster hits in a single calendar year**.
- While Shah Rukh Khan claimed the top position, the talented and popular actress **Alia Bhatt secured the second spot on the list**. Her stellar performances and widespread acclaim contribute to her standing as one of the leading actors in the industry. The recognition reaffirms her status as a powerhouse performer in Bollywood.
- Securing the fourth place on the prestigious list is **Diljit Dosanjh**, celebrated as the **biggest Punjabi star**. Dosanjh's noteworthy achievement includes a performance at the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in California, adding a unique flavor to his already illustrious career.

IndiGo Becomes First Indian Airline To Carry 100 Million Passengers A Year

- **IndiGo**, India's leading carrier, has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the **first Indian airline to transport 100 million passengers** in a single calendar year.
- This accomplishment places IndiGo in an elite global club of carriers operating such a massive scale, solidifying its position among the **world's top-10 airlines by passenger traffic**.
- IndiGo's success is further underscored by its **substantial backlog of close to 1,000 planes**, set to be delivered over the next decade. The airline's aggressive approach to fleet expansion positions it for sustained growth and increased market share in the highly competitive aviation industry.



Parliament Passes Post Office Bill, 2023, Replacing 125-Year-Old Indian Post Office Act, 1898

- The Indian Parliament recently approved the **Post Office Bill, 2023**, marking a significant overhaul of the 125-year-old Indian Post Office Act, 1898. The new legislation aims to modernize and consolidate the legal framework governing post offices in India.
- The Bill grants post office employees the authority to open, detain, or intercept any item during transmission in the interest of national security or public safety. However, this power is subject to specific conditions.
- While providing immunity for post office employees from liability in delivering services, the Bill includes conditions. Officers are exempt unless they act fraudulently or willfully cause loss, delay, or misdelivery of services.



Zepto Founders Top Hurun India's List Of 'Top 100 Under 30'

- The recently unveiled **Hurun India Top 100 Under 30 List 2023** has showcased inspiring success stories of young entrepreneurs making waves in various industries.
- Kaivalya Vohra (21) and Aadit Palicha (22), the founders of the Quick Commerce app Zepto, have claimed the top spots. Zepto's commitment to delivering a diverse array of products within minutes has garnered attention, making it the first Indian unicorn of 2023 with a valuation of \$1.4 billion.
- At a close second is Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash (24), founder of Bhanzu. Beyond his entrepreneurial endeavors, he is globally recognized as the world's fastest human calculator. His research initiative has positively impacted over 2 million students in India.

Parliament Greenlights Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University In Telangana

- The Indian Parliament has given its nod to the establishment of the **Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University** in Telangana. The approval comes in the form of **The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023**, which successfully passed

through the Rajya Sabha, having been previously cleared by the Lok Sabha.

- This move signifies a significant stride towards providing quality education in tribal regions and fostering inclusive learning environments. Minister Pradhan emphasized the continuous efforts to enhance higher education in the country, ensuring that students from all backgrounds have access to quality learning opportunities.

Surat Diamond Bourse Inaugurated By PM Modi

- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** recently inaugurated the Surat Diamond Exchange, marking a historic moment as it surpassed the Pentagon to become the **world's largest office complex**.
- This sprawling complex spans an impressive 6.7 million square feet and was completed at a cost of ₹32 billion. The iconic Pentagon, a symbol of American power, has an area of 6.5 million square feet.
- The Surat Diamond Bourse is a crucial component of the Diamond Research and Mercantile (DREAM) City. With an astounding 67 lakh square feet of floor space, the SDB is now recognized as the world's largest office building, housing nearly 4,500 diamond trading offices.

Bhashini AI Translates PM Modi's Speech In Indian Languages

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi utilized an **AI-powered Indian language translation tool, 'Bhashini'**, during a recent speech in Uttar Pradesh.
- The tool, developed by the government, **aims to facilitate real-time translation**, fostering communication across diverse linguistic communities within the country.
- 'Bhashini' operates as an **AI-driven language translation system**, facilitating conversations between speakers of different Indian languages. It allows individuals to communicate in their native language, effectively breaking down language barriers.

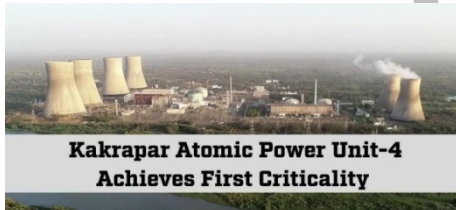


Implementation Of Anand Marriage Act In Jammu And Kashmir

- The Jammu and Kashmir administration has taken a significant step towards fulfilling a long-standing demand of the Sikh community by **implementing the Anand Marriage Act**.
- This act provides statutory recognition to Sikh marriage rituals, allowing Sikh couples to register their marriages under specific regulations instead of the Hindu Marriage Act.
- The set of regulations, titled **‘Jammu and Kashmir Anand Marriage Registration Rules, 2023,’** outlines the procedures for registering “Anand marriages.”
- According to a government notification issued on November 30, tehsildars within their respective territorial jurisdictions will serve as registrars for such marriages.

Kakrapar Unit-4 Power Project Attains Initial Criticality

- The **Unit 4 of Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP 4 – 700 MW)** marked a historic moment in India’s nuclear power landscape by achieving criticality, signifying the initiation of controlled fission chain reactions.
- This significant milestone, attained on December 17, 2023, is a testament to the stringent safety standards set by the **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)**.
- This achievement reinforces the commitment to **AtmaNirbhar Bharat**, with the reactors designed, constructed, commissioned, and operated by the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), while equipment supply and contracts execution were handled by Indian industries and companies.



Govt Suggests ‘Decriminalizing Medical Negligence’ In New Criminal Law Bill

- Union Home Minister **Amit Shah** has announced a significant amendment to the **criminal law bill** that will **exempt doctors from criminal prosecution in cases of death due to medical negligence**.
- As per the existing legal framework, the death of patients under a doctor’s care is categorized as

criminal negligence under **Section 304A of the Indian Penal Code**.

- This section stipulates that anyone causing the death of a person through a rash or negligent act may face imprisonment for up to two years, a fine, or both.
- The proposed amendment aims to **protect doctors from unwarranted criminal prosecution**, fostering a more supportive environment for medical practitioners.

International Gita Mahotsav Commences In Kurukshetra, Haryana

- **Kurukshetra**, a sacred town resonating with cultural heritage and spiritual significance, witnessed a grand spectacle as it hosted the inauguration of the **International Gita Mahotsav – 2023**.



- The auspicious event kicked off with the **enchanting Gita Aarti and worship of the holy scripture at Brahma Sarovar**.
- The International Gita Mahotsav promises a holistic experience with global Gita recitations involving 18,000 students. The event also features an **International Gita Seminar**, a saints’ conference, aarti at the Brahma Sarovar, Deepotsav, and cultural programs at 164 locations within a 48-km radius.

Transition Of National Academy Of Indian Railways Assets To Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya

- In a landmark decision, the **Ministry of Railways** has issued a directive for the handover of all assets from the **National Academy of Indian Railways (NAIR)**, located in **Vadodara**, to **Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV)**.
- This directive comes in alignment with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bolster the newly envisioned Central university. The move is poised to impact the esteemed legacy of NAIR, a pivotal



training facility for railway officers over several decades.

- To ensure a smooth transition and ongoing collaboration, the Railway Board emphasized that all future annual training calendars of NAIR and Central Training Institutes (CTIs) should be coordinated with GSV.
- Furthermore, GSV will be accorded preference for the utilization of these facilities, indicating a paradigm shift in the dynamics of training programs for railway officers.

Telecom Bill 2023 Approved By Parliament

- The Lok Sabha recently approved the **Telecommunications Bill, 2023**, a significant piece of legislation that empowers the government to temporarily take control of telecom services in the interest of national security.



- The bill, passed by a voice vote after a brief debate, also addresses the allocation of satellite spectrum and grants the government authority to assume possession of a telecom network during public emergencies or in the interest of public safety.
- The bill, spearheaded by **Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw**, outlines provisions for stopping transmission and intercepting messages in case of public emergencies. It emphasizes that such measures are essential to prevent incitement for committing offenses during times of crisis.

President Draupadi Murmu Gives Assent To Three Criminal Code Bills

- On December 25, **President Draupadi Murmu** granted her assent to three groundbreaking criminal code bills, marking a significant shift in India's legal landscape.
- These bills, namely the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita**, the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita**, and the



Bharatiya Sakshya Act, received parliamentary approval and are poised to replace the age-old Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, and the Indian Evidence Act of 1872.

- The trio of bills aims to redefine various offenses and their corresponding punishments. Notably, the legislation provides a clear definition of terrorism and introduces a novel section titled "Offences Against the State." Strikingly, it abolishes sedition as a crime, replacing it with a more contemporary framework.

Bihar Police To Launch 'Mission Investigation@75 Days' From January 1, 2024

- The Bihar Police has announced the implementation of '**Mission Investigation@75 Days**,' aiming to streamline and expedite the criminal justice process in the state.



- Starting from January 1 next year, investigators will be mandated to complete the **investigation of cases within 75 days of the registration of First Information Reports (FIRs)**.
- The initiative aims to ensure that investigations, including the filing of chargesheets, are concluded within 75 days of the registration of FIRs.

Raghuram Rajan's New Book 'Breaking The Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future,' Released

- Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor, **Raghuram Rajan**, in collaboration with economist **Rohit Lamba**, has released a groundbreaking book titled '**Breaking the Mould: Reimagining India's Economic Future**.'
- This latest addition to Rajan's literary contributions marks a significant exploration into the potential and challenges of India's economic trajectory.
- 'Breaking the Mould' seeks to elucidate strategies for accelerating India's economic development. The authors propose investing in human capital, expanding opportunities in high-skilled services and innovative



manufacturing, and transforming India into a hub of ideas and creativity.

Gwalior Achieves Guinness Record With 'Largest Tabla Ensemble' At Tansen Festival

- **Gwalior**, often hailed as the **City of Music**, recently witnessed an extraordinary spectacle as **1500 tabla performers converged at the historic KarnaMahal of Gwalior Fort.**



- The event, known as '**TablaDarbar**,' unfolded as part of the annual '**TansenSamaroh**' music festival at the iconic **KarnaMahal of Gwalior Fort** on the evening of December 25th, drawing attention and acclaim from distinguished guests, including **Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav.**
- A team of three from the **Guinness Book of World Records** was present to personally supervise and document this unprecedented '**TablaDarbar**' performance. The meticulous recording process added an official seal to the city's musical achievement.

Indian PM Crosses 2 Crore Subscribers, Leaving World Leaders In The Dust

- Prime Minister **NarendraModi** has cemented his dominance in the digital realm, becoming the first world leader to surpass the **2 crore subscriber mark on YouTube.**
- With over **4.5 billion views on his channel**, Modi has left his global peers trailing far behind, highlighting his adeptness at utilizing social media for public engagement.
- Modi enjoys a commanding lead in both subscribers and views, with **Former Brazilian President JairBolsonaro** a distant second at 64 lakh subscribers, less than a third of Modi's total.

Coca-Cola Scores A Victory Lap: Secures 8-Year Partnership With ICC As Global Cricket Partner

- The iconic brand **Coca-Cola** has cemented its long-standing relationship with the sport, signing an eight-year deal as the **global partner of the International Cricket Council (ICC)** until the end of **2031.**

- This partnership marks a significant extension from their initial five-year agreement in 2019, solidifying Coca-Cola's position as a major player in the cricketing world.
- This extended partnership stands as one of the longest-ever collaborations between the ICC and a single brand, highlighting the mutual strength and value both parties find in this association.

'Word Of The Year' (2023) By Different Dictionaries

- **Oxford Dictionary:** Rising to the top spot for Oxford is "**Rizz**", a slang term referring to one's natural charm, charisma, and ability to attract romantic partners.
- **Merriam-Webster:** Merriam-Webster champions "**Authentic**" as its Word of the Year. This choice highlights a yearning for genuineness and self-expression in a world increasingly saturated with artifice and digital filters.
- **Collins Dictionary:** For Collins Dictionary, the future reigns supreme. Their Word of the Year is "**AI**" (**artificial intelligence**), recognizing its transformative potential and its ever-growing influence on various aspects of our lives.
- **Cambridge Dictionary and Dictionary.com:** Interestingly, both Cambridge Dictionary and Dictionary.com share the same Word of the Year: "**Hallucinate**".

WORD OF THE YEAR 2023

IOA Forms Ad Hoc Committee To Govern Suspended WFI

- In response to the suspension of the **Wrestling Federation of India (WFI)** by the Sports Ministry, the **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** has established a three-member ad hoc committee to oversee the day-to-day operations of the WFI.
- The Sports Ministry took action three days after the WFI elected new office bearers, including **Sanjay Singh** as president. The



ministry accused the WFI of violating its own constitution and instructed the IOA to form an ad-hoc panel.

- The committee is tasked with overseeing various aspects of WFI's operations, including athlete selection, international event participation, organizing sports activities, managing finances, handling the website, and other related responsibilities.

MHA Declares Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (MasaratAlam Faction) Unlawful Under UAPA

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has designated the **Muslim League Jammu Kashmir (MasaratAlam faction)** as an "unlawful association" for a five-year period under the anti-terror **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)**.



- The Ministry revealed that the outfit had been actively raising funds through various sources, including Pakistan and its proxy organizations, to perpetrate unlawful activities.
- The organization's objectives included seeking the freedom of Jammu and Kashmir from India, aspiring to merge the region with Pakistan, and establish Islamic rule.

Hyderabad Leads In Food Adulteration Cases: NCRB

- The **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** recently revealed alarming data that sheds light on the severity of **Adulteration**, especially in the city of Hyderabad and its surrounding areas.
- The NCRB data pointed out that **Hyderabad topped the nation in food adulteration cases in 2022**. In close second place was **Andhra Pradesh**, trailing after **Telangana**.
- Among 19 major Indian cities, a total of 291 cases of adulterated food were reported, with a staggering 246 cases emerging from Hyderabad alone. This unsettling trend underscores a pressing concern for the city's food safety.

Ayodhya Railway Station To Be Renamed As AyodhyaDham

- The holy city of **Ayodhya** is gearing up for a major transformation, with the renaming of its iconic railway junction and the inauguration of a brand new airport.
- The **AyodhyaDham railway station** is now a state-of-the-art facility that seamlessly blends ancient Indian architecture with modern amenities. The station building resembles a majestic temple, adorned with domes, pillars, arches, and murals depicting the life and glory of Lord Rama.
- Located about 25 kilometers from the city, the new airport is poised to become a game-changer for Ayodhya's connectivity and accessibility. The airport will cater to both domestic and international flights, making it easier for pilgrims and tourists from all over the world to reach the holy city.

Ayodhya Airport To Be Renamed Maharishi Valmiki Airport

- **Ayodhya**, the holy city in Uttar Pradesh, is all set to get its first international airport, marking a significant development in its pilgrimage and tourism potential.
- The airport currently boasts the lengthy name "**Maryada Purushottam Shri Ram International Airport.**"
- The Yogi Adityanath government is reportedly considering renaming it "**Maharishi Valmiki Airport,**" honoring the revered poet who authored the epic Ramayana.
- The proposed name change aligns with the religious significance of the city and pays homage to Maharishi Valmiki, whose Ramayana immortalized the story of Lord Rama.

Gujarat Claims The Title Of India's Petro Capital

- **Gujarat** has emerged as the **nation's petrochemical powerhouse**, boasting the world's largest grassroots oil refinery and a state-of-the-art petrochemical complex.
- The dynamic growth of the petrochemical sector in Gujarat is exemplified by the monumental achievements of Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) Jamnagar refinery and



the ONGC Petro additions Limited (OPaL) petrochemical complex in Dahej.

- With established players like **Reliance, Shell, ONGC,** and others having firmly established their manufacturing units in Gujarat, experts foresee the state becoming unparalleled in the chemicals and petrochemicals sector.
- The upcoming **10th edition of VGGS,** themed 'Gateway to the Future,' is poised to further boost investments and collaborations in the petrochemical domain.

Gujarat To Unveil India's First Submarine Tourism In Dwarka

- The **Gujarat government,** in collaboration with **Mazgaon Dock**

Limited (MDL), is set to make waves in the tourism industry by



introducing **India's first submarine tourism venture.**

- This ambitious project aims to explore the mesmerizing marine life surrounding Bet Dwarka, a sacred island off the coast of Dwarka city, steeped in mythological significance within Hinduism.
- Tourists will have the opportunity to **dive 100 meters below the sea surface in a specially designed submarine,** providing an up-close encounter with the rich marine life surrounding the island.
- The tourism facility is expected to be operationalized **before Diwali in 2024,** marking a festive occasion for both locals and tourists.

ULFA Peace Accord Marks Historic Day For Assam: Amit Shah

- The pro-talks faction of the **United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)** inked a historic peace accord with the central and state governments, marking a significant stride towards ending decades of insurgency in Assam.

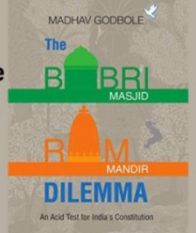


- The ULFA's commitment to renounce violence and disband the organization was a pivotal aspect of the accord, fostering an atmosphere of peace.
- Embracing the democratic process, the ULFA pledged to participate in peaceful political activities within the framework of the law, promoting stability and unity.

A Book Titled "The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma" Authored By MadhavGodbole

- The **Babri Masjid Ram Mandir dispute** has been a longstanding and contentious issue in India, intricately woven into the fabric of its history and politics.

A Book Titled "The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma" Authored by Madhav Godbole



- A recent publication, titled "**The Babri Masjid Ram Mandir Dilemma: An Acid Test for India's Constitution,**" authored by **MadhavGodbole** delves into the complexities of the issue, emphasizing the missed opportunities for resolution and the imperative for a modern and equitable solution.
- The book underscores the possibility of preventing the **Babri Masjid's demolition,** citing instances where timely intervention by leaders such as **Rajiv Gandhi, V.P. Singh, and P.V. NarasimhaRao** could have averted the hardening of political positions.

International

India Resumes Venezuelan Crude Oil Imports, Explores Direct Deals

- Indian refiners, including Reliance Industries, have reinitiated the import of Venezuelan crude oil through intermediaries. The move comes in the wake of the temporary lifting of U.S. sanctions on Venezuela, opening avenues for direct deals between Indian companies and Venezuela's state-owned oil firm, PDVSA.
- Reliance (RELI.NS)**, one of India's major conglomerates, is set to engage in discussions with PDVSA executives next week regarding direct crude oil sales. The easing of U.S. sanctions in October prompted a resurgence in Venezuelan oil exports, mainly facilitated by middlemen and traders, particularly to China.
- Notable transactions involve trading house Vitol selling 1.5 million barrels to Indian Oil Corp (IOC.NS) and 500,000 barrels to HPCL-Mittal Energy (HMEL), a joint venture between Hindustan Petroleum Corp (HPCL.NS) and Mittal Energy Investmen



India Re-Elected To International Maritime Organization With Highest Vote Tally

- India has been re-elected to the **International Maritime Organization (IMO) Council** for the 2024-25 biennium with the highest tally. The **Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal**, expressed gratitude for the international support.
- India's re-election places it among the ten states with the **"largest interest in international seaborne trade,"** alongside influential nations such as Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- The **IMO Council**, serving as the **executive organ of the International Maritime Organization**, holds a



pivotal role in supervising the organization's work. Responsible for overseeing maritime industry regulations, the council supports and shapes global trade, transportation and all marine operations.

"Rizz" Crowned Oxford University Press Word Of The Year By Generation Z

- Oxford University Press** has unveiled **"Rizz"** as its Word of the Year, reflecting the linguistic choices of Generation Z. The term, used to describe someone's ability to attract or seduce another person, triumphed over finalists like **"Swiftie," "situationship,"** and **"prompt"** in the annual decision made by language experts at the renowned publisher of the Oxford English Dictionary.
- The selection of **"rizz"** as the Word of the Year by Oxford University Press highlights the dynamic nature of language, especially in the realm of Generation Z. This linguistic evolution serves as a testament to the ever-changing landscape of communication, reflecting the unique ways in which younger generations shape and redefine the words that encapsulate their experiences, perspectives, and interactions in the modern world.

Fusion Milestone: Japan Unveils JT-60SA, The World's Largest Experimental Nuclear Fusion Reactor

- In a historic moment for the field of nuclear fusion research, the **JT-60SA**, the world's largest and most advanced experimental **nuclear fusion reactor**, has officially commenced operations in **Japan's Ibaraki Prefecture**.
- Developed as a collaborative effort between the European Union and Japan, the JT-60SA represents a significant step forward in harnessing the potential of nuclear fusion as a clean and sustainable energy source.
- Standing six stories high within a hangar in Naka, north of Tokyo, the JT-60SA reactor features a doughnut-shaped **"tokamak"** vessel designed to contain swirling plasma heated to an astounding 200 million degrees Celsius.
- This state-of-the-art facility serves as a precursor to the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) in France, showcasing the collaborative spirit in the global pursuit of fusion energy.

Google Doodle Celebrates ‘Ahmed’ The Elephant Known For His Big Tusks

- **Google Doodle**, the creative and artistic platform used by Google to commemorate significant events and individuals, has dedicated a doodle today to **Ahmed, the Elephant**.
- Ahmed’s story is a remarkable tale of a **majestic elephant born in 1919 in the forests of Mount Marsabit, Kenya**. The doodle, featuring illustrations of elephants and tourists, serves as a tribute to Ahmed’s legacy and the efforts to protect him from poachers.
- Ahmed rose to prominence in the **1960s** when hikers in the Northern Kenya mountains spotted him. His massive tusks, reported to scrape the ground, set him apart from other elephants and led to global recognition. Ahmed soon became known as **“The King of Marsabit.”**

Indonesia’s Marapi Volcano Eruption

- **Indonesia’s Mount Marapi**, located in **West Sumatra**, recently erupted, leading to a tragic incident resulting in the loss of lives and the disappearance of several climbers. The eruption occurred on **December 3, 2023**, catching many by surprise as authorities scrambled to evacuate those in the vicinity.
- As Mount Marapi unleashed its fury, a massive cloud of volcanic ash blanketed the sky and debris covered roads and vehicles. The eruption took place with **75 people in the area** and while efforts were made to evacuate, **26 individuals were left behind**.
- **Indonesia** is situated on the **“Ring of Fire,”** a volatile tectonic region known for its seismic and volcanic activity. The country boasts **127 active volcanoes and Mount Marapi, standing at 2,891 meters (approximately 9,500 feet)**, is among the most active on **Sumatra**.

Google Reveals ‘Gemini’, Its Biggest AI Model

- Google parent company **Alphabet** made a significant announcement on December 6, unveiling **Gemini**, its latest and most advanced AI model to date. Gemini represents a major leap forward for the tech giant in the rapidly evolving field of artificial intelligence.
- Gemini marks the first AI model to emerge from Alphabet following the merger of its renowned AI research units, **DeepMind** and **Google Brain**. The amalgamation has given rise to a unified division

named **Google DeepMind**, helmed by DeepMind CEO Demis Hassabis.

- Gemini sets itself apart by being **“multimodal,”** demonstrating the ability to comprehend and process diverse types of information concurrently. This includes **text, code, audio, images, and videos**, positioning Gemini as a versatile tool for a wide range of applications.

Taylor Swift Named Time Magazine’s Person Of The Year

- **Taylor Swift** has been named **Time Magazine’s Person of the Year for 2023**. This recognition comes on the heels of her title as the most-played artist on Spotify, underscoring the widespread impact of her music and influence.
- This honour serves as a reflection of her multifaceted impact on music, culture, and society. Beyond the accolades and financial success, Swift’s ability to connect with audiences on a global scale showcases the enduring power of her artistry.
- Swift faced tough competition for the Person of the Year title, standing out among a diverse group of finalists that included Barbie, King Charles III, and OpenAI chief executive Sam Altman. Time Magazine’s selection acknowledges not only Swift’s individual achievements but also her cultural resonance and influence.

Lahore Leads In Global Pollution Ranking

- **Lahore**, the second-largest city in Pakistan, recently earned the dubious distinction of having the **worst air quality in the world**, with a hazardous Air Quality Index (AQI) of 400 in the morning.
- The AQI is calculated based on five categories of pollutants: **ground-level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide**. Each of these pollutants has distinct sources, ranging from industrial emissions to vehicular exhaust and agricultural activities.
- The consequences of Lahore’s air quality crisis extend beyond mere discomfort. Prolonged exposure to high levels of air pollution can lead to severe health issues, including **respiratory problems, cardiovascular diseases, and other respiratory illnesses**.

China Unveils World's First 4th-Generation Nuclear Reactor

- **China** has achieved a significant milestone in its quest to shift away from traditional coal-fired power plants and decrease its reliance on foreign technologies.



- Recently, the **Shidao Bay nuclear power plant** in eastern Shandong province commenced commercial operations, heralding the era of next-generation gas-cooled nuclear reactors.
- The Shidao Bay plant distinguishes itself by **utilizing two high-temperature reactors cooled by gas**, a departure from conventional pressurized water cooling systems.
- A noteworthy aspect of the Shidao Bay project is its emphasis on domestically developed technology. **More than 90 percent of the plant's equipment is of Chinese design**, showcasing the nation's capability to innovate and implement advanced nuclear solutions independently.

Poland's Parliament Elects Donald Tusk As Prime Minister

- In a historic vote on **December 11**, former EU leader **Donald Tusk** returned as **Poland's Prime Minister** after nearly a decade, marking a significant shift from **eight years** of stormy national conservative rule.
- Tusk's leadership is expected to usher in a new-pro-European era, with promises to restore democratic standards and improve ties with European allies.
- The parliamentary vote in support of Tusk was **248-201 in the 460-seat lower house of parliament**. Tusk's leadership is anticipated to usher in a new era, with a focus on restoring democratic values and improving **Poland's relations with the EU**.

India Backs Urgent Ceasefire In Israel-Gaza Conflict

- India voted in favor of a **UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution** calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict and the unconditional release of hostages.

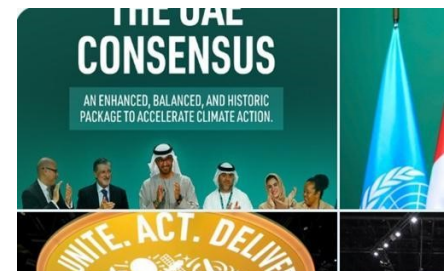
- The **193-member UNGA** adopted the **resolution** introduced by Egypt in an Emergency Special Session. The resolution garnered 153 votes in favor, with 23 nations abstaining and 10 voting against.
- Sponsored by several nations, including **Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Palestine**, the resolution demands an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza.
- It reiterates the obligation for all parties to comply with international law, particularly regarding the protection of civilians. The resolution also calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages and ensures humanitarian access.

Myanmar Surpasses Afghanistan As World's Leading Opium Source In 2023: UN Report

- **Myanmar** has emerged as the world's largest source of **opium in 2023**, surpassing **Afghanistan**, according to a new report by the United Nations. This shift is attributed to a third consecutive year of expanding cultivation fueled by Myanmar's civil war and a significant decline in opium cultivation in Afghanistan.
- The shift resulted in a substantial increase in earnings for Myanmar farmers, with opium poppy farming yielding about 75% higher profits. The average price of opium poppies has risen to approximately \$355 per kilogram. The cultivation area has expanded by 18% year-on-year, reaching 47,000 hectares, marking the highest potential yield since 2001.

COP28 Concludes With Historic Agreement On Fossil Fuels

- The 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change concluded with a groundbreaking decision – the **“UAE Consensus”** – marking a historic step towards addressing the climate crisis.
- For the first time, participating parties agreed to confront the issue of fossil fuels, recognizing the imperative for a **“fair and equitable” transition** away from them. Developing nations emphasized the



absence of concrete financial commitments for their transition away from fossil fuels, raising questions about the global commitment to climate action.

- However, Several developing countries, including Bolivia, Cuba, China, and members of the “**G-77 and China**” group, expressed dissatisfaction with the final text on fossil fuels. They argued that it undermined principles of equity and climate justice.

COP28 concludes: Highlights from the largest global climate summit

- The two-week-long COP28 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), concluded on December 13 with member nations engaging in extended talks on the final text. In the closing plenary, COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber highlighted the summit’s achievements, emphasizing a robust action plan aimed at **limiting global warming to the targeted 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times set in the 2015 Paris deal.**
- The most significant achievement of COP28 is the historic agreement to begin reducing global consumption of fossil fuels. Unlike previous COP texts that focused on coal, COP28 marked the first time a global commitment was made to transition away from oil and gas, fundamental components of the global economy for decades. The Global Stocktake (GST) text outlines a just, orderly, and equitable transition, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050.

UK Government Considers Social Media Limits For Under-16s

- The **UK government**, led by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, is contemplating additional measures to **protect teenagers below the age of 16 from online dangers**, despite the recent implementation of the Online Safety Act.
- **The Online Safety Act**, a landmark legislation mandating social media platforms to shield minors from harmful content or face substantial fines, marked a significant step toward **ensuring online safety for children.**
- In the coming year, the government plans to **initiate a consultation to investigate the risks faced by**



children using social media. The emphasis, according to official statements, is on **empowering parents to navigate their children’s online experiences** rather than imposing strict regulations.

China Launches Deepest Lab On Earth, More Than 2,000m Below Ground

- **China** has achieved a significant milestone in the field of physics with the operationalization of the **world’s deepest and largest underground laboratory.**



According to a report, the physics laboratory, known as the Deep Underground and Ultra-low Radiation Background Facility for Frontier Physics Experiments (DURF), reaches an impressive depth of **2,400 meters.**

- Jointly built by **Tsinghua University** and **Yalong River Hydropower Development Company, Ltd.**, the facility provides unique testing conditions that are not available to scientists elsewhere. One of the primary objectives of DURF is to contribute significantly to the **global search for dark matter**—a mysterious form of matter that seems to defy interaction with light or the electromagnetic field.

President Sisi Secures Third Term Amid Economic Challenges

- **Egypt’s President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi** has clinched a third term, garnering 89.6% of the vote in the nation’s latest election, held from December 10-12. Despite economic hardships and regional tensions, Sisi’s victory was anticipated, given the limited opposition.
- Egypt faces a severe economic crisis marked by a 36.4% annual inflation rate, impacting household budgets. Even before the crisis, about two-thirds of the population lived on or below the poverty line. The victory comes amid heightened regional tensions stemming from the Israel-Hamas war in neighboring Gaza, adding to the challenges faced by Sisi’s administration.

JN.1 Variant Of COVID-19 Virus, All You Need To Know About It

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** issued a warning on **Sunday, December 17**, expressing concerns over the evolving nature of the **JN.1 COVID subvariant** and the surge in respiratory diseases globally.
- The organization urged member states to prioritize sequence sharing and enhance surveillance efforts to better understand and combat the changing landscape of the virus
- JN.1 has distinct characteristics, spreading faster and demonstrating the ability to evade immunity. This alarming combination makes it capable of infecting individuals with prior COVID infections and those who have been vaccinated.
- In India, JN.1 was detected in **Kerala on December 8**, with a **reported case in 79-year-old woman** who experienced mild symptoms of **Influenza like Illness (ILI)**. The country is urged to stay vigilant and implement necessary measures to contain the variant's spread.

Donald Trump Declared Ineligible To Run For President In Colorado By State's Supreme Court

- In a landmark decision, the Colorado Supreme Court, consisting entirely of justices appointed by Democratic governors, declared **former U.S. President Donald Trump** ineligible for the presidency under the U.S. Constitution's insurrection clause.
- The **court's 4-3 decision** sets the stage for a legal battle, as Trump's attorneys vowed to appeal the disqualification immediately to the U.S. Supreme Court, which holds the final authority on constitutional matters. The legal challenge revolves around whether the frontrunner for the GOP nomination can remain in the race.
- The court ruled that Trump is disqualified from holding the presidency under **Section 3 of the 14th Amendment**, which bars individuals who engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the Constitution from holding office. This decision stems from Trump's



alleged role in inciting the January 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol.

India Tops Global Remittance Charts With \$125 Billion In 2023: World Bank Report

- The World Bank's latest report reveals India's leading position in global remittances, reaching **\$125 billion in 2023**. Apart from India, the top five remittance recipient countries include Mexico (USD 67 billion), China (USD 50 billion), the Philippines (USD 40 billion), and Egypt (USD 24 billion).
- While remittances to low- and middle-income countries grew by 3.8%, challenges include declines in the Middle East and North Africa. The report sheds light on the sustained growth in remittance flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in 2023, albeit at a slower pace compared to previous years.

Argentina Rejects BRICS Membership Under President Javier Milei

- Argentine President **Javier Milei** has officially declined the invitation to join the **BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa)** grouping of major emerging economies.
- The rejection was conveyed through letters sent to BRICS leaders, solidifying Argentina's decision to abstain from the bloc. President Milei's rejection was grounded in the assertion that Argentina's membership was **"not considered appropriate at this time."**
- The letters emphasized a departure from the foreign policy approach of the previous administration, indicating a comprehensive review of decisions made earlier. The president highlighted that his geopolitical alignment prioritizes ties with the United States and Israel, eschewing alliances with communist nations.



Defence

India Bolsters Naval Strength With \$5 Billion Aircraft Carrier To Counter China

- India is set to reinforce its naval capabilities with the addition of a **\$5 billion aircraft carrier**, signaling its strategic response to China's expanding naval influence in the **Indian Ocean region**.
- The Defense Acquisition Council is expected to greenlight the acquisition of a second indigenous aircraft carrier, costing nearly **400 billion rupees (\$4.8 billion)**.
- The new aircraft carrier is designed to accommodate a fleet of at least **28 fighter jets** and helicopters, with a displacement of 45,000 tons. Notably, the carrier will be equipped with French Rafale jets, showcasing India's commitment to advanced military technology.



Three Anti-Submarine Warfare Ships For Indian Navy Launched At Cochin Shipyard

- On **30th November 2023**, the **Cochin Shipyard** marked a significant milestone with the simultaneous launch of the **first three ships in a series of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) shallow water crafts** commissioned by the Indian Navy.
- The vessels, names **INS Mahe, INS Malva and INS Mangrol**, were unveiled in a ceremony attended by distinguished naval officials and their spouses.
- Each Mahe class vessel measures **78 meters in length, 11.36 meters in width, with a draught of 2.7 meters**. They have a displacement of **896 tonnes** and can achieve **speeds of up to 25 knots (approximately 45 km/h)**.
- With an endurance of **1,800 nautical miles**, these vessels are specifically designed to accommodate indigenously-developed sonars for underwater surveillance. The crew composition includes **57 personnel**, including seven naval officers.



India Navy Appointed First Woman Commanding Officer In Naval Ship

- In a groundbreaking move aligning with the philosophy of **'all roles-all ranks,'** the Indian Navy has achieved a historic milestone by appointing its first woman commanding officer for a naval ship.
- Admiral Kumar proudly announced that the overall strength of women in the Navy, referred to as **Agniveers**, has surpassed the **1,000 mark**.
- This achievement underscores the Navy's commitment to an **'all roles, all ranks'** approach, showcasing the diverse deployment of women across various responsibilities within the organization.



GRSE Delivers India's Largest Survey Vessel To Navy

- The **Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd** delivered the largest-ever survey vessel built in the country, **INS Sandhayak**, to the Indian Navy. The **110-meter-long vessel** is the first in a series of four survey ships being constructed by GRSE for the navy, marking a crucial milestone in the indigenous shipbuilding industry.
- The Sandhayak-class vessels boast comprehensive capabilities, making them invaluable assets to the Indian Navy. These survey ships can **conduct full-scale coastal and deep-water hydrographic surveys**, providing crucial data for port and harbor approaches, navigation channels, and routes.
- In addition to their primary survey functions, these vessels exhibit multi-role capabilities. **Each ship can carry a helicopter, participate in low-intensity combat scenarios, and function as hospital ships.**



Vice Admiral Dinesh Tripathi To Become India's New Vice Chief Of Navy Staff

- In a significant development within the **Indian Navy**, a major reshuffle is set to take place at the top echelons of the force, with **Vice Admiral Dinesh Tripathi** slated to assume the position of **Vice Chief of Naval Staff on January 4**.
- This transition marks a crucial moment for the Navy, as Vice Admiral Tripathi steps into a role responsibility for overseeing the modernization efforts of the force. Notably, the **Indian Navy** is set to **acquire MQ-9B Predator drones and Rafale fighter jets**, underscoring the strategic importance of the position.
- **Vice Admiral Tripathi's** appointment comes as **Vice Admiral SJ Singh**, the outgoing Vice Chief of Naval Staff, moves to take command of the **Western Navy headquartered in Mumbai**. This shift follows Vice Admiral Singh's **tenure of around 9 months in the vice Chief's office**, bringing a fresh perspective to the Western Naval Command.

Indian Navy Conducts Bi-Annual 'Prasthan' Exercise Off Mumbai Coast

- The **Indian Navy**, in collaboration with various defense, state, and civil agencies, recently concluded a comprehensive two-phased exercise named '**Prasthan**' in the Offshore Development Area off the Mumbai coast.
- This exercise, conducted every six months, is pivotal in validating and refining measures and procedures aimed at addressing various contingencies that may arise in oil production platforms.
- The first phase of the exercise focused on **simulating security emergencies, including potential terrorist attacks and bomb threats involving Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)**.
- The second phase of the exercise focused on responding to contingencies such as **fires on the oil platform** and assisting a disabled vessel in the offshore development area.

India, Vietnam Armies Start 11-Day Hanoi Exercise

- The **Indian and Vietnamese Armies** have initiated an **11-day military exercise** in Vietnam, commencing on December 11. This collaborative endeavor, named "**VINBAX-23**," reflects the deepening strategic partnership between the two nations and is a response

to shared concerns over China's assertive actions in the South China Sea.

- The joint military exercise is part of an expanding strategic engagement between India and Vietnam, emphasizing their commitment to counterbalance China's increasing aggression in the South China Sea. This collaboration aims to foster a collaborative partnership and enhance interoperability between the Indian and Vietnamese forces.
- The military exercise, **VINBAX-23**, spans from **December 11 to 21** and is hosted in **Hanoi**. The Indian contingent consists of **45 personnel**, including 39 from the Bengal Engineer Group's engineer regiment and six from the Army Medical Corps. Correspondingly, Vietnam has deployed 45 personnel for the drill.

India Successfully Flight Tests Indigenous High-Speed Flying-Wing UAV

- The Defence Ministry announced on Friday that the DRDO conducted a successful flight trial of the **autonomous flying wing technology demonstrator** (an indigenous high-speed flying-wing **Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)** in **Karnataka's Chitradurga**.



- With this achievement, India joins an elite club of countries that have mastered the controls for flying wing technology, showcasing a remarkable advancement in the nation's technological readiness levels.
- The UAV, designed and developed by DRDO's **Aeronautical Development Establishment**, marks a significant step leap in **India's aerospace capabilities**. **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** commended the DRDO, armed forces and the industry for the successful flight trial, emphasizing the strengthening of the armed forces through the indigenous development of critical technologies.

Indian Army Organizes Table-Top Exercise To Empower ASEAN Women Officers

- In a significant step towards **fostering gender inclusivity** and strengthening the capabilities of women military personnel in peacekeeping operations,

the **Indian Army** recently conducted a **table-top exercise (TTX)** for women officers from the **Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)**.

- This exercise, held at the **Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi** from December 4 to 8, is part of the ongoing joint military training initiatives between India and ASEAN member states. The initiative is spearheaded by the **Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK)**.
- The table-top exercise serves as a follow-up to the collaborative efforts between India and ASEAN to enhance the preparedness and proficiency of women officers in peacekeeping missions.
- The exercise stands as a landmark initiative, explicitly designed to **promote gender inclusivity and elevate the capabilities of women military personnel** operating in peacekeeping environments.

India's Akash Missile Achieves Global First: Engages Four Targets Simultaneously At 25km



- India has achieved a **global first** by demonstrating the capability of its indigenous **Akash missile system** to engage four aerial targets simultaneously at a range of 25 kilometers.
- The remarkable feat took place during the **'Astrashakti' military exercise** conducted by the Indian Air Force on December 12. This exercise served as a platform to showcase the exceptional capabilities of the Akash missile system, illustrating its ability to engage multiple targets concurrently.
- The Akash missile, with a commendable range of up to 25 kilometers, represents a short-range surface-to-air missile designed primarily for safeguarding vulnerable areas from potential air attacks. This demonstration not only underscores the effectiveness of the Akash system but also solidifies its significance in India's defense capabilities.

IAF Successfully Testfires 'SAMAR' Air Defense Missile System In Andhra Pradesh

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** has proudly announced the **successful test firing** of its **Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation (SAMAR)** air defence

missile system. This accomplishment marks a milestone for the IAF's strategic self-reliance efforts.

- The IAF conducted the successful firing trials of the SAMAR air defence missile system during the **AstraShakti-2023 exercise** at Air Force Station Suryalanka. This exercise provided the platform for the SAMAR missile system to showcase its capabilities in real-world scenarios.
- SAMAR is a quick reaction surface-to-air missile system, ingeniously **crafted by the IAF's 7 Base Repair Depot (BRD) and 11 BRD**, in collaboration with SimranFlowtech Industries and Yamazuki Denki. Notably, the system repurposes old **Russian-origin Vympel R-73 and R-27** air-to-air missiles, demonstrating an innovative approach to maximize existing resources.+

India Launches 'Barracuda,' Nation's Fastest Solar Electric Boat

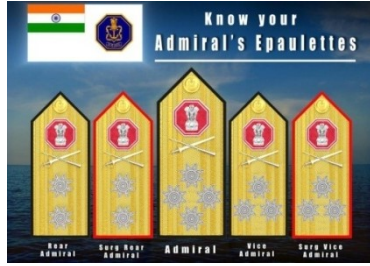
- In a significant stride towards sustainable maritime technology, India has unveiled **'Barracuda,'** the nation's fastest solar electric boat, at the **Navgathi Yard in Panavally,**



- **Alappuzha.** This cutting-edge vessel, named 'Saur Shakti,' is a collaborative effort between Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd and Navalt, an eco-marine tech company.
- The Barracuda stands as a symbol of efficient and clean energy usage, showcasing India's commitment to a greener maritime future. Designed by Navalt, the Barracuda is a 14-meter-long and 4.4-meter-wide vessel engineered for workboat purposes.
- It boasts twin 50-kW electric motors, a marine-grade LFP battery, and 6-kW solar power, propelling it to a top speed of 12 knots (23 kmph). The vessel's capabilities include a range of seven hours on a single charge, making it a formidable addition to eco-friendly maritime transportation.

Navy Unveils New Admirals' Epaulettes In 'True Reflection Of Indian Rich Maritime Heritage'

- In a significant move reflecting India's commitment to its maritime heritage and a departure from colonial vestiges, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** announced the unveiling of **new designs for Admirals' epaulettes** and a **renaming of ranks within the Indian Navy**.
- The redesigned Admirals' epaulettes mark a symbolic departure from the past, with the octagon taking center stage.
- Inspired by the naval ensign and drawing from the **rajmudra (royal seal) of Chhatrapati Shivaji**, the new design aims to encapsulate India's rich maritime heritage.
- The **octagon, golden navy button top, and symbols of an Indian sword and telescope crossed**, along with stars indicating ranks, contribute to a visual representation of the Navy's commitment to national pride and heritage.



Appointments or Resign/Retired

Sanjay Kumar named as secretary of Department of School Education

- IAS **Sanjay Kumar** took charge as **Secretary of the Department of School Education and Literacy**, Ministry of Education in Shashtri Bhawan in New Delhi.
- Sanjay Kumar, a 1990-batch Bihar cadre IAS officer, was a former Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. He replaced **Anita Karwal** IAS upon her superannuation.
- Sanjay Kumar held a meeting with the senior officials of the Ministry in which he reviewed the functioning of the department, autonomous bodies and various schemes relating to school education.

Rajeeva Laxman Karandikar named as chairperson of the National Statistical Commission

- Government of India had appointed **Rajeeva Laxman Karandikar**, Professor Emeritus at Chennai Mathematical Institute (CMI), as the part-time chairperson of the **National Statistical Commission (NSC) of India** for a period of three years.
- He will take up this role as an additional responsibility while continuing as Professor Emeritus at CMI. He joined CMI as a visiting professor in 2010, and officiated as the Director of CMI from January 2011 to April 2021.
- NSC is an autonomous body formed in June 2005 under the recommendation of the Dr. C Rangarajan commission. The objective of its constitution was to reduce the problems faced by statistical agencies in the country with respect to the collection of data, and strengthen public trust in the numbers released by the Government of India. The chairperson of the Commission enjoys the status of a Minister of State, Government of India.

Kanchan Devi Becomes First Woman Director General Of ICFRE

- **Kanchan Devi**, 1991-batch Indian Forest Service Officer from the Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the **first woman Director General (DG)**

of the Indian Council of Forestry Research Education (ICFRE).

- Kanchan Devi brings to her new role an impressive **track record of over 30 years in the realm of forestry**. Her extensive expertise spans a myriad of aspects, including forest management, administration, education, human resource development, research, and extension.
- Established in **1986** under the Central Ministry of Environment and Forests, ICFRE is the largest organization responsible for forestry research in India.

Captain Geetika Koul Becomes First Woman Medical Officer Deployed At Siachen

- In a historic development, **Captain Geetika Koul**, a woman army doctor, has been deployed at Siachen, the world's highest battlefield, marking a significant stride



- towards gender inclusivity in India's armed forces.
- This follows the deployment of Captain Shiva Chouhan, from the Corps of Engineers, at the same location almost a year ago.
- The deployment of Captain Geetika Koul at Siachen, known for its extreme weather conditions, exemplifies the expanding opportunities for women in challenging environments. Captain Shiva Chouhan's deployment in January 2023 set the precedent for such deployments, breaking barriers in the traditionally male-dominated arena of high-altitude warfare.

Indian-Origin Samir Shah To Lead BBC Board

- The U.K. government has selected **Samir Shah** to serve as the **new chair of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)**. With



- over **four decades of experience in the media industry**, Shah has held various positions, including a stint as a non-executive director at the BBC.
- A 71-year-old media executive, Shah was born in **Aurangabad** and immigrated to the U.K. in 1960.

He is currently heading the **media company Juniper TV**, a British company. He also played a key role in the U.K. government's **Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities**.

- The BBC Chair's responsibilities include **overseeing the independence of the organization**, a critical aspect given recent concerns. The previous chair, **Richard Sharp**, resigned in June due to issues related to disclosure, raising questions about the broadcaster's governance.

Vishnu Deo Sai Is New Chhattisgarh Chief Minister

- In a strategic move ahead of the **2024 general elections**, the **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)** has selected **Vishnu Deo Sai**, a tribal leader and former Union Minister, as its candidate for the Chief Minister's position in **Chhattisgarh**.



- Vishnu Deo Sai, 59, is a four-term Member of Parliament and has previously served as the president of the Chhattisgarh unit of the BJP from 2020 to 2022. He is recognized for his organizational skills and maintains a non-controversial image in the political arena. Having been a member of the BJP National Working Committee, Sai has a long-standing association with the party.

Bhajan Lal Sharma Newly Elected Chief Minister Of Rajasthan

- **Bhajan Lal Sharma**, a prominent figure in Rajasthan's political landscape, is set to become the **state's next Chief Minister**. At 56 years old, he brings a wealth of political experience and accomplishments to the position.
- Sharma's electoral triumph, coupled with his extensive political background, reflects the BJP's strategic choice for leadership. As he takes on the responsibilities of the state's top office, all eyes will be on the new leadership to address the challenges and contribute to the development of Rajasthan.
- In addition to Bhajan Lal Sharma's appointment, **Diya Kumari and Premchand Bairwa** have been named as his two deputies. The role of Speaker will be held by **MLA Vasudev Devnani**, who comes with prior experience as the state Education Minister.

Mohan Yadav Is The Newly Elected Chief Minister Of Madhya Pradesh

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has officially announced **Mohan Yadav** as the **chief minister-elect for Madhya Pradesh**, solidifying its victory in the November 17 polls.
- The BJP appointed **Rajendra Shukla and Jagdish Devda** as deputy chief ministers for Madhya Pradesh. Rajendra Shukla, hailing from the Rewa constituency, and Jagdish Devda, representing Mandsaur, bring diverse perspectives and experiences to support Chief Minister Mohan Yadav in his leadership.
- Adding another significant development, **Narendra Tomar** has been elected as the Madhya Pradesh Assembly Speaker. His role as Speaker will be instrumental in maintaining parliamentary decorum and facilitating smooth legislative proceedings.



Revanth Reddy Named Telangana's New Chief Minister

- In a historic move, the **Congress central leadership** has officially announced **A. Revanth Reddy** as the **new Chief Minister of Telangana**. This decision marks a significant milestone for the party as Mr. Reddy is set to become the **first Congress Chief Minister of the state** since its formation in 2014.
- The decision was endorsed by Congress president **Mallikarjun Kharge**, who relied on a comprehensive report submitted by the party's poll observers. This move sets the stage for Mr. Reddy to take the oath of office on **December 7**, symbolizing a new era in Telangana's political landscape.

Lalduhoma Set To Assume Office As Mizoram's Chief Minister

- In a significant political development, **Lalduhoma**, the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) leader and legislature party leader, is poised to be sworn in as the **new Chief Minister of Mizoram** on December 8.



- A Raj Bhavan official confirmed that Lalduhoma, along with other members of his council of ministers, will take the oath of office at 11 am in a ceremony at the Raj Bhavan.
- The ZPM emerged victorious in the Mizoram Assembly elections held on November 7, securing a total of 27 out of 40 seats. The electoral success resulted in the defeat of the incumbent Mizo National Front (MNF) led by Zoramthanga.

Sanjay Singh Becomes New Chief Of Wrestling Federation Of India (WFI)

- **Sanjay Singh**, a prominent figure within the former WFI chief BrijBhushan's faction and currently the UP Wrestling Association vice president, clinched victory with an overwhelming 40 votes against Anita Sheoran's meager seven.
- While **Anita Sheoran's** panel faced defeat in the presidential race, they managed to secure the crucial post of **secretary general**. **Satyapal Singh Deshwal**, representing **Uttarakhand** emerged as the **new treasurer** by defeating Jammu and Kashmir's Dushyant Sharma with a commanding 34-12 vote margin.
- **Prem Chand Lochab**, a former RSPB secretary, emerged victorious with a 27-19 vote count against Darshan Lal. Additionally, **Devender Singh Kadian**, aligned with the protesting wrestlers, claimed the senior vice president's post by defeating I D Nanavati with a 32-15 margin.



SEBI Gives Nod To Appoint PramodAgrawal As BSE Chairman

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has given its nod to the appointment of **PramodAgrawal**, the former **Chief of Coal India**, as the **Chairman of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)**.
- This regulatory approval paves the way for Agrawal to assume his role on the Governing Board of BSE, **effective from January 17, 2024**. The move comes as the term of the **current Chairman, SS Mundra**, concludes on **January 16, 2024**.

- Agrawal is an **alumnus of the prestigious Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)**, with a **Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from IIT Mumbai**. He furthered his education with a **Master's degree in Design Engineering from IIT Delhi**, showcasing a strong academic foundation in engineering.

Nina Singh First Woman CISF Chief Rahul Rasgotra ITBP Chief

- The central government has appointed **Nina Singh** as the **first woman Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)**, marking a significant milestone in the traditionally male-dominated realm of security forces.
- Currently serving as the **Special DG of the CISF**, her elevation to the top post is a testament to her exemplary career and leadership skills. This move underscores the government's commitment to promoting gender diversity in crucial security positions.
- In another key appointment, **Rahul Rasgotra**, the **Special Director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB)**, has been named the **new Director General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)**.



Honours/ Awards

Arshia Sattar Conferred With French Honour

- Renowned author and translator **Arshia Sattar** has added another feather to her cap, being honored with the **Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters** by the **French government**.
- The prestigious award was presented by Thierry Mathou, the ambassador of France to India, in a ceremony held at the Consulate General of France in Bengaluru on November 28.
- Arshia Sattar, aged 63 and based in Bengaluru, has made significant contributions to Indian literature and mythology. Notable among her works are translations of epics like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as well as tales from **Kathasaritsagara**. Her literary prowess extends to creating engaging books for children, with "The Mahabharata for Children" earning her the Sahitya Akademi Prize for Children's Literature in 2022.

Sheetal Devi Wins Best Young Athlete At APC Conference

- Indian para archer **Sheetal Devi** emerged victorious at the **fourth edition of the Asian Awards in Riyadh** securing the prestigious title of Best Youth Athlete.
- Devi's remarkable performance at the **Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games** in October played a pivotal role in earning her the coveted award. The 16-year-old para archer clinched gold in both the individual and team compound events, further adding a silver medal in the compound doubles category to her impressive tally.
- In a testament to her skill and consistency, Sheetal Devi achieved the **world number one ranking in compound women this year**. This recognition solidifies her as a force to be reckoned with in the world of para archery.



Ranveer Singh Receives Prestigious Honor From Sharon Stone At Red Sea International Film Festival

- In a momentous occasion at the **Red Sea International Film Festival**, Bollywood actor **Ranveer Singh** was honored for his significant contributions to cinema.
- The prestigious accolade was presented to him by the iconic Hollywood actress Sharon Stone, adding a touch of glamour to the event attended by luminaries like Johnny Depp.
- The 2023 edition of the Red Sea Film Festival commenced on November 30 and is scheduled to continue its cinematic celebration until December 9. The festival's opening featured the fantasy film "HWJN," directed by Iraqi filmmaker Yasir Al-Yasiri, setting the stage for a diverse and captivating lineup of films.

Climate Champions: Michelle Zárate Palomec And Sebastian Mwaura Win UN Awards

- Amidst the global efforts to combat climate change, two remarkable individuals, **Michelle Zárate Palomec** from Mexico and **Sebastian Mwaura** from Kenya, are set to be honored as winners of the **UN Global Climate Action Awards**.
- At the age of 27, Zárate Palomec leads initiatives within Espacio de Encuentro de las Culturas Originarias to provide clean and sufficient water to marginalized indigenous communities in Oaxaca, Mexico. Her work addresses water scarcity challenges and combats social and gender inequalities exacerbated by water pollution.
- Co-founder of Yna Kenya, 35-year-old Mwaura is recognized for his efforts in accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles. His organization focuses on establishing a robust charging network powered by renewable energy sources, while also creating employment opportunities for women through the HerGo program in the e-mobility transport sector.

ISRO And Team Chandrayaan-3 Honoured For Outstanding Contribution To Brand India

- In a historic moment on **August 23**, **India's Chandrayaan-3** achieved remarkable lunar landing, making India the first country to reach the Lunar South Pole. The successful mission, a testament to India's scientific prowess, has solidified its status as a space superpower.

- The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and the **Chandrayaan-3 team** were recently honored with the **“Outstanding Contribution to Brand India” award at the 19th India Business Leader Awards (IBLA), held in Mumbai on December 2.**
- The **“Outstanding Contribution to Brand India” award bestowed upon ISRO and the Chandrayaan-3 team at the IBLA** is a recognition of their remarkable achievements in space exploration. This acknowledgment not only celebrates the scientific success but also underscores the positive impact on India’s global image.

Time Magazine Names Lionel Messi ‘Athlete Of The Year’ For 2023

- Argentina’s football icon, **Lionel Messi**, has been named Time magazine’s **Athlete of the Year for 2023.** This prestigious honor comes on the heels of Messi’s historic **eighth**



Ballon d’Or win, solidifying his status as one of the greatest footballers of all time.

- Messi also played a pivotal role in **Argentina’s triumph at the 2022 World Cup, securing their first title in 36 years.** The Argentine captain led his team to victory in a thrilling final against defending champions France.
- Beyond the playing field, Lionel Messi’s move to Inter Miami caused ripples of excitement among fans and sports enthusiasts. The announcement led to a **surge in searches for match dates and tickets**, reflecting the heightened interest in witnessing Messi’s magic firsthand.

Indian-Origin Novelist Meira Chand Receives Singapore’s Highest Arts Award

- **Singapore** recently bestowed its prestigious Cultural Medallion upon three distinguished individuals, recognizing their artistic excellence and significant contributions to the nation’s rich arts and culture.
- Among them, **Meira Chand**, an eighty-one-year-old Indian-origin writer, shares this esteemed accolade with novelist **Suchen Christine Lim** and Malay dance veteran **Osman Abdul Hamid.**

- Meira Chand, of Swiss-Indian parentage, is renowned for her award-winning novels depicting multicultural societies. Her notable work, ‘The Painted Cage’ (1986), was longlisted for the Booker Prize.

Federal Bank Titled “Bank Of The Year 2023” In India : The Banker

- In a momentous achievement, **Federal Bank**, a prominent financial institution, has been awarded the prestigious title of **“Bank of the Year (India)”** by **The Banker**, a renowned publication under the Financial Times umbrella. This accolade is one of the few global awards recognizing banks on a worldwide scale.
- The Federal Bank has taken initiatives such as the introduction of the Digital Personal Loan, the launch of the ‘Bank on the Go’ initiative, and the introduction of ‘Feddy,’ an artificial intelligence-powered chatbot. These actions demonstrate the bank’s commitment to innovation, customer-centric services, and its outstanding contributions to the banking industry in the past year.

Nikhil Dey Named ‘2023 International Anti-Corruption Champion’ By The US Government

- Indian social activist **Nikhil Dey** has been honored as an **International Anti-Corruption Champion** by the **US government for 2023.** For the past **35 years**, Nikhil Dey has been a stalwart advocate for policy reforms aimed at empowering workers in India.
- Dey is the **co-founder of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)**, a Rajasthan-based organization at the forefront of transparency and anti-corruption movements in India.
- The US State Department acknowledged his efforts in bringing official corruption to light, specifically instances such as the **underpayment of workers on official projects.** Dey’s work has centered on **building empowerment campaigns for peasants and workers**, targeting corruption in the delivery of essential government services.



Veteran Actor Kabir Bedi Awarded Italy's Civilian Honour 'Order Of Merit'

- **Kabir Bedi** was awarded the "Order of Merit of the Italian Republic" (**Merito della Repubblica Italiana**), the country's highest honour awarded to civilians, at a private ceremony held in Mumbai.
- This award, the most prestigious Italian honorific one, ultimately recognizes his unconditional feeling and passionate dedication to Italy. The "Order of Merit of the Italian Republic" stands as a testament to Italy's appreciation for those who have made outstanding contributions to society, embodying the nation's values of merit and excellence.
- Established on March 3, 1951, the order is bestowed to individuals who have made significant contributions to various fields, including arts, literature, economy, public service, and social, philanthropic, and humanitarian activities.

Noted Hindi Writer Pushpa Bharati To Receive 33rd Vyas Samman

- The literary world is set to celebrate as the **33rd Vyas Samman, 2023**, is announced to honor the accomplished **Hindi writer Pushpa Bharati** for her 2016 memoir, "**Yaadein, Yaadein aur Yaadein.**" This prestigious award is bestowed by the **KK Birla Foundation**, recognizing outstanding contributions to Hindi literature.
- Born in 1935 in Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, Pushpa Bharati embarked on her literary journey, earning an MA in Hindi literature from Prayag University in 1955. With a career spanning decades, she has crafted a diverse body of work, earning critical acclaim for her unique writing style and language proficiency.
- Instituted in 1991, the Vyas Samman acknowledges exceptional Hindi literary works by Indian citizens published in the **last 10 years**. The award includes a cash prize of **₹4 lakh**, a citation, and a plaque, recognizing the profound impact of the recipient's contribution to the literary landscape.

Javed Akhtar To Receive Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award At Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival

- The veteran lyricist-screenwriter **Javed Akhtar** is set to be honored with the **Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award** at the upcoming **Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival**.
- This recognition celebrates his remarkable contributions to the Indian film industry, including

iconic works like 'Zanjeer,' 'Deewar,' 'Sholay,' 'Don,' 'Kala Patthar,' and 'Mr India.'

- The award ceremony will take place on January 3, 2024, marking the opening day of the ninth edition of the festival. The Padmapani Award, which includes a memento, a certificate, and a monetary award of Rs 2 lakh, will be presented to Javed Akhtar by the Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival Organizing Committee Chairman Nandkishore Kagliwal and Chief Guide Ankushrao Kadam.

Ban Ki-Moon Honored With 2023 Diwali 'Power Of One' Award At UN

- Former UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon**, along with three distinguished diplomats, was honored at the annual 'Diwali Power of One Awards.'



This prestigious ceremony, often hailed as the 'Oscars of Diplomacy,' celebrated their selfless contributions to shaping a more perfect, peaceful, and secure world.

- Hailed as the 'Oscars of Diplomacy,' these awards aim to recognize former Permanent Representatives and high-level members of the UN who have selflessly worked towards creating a more perfect, peaceful, and secure world.
- The other distinguished awardees for the year 2023 included Ambassador **Mirsada Colakovic**, Ambassador **Kim Sook**, and **Miroslav Lajcak**. Their invaluable contributions were acknowledged at a special ceremony held at the UN Headquarters, marking their commitment to global peace and development.

Mohammed Shami Nominated For Arjuna Award, Satwiksairaj-Chirag For Khel Ratna

- India's premier badminton men's doubles pair of **Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty** is in line to receive the **Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award**, the country's highest sports prize.
- The pair has had a remarkable year, reaching as many as six finals, winning five. They won at the **Asian Games, Asian Championships, Swiss Open, Indonesia Open and Korea Open**. They were **runners-up at China Masters**.

- India pace ace **Mohammed Shami**, who finished as the top wickettaker in the **ODI World Cup with 24 scalps**, is in the list for the **Arjuna Award**, it is learnt. **Satwik-Chirag**, the first Indian doubles pair to rise to the top of the international game, also rose to No.1 in the BWF world rankings this year, also a first for an Indian doubles pair.

Antim Panghal Named UWW Rising Star Of The Year

- Indian wrestler **Antim Panghal** has been named the **Rising Star of the Year among women** by the **United World Wrestling (UWW)**, the sport's global governing body.
- The 19-year-old dynamo, competing in the 53 kg category, has had a remarkable season that has not only garnered accolades but has also overshadowed senior stalwart **Vinesh Phogat** in the same weight class.
- Hailing from Haryana, Antim Panghal has etched her name in history as the only two-time junior world champion for India, a testament to her exceptional skill and dedication to the sport. Her achievements in the junior category have laid a strong foundation for her rapid rise in the senior ranks.



Indira Gandhi Peace Prize Awarded To Daniel Barenboim And Ali Abu Awwad

- The prestigious **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023** has been jointly conferred upon renowned classical pianist and conductor **Daniel Barenboim** and Palestinian peace activist **Ali Abu Awwad**.
- Ali Abu Awwad**, an eminent Palestinian peace activist, represents the resilience and determination of individuals dedicated to transforming conflict into cooperation. **Maestro Daniel Barenboim**, an Argentine-born virtuoso, has not only left an indelible mark on the world of classical music but has also emerged as a beacon of hope in the pursuit of harmony in West Asia.
- The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development is a prestigious award presented annually to individuals or organizations that have made

outstanding contributions to the promotion of international peace, disarmament, and development.

Vijay Amritraj And Leander Paes Inducted Into International Tennis Hall Of Fame

- In a historic moment for Indian tennis, legends **Vijay Amritraj and Leander Paes** have etched their names into the annals of the sport as the first Asian men to be inducted into the esteemed International Tennis Hall of Fame. This achievement elevates India to the 28th nation represented in this prestigious institution.
- Leander Paes**, an 18-time Grand Slam champion in doubles and mixed doubles, secures his place in the Player category. Renowned as one of the greatest doubles players in history, Paes achieved the No. 1 ranking in doubles and boasts an impressive tally of 8 doubles titles and 10 mixed doubles titles.
- Vijay Amritraj**, a tennis icon and successful broadcaster, has been honored in the Contributor category. Amritraj's leadership in India's Davis Cup history is noteworthy, having guided the team to its only two Finals appearances in 1974 and 1987.

RijulMaini Wins Miss India USA 2023

- The annual **Miss India USA 2023** pageant was held in New Jersey. The pageant, now in its 41st year, witnessed contestants from over 25 states participating in three categories: **Miss India USA, Mrs India USA, and Miss Teen India USA**.
- RijulMaini**, a medical student and aspiring surgeon, clinched the prestigious title of Miss India USA 2023. Hailing from Michigan, Maini aims to serve as a role model for women, embodying intelligence, grace, and ambition.
- SnehaNambiar** from Massachusetts was declared Mrs India USA, showcasing the diversity of talent and accomplishments among married Indian-American women.
- SaloniRammohan** from Pennsylvania emerged victorious as Miss Teen India USA, representing the promising young talents within the Indian-American community.

Gaja Capital Business Book Prize 'Against All Odds', 'Winning Middle India' Declared Joint Winners

- The **Gaja Capital Business Book Prize**, a prestigious annual recognition, has crowned two exceptional narratives in its **2023** edition. **Against All Odds: The**

IT Story of India and Winning Middle India: The Story of India's New-Age Entrepreneurs emerged as joint winners, capturing the essence of India's dynamic business landscape.

- Authorized by **Kris Gopalkrishnan, N Dayasindhu and Krishnan Narayanan**, *Against All Odds* meticulously weaves together the firsthand accounts of over fly distinguished individuals who have played pivotal role in shaping IT industry. The jury commended the book for its detailed exploration of the challenges, triumphs and transformative moments that have defined the trajectory of the IT sector in India.

Israeli Film 'Children of Nobody' Wins Golden Bengal Tiger Award

- The **29th Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF)** concluded with a momentous highlight as the Israeli film **'Children of Nobody'** secured the prestigious **Golden Royal Bengal Tiger Award for Best Film**.



- Inspired by a true story, this compassionate Israeli drama sheds light on the often unnoticed and uncared-for individuals on the periphery of society.
- The movie, written and directed by **Erez-Tadmor** from Tel-Aviv, unfolds the compelling journey of troubled boys compelled to unite to save a shelter for at-risk youth, providing them refuge from the streets
- The film not only earned critical acclaim but also received the highest cash award given by any film festival globally—a remarkable **Rs 51 lakh along with the trophy**. This accolade not only underscores the film's excellence but also showcases the international recognition garnered by Israeli cinema.

PoonamKhetrapal Singh Honored With Bhutan's National Order Of Merit

- **Dr.PoonamKhetrapal Singh**, the Regional Director of the **World Health Organisation (WHO) South-East Asia**, has been honored with Bhutan's National Order of Merit (NOM) Gold Medal.
- **Dr.PoonamKhetrapal Singh**, a retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, played a pivotal

role as the WHO Regional Director in supporting transformative healthcare leadership in Bhutan.

- Her efforts were instrumental in Bhutan achieving significant milestones in public health, notably becoming one of the first countries to eliminate measles in 2017 and rubella in 2023, ahead of schedule.
- The prestigious award was presented by **JigmeKhesarNamgyelWangchuck**, the **DrukGyalpo** (dragon king) of Bhutan, during the celebration of Bhutan's 116th National Day on December 17, 2023, in Thimphu, Bhutan.

ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 Moon Mission Earns Leif Erikson Lunar Prize

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has once again soared to new heights by clinching the prestigious **Leif Erikson Lunar Prize**. The focal point of this



- recognition is **ISRO's groundbreaking Chandrayaan-3 mission**, a venture that has significantly deepened our understanding of celestial mysteries.
- The **Leif Erikson Lunar Prize** was received on ISRO's behalf by **Ambassador BalasubramanianShyam**, underscoring the international acclaim for India's growing prowess in space exploration.
- Named after the iconic Norse explorer Leif Erikson, the **Leif Erikson Lunar Prize** is awarded by the **Exploration Museum in Husavik, Iceland**. This prestigious award is reserved for individuals and organizations that have made significant strides in the field of lunar exploration.

India'sHardik Singh Clinched Men's FIH Player Of The Year 2023

- Indian hockey team midfielder, **Hardik Singh**, clinched the prestigious title of **Men's FIH Player of the Year at the FIH Hockey Star Awards 2023**. This recognition adds another feather to the cap of the talented player, who played a pivotal role in India's bronze medal victory at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

- **Dutch player Xan de Waard** emerged victorious as the **Women's FIH Player of the Year**, showcasing outstanding prowess in the field of hockey.
- **Savita Punia**, captain of the Indian women's hockey team, secured the title of the **Best Goalkeeper of the Year**. This marks her third consecutive win in this category, reflecting her consistent excellence between the goalposts.

IREDA's Pradip Kumar Das Wins 'CMD Of The Year' For The Second Straight Year

- **Shri Pradip Kumar Das**, Chairman & Managing Director of **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA)**, has been honored with the esteemed **"CMD of the Year"** award under the **Mini-Ratna** category at the **13th PSE Excellence Awards**.



- This recognition is under the Mini-Ratna category, marking the second consecutive year for Shri Pradip Kumar Das. The awards also recognize IREDA's commitment to upholding the **highest standards of corporate governance and social responsibility**.
- In addition to Shri Pradip Kumar Das's individual recognition, IREDA also emerged as a **runner-up in four key categories**: **"Operational Performance Excellence," "Corporate Governance," "Corporate Social Responsibility & Sustainability,"** and **"Inclusivity- Contribution of Women and Differently-Abled In."**

French President Emmanuel Macron To Grace India's Republic Day

- **President Emmanuel Macron** is set to be the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi. This marks the 6th instance of a French leader gracing this prestigious occasion, highlighting the significance of the bilateral relationship.
- President Macron follows in the footsteps of his predecessors, with former French Prime Minister **Jacques Chirac** having been the Chief Guest in 1976 and 1998. Additionally, former Presidents **Valery Giscard d'Estaing**, **Nicolas Sarkozy**, and **Francois Hollande** have all contributed to this tradition in the years 1980, 2008, and 2016, respectively.

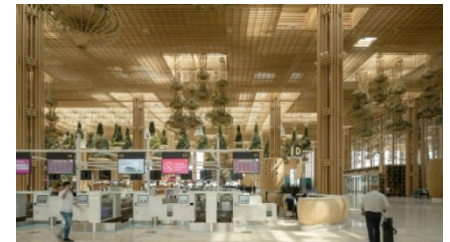
- This year's Republic Day celebrations hold special significance as India and France commemorate the **25th anniversary of their Strategic Partnership**. The enduring collaboration spans across diverse sectors, reflecting the depth and breadth of the diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties between the two nations.

SASTRA Ramanujan Awards 2022 And 2023 Announced

- In a prestigious ceremony at the **SASTRA campus in Kumbakonam**, the **SASTRA-Ramanujan Awards for 2022 and 2023** were bestowed upon mathematicians **Yunqing Tang and Ruixiang Zhang**, both affiliated with the University of California in Berkeley.
- The **SASTRA-Ramanujan Awards**, with a commendable cash prize of **USD 10,000** and a citation, are presented annually on the birthday of the legendary Indian mathematician, **Srinivasa Ramanujan**. The awards, instituted by SASTRA in 2005, honor individuals under the age of 32 who have made remarkable contributions to the field of mathematics.

Bengaluru Airport's T2 Recognized Among UNESCO's 'Most Beautiful Airports'

- In a recent announcement from UNESCO's **Prix Versailles 2023**, **Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) Terminal 2 (T2)** has achieved



- global acclaim, being recognized as one of the **'world's most beautiful airports.'**
- The world judges panel, chaired by renowned fashion designer **Elie Saab**, bestowed this honor, making it the sole Indian airport to receive such esteemed recognition.
- The airport was honored with the prestigious **'Special Prize for an Interior'** in recognition of its outstanding design. This global acknowledgment emphasizes the airport's commitment to exceptional design and architectural brilliance on an international level.

Mr L P Hemanth K Srinivasulu Receives 'Man Of The Year 2023' Award From Home Minister ShriAmit Shah

- In a ceremony held on December 28, 2023, Mr. L.P. Hemanth K. Srinivasulu, the newly appointed Director of the Latin America and Caribbean Trade Council, was bestowed with the prestigious "Man of the Year-2023" award.
- The honor, presented by ShriAmit Shah, the Home Minister of India, serves as a recognition of Mr.Hemanth's outstanding contributions to trade diplomacy and global economic relations.
- Mr.Hemanth's journey to the helm of the Latin America and Caribbean Trade Council has been marked by a distinguished career in multinational corporations. Having lent his expertise to renowned entities such as Fannie Mae (USA), Wipro, Tech Mahindra, and ICBC (Canada), he has showcased versatility and leadership prowess in senior roles across various sectors.



Mr L P Hemanth K Srinivasulu Receives 'Man of the Year 2023' Award

Sports

Ruturaj Gaikwad Becomes The Fastest Indian To 4,000 Runs In Men's T20

- In the fourth T20I against Australia at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium in Raipur, Ruturaj Gaikwad etched his name in the record books by becoming the fastest Indian to amass **4,000 runs** in the shortest format of the game.
- Ruturaj Gaikwad entered the match needing just seven runs to reach the coveted **4,000-run mark in T20 cricket**. He accomplished this remarkable feat in only **116 innings**, showcasing his exceptional batting prowess.
- This achievement makes Gaikwad the quickest Indian batsman to achieve the milestone, surpassing the previous record held by KL Rahul, who reached 4,000 runs in **117 T20 innings**. Virat Kohli, one of India's cricketing legends, is the third-fastest Indian to achieve this feat, taking **138 T20 innings to do so**.

Kolkata Inaugurated FITEXPO INDIA 2023

- The **FITEXPO INDIA 2023**, one of Asia's premier sports, fitness, and wellness trade expos, commenced on December 1 at the Biswa Bangla Mela Prangan in **Kolkata**.
- The mega expo, **sprawling over 3 lac sq feet of indoor and outdoor space**, is set to captivate over 5000 fitness, sports, and wellness enthusiasts. With an expected footfall of over 1.25 lac, FITEXPO INDIA 2023 is poised to be a colossal success.
- Described as a '**Kumbh Mela**' for sports, fitness, and wellness, FITEXPO INDIA connects with the growing base of enthusiasts and practitioners. **Mr. Gagan Sachdev**, founder-director of the expo, emphasized the significant growth of the Indian sports, fitness, and wellness sector, now five times larger under initiatives like **Khelo India** and **Fit India**.

Vijay Hazare Trophy Final: Saurashtra beat Maharashtra by 5 wickets

- Saurashtra** beat **Maharashtra** by 5 wickets in the final to win the **Vijay Hazare Trophy** at the Narendra Modi Stadium in **Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.
- They restricted Maharashtra at 248/9 in 50 overs as captain **Ruturaj Gaikwad** hit a century, scoring 108 off 131 balls after a slow start. Saurashtra bowler

Chirag Jani claimed a hat-trick in the match. Man of the moment is Sheldon Jackson

Full List of Award Winners:

- Player of the match in the final: **Sheldon Jackson (133 runs in 135 Balls)**
- Player of the tournament: **Ruturaj Gaikwad (Games: 5; Runs: 660; Avg: 220)**
- Most Runs: N Jagadeesan (Tamil Nadu): 830runs, 8 innings
- Highest Score: N Jagadeesan – 277 off 141 balls vs Arunachal Pradesh
- Most Fours: N Jagadeesan – 73 in 8 innings
- Most Sixes: Ruturaj Gaikwad – 34 in 5 innings
- Most Wickets: Vasuki Koushik (Karnataka) – 18 wickets in 9 matches

3rd T20 World Cup cricket tournament for Blind to be held in India

- **The third T20 World Cup Cricket Tournament for the Blind** will be held from **December 5 to 17, 2022 in India**. The participating countries of the World Cup 2022 are Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka and India.
- Around 150 players from all countries will participate in the tournament and there will be a total of 24 matches across nine cities in India. The tournament is being organised to mark the World Disability Day celebrations universally. The inauguration of the World Cup on December 5 at **Tau Devi Lal Indoor Stadium, Gurugram**. Former India batter **Yuvraj Singh** is the brand ambassador of the tournament.

ICC Launches New Vibrant Logo For Men's And Women's T20 World Cup 2024

- The International cricket scene is abuzz with excitement as the **ICC T20 World Cup** undergoes a dynamic makeover with the **launch of its new brand identity on December 7**.
- At the heart of the new identity lies a logo that ingeniously merges the iconic symbols of cricket – **the bat, ball and the fervour that defines international T20 cricket**.
- The 'T20' text seamlessly transforms into a striking batting stance, enclosed within a kinetic sphere, vividly portraying the heart-stopping drama inherent in each delivery.
- The 'impact' design within the ball mirrors the unparalleled vibe and vigour experienced at the **ICC T20 World Cup games**. A zig-zag motif, reminiscent

of a lighting strike, symbolizes the suspense and adrenaline-charged moments that make T20 cricket an exhilarating experience.

Travis Head Wins ICC Men's Player Of Month Award For November 2023

- The cricket world witnessed outstanding performances in **November 2023**, with Australian batter **Travis Head** and spin maestro **Nahida Akter** earning the prestigious **ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month awards**, respectively.
- In a thrilling display of cricket prowess, Travis Head played a pivotal role in Australia's triumphant journey to their sixth ICC Cricket World Cup title. The highlight of his outstanding performance was an explosive century that not only earned him the Player of the Match award in the semi-final against South Africa but also significantly contributed to Australia's victory in the blockbuster final against India in Ahmedabad.
- Travis Head's outstanding Player of the Match performances in both the semi-final against South Africa and the final against India solidified his claim to the ICC Men's Player of the Month award. His explosive batting, leadership on the field, and crucial contributions in high-stakes matches marked him as a standout player.

BCCI Decides To Retire MS Dhoni's Iconic No.7 Jersey

- In a move echoing the tribute to cricket legends, the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** has decided to retire the iconic **No.7 jersey** worn by former captain **MS Dhoni**. This decision follows the precedent set by **Sachin Tendulkar's No.10, retired in 2017**. Going forward, no other Indian cricketer will sport the No.7 jersey.
- Dhoni's last appearance in the Indian jersey, marked by the No.7, was in the 2019 World Cup semi-final against New Zealand. The decision to retire the jersey adds a poignant touch to his illustrious career.
- The retirement of MS Dhoni's No.7 jersey stands as a symbolic gesture, honoring the exceptional contribution of a cricketing legend whose leadership and prowess left an indelible mark on the sport in India.

Djokovic And Sabalenka Clinch 2023 ITF World Champion Titles With Stellar Performances

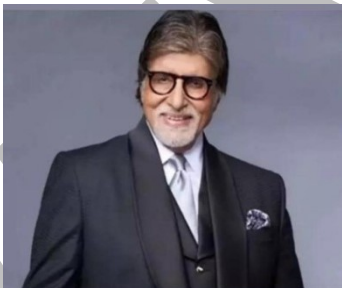
- In a fitting recognition of their outstanding achievements on the tennis court, **Novak Djokovic and Aryna Sabalenka** have been named the **2023 ITF World Champions** by the **International Tennis Federation**.



- Novak Djokovic, a tennis legend, secured his eighth ITF World Champion award after an extraordinary year. Djokovic's remarkable performances saw him claim victories at the Australian Open, French Open, and US Open, adding to his men's leading total of 24 Grand Slam titles.
- Aryna Sabalenka, in her breakthrough season, earned her first ITF World Champion honor. The Belarusian tennis star had an exceptional year, demonstrating her prowess on the court and making her mark in the Grand Slam tournaments.

Amitabh Bachchan Becomes Owner Of Mumbai Team In Indian Street Premier League

- Legendary actor **Amitabh Bachchan** revealed his ownership of the Mumbai team in the upcoming **Indian Street Premier League (ISPL)**. Earlier announcements revealed that actors Akshay Kumar and Hrithik Roshan have taken up ownership of the Srinagar and Bengaluru teams, respectively. This star-studded ownership adds an extra layer of glamour and excitement to the league. The ISPL will feature a total of 19 high-intensity matches during its inaugural edition. The six participating teams are Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata and Srinagar. Each team represents a city, providing a diverse and competitive mix of players from various regions.



Mitchell Starc Overtakes Cummins And Gets Record ₹24.75 Crore By KKR

- Mitchell Starc** marks a remarkable return to the IPL, securing a spot with **Kolkata Knight Riders**

for the **2024 season** after the franchise successfully bid **₹24.75 crore** for the Australian pace bowler.

- The bidding war intensified as Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals vied for his services, reaching ₹9.6 crore. However, Kolkata Knight Riders and Gujarat Titans entered the fray, driving the price beyond ₹10 crore and eventually crossing the ₹20 crore thresholds.
- Mitchell Starc previously featured in two IPL seasons in 2014 and 2015, representing Royal Challengers Bangalore. The 33-year-old, who recently played a pivotal role in Australia's ICC World Cup victory, is set to make a significant impact in the upcoming IPL season with Kolkata Knight Riders.

Sakshi Malik Quits After Election Of New Wrestling Federation Chief

- Acclaimed Indian wrestler **Sakshi Malik**, a bronze medalist at the 2016 Rio Olympics, **declared her retirement in protest of the Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) recent leadership change**.



- The move follows allegations of sexual abuse against the ousted president, Brij Bhushan Singh, and the controversial election of his close ally, Sanjay Singh. Charges filed in June accused Singh of harassing six athletes, including a minor, during his tenure as WFI chief.
- Olympic bronze medallist Sakshi Malik made history as the first Indian women wrestler to secure a **medal at the Rio 2016 Olympics**, breaking barriers and serving as a role model for future generations. In 2013, Sakshi Malik secured a bronze at the Commonwealth Championships, paving the way for her participation in the **2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow**, where she claimed a silver medal in the 58kg category.

India Achieve Historic Feat With Maiden Test Victory Over Australia

- India Women concluded their **first 'home season' of Test cricket in 28 years** with a historic **maiden victory over Australia in a one-off Test match in Mumbai on December 24**.

- The win marked a significant achievement for the Indian team, capping off a season characterized by exemplary performances with both bat and ball.
- India posted **406 in the first innings, recording their highest total ever against Australia in Tests.** Despite early breakthroughs, Richa Ghosh and Smriti Mandhana's partnership secured the meager **target of 75** with ease, sealing an eight-wicket win.

Sony Sports Ropes In Kartik Aaryan As Brand Ambassador For Football

- **Sony Sports Network (SSN)** has kicked off a new era of football enthusiasm in India by appointing Bollywood heartthrob and Gen Z icon **Kartik Aaryan** as their official brand ambassador for the beautiful game.
- The primary objective is to bring football closer to a wider Indian audience and foster a passion for the sport across different generations.
- His popularity among the youth and broad appeal make him an ideal choice to connect with a diverse audience and ignite enthusiasm for the sport.

Obituaries

Subbalakshmi Dies At 87: Popular Malayalam Actress And Musician No More

- Veteran actor **R. Subbalakshmi**, renowned for her remarkable contributions to **Malayalam cinema**, bid farewell to the mortal world at the age of **87**.
- **Subbalakshmi's** journey in the entertainment industry began as a dedicated employee of All India Radio. Her passion for **music and the arts** led her to also serve as a music instructor at Jawahar Balbhavan, showcasing her multifaceted talents early in her career.
- Her breakthrough role in the film "**Kalyanaraman**" catapulted her to fame, making her a household name. Over the course of her illustrious career, she graced the screens in **approximately 75 films**, leaving an enduring impact on Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi cinema.



Veteran Actor Junior Mehmood Passes Away at 67

- Veteran character actor **Junior Mehmood**, known for his roles in iconic Bollywood films such as Caravan, Haathi Mere Saathi, and Mera Naam Joker, passed away at 67.
- **Mehmood Junior**, whose real name was **Naeem Sayyed**, began his acting journey when he was very young. Junior Mehmood became well-known for acting in over 260 movies in seven different languages. Some of his famous movies include "**Caravan**," "**Haathi Mere Saathi**," "**Mera Naam Joker**," "**Brahmachari**," "**Kati Patang**," "**Hare Rama Hare Krishna**," and many more.
- Apart from movies, Junior Mehmood also worked on TV shows. Some of the shows he appeared in were "**Pyar Ka Dard Hai Meetha Meetha Pyaara Pyaara**" and "**Ek Rishta Saajhedari Ka**." This showed that he could be great on both the big and small screens.

Sandra Day O'Connor, First Woman On The Supreme Court, Passes Away At 93

- **Sandra Day O'Connor**, the first woman to serve as a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, passed away at the age of 93 in Phoenix, Arizona. President Ronald

Reagan appointed Sandra Day O'Connor to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981.

- Sandra Day O'Connor was born on March 26, 1930, in El Paso, Texas. She earned her Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctor degrees from Stanford University. She faced significant challenges as a female lawyer in a male-dominated profession during the mid-20th century.
- Sandra Day O'Connor retired from the Supreme Court in 2006. Her retirement allowed President George W. Bush to nominate Justice Samuel Alito as her successor.

Dinesh Phadnis, Who Played Fredericks In CID Passed Away

- Actor **Dinesh Phadnis**, renowned for his portrayal of the funny and innocent CID officer **Fredericks on the popular Sony TV show CID**, has passed away. His demise was confirmed by his co-star **Dayanand Shetty**, who clarified that Dinesh suffered from liver damage and not a heart attack.
- Dinesh Phadnis played the role of Fredericks, providing comic relief in CID, a show that initially lacked humor. Dinesh's portrayal of Fredericks added a touch of lightness to the intense crime-solving narrative of CID, earning him great appreciation from the audience.
- He also featured in the Bollywood movies **Sarfarosh** and **Super 30**, in addition to contributing as a writer for a Marathi film. In addition to his roles in shows like CID: Special Bureau, Aadaalat, **Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah**, and CIF, Dinesh Phadnis made cameo appearances.



Former Mr. Universe Bodybuilder Shaun Davis, Dies At 57

- Former Mr Universe bodybuilder **Shaun Davis** has tragically passed away at the age of 57, leaving behind a legacy of remarkable achievements in the world of bodybuilding.
- Hailing from Derbyshire, in east England, Davis had an illustrious career that saw him clinch prestigious titles such as **Mr Britain** and **Mr Europe** before

reaching the pinnacle of success by being crowned Mr Universe in 1996.

- His imposing presence earned him the fitting moniker of '**Dinosaur**' within the bodybuilding community. However, Shaun Davis faced multiple health challenges, particularly **kidney issues**, which ultimately forced him to bring his illustrious bodybuilding career to an early close.

Veteran Kannada Actor Leelavathi Passes Away At 86

- In a poignant moment for fans and the film fraternity, the revered Kannada actor **Leelavathi** has passed away at the age of 86. The seasoned artist, known for her versatile performances, left an indelible mark on the **Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu film industries**.
- Leelavathi, with a career spanning over 600 films, embarked on her cinematic journey with her debut in "**Bhakta Prahlada**" in 1958. Stepping into the Kannada film industry as a leading lady in "**Mangalya Yoga**" the same year, she quickly established herself as a prominent figure.

Sheikh Nawab Al-Ahmad Al-Sahab, Kuwait Emir, Passed Away At The Age Of 86

- **India** is in a somber state as it observes a one-day **state mourning on Sunday, December 17**, following the passing of the **Emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Nawab Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah**, who died on **December 16, 2023, at the age of 86**.
- The Union Home Ministry has issued a communication to all states outlining the protocols to be observed during this period of mourning.
- In alignment with the solemnity of the occasion, **the government has declared a suspension of all official entertainment on the day of mourning**. This decision reflects a collective expression of grief and a show of solidarity with the people of Kuwait during this period of mourning.

Tamil Superstar And Politician Vijayakanth Passes Away At 71

- Tamil Nadu mourns the passing of beloved actor and politician **Vijayakanth**, fondly called "Captain," who breathed his last today at the age of 71.
- Born Vijayaraj in 1952, Vijayakanth's film career began in 1979 with "Iniukumllamai." He rose to fame through films like "SenthoooraPoove,"

“Pulan Visaranai,” “Chatriyan,” “Captain Prabhakaran,” “Chinna Gounder,” and “Ramana,” among others.

- His rugged persona and portrayal of strong characters resonated deeply with audiences, particularly in rural areas, earning him the nickname “Karuppu MGR,” referencing MGR, another iconic Tamil actor-politician.
- His dedication to cinema was recognized with the prestigious Kalaimamani award in 2001 and the Tamil Nadu State Film Award for his performance in “Ramana” (2002).

Founding Father Of EU’s Single Currency Project Jacques Delors Dies Aged 98

- **Jacques Delors**, the former **European Commission chief** and a key figure in the formation of the European Union (EU), has **died at the age of 98**.
- A prominent French socialist, Delors played a crucial role in shaping the EU during his **three-term presidency from January 1985 to the end of 1994**.
- His contributions include the completion of the integrated single market, the introduction of the euro, and the development of a common foreign and security policy.

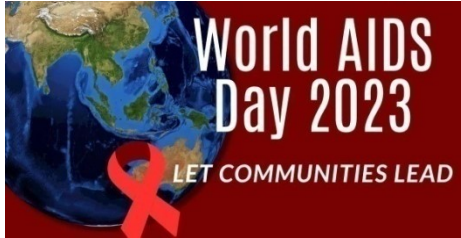


Founding Father of EU's Single Currency Project Jacques Delors Dies Aged 98

Important Days with theme

Worlds AIDS Day 2023

- December 1, marks as the World AIDS Day 2023 which is observed annually since 1988, serving as a crucial occasion



to raise awareness about HIV/ AIDS, commemorate those who have lost their lives to AIDS-related illnesses and show solidarity with people living with HIV.

- The theme for World AIDS Day 2023, “Let Communities Lead!” This theme emphasizes the collective strength and influence of communities in driving initiatives related to HIV awareness, prevention and healthcare.
- In August 1988, James W. Bunn and Thomas Netter, public information officers for the AIDS Global Program of the World Health Organization, initiated World AIDS Day to address the devastating HIV/ AIDS pandemic.
- With an estimated 90,000 to 150,000 individuals HIV-positive in 1988, they proposed the idea to Dr. Johnathan Mann, Director of the AIDS Global Program, who approved it for December 1.

International Day For The Abolition Of Slavery 2023

- The International Day for the Abolition of Slavery is observed annually on December 2nd. This day serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring struggle against slavery and its modern forms.
- The day originates from the United Nations General Assembly’s adoption of the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others on December 2, 1949.
- Historically, slavery was a systematic institution where individuals were treated as property, bought, and sold, often enduring unimaginable hardships. However, modern slavery has taken different forms, including human trafficking, forced labor, and the exploitation of children in various industries.

Indian Navy Day 2023

- Indian Navy Day, observed annually on December 4, is a significant day in India, honoring the bravery, dedication, and achievements of the Indian Naval forces.
- This day holds great importance as it commemorates the strategic and victorious Operation Trident during the Indo-Pakistan War in 1971.
- The theme for Indian Navy Day 2023 is “Operational Efficiency, Readiness, and Mission Accomplishment in the Maritime Domain.”

Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2023

- December 6, 2023, marks the Mahaparinirvan Diwas 2023, commemorating the death anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a towering figure in the Indian history.
- The term Mahaparinirvan derives its significance from Buddhism’s fundamental concept of Parinirvana. This state symbolizes the attainment of nirvana, freedom both in life and after death.
- In the context of Dr. Ambedkar, his embrace of Buddhism and renunciation of Hinduism align with the principles of Parinirvana. The use of the term Mahaparinirvan Diwas to mark his death underscores his stature as a revered Buddhist leader. The article sheds light on the historical and philosophical underpinnings of Mahaparinirvan.

International Cheetah Day 2023

- International Cheetah Day, observed annually on December 4, is a global initiative to raise awareness about the conservation of cheetahs, renowned as the fastest land animals on Earth.
- The significance of this date lies in the birthday of Khayam, a cheetah raised by Dr. Laurie Marker, marking the beginning of a journey towards cheetah conservation.
- Established in 2010 by Dr. Laurie Marker, International Cheetah Day finds its roots in the memory of Khayam, a cheetah cub nurtured by Marker at Wildlife Safari in Oregon.
- In 1977, during a research project in Namibia, Marker witnessed the peril faced by cheetahs due to farmer conflicts. This experience prompted her to dedicate her life to cheetah conservation. December 4, Khayam’s birthday, was chosen as the day to globally celebrate the fastest land mammal.

Armed Forces Flag Day 2023

- **Armed Forces Flag Day**, celebrated on **December 7** each year, holds a special place in our hearts as we pay tribute to the indomitable spirit and sacrifices of the soldiers, sailors, and airmen who stand guard at our borders.
- Established on **August 28, 1949**, by the Ministry of Defence, Armed Forces Flag Day was designated to honor the brave men and women in uniform.
- This day serves as a reminder of the unwavering dedication of our armed forces and provides an opportunity for citizens to contribute towards their welfare.

Human Rights Day 2023

- The year 2023 marks the **75th anniversary** of a monumental global commitment—the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**. Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on **December 10, 1948**, this transformative document remains a beacon of hope, enshrining the inalienable rights that every individual is entitled to, irrespective of diverse factors.
- The UDHR is a groundbreaking document that lays the foundation for fundamental human rights universally protected. It asserts the inherent rights of every person, regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political opinion, national origin, social origin, property, birth, or other status. 10 December 2023 marks the 75th anniversary of one of the world's most groundbreaking global pledges: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

International Anti-Corruption Day 2023

- **International Anti-Corruption Day** is celebrated worldwide on **December 9** each year. In 2023, this special day falls on a Saturday. The aim of this day is to draw attention to the harmful impact of corruption on society and to encourage collective efforts to combat this global issue.
- The theme for International Anti-Corruption Day 2023 is **'UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption.'** This theme emphasizes the ongoing global efforts to fight corruption and highlights the collective responsibility we all share in standing against bribery, misuse of public funds, and any selfish motives that contribute to unethical practices.

- On October 31, 2003, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Designating December 9 as World Anti-Corruption Day, the goal was to raise awareness about corruption and stress the Convention's role in preventing it. The first observance took place on December 9, 2005.

International Mountain Day 2023

- Every year on **December 11**, we celebrate **International Mountain Day** to remind ourselves of the incredible importance of mountains in our lives. This year, the theme is **"Restoring Mountain Ecosystems."**



- This special day, designated by the United Nations, encourages us to think about how we can protect these natural wonders and ensure a better future for our planet.
- Mountains cover about 27% of the Earth's land, and they are like nature's treasure chests. They are home to 15% of the world's population! Not only that, but they also host around half of the world's biodiversity hotspots, which means they're like a haven for various plants and animals.

VijayDiwas 2023

- **Vijay Diwas**, observed on **December 16** every year, stands as a testament to the valor and sacrifice of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war against Pakistan. This day holds deep historical significance as it marks India's resounding victory, resulting in the creation of Bangladesh.
- On Vijay Diwas, India remembers the significant moment when General Niazi, along with 93,000 soldiers, surrendered before the Indian Army and the MuktiBahini of Bangladesh. This surrender is marked as one of the most substantial military surrenders post-World War II, signifying India's triumph in the face of adversity.
- Vijay Diwas is a day of reflection and tribute, commemorating the sacrifices made by the Indian

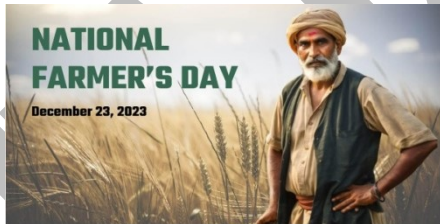
armed forces. The day holds immense cultural and political significance, emphasizing the strong ties between India and Bangladesh. India pays homage to the bravery and strength displayed by its armed forces during the war.

National Mathematics Day 2023

- Every year on **December 22**, the nation reveres the brilliance of **Srinivasa Ramanujan**, one of the greatest mathematicians in history, as **National Mathematics Day (NMD)**.
- The genesis of National Mathematics Day dates back to 2012 when the Manmohan Singh government officially designated December 22 for its observance. This day coincides with the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan, born on **December 22, 1887, in Erode, Tamil Nadu**.
- National Mathematics Day aims to propagate the significance of mathematics in various aspects of life and illuminate Ramanujan's remarkable contributions. On this occasion, the focus extends beyond textbooks, encouraging children to embrace critical thinking and logical reasoning, mirroring Ramanujan's unconventional path of learning.

National Farmers Day 2023

- **National Farmer's Day 2023**, also known as **Kisan Diwas**, is celebrated on **December 23** in India to honor and recognize the invaluable contribution of farmers to the country's socio-economic fabric.
- This day marks the birth anniversary of **Chaudhary Charan Singh**, a former prime minister of India and a dedicated advocate for the welfare of farmers.
- During his political career, **Charan Singh** introduced several welfare schemes for farmers. Notably, in **1939**, he proposed the **Debt Redemption Bill**, a crucial step towards liberating farmers from the burden of moneylenders.
- His advocacy extended to reshaping land reforms in Uttar Pradesh, where he served as the chief minister twice. Charan Singh's multifaceted efforts included



writing extensively on zamindari abolition and land reforms, leaving an indelible mark on India's agricultural history.

Good Governance Day 2023

- **December 25, 2023**, is celebrated as **Good Governance Day 2023** in honor of the **birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.
- This day pays tribute to Vajpayee's leadership and contributions to society, marked by his three terms as the Prime Minister of India.
- The genesis of Good Governance Day can be traced back to **December 23, 2014**, when **Atal Bihari Vajpayee was awarded the Bharat Ratna**, along with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (posthumously).
- In recognition of this prestigious honor, the Narendra Modi-led government declared **December 25 as Good Governance Day**, aiming to celebrate Vajpayee's enduring legacy.



National Consumer Rights Day 2023

- National Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on December 24th to commemorate the passage of the Consumer Protection Act in 1986. This day highlights the significance of consumer rights and serves as a reminder of the need to protect consumers from various threats in the marketplace.
- The Consumer Protection Act of 1986 outlines six fundamental rights for consumers:



Sno.	Fundamental Right
1	Right to Safety
2	Right to Choose
3	Right to be Informed
4	Right to be Heard

Sno.	Fundamental Right
5	Right to Seek Redressal
6	Right to Consumer Education

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