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NATIONAL NEWS

Vikrant Massey Retires From Acting At 37

Vikrant Massey, an industry outsider who rose to fame with hits like *The Sabarmati Report*, *12th Fail*, and *Sector 36*, has surprised his fans by announcing his retirement at 37. In a heartfelt Instagram post, Massey expressed gratitude for the "indelible support" he received and shared his decision to "recalibrate and go back home" to focus on being a husband, father, son, and actor. Prominent casting director Kunal M Shah praised Massey, stating, "Vikrant is at the peak of his career right now. He's a brilliant actor, as seen in *12th Fail* and *Sector 36*. We've rediscovered his talent time and again."

Foot notes:

- **Television Debut:** Began acting career in 2007 with Disney's *Dhoom Machao Dhoom*, gaining fame through TV soaps like *Dharam Veer*, *Balika Vadhu*, *Baba Aiso Varr Dhoondo*, and *Qubool Hai*.
- **Film Breakthrough:** Supporting roles in *Lootera* (2013) and *Dil Dhadakne Do* (2015).
- **Acclaimed performance** as Shyamal "Shutu" Chatterjee in *A Death in the Gunj* (2016).
- **Recent Projects:** Starred in *12th Fail*, *Sector 36*, and *The Sabarmati Report*, addressing the 2002 Godhra train burning and its aftermath.
- **Upcoming Films:** Reportedly includes *Yaar Jigri* and *Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan*.

Gukesh Dommaraju became youngest undisputed chess world champion

Gukesh Dommaraju has made history by becoming the youngest undisputed World Chess Champion at the age of 18. The Indian chess prodigy displayed exceptional skill and composure, defeating several elite players in the championship. His victory not only cements his place among the legends of the game but also highlights the rise of India as a chess powerhouse. Gukesh's success is the culmination of years of hard work, supported by his family and a dedicated coaching team. This achievement inspires a new generation of chess enthusiasts in India and worldwide.

Foot notes:

- Gukesh broke the previous record held by Ruslan Ponomarev, who won the title in 2002 at the age of 18 years and 104 days.
- Gukesh defeated the defending champion, Ding Liren from China, in the 2024 FIDE World Championship, winning the match 7.5-6.5 and taking home a prize of \$1.35 million.
- The final game was a nail-biter, with Gukesh coming from behind to win the championship. Ding Liren seemed to have a risk-free chance to press for a win but instead liquidated into a pawn-down endgame, which Gukesh won.

- Gukesh is the second Indian to become a chess world champion, after Viswanathan Anand. His victory has been celebrated by the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, and other top players.
- Gukesh's victory has catapulted him to international fame, with many chess enthusiasts and fans around the world congratulating him on his achievement. He has become a role model for young chess players in India and around the world.

India's FDI journey reaches \$1 trillion milestone

India has achieved a remarkable milestone in its economic journey, reaching \$1 trillion in foreign direct investment (FDI) since April 2000. This feat is a testament to the country's growing appeal as a global investment destination, driven by a proactive policy framework, a dynamic business environment, and increasing international competitiveness. The first half of the current fiscal year saw a 26% increase in FDI to \$42.1 billion, with total FDI inflows amounting to \$709.84 billion over the last decade, accounting for 68.69% of the overall FDI inflow in the past 24 years.

- **Improved Business Environment:** India's ranking in global business ease of doing business indices has improved significantly, making it an attractive destination for investors.
- **Favorable Government Policies:** Initiatives like "Make in India" and tax reforms have created a conducive environment for investment.
- **Strong Economic Growth:** India's robust economic growth and increasing consumption have made it an attractive market for foreign investors.
- **Strategic Geopolitical Position:** India's strategic location and growing geopolitical importance have further enhanced its appeal to foreign investors.

India Becomes First Nation to Define 'Green Steel' Standards

India has become the first country to define "green steel" standards, taking a pioneering step in decarbonizing the steel industry. These standards aim to eliminate fossil fuels from steel production, promoting the use of green hydrogen, renewable-powered electric arc furnaces, and recycled materials. The initiative aligns with India's National Steel Policy and its climate commitments under the Paris Agreement, fostering a cleaner energy ecosystem and reducing dependency on coal imports. It also positions Indian manufacturers to compete globally as demand for low-carbon steel rises. The move is expected to drive technological advancements, attract investments, and accelerate India's leadership in sustainable industrial practices.

Foot notes:

- Green steel is defined as steel produced with carbon dioxide emissions of less than 2.2 tonnes per tonne of finished steel. This definition is a significant step towards reducing the steel industry's carbon footprint.

- A star-rating system has been introduced to evaluate green steel based on its emissions. Steel with emissions below 1.6 tonnes per tonne will receive a five-star rating, while those with emissions between 1.6 and 2.0 tonnes will get a four-star rating, and those between 2.0 and 2.2 tonnes will receive a three-star rating.
- The Ministry of Steel is launching a 15,000 crore Green Steel Mission to facilitate the transition to sustainable steel production. This mission will include public procurement policies and financial support for companies adopting cleaner technologies.
- The government proposes to allocate 37% of public procurement to five-star rated green steel, with an additional 30% directed towards other green steel options. This policy aims to incentivize the production and use of environmentally friendly steel.
- The steel industry requires a capital investment of approximately 260,000-270,000 crore to transition to greener methods. The Ministry is seeking support from international agencies like the World Bank to achieve this goal.

Chennai's Lalitha Cherukumudi Won Mrs Universe Colorado 2025

Lalitha Cherukumudi from Chennai has won the prestigious title of Mrs. Universe Colorado 2025, showcasing her grace and talent on an international platform. Her achievement highlights her dedication and commitment to representing India with pride. The competition celebrated her poise, confidence, and ability to inspire, making her a standout contestant. Lalitha's victory is a testament to her hard work and a moment of pride for her supporters back home.

Foot notes:

- Lalitha Cherukumudi, hailing from Chennai, has put her city on the global map with her remarkable win.
- As a techie in the US, Lalitha has shown that she's not just about coding and software, but also about elegance and poise.
- The award is a testament to her hard work, dedication, and passion for making a difference in the world.
- Lalitha's win is an inspiration to many young women in India and around the world, showing them that they can achieve their dreams with perseverance and determination.
- As Mrs Universe Colorado 2025, Lalitha will have a platform to raise awareness about social causes and make a positive impact on her community.
- Lalitha's achievement is a matter of pride for India, showcasing the country's talent and beauty on a global stage.

India becomes 3rd largest exporter of smartphones in the world

India has achieved the milestone of becoming the third-largest exporter of smartphones in the world, reflecting its growing prominence in the global electronics market. This achievement is driven by significant investments in manufacturing, government initiatives like the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, and the presence of major global brands in the country. Indian smartphone exports have seen a surge, reaching key markets across Asia, Europe, and the

Middle East. The rise underscores India's transition from being a major consumer to a key manufacturing and export hub. This development not only boosts the economy but also solidifies India's position as a global technology powerhouse.

Foot notes:

- India's smartphone exports have grown dramatically, with the country breaching the 20 thousand crore rupees mark in a single month, November 2024.
- India's smartphone exports have reached \$15.6 billion in FY24, with a 42% growth rate. The US, UAE, Netherlands, and UK are among the top destinations for Indian smartphone exports.
- India has become the second-largest mobile phone manufacturing country after China, with companies like Apple, Samsung, and others setting up production units in the country.
- The growth in smartphone exports has contributed significantly to India's economy, creating job opportunities and improving the country's trade balance and foreign exchange reserves.
- With continued investment in technology and infrastructure, India aims to strengthen its position in the global smartphone market and become one of the top exporters in the world.

India Ranks 39th in Travel and Tourism Development Index 2024

India has secured the 39th position in the Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) 2024, marking a steady improvement in its global ranking. The index, published by the World Economic Forum, assesses countries based on factors like infrastructure, natural resources, cultural heritage, and regulatory frameworks. India's progress reflects the government's efforts to boost the tourism sector through initiatives such as the Incredible India campaign and improvements in travel infrastructure. The country's diverse landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and growing digital transformation are factors that continue to drive its tourism potential. Despite challenges, India remains a significant player in the global tourism industry.

Foot notes:

- India's ranking has improved significantly from 54th in 2021, with an adjusted ranking of 38th due to a revision in the WEF's methodology.
- India's scores have improved in three areas: Prioritization of Travel & Tourism, Safety & Security, and Health & Hygiene.
- India recorded 14.3 million International Tourist Arrivals in 2022, representing 1.47% of the international inbound tourism market share.
- The Ministry of Tourism has been promoting tourism infrastructure development through various schemes, including Swadesh Darshan, PRASHAD, and Assistance to Central Agencies for Tourism Infrastructure Development.
- Several states, including Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Kerala, have been developing their tourism infrastructure and promoting their unique tourist attractions.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

New agent to Prince of Arcot Endowments appointed

The Government of Tamil Nadu approved the appointment of Nawabzada Ghulam Ghouse as the new agent of the Prince of Arcot Endowments through G.O. (Ms.) No. 106, dated 28.11.2024, issued by the Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes, and Minorities Welfare (S2) Department. Nawabzada Ghouse succeeds U. Mohamed Khalilullah, who served as the agent since 1993. Now 91, Khalilullah is praised by the Prince for his 31 years of dedicated service, which saw significant improvements and contributions to the Endowments' development. The Prince expressed gratitude to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin for approving the appointment and supporting the request for the new agent.

Foot notes:

- Appointment: Nawabzada Ghulam Ghouse, 48, appointed as the new agent of the Prince of Arcot Endowments.
- Role: Manages Charitable and Religious Endowments under the Prince of Arcot Endowments Act (1922).
- Location: Endowments are based in Chennai, Tiruchirapalli, and other places in Tamil Nadu.
- Successor: Ghouse succeeds U. Mohamed Khalilullah, who served as agent since 1993.
- Acknowledgment: Prince of Arcot thanked Tamil Nadu CM M. K. Stalin for his support in the appointment.

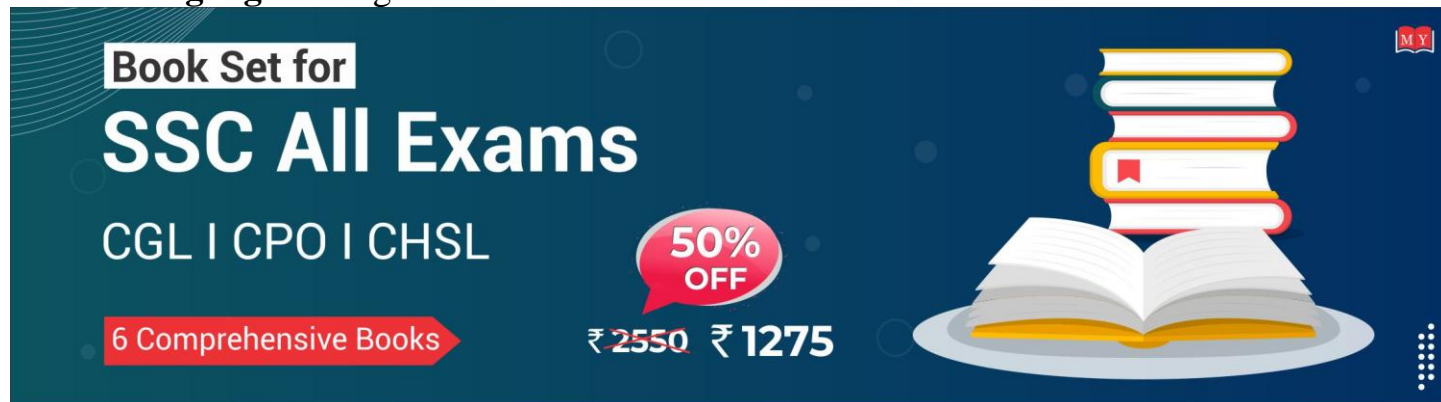
Mikheil Kavelashvili elected as President of Georgia

Mikheil Kavelashvili, a candidate from the ruling Georgian Dream party, has been elected as the President of Georgia in an unprecedented electoral process. This marks the first time in the country's history that the president was chosen by a 300-member electoral college, comprising parliamentary members and regional delegates, rather than by a direct public vote. Kavelashvili secured 224 votes, surpassing the required minimum of 200 votes. His election has sparked controversy, with opposition leaders rejecting the results and accusing the ruling party of undermining democratic processes and moving the country away from its European aspirations. Protests in Tbilisi and allegations of Russian interference continue to challenge the legitimacy of the election.

Foot notes:

- Kavelashvili was elected by an electoral college consisting of 300 members, including parliament members, Supreme Council representatives, and local authority deputies. He secured 224 votes, exceeding the required two-thirds majority.

- The opposition has not recognized the results of the parliamentary vote and boycotted the meetings, not putting forward any candidates. Transparency International-Georgia has denounced the election as "illegitimate," citing constitutional violations and lack of legitimacy.
- A former footballer and ex-parliament member, Kavelashvili was the only presidential candidate backed by the ruling Georgian Dream-Democratic Georgia party.
- Bidzina Ivanishvili, the honorary chair of Georgian Dream, congratulated Kavelashvili on his election, stating that he will be a "patriotic and worthy president." Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze expressed confidence that Kavelashvili's presidency will strengthen Georgia's statehood and sovereignty.
- Kavelashvili's inauguration ceremony is set for December 29, and he will serve a five-year term as President of Georgia.

About Georgia:**Capital:** Tbilisi**Official language:** Georgian**François Bayrou Appointed French Prime Minister**

François Bayrou, the leader of the Democratic Movement (MoDem) party, was appointed as France's new Prime Minister by President Emmanuel Macron on December 13, 2024. Bayrou's appointment follows the resignation of Michel Barnier, who stepped down after his government lost a no-confidence vote. This marks Bayrou's return to a prominent political role after his prior tenure as Macron's justice minister in 2017 ended amid controversy. At 73, Bayrou faces significant challenges, including navigating a deeply divided parliament and addressing France's economic issues, such as its growing budget deficit. His focus will also include fostering political stability and bridging the gap between citizens and government institutions.

Foot notes:

- Bayrou, 73, is the head of the centrist MoDem group, allied with Macron's party. He has a rich political background, having served as Minister of National Education, Minister of Justice, and President of the European Democratic Party.
- Bayrou replaces Michel Barnier, who was recently ousted in a no-confidence vote. His priority is to form a stable cabinet and address economic reforms, while navigating France out of months of political instability.

- Bayrou's appointment has sparked criticism from opposition parties, including the hard-left France Unbowed (LFI) party and the Greens. They have threatened to propose another motion of censure if Bayrou's administration does not adopt changes to its economic policies.
- Bayrou faces the complex challenge of addressing the 2025 budget to mitigate economic uncertainty while avoiding additional no-confidence votes. The French presidency has confirmed his appointment, tasking him with forming a government.
- Bayrou has been involved in controversies in the past, including a fictitious jobs scandal in 2017, which led to his resignation as Minister of Justice. However, he has also been a vocal campaigner on issues like reform of the political process, civil liberties, and free software.

About France:**Capital:** Paris**President:** Emmanuel Macron**Musa Aman appointed as Sabah's 11th governor**

Musa Aman has been appointed as the 11th Governor of Sabah, Malaysia, marking a significant milestone in his political career. He succeeds Tun Juhar Mahiruddin, who served two terms in the role. Musa Aman, a former Chief Minister of Sabah, has a long history of political involvement in the state and at the national level. His appointment is seen as a crucial development in Sabah's political landscape, reflecting his leadership experience and influence. As Governor, Musa Aman is expected to contribute to the state's development and strengthen its relationship with the federal government.

Foot notes:

- Musa Aman will assume the office of Yang di-Pertua Negeri of Sabah on January 1, 2025, succeeding Juhar Mahiruddin.
- Musa served as the 14th Chief Minister of Sabah from March 2003 to May 2018 and held various ministerial positions.
- Musa holds the record for being the longest-serving Chief Minister of Sabah, having held the position for 15 years.
- During his tenure as Chief Minister, Musa was involved in several controversies, including a timber corruption scandal in 2012 and allegations of corruption during the 2018 general election.
- In 2018, Musa disappeared after being ousted as Chief Minister and was later found to be in the UK, where he was seeking medical treatment. He filed a court case challenging his dismissal but lost.
- Musa's appointment as governor marks a new chapter in his career, and it will be interesting to see how he navigates this new role and contributes to the development of Sabah.

Richard Niall appointed as Chief Justice of Supreme Court of Victoria

Richard Niall has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Australia. Niall, a highly respected legal professional, succeeds Justice Anne Ferguson in this prestigious role. With extensive experience as a barrister and judicial officer, Niall has demonstrated a strong commitment to the legal profession and the administration of justice. His appointment is expected to bring stability and leadership to the court as it navigates complex legal matters. As Chief Justice, Niall will play a crucial role in overseeing the judiciary and ensuring the fair and effective functioning of the court system in Victoria.

Foot notes:

- Niall brings a wealth of experience to the role, having served as a judge of appeal of the Supreme Court since 2017, presiding over criminal and civil appeals as well as matters in the trial division.
- Niall held various roles, including Victoria's Solicitor-General from 2015 to 2017 and senior counsel at the Victorian Bar, specializing in constitutional and administrative law.
- In 2010, Niall was appointed Queen's Counsel, recognizing his expertise in human rights law and environmental law, with notable appearances in the High Court of Australia.
- Niall graduated with a Bachelor of Economics and a Bachelor of Laws with honors from Monash University in 1989 and commenced practice as a barrister at the Victorian Bar in 1995.
- Attorney-General Jaclyn Symes praised Niall's appointment, stating that he is "highly regarded" and has contributed significantly to the Court of Appeal and as Solicitor-General.

Jagath Wickramaratne Elected as Sri Lanka's Speaker

Jagath Wickramaratne has been elected as the new Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament. A seasoned politician known for his bipartisan approach, Wickramaratne secured broad support from members across party lines. His election comes at a crucial time, as Sri Lanka navigates political and economic challenges. As Speaker, he is expected to play a pivotal role in maintaining parliamentary decorum and fostering constructive debates. This appointment underscores his reputation for fairness and leadership within Sri Lanka's political landscape.

Foot notes:

- Wickramaratne assumed office on December 17, 2024, taking over from Asoka Ranwala.
- He was unanimously elected as the new Speaker, with Prime Minister Dr. Harini Amarasuriya proposing his name.
- Wickramaratne is a doctor and medical administrator by profession, and a member of the National People's Power.
- He represents the Polonnaruwa Electoral District, having secured 51,391 preferential votes in the 2024 Sri Lankan parliamentary election.
- Wickramaratne's election marks a significant milestone in his political career, and he is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the country's legislative agenda.

Mitchell Santner Named New White-Ball Captain for New Zealand

Mitchell Santner has been appointed as the new captain of New Zealand's white-ball cricket teams, succeeding Kane Williamson. Santner, a left-arm spinner and all-rounder, has been a key figure in New Zealand's limited-overs setup for several years. His leadership qualities and experience in international cricket make him a natural choice for the role. As the new captain, Santner is expected to continue New Zealand's strong performances in white-ball formats, particularly in One Day Internationals and T20s.

Foot notes:

- Santner has already led New Zealand in 24 T20Is and four ODIs, giving him valuable experience to take on the new role.
- His first series as captain will be against Sri Lanka in late December and early January, which includes six white-ball fixtures.
- New Zealand head coach Gary Stead believes Santner is well-suited for the role, citing his calm and collected personality, which has earned him respect in the changing room.
- Santner is thrilled to take on the new challenge, saying it's a huge honor and privilege to lead his country in two formats.
- Santner will lead New Zealand in an ODI tri-series in Pakistan in February, followed by the ICC Champions Trophy and a home T20I and ODI series against Pakistan.

Shankar Sharma Reappointed as Nepal's Ambassador to India

Shankar Sharma has been reappointed as Nepal's Ambassador to India, marking the continuation of his diplomatic mission between the two neighboring countries. Sharma, who has previously held this crucial post, brings extensive experience in bilateral relations and diplomacy. His reappointment comes at a time when India-Nepal relations are focused on strengthening economic, political, and cultural ties. Sharma's leadership is expected to further enhance cooperation, resolve issues, and promote mutual interests between India and Nepal.

Foot notes:

- He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Hawaii and has worked as a Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Nepal, and a Senior Economist in the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore.
- Sharma has provided leadership for national planning, policy guidance, program development, and monitoring as a highest-level development planner in Nepal.
- He has been engaged with various international organizations, including the World Energy Council Committee for Energy Issues of Developing Countries, London, and the advisory panel on MDG Assessment of the Asia Pacific Region, UNESCAP, Bangkok.
- Sharma has published eight books and more than fifty articles on the economy, energy, and the environment of the Asia-Pacific region, including Nepal.
- His reappointment as Nepal's Ambassador to India highlights his continued importance in Nepal's diplomatic efforts and his ability to navigate complex international relationships.

Real Madrid Clinches Intercontinental Cup 2024 Victory Over Pachuca

Real Madrid secured the Intercontinental Cup 2024 title with a thrilling victory over Mexican club Pachuca. The match, held in Riyadh, saw Real Madrid dominate with a blend of tactical brilliance and individual skill. Key player Vinícius Júnior delivered an exceptional performance, scoring two goals and assisting another, earning him the Player of the Match title. Pachuca put up a spirited fight but struggled to overcome Madrid's relentless attack and solid defense. This win marks Real Madrid's continued dominance on the global stage, further solidifying their legacy as one of football's most successful clubs.

Foot notes:

- The final took place at the Lusail Stadium in Qatar on December 18, 2024, with Real Madrid's goals coming from Kylian Mbappé, Rodrygo, and Vinicius Junior.
- With this win, Carlo Ancelotti became the most successful manager in Real Madrid's history, surpassing Miguel Muñoz's record with 15 trophies.
- Vinicius Junior played a crucial role in the win, contributing with an assist and a penalty goal, and was also crowned FIFA Best Player of the Year.
- The Spanish giants were in control throughout the match, with their offensive power and defensive stability ensuring a comfortable victory.
- Despite some early threats from Pachuca, they were no match for Real Madrid's star-studded team, with veteran striker Salomon Rondon offering some resistance in the second half.

Jaishankar Opens Indian Embassy's New Chancery in Italy

The Government of Tamil Nadu approved the appointment of Nawabzada Ghulam Ghouse as the new agent of the Prince of Arcot Endowments through G.O. (Ms.) No. 106, dated 28.11.2024, issued by the Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes, and Minorities Welfare (S2) Department. Nawabzada Ghouse succeeds U. Mohamed Khalilullah, who served as the agent since 1993. Now 91, Khalilullah is praised by the Prince for his 31 years of dedicated service, which saw significant improvements and contributions to the Endowments' development. The Prince expressed gratitude to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin for approving the appointment and supporting the request for the new agent.

Foot notes:

- Historical Significance: Italy has been a vital hub for India's historical interactions with Europe, playing key roles as a producer, customer, financier, and carrier in India's commerce.
- Shared Maritime Interests: Both nations are maritime powers with aligned perspectives on global affairs.

- **Diplomatic Relations:** Frequent high-level interactions highlight the depth of India-Italy relations.
- **Strategic Focus:** Italian PM Giorgia Meloni's Indo-Mediterranean focus aligns with India's strategic interests, especially in maritime security and global cooperation.
- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC):** Launched during India's G20 presidency in 2023. Enhances connectivity between India, the Middle East, and Europe.
- **Global Participation:** Jaishankar to represent India at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Fiuggi. Attending the 10th MED Mediterranean Dialogue in Rome, a key geopolitical forum.
- **Diaspora Engagement:** The new Chancery improves services and representation for the Indian diaspora in Italy. Strengthens people-to-people ties and fosters cultural connections.



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Veronica Michelle Bachelet Jeria awarded Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2024

Former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet has been selected to receive the 2024 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development, as announced by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust on Friday. The decision was made by a jury chaired by former national security advisor and foreign secretary Shivshankar Menon. The prize honors Bachelet's significant contributions to human rights, peace, and equality. The trust highlighted her roles as the first director of UN Women, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and two-term President of Chile. The award also acknowledges her efforts in strengthening India's relations with Chile.

Foot notes:

- Michelle Bachelet served as the President of Chile from 2006 to 2010 and again from 2014 to 2018.
- During her presidency, she implemented education and tax reforms, and oversaw the signing of a free trade agreement between India and Chile.
- She led UN Women from 2010 to 2013 and served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2018 to 2022.

- The Indira Gandhi Prize includes a cash award of Rs 25 lakh and a citation, recognizing her contributions to international peace and development.
- Established in 1986, the prize is awarded annually to individuals and organizations promoting these causes.
- Bachelet has been a consistent champion of gender equality and the rights of marginalized communities, making a lasting impact both domestically and internationally.
- Born on September 29, 1951, in La Cisterna, Santiago Province, Chile, Bachelet faced personal and political adversity during General Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship.

US President Donald Trump received the 'Patriot of the Year' award

Donald Trump was honored with the 'Patriot of the Year' award at a Long Island event hosted by Fox Nation. The award, styled to resemble the American flag, was presented following a live rendition of Lee Greenwood's God Bless the USA. In his acceptance speech, the president-elect reflected on his journey to reclaim the White House and asserted that the nation is already reaping the benefits of his electoral victory over Kamala Harris.

Foot notes:

- Donald Trump, 78, continued celebrating his electoral and popular vote victories at the event.
- He highlighted his close ties with individuals at Fox, stating: "You have incredible people at Fox."
- Former U.S. Senator David Perdue was named ambassador to China.
- Initially scheduled to be hosted by Defense Secretary nominee Pete Hegseth, the role shifted to Sean Hannity after Hegseth left Fox News to accept his nomination.
- Around 2,000 attendees, dressed elegantly and often adorned with American flags or "Make America Great Again" merchandise, packed the venue.
- Fox News host Sean Hannity emceed the event, describing the honorees as "an eclectic blend of people" worthy of recognition.
- Awards were presented in various categories, including service to veterans, bravery, and courage.
- About a dozen Fox News personalities participated, including Jesse Watters, Laura Ingraham, and Judge Jeanine Pirro, who also served as award presenters.

Murdu Fernando Sworn in as Sri Lanka's 48th Chief Justice

Justice Murdu Nirupa Bindushini Fernando was ceremonially sworn in as the Chief Justice of Sri Lanka on December 2, 2024, by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake at the Presidential Secretariat. Justice Fernando is the 48th Chief Justice of Sri Lanka and the second woman to hold the position, following Justice Shirani Bandaranaike. She succeeds Chief Justice Jayantha Jayasuriya, who recently retired.

Foot notes:

- **Nomination and Swearing-In:** Approved by the Constitutional Council. Sworn in on December 2, 2024, at the Presidential Secretariat by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake.
- **Ceremony** attended by dignitaries, including Dr. Nandika Sanath Kumanyake, Secretary to the President.
- **Educational Background:** Alumna of Princess of Wales College, Moratuwa. Earned an LL.B. from the University of Colombo's Faculty of Law.
- **Professional Journey:** Joined the Attorney General's Department in 1985. Promoted to Deputy Solicitor General in 1997. Became Additional Solicitor General in 2014. Appointed to the Supreme Court in March 2018. Served as Senior Additional Solicitor General and the senior-most judge on the Supreme Court.
- **Significance:** Justice Fernando's career spans over three decades, reflecting her expertise and commitment to the rule of law. Her appointment marks a progressive step for gender representation in Sri Lanka's judiciary.

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah Becomes Namibia's First Female President

Namibia elected its first female president last week, with Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah winning the presidential election, despite technical and logistical challenges. The 72-year-old, who currently serves as the country's vice president, secured 57% of the vote, strengthening the ruling South West Africa People's Organisation (Swapo) party's control since Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990. Opposition parties have disputed the results, calling the extension of Swapo's power illegal and have announced plans to challenge the outcome in court.

- **Foot notes:**
- Nandi Ndaitwah, a staunch Swapo supporter, joined the party at 14 and was involved in the underground independence movement in the 1970s that fought against South African apartheid rule in Namibia.
- Primary challenger Panduleni Itula of the Independent Patriots for Change (IPC) received 26% of the vote.

- IPC plans to contest the results in court, citing issues like ballot paper shortages and technical difficulties that caused a threeday voting extension.
- Joined SWAPO in the 1960s as part of Namibia's independence struggle.
- Held senior roles, including foreign minister, and was promoted to vicepresident in February after President Hage Geingob's death.
- SWAPO received 53% of the parliamentary vote, a drop from 65% five years ago.
- Nandi Ndaitwah is seen as a steady, seasoned diplomat who avoided the corruption scandals that have affected other SWAPO members.

US President appointed Warren Stephens as envoy to UK

US President-elect Donald Trump has selected billionaire investment banker Warren Stephens as the next US ambassador to the United Kingdom. This prestigious position is typically filled by close allies and major donors. Stephens, a prominent Republican donor, contributed \$2 million to a pro-Trump super PAC during the 2024 campaign. He is the chairman, president, and CEO of Stephens Inc., a financial services firm based in Little Rock, Arkansas, which he inherited from his father.

Foot notes:

- US President-elect Donald Trump appointed businessman Warren Stephens as the US Ambassador to the United Kingdom.
- Trump announced the nomination on social media, praising Stephens as one of the country's most successful businessmen.
- Warren Stephens is the chairman, president, and CEO of Stephens Inc., a privately held financial services company based in Little Rock, Arkansas.
- A significant Republican party supporter, Stephens was a fundraising bundler for Mitt Romney's 2012 presidential campaign.
- Initially supporting conservative groups that opposed Trump in 2016, Stephens later shifted his support to Trump for the 2020 and 2024 presidential elections.
- Trump highlighted Stephens' 38-year leadership in building a successful financial firm and his philanthropic contributions to the community.

China Opens First Atmospheric Monitoring Station in Antarctica

China has launched its first atmospheric monitoring station in Antarctica, significantly enhancing its research presence on the continent. Situated in the Larsmann Hills of East Antarctica, the Zhongshan National Atmospheric Background Station is designed to offer continuous, longterm monitoring of atmospheric components. This initiative will provide

crucial data on climate change and the effects of human activity on the environment. The station underscores China's expanding involvement in Antarctic research, reinforcing its ambitions as a 'polar power'.

Foot notes:

- Zhongshan Station located in a region of unique geographical and scientific value.
- It will monitor atmospheric concentration changes, aiding in understanding global climate shifts, especially in polar regions, which are critical amplifiers of climate change.
- China's growing presence in Antarctica is part of its longterm strategic vision, including exploration of resources like minerals, petroleum, and natural gas.
- The mining ban under the treaty will be up for review in 2048, and China's actions may be preparing for that possibility.
- China's approach seeks to balance environmental protection with resource use, which could influence future discussions regarding the treaty.

Donald Trump Named TIME's 2024 Person of the Year

Donald Trump has been named TIME's 2024 Person of the Year, marking a significant recognition of his influence in American politics and global discourse. The former U.S. president made headlines with his remarkable political comeback, securing the Republican nomination for the 2024 presidential election. TIME cited Trump's enduring impact on reshaping the Republican Party and his ability to galvanize his supporters despite facing numerous legal challenges. His controversial leadership style and polarizing rhetoric have continued to dominate public conversations, keeping him a central figure in U.S. politics. The decision sparked widespread debate, reflecting the deep divisions in public opinion about Trump's legacy and ongoing influence.

Foot notes:

- TIME recognized Trump's "historic comeback" in the 2024 US presidential election, where he defeated Kamala Harris on November 5.
- Trump's influence on American politics has been significant, and TIME acknowledged his role in "reshaping the American presidency and altering America's role in the world".
- Sam Jacobs, TIME's editor-in-chief, stated that Trump was the most influential person in the news in 2024, making him the obvious choice for Person of the Year.
- Trump was previously named Person of the Year in 2016, following his first presidential election victory.
- Trump was among a list of finalists that included Kamala Harris, Elon Musk, Benjamin Netanyahu, and Kate, Princess of Wales.
- The issue featuring Trump on the cover will hit newsstands on December 20, and it's expected to be a highly sought-after edition.

Donald Trump appointed Tilman Fertitta as US ambassador to Italy

Donald Trump has appointed billionaire businessman Tilman Fertitta as the United States Ambassador to Italy. Fertitta, known for his extensive hospitality and entertainment ventures, brings a wealth of experience to the role. This appointment underscores Trump's focus on strengthening diplomatic ties with Italy. Fertitta's leadership and global business acumen are expected to enhance bilateral relations. His selection highlights the administration's strategy of leveraging expertise from diverse sectors for diplomatic positions.

Foot notes:

- President-elect Donald Trump nominated Tilman Fertitta, owner of the Houston Rockets, as the US Ambassador to Italy on December 22, 2024.
- Fertitta, a well-known businessman and sports team owner, has no prior diplomatic experience.
- Fertitta's nomination is subject to approval by the US Senate. If confirmed, he will take on the role of representing the United States in Italy.
- It's unclear what Fertitta's appointment would mean for the Houston Rockets, the NBA team he owns.
- Trump also nominated former NFL player Herschel Walker as ambassador to the Bahamas around the same time.
- Trump announced Fertitta's nomination via social media, marking a significant development in his administration's diplomatic appointments.

Trump Appoints Sriram Krishnan as Senior AI Policy Advisor

Donald Trump has appointed Sriram Krishnan as the Senior AI Policy Advisor. Krishnan, a renowned expert in artificial intelligence, will play a pivotal role in shaping AI governance and regulatory strategies. This appointment reflects Trump's focus on advancing AI technology and ensuring its responsible development. Krishnan's expertise is expected to guide critical decisions in the rapidly evolving AI landscape. His leadership will be instrumental in aligning AI innovation with ethical and societal considerations.

Foot notes:

- Sriram Krishnan is an Indian-American entrepreneur, venture capitalist, and podcaster. He has led product teams at major tech companies like Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, and Snap.
- Krishnan will serve as Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, focusing on ensuring continued American leadership in AI.
- He will work closely with David Sacks, the White House AI and Crypto Czar, to shape and coordinate AI policy across the government, including collaborating with the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.
- Previous Work with Elon Musk: Krishnan worked with Elon Musk in 2022 to help rebuild Twitter (now X) after Musk's acquisition.

- The Indian community leaders in the US welcomed Krishnan's appointment, with Sanjeev Joshipura, Executive Director of Indiaspora, praising Krishnan's insightful thinking and influential commentary in the AI realm.

Aisake Valu Eke becomes the new Prime Minister of Tonga

Aisake Valu Eke has been appointed as the new Prime Minister of Tonga, marking a significant transition in the country's leadership. A seasoned politician, Eke brings with him a wealth of experience and a commitment to addressing Tonga's pressing issues. His leadership priorities are expected to focus on economic development, climate resilience, and strengthening international relations. The appointment has been met with optimism, as many hope his governance will bring stability and progress.

Foot notes:

- Aisake Valu Eke was elected as the new Prime Minister of Tonga on December 24, 2024, by the Legislative Assembly of Tonga, securing 16 votes against his closest rival, Viliami Latu, who garnered 8 votes.
- Eke is a veteran politician who has served as the Minister for Finance and National Planning from 2014 to 2017. He was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 2010 and has been a member of parliament for Tongatapu 5.
- Eke holds a PhD from the University of Southern Queensland in Australia, where he completed his thesis on the quality of service in the public sector in Tonga.
- Eke will be formally sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Tonga in February 2025 and is expected to lead the country into the next general elections scheduled for November 2025.

Maia Sandu Sworn in for 2nd Term as President of Moldova

Maia Sandu has been sworn in for her second term as the President of Moldova, reaffirming her leadership in the country. Her re-election reflects the trust and confidence of the Moldovan people in her vision and governance. Sandu's presidency has been marked by a commitment to democratic reforms, economic stability, and strengthening international relations. As she embarks on her new term, she is expected to continue prioritizing transparency, anti-corruption measures, and progress for Moldova. Her leadership will play a crucial role in shaping the country's future amidst regional and global challenges.

Foot notes:

- Maia Sandu was re-elected as President of Moldova, winning 55.33% of the vote in the run-off election against Alexandr Stoianoglo.
- Sandu was sworn in for her second term as President on December 24, 2024, after first becoming President in 2020.
- Sandu has been a strong supporter of Moldova's accession to the European Union and has overseen the country's move away from Russia.

- Sandu faces significant challenges, including reducing Moldova's dependence on Russian natural gas and navigating the country's complex relationships with Russia and the EU.
- Sandu is the first woman to serve as President of Moldova, a position she has held since 2020.
- Sandu has pledged to continue her domestic agenda, focusing on anti-corruption efforts, economic reform, and liberalization.

Elon Musk Becomes World's First \$400 Billion Net Worth Individual

Elon Musk has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the world's first individual with a net worth of \$400 billion. This unprecedented feat is attributed to the surging valuations of his companies, including Tesla, SpaceX, and X (formerly Twitter). Musk's innovative ventures in electric vehicles, space exploration, and AI-driven technologies have solidified his position as a leading global entrepreneur. His wealth has made him a symbol of transformative innovation and the expanding possibilities of the tech-driven economy. Despite criticism over his management style, Musk's achievements continue to reshape industries and inspire aspiring entrepreneurs worldwide.

Foot notes:

- Musk's wealth primarily comes from his ownership stakes in Tesla, Inc. and SpaceX. In November 2020, around 75% of his wealth was derived from Tesla stock, but this proportion has since decreased to about 37% as of December 2022.
- Musk became the first person in the world to have a net worth above \$300 billion in November 2021. He also surpassed Jeff Bezos to become the richest person in the world in January 2021, with a net worth of \$185 billion.
- Musk's net worth has been known to fluctuate significantly. In September 2020, he lost \$16.3 billion in a single day, the largest single-day plunge in the Bloomberg Billionaires Index's history at the time.
- Musk doesn't receive a salary from Tesla, but instead has a compensation plan tied to the company's valuation and revenue. In May 2020, he was eligible to purchase 1.69 million Tesla shares at below-market prices, worth around \$800 million.
- Musk has paid significant taxes on his income, including an estimated \$12 billion in 2021. However, he has also been reported to have paid no federal income taxes in 2018.

STATE NEWS

Harchand Barsat appointed as chairman of COSAMB

S. Harchand Singh Barsat, Chairman of the Punjab Mandi Board, has been appointed as the Chairman of the National Council of State Agricultural Marketing Boards (Kausamb) in New Delhi. This appointment comes in recognition of his exceptional contributions to the Mandi system in Punjab. The announcement was made by Kausamb Managing Director Dr. J.S. Yadav

at a ceremony held at Kisan Bhawan. Barsat becomes the 21st Chairman of Kausamb. During the event, the leadership of Kausamb was officially handed over to him by Shri Aditya Devi Lal Chautala, MLA from Dabwali, Haryana, and former Chairman of Kausamb.

Foot notes:


- Importance of Farmers: Farmers, known as Annadaata, produce a variety of crops, including vegetables, fruits, and grains, feeding everyone.
- Modernization of Mandi System: Emphasized the need for modernization to ensure clean handling of farm produce from harvest to consumer delivery. Highlighted the changing eating habits, which demand an upgraded system.
- National Mandi System Upgrade: Advocated for unifying India's Mandi system, creating a more efficient and beneficial network for all stakeholders. Aimed to improve the Mandi system to benefit farmers, commission agents, laborers, and traders.
- Collaboration for Welfare: Pledged to enhance the Mandi system through modern techniques for the welfare of the people. Stressed the importance of collective efforts to ensure that every section of society benefits from the improvements.

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Arunachal Pradesh Launched 'Mission Arun Himveer'

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has launched Mission Arun Himveer to improve market access for local agricultural and horticultural producers. In a significant development, the Arunachal Pradesh Agriculture Marketing Board (APAMB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), North East Frontier, in the presence of Chief Minister Pema Khandu. Provide direct market access for local farmers, SHGs, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), and cooperatives. Promote economic growth in rural and border areas. Address employment challenges by encouraging reverse migration to villages.

Foot notes:

- ITBP will directly purchase fruits, vegetables, meat, and poultry from local farmers through APAMB.
- A revolving fund of 4 crore will facilitate payments, reimbursed after reconciliation by ITBP.
- 400 tons of produce worth 72 lakhs were supplied to the Indian Army under a similar agreement in August 2022.

- Agricultural produce exchange has already started in regions like Tawang, Lower Subansiri, West Siang, Upper Siang, and Lohit.
- MoU signed by APAMB CEO Okit Palling and ITBP NE Frontier Inspector General Akun Sabharwal.
- Ceremony attended by Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, Chief Secretary, and senior officials from agricultural and allied sectors.
- Deputy Commissioners, farmers, SHGs, and cooperatives participated virtually.

About Arunachal Pradesh:

Capital: Itanagar (Executive Branch)

Chief Minister: Pema Khandu

Governor: Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik

Ekhnath Shinde joined Maharashtra as Deputy CM

Ekhnath Shinde has agreed to take the oath as deputy chief minister, as announced by party leader Uday Samant on Thursday. Initially, Shinde had hesitated to confirm his cabinet position due to the BJP not meeting his demands, which included the home portfolio for himself as deputy chief minister and the assembly speaker position for a Shiv Sena legislator. Shinde and Fadnavis held two meetings over the past two days. Samant revealed that Shiv Sena MLAs had urged Shinde to take the cabinet position, with many indicating they would refuse ministerial positions if Shinde stayed outside the government.

Foot notes:

- The Shiv Sena is expected to receive approximately 12 ministerial positions in the upcoming cabinet reshuffle.
- While the party remains optimistic about the alliance's future, some members feel that Ekhnath Shinde continuing as chief minister could have strengthened the party's position ahead of local body elections.
- Several Shiv Sena MLAs believe that retaining Shinde for a longer period would have boosted morale and improved performance in the upcoming municipal and zilla parishad elections, according to a TOI report.
- Outgoing cabinet ministers are keen to retain their positions, while Shiv Sena leaders are focusing on including new faces in the cabinet.
- The party is looking to balance regional and caste considerations while preparing for local elections.
- With 57 MLAs and four independents backing the party, Shiv Sena faces the challenge of managing diverse expectations.

Justice Manmohan appointed as Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court

The appointment follows a recommendation made by the Supreme Court Collegium on November 28. The Collegium, led by Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and comprising Justices B.R. Gavai, Surya Kant, Hrishikesh Roy, and Abhay S. Oka, endorsed the elevation of Justice Manmohan. Justice Manmohan, currently serving as the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court since September 2024, previously held the position of Acting Chief Justice from September 2023. With a distinguished legal career, he was born on December 17, 1962, and earned his LL.B. from Delhi's Campus Law Centre in 1987.

Foot notes:

- Collegium Recommendation: The Supreme Court Collegium, led by CJI Sanjiv Khanna, recommended Justice Manmohan's elevation to the Supreme Court on November 23, 2024.
- Supreme Court Composition: His appointment increases the Supreme Court's strength to 33 judges against the sanctioned 34.
- Seniority and Representation: Justice Manmohan is ranked No. 2 in the all-India seniority of High Court judges and is the senior-most judge in the Delhi High Court. Currently, the Supreme Court has only one judge from the Delhi High Court.
- Family Background: Born on December 17, 1962, he is the son of the late Jagmohan Malhotra, a former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir and Lt. Governor of Delhi.
- Education: Earned an LL.B. from Campus Law Centre, Delhi University, and enrolled as an advocate in 1987.
- Retirement: Supreme Court judges retire at 65, while High Court judges demit office at 62.

Bihar Pavilion awarded gold award in the 43rd Indian International Trade Fair

The Bihar Pavilion at the 43rd India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2024 in Delhi received a gold medal for its design, thematic presentation, and dedication to sustainability, according to officials from the state's industry department. Inaugurated by Industries and Tourism Minister Nitish Mishra, the pavilion showcased Bihar's progressive journey with the theme "Viksit Bihar under Viksit Bharat @ 2047." Alok Ranjan Ghosh, the Director of Industries, praised the award as a testament to the state's efforts in blending tradition with modernity.

Foot notes:

- Bandana Preyashi, Secretary, Department of Industries, Government of Bihar, highlighted that the award reinforces the state's commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation, aligning with its vision of "Viksit Bihar by 2047."
- She emphasized the recognition as a proud moment, showcasing Bihar's cultural richness and economic advancement.
- The success of the pavilion was attributed to the collaborative efforts of the government, local artisans, entrepreneurs, and stakeholders.

- Alok Ranjan Ghosh, Director of Industries, credited the achievement to meticulous planning and inter-departmental collaboration.
- Ghosh described the award as a significant milestone, reaffirming Bihar's position as a forward-looking state that values its heritage while pursuing progress.
- He noted that the Bihar Pavilion symbolizes the state's aspirations and collective efforts toward realizing its vision of "Viksit Bihar by 2047."

About Bihar:

Chief Minister: NitishKumar

Capital: Patna

Ratapani Wildlife sanctuary declared as 8th Tiger Reserve of MP

The Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary has been officially declared as the 8th Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh. This significant development aims to provide a protected habitat for the majestic Bengal tiger and other endangered species. Located in the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh, the Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary is spread over an area of approximately 890 square kilometers. The declaration of this sanctuary as a tiger reserve is expected to boost conservation efforts and ensure the long-term survival of tigers in the region.

Foot notes:

- 8th Tiger Reserve: Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary has been declared as the 8th Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh.
- Location: The sanctuary is located in the Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh.
- Area: The Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary covers an area of approximately 890 square kilometers.
- Conservation Efforts: The declaration aims to provide a protected habitat for the Bengal tiger and other endangered species.
- Significance: This move is expected to boost conservation efforts and ensure the long-term survival of tigers in the region.

UNESCO Declares West Bengal a Top Heritage Tourism Destination

West Bengal's tourism sector has gained international acclaim, with UNESCO recognizing it as a leading destination for heritage tourism. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee highlighted the state's remarkable strides in religious, heritage, and tea tourism, which have significantly boosted the industry and created employment opportunities for thousands of youth. By enhancing iconic religious and heritage sites, West Bengal is elevating its tourism profile, driving economic growth, and solidifying its role as a key player in India's tourism sector.

Foot notes:

- Over 2,400 homestays have been opened, particularly in North Bengal, boosting accommodation options for tourists.

- Development of tourist-friendly amenities in key regions like the Sunderbans, forests, and mountains.
- Establishment of thousands of hotels and facilities, creating significant employment opportunities for local youth.
- Gangasagar Mela: Enhancing Pilgrimage Tourism. Recognized as one of India's largest religious gatherings, second only to the Kumbh Mela.
- Infrastructure upgrades, including a new bridge over the Muriganga River, aim to improve visitor experience.
- Efforts to elevate the Mela's prominence and attract more pilgrims.

Uttar Pradesh Set To Become India's Top Cow Milk Producer

Uttar Pradesh is poised to become India's top cow milk producer, driven by advancements in dairy farming and robust government support. The state has implemented initiatives to boost milk production, including better breeding techniques, veterinary services, and subsidies for farmers. With its large bovine population and enhanced focus on quality and quantity, UP is outpacing other states in milk yield. These efforts not only strengthen the rural economy but also support allied industries like milk processing and exports. This achievement underscores UP's commitment to revolutionizing the dairy sector and contributing to India's agricultural growth.

Foot notes:

- Uttar Pradesh is currently the largest milk producer in India, with an annual milk production of 319 lakh metric tonnes.
- The state government plans to establish nine new greenfield dairy plants, which will become functional in the next one to two years.
- The dairy sector in Uttar Pradesh offers immense investment opportunities, with a focus on value-added dairy products, organic/farm-fresh milk, and exports.
- The state government has launched the Dairy Policy 2022 to increase milk processing levels, improve quality, and provide access to animal nutrition and feed.
- The government offers various incentives, including capital investment grants, interest subvention, and reimbursement of electricity duty, to encourage investment in the dairy sector.
- The Dairy industry in UP employs a large number of people, with the state having a significant share of the country's milch animal population, which contributes 7% to the state's GSDP.

Srinagar Earns 'World Craft City' Tag

Srinagar, the picturesque capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has been bestowed with the prestigious title of "World Craft City" by the World Craft Council (WCC). This esteemed recognition makes Srinagar the fourth Indian city to receive this honor, after Jaipur, Bhuj, and Pune. The "World Craft City" tag is a testament to Srinagar's rich cultural heritage and its

expertise in traditional crafts, such as carpet weaving, papier-mâché, and woodcarving. This distinction is expected to boost tourism and promote the local handicrafts industry in Srinagar.

Foot notes:

- **Prestigious Recognition:** Srinagar, the capital of Jammu and Kashmir, has been recognized as a "World Craft City" by the World Craft Council (WCC).
- **4th Indian City:** Srinagar is the fourth Indian city to receive this honor, after Jaipur, Bhuj, and Pune.
- **Rich Cultural Heritage:** This recognition is a testament to Srinagar's rich cultural heritage and its expertise in traditional crafts.
- **Traditional Crafts:** Srinagar is famous for its traditional crafts, including carpet weaving, papier-mâché, and woodcarving.
- **Boost to Tourism and Local Industry:** This distinction is expected to boost tourism and promote the local handicrafts industry in Srinagar.

Devendra Fadnavis to be sworn in as Chief Minister of Maharashtra

Devendra Fadnavis has been elected as the BJP's Legislative Party leader in a crucial meeting, positioning him as the next Chief Minister of Maharashtra. With his appointment confirmed, Fadnavis is set to meet Eknath Shinde at 2 PM at Varsha bungalow, with Ajit Pawar also attending. The meeting will focus on the next steps, the distribution of cabinet portfolios, and finalizing the list of leaders for the oath taking ceremony.

Foot notes:

- Senior BJP leaders, including Sudhir Mungantiwar and Pankaja Munde, seconded the proposal, confirming Fadnavis's return as CM.
- Fadnavis will take the oath alongside Eknath Shinde of Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), who are expected to be appointed deputy chief ministers.
- The Mahayuti alliance (BJP, Shiv Sena under Eknath Shinde, and NCP under Ajit Pawar) won a resounding victory in the Maharashtra Assembly elections, securing 232 of 288 seats.
- Despite the overwhelming mandate, the alliance initially faced challenges in finalizing leadership roles, particularly due to Eknath Shinde's insistence on remaining CM.
- The deadlock was resolved when Eknath Shinde publicly agreed to step aside for party unity, expressing his willingness to follow decisions made by Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

Ashwini Bhide appointed Principal Secretary to Maharashtra Chief Minister

Ashwini Bhide has been appointed as the Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, highlighting her exemplary administrative credentials. Known for her innovative approach and efficiency, she is expected to play a key role in driving the government's strategic

initiatives. Her appointment comes at a crucial time, aiming to ensure seamless coordination between various departments and the Chief Minister's Office. With her extensive experience, Bhide is poised to contribute significantly to Maharashtra's governance and development agenda.

Foot notes:

- Bhide's appointment was made on December 13, 2024, by the Maharashtra government.
- She will continue to hold her current charge as Managing Director of the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation until further orders.
- Bhide replaces Brijesh Singh, an IPS officer who was appointed as Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister in February 2023.
- Ashwini Bhide has been serving as the Managing Director of Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation since 2015.
- As Principal Secretary, she will be responsible for handling the day-to-day affairs of the Chief Minister's office and advising the CM on important policy matters.
- Bhide's appointment is significant, as she is a senior IAS officer with extensive experience in administration and governance.

About Maharashtra:

Chief Minister: Devendra Fadnavis

Governor: C. P. Radhakrishnan

Capital: Mumbai

Masali Village in Gujarat Became India's First Solar Border Village

Masali Village in Gujarat has achieved the distinction of becoming India's first solar-powered border village. Situated near the India-Pakistan border, the village is now fully electrified through renewable energy, promoting sustainability and energy independence. This initiative is part of a larger effort by the government to develop border villages under the Vibrant Village Program. The solar project has not only improved the quality of life for residents but also enhanced security in the region with uninterrupted power supply for surveillance systems. Masali's transformation serves as a model for sustainable development in remote and strategic areas.

Foot notes:

- Masali village, located 40 kilometers from the Pakistan border in Gujarat's Banaskantha district, has become India's first fully solar-powered border village.
- The village, with a population of 800, has achieved 100% solar power generation through the installation of solar rooftops on 199 households, generating 225.5 kilowatts of electricity.
- The project, valued at 1.16 crore, was made possible through a collaborative effort involving the Revenue Department, Uttar Gujarat Vij Company Limited (UGVCL), banks, and solar companies, with significant subsidies under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

- The initiative has resolved longstanding electricity issues in the village, eliminating the burden of energy bills for residents and reducing dependency on conventional energy sources.
- The state government plans to replicate this success in 17 additional villages in Vav and Suigam talukas, aiming to transform them into fully solar-powered communities.
- Masali village's achievement marks a significant milestone in India's renewable energy initiatives, showcasing the country's commitment to sustainable development and rural electrification.

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DEFENCE NEWS

India-Cambodia Joint Exercise VINBAX Begins in Pune

The Indian Army and Cambodian Army have launched their inaugural Joint Table Top Exercise, CINBAX, at the Foreign Training Node in Pune. Scheduled from 1st to 8th December 2024, the exercise aims to enhance strategic cooperation, mutual trust, and interoperability. Indian Army: 20 personnel from an Infantry Brigade. Cambodian Army: 20 personnel. Wargaming counter-terrorism operations in alignment with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Foot notes:

- Enhance trust, camaraderie, and interoperability between Indian and Cambodian forces.
- Improve joint operational efficiency in United Nations peacekeeping missions.
- Promote indigenous defense production by showcasing Indian-made weapons and equipment.
- Counter-Terrorism: Joint planning and execution of CT operations.
- Force Multipliers: Use of advanced technology in sub-conventional warfare.
- Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR): Crisis management training.
- Casualty Management and Logistics: Improved operational support efficiency.
- Atmanirbharta: Highlighting Indian-origin defense equipment.
- Trust Building: Strengthening bilateral military relations and fostering camaraderie.
- Joint Training Task Force: Establishing collaborative frameworks for intelligence and reconnaissance.

Defense Minister to commission 'INS Tushil' in Russia

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will commission the multi-role stealth-guided missile frigate 'INS Tushil' at Yantra Shipyard in Kaliningrad, Russia. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has been on a three-day visit to Russia. He and his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov will co-chair the 21st meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military and Military-Technical Cooperation. Both leaders will review the entire range of multi-faceted relations between the two countries in the field of defence, including military-to-military and industrial cooperation.

Foot notes:

- They will also exchange views on contemporary regional and global issues of mutual interest.
- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will also pay tribute at 'The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' in Moscow.
- The Defense Minister will oversee the commissioning of 'INS Tushil' in Russia.
- This marks a significant step in enhancing India's naval capabilities.
- The commissioning event underscores the growing defense cooperation between India and Russia.
- It highlights the ongoing collaboration in defense technology and naval operations between the two countries.

The President of India awards Honorary General Rank to Nepali Army Chief Ashok Raj Sigdel

The President of India has conferred the honorary rank of General of the Indian Army on Nepali Army Chief Ashok Raj Sigdel, strengthening the longstanding ties between the two nations. This tradition, reflecting mutual respect and camaraderie, has been a hallmark of India-Nepal relations since 1950. General Sigdel received the honor during a formal ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan, symbolizing the deep bond between the Indian and Nepali armed forces. The gesture highlights the commitment to bilateral defense cooperation and shared strategic interests in the region. This honorary rank reinforces the cultural and historical connections between India and Nepal, fostering goodwill and collaboration.

Foot notes:

- The honorary rank of 'General of the Indian Army' is a symbol of the strong defense partnership between India and Nepal, and it recognizes General Sigdel's commendable military skills and contributions to fostering friendly relations between the two nations.
- This tradition of conferring honorary military titles has been maintained between the two countries since 1950, with Indian Army chiefs receiving the honorary rank of 'General of Nepal Army' and Nepal Army chiefs receiving the honorary rank of 'General of Indian Army'.

- General Sigdel's four-day visit to India, which commenced on December 11, 2024, aims to bolster defense ties between the two nations and underscore their shared commitment to regional security and cooperation.
- Recently, Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel conferred the honorary rank of 'General of Nepal Army' on Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi during a ceremony in Kathmandu.
- This exchange highlights the robust defense partnership and mutual respect between India and Nepal, which is central to fostering stability and security in the region.

India-Nepal Joint Military Exercise SURYA KIRAN held in Nepal

The 17th edition of the India-Nepal joint military exercise SURYA KIRAN was conducted in Nepal, fostering defense cooperation and interoperability between the two countries. The exercise involved the Indian Army and the Nepalese Army engaging in counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, and disaster response drills in a mountainous terrain. It emphasized mutual sharing of operational expertise, cultural exchange, and camaraderie between the two armed forces. Both sides conducted field training exercises and humanitarian assistance simulations to enhance joint operational capabilities. This bilateral engagement underscores the longstanding friendship and robust defense ties between India and Nepal.

Foot notes:

- The 18th edition of the exercise is being held in Saljhandi, Nepal, from December 31, 2024, to January 13, 2025.
- Participating Troops: The Indian Army contingent comprises 334 personnel from the 11th Gorkha Rifles Regiment, while the Nepalese Army is represented by the Srijung Battalion.
- Exercise Objectives: The exercise aims to enhance interoperability in jungle warfare, counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief under the United Nations Charter.
- Training Activities: The exercise includes joint training, mutual interaction, and sharing of experiences between the two armies, with a focus on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, disaster management, and humanitarian assistance.
- Significance: The exercise strengthens the bilateral relationship between India and Nepal, promoting mutual understanding, trust, and cooperation between the two armies.
- Previous Editions: The exercise has been held annually since 2011, with previous editions taking place in India and Nepal.

MoA signed between the Arunachal Pradesh government and the Indian Army

A Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) has been signed between the Arunachal Pradesh government and the Indian Army for the upkeep and maintenance of the Major Ralengnao Bob Khathing Museum of Valor. The agreement was signed in the presence of Arunachal Pradesh

Chief Minister Pema Khandu in Tawang on Wednesday. Tawang Deputy Commissioner Kangki Darang and Brigadier V S Rajput of the 190 Mountain Brigade officially signed the MoA. The agreement establishes that the management and oversight of the museum will be fully handled by the Indian Army.

Foot notes:

- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu paid tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's first Home Minister, who directed Major Bob Khathing to travel to Tawang in 1951 and establish administrative control over the region, which was previously under Tibetan administration.
- This crucial move not only integrated Tawang into India but also embodied Patel's vision of a unified and strong nation.
- CM Khandu acknowledged the contributions of Sardar Patel, Major Bob Khathing, and the then Governor of Assam, Daulat Ram, in securing Tawang as part of India.
- He emphasized that without their efforts, the Monpas and the Tawang region could have been under China-controlled Tibet.
- The Chief Minister expressed gratitude to the Indian Army, particularly the Tawang-based 190 Mountain Brigade, for providing defense land for the museum and agreeing to manage it.
- He assured that the government would provide full support for the museum's maintenance and management whenever necessary.

About Arunachal Pradesh:

Capital: Itanagar

Chief Minister: Pema Khandu

Governor: Kaiwalya Trivikram Parnaik

India, France, UAE Conduct Desert Knight Air Combat Exercise

India, France, and the UAE recently conducted the Desert Knight air combat exercise over the Arabian Sea. This multi-nation drill aimed at enhancing interoperability and sharing operational knowledge between the air forces. French and UAE fighter jets, alongside Indian Air Force (IAF) planes, participated in various air combat scenarios, showcasing advanced tactical capabilities. The exercise highlights the growing military collaboration between the three countries and strengthens defense ties in the region. This joint effort underscores the importance of strategic defense partnerships and is a significant step in boosting regional security.

Foot notes:

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) deployed a range of aircraft, including Su-30 MKI, MiG-29, Jaguar fighter jets, AWACS, C-130-J transport planes, and air-to-air refuelling aircraft.

- The French Air and Space Force contributed Rafale fighter jets and a multi-role tanker transport, while the UAE Air Force fielded F-16 jets.
- The exercise took place over the Arabian Sea, approximately 350-400 kilometers southwest of Karachi, and allowed for large force engagement with intensive combat maneuvers. The IAF aircraft operated from various bases in India, while the French and UAE aircraft operated from Al Dhafra air base in the UAE.
- The main focus of the exercise was to enhance synergy and interoperability among the three air forces, as well as to showcase the IAF's prowess.
- The exercise came amid increasing attacks on commercial vessels by Houthi militants in the Red Sea and ahead of India's Republic Day celebrations, where French military forces will also participate.
- The Desert Knight exercise reflects a broader trend of collaborative defense strategies among nations with shared security interests.

Joint naval exercise SLINEX 2024 between India and Sri Lanka started

The joint naval exercise SLINEX 2024 between India and Sri Lanka has officially commenced. This biennial exercise aims to strengthen maritime cooperation, enhance interoperability, and foster mutual understanding between the two nations' navies. The exercise includes both harbor and sea phases, featuring advanced naval maneuvers, search and rescue operations, and tactical drills. SLINEX 2024 underscores the commitment of India and Sri Lanka to ensuring regional maritime security and stability. It also provides a platform to address shared challenges and boost bilateral relations in the Indian Ocean region.

Foot notes:

- SLINEX 2024 is being held from December 17 to 20, 2024, at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.
- The Indian Navy is being represented by INS Sumitra, a Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel, along with a Special Forces team, while the Sri Lankan Navy is participating with SLNS Sayura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, and an embarked Special Forces team.
- The exercise is being conducted in two phases - the Harbour Phase (December 17-18) and the Sea Phase (December 19-20), focusing on enhancing interoperability, strengthening mutual understanding, and promoting regional maritime security.
- The Sea Phase will feature joint exercises in various operational domains, including Special Forces operations, gun firings, communication drills, seamanship practices, navigation evolutions, and helicopter operations.

India-Malaysia Joint Military Exercise HARIMAU SHAKTI Commenced

The 4th edition of the India-Malaysia Joint Military Exercise, HARIMAU SHAKTI, began on December 2, 2024, at Bentong Camp in Malaysia's Pahang district. Scheduled to continue until December 15, 2024, this annual exercise aims to strengthen military cooperation between the

two nations. The focus is on enhancing the forces' capability to conduct joint counterinsurgency operations in jungle terrain, in accordance with the United Nations Chapter VII Mandate.

Foot notes:

- Enhance joint military capabilities for counterinsurgency operations in jungle terrain.
- Strengthen defense cooperation and foster stronger bilateral ties between India and Malaysia.
- Focus Areas: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs): Sharing best practices for joint operations.
- Jungle Warfare: Training for operations in challenging jungle environments.
- Interoperability: Developing seamless operational coordination.
- Camaraderie: Building effective communication and teamwork between forces.
- Historical Context: This is the 4th edition of the exercise.
- The previous edition was held in November 2023 at Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya, India.
- Strategic Importance: Strengthens defense ties and collaboration on counterinsurgency tactics. Enhances bilateral military relations between India and Malaysia.

BANKINGNEWS

ANZ appointed Sam Garland as Group General Manager

ANZ has appointed Sam Garland as Group General Manager of Internal Audit. Reporting directly to the Chair of the Audit Committee, Christine O'Reilly, he will also have an internal management reporting line to ANZ CEO Shayne Elliott. With two decades of experience in professional services and extensive expertise in the financial sector, Mr. Garland joins ANZ from PwC Australia. At PwC, he served as the Banking and Capital Markets Leader, overseeing client relationships and providing assurance, risk management, regulatory guidance, and support for complex transformations.

Foot notes:

- Mr Garland succeeds Paul Orton, who will retire after 14 years at ANZ. Mr Orton has been a trusted leader and demonstrated unquestionable integrity throughout his many leadership roles at ANZ, and in particular while leading Group Internal Audit since 2021.
- Mr Garland will be based in Melbourne and commences in the role in early 2025.
- Mr. Garland will succeed Paul Orton, who is retiring after 14 years at ANZ.
- Paul Orton has been a trusted leader, showing exceptional integrity during his leadership roles, especially as the head of Group Internal Audit since 2021.
- Mr. Garland will be based in Melbourne and is set to begin his role in early 2025.

Govt appoints Vaibhav Chaturvedi as RBI representative

The Central Government has appointed Vaibhav Chaturvedi, Chief General Manager of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as the ex-officio member of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) to represent the RBI. This announcement was made by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. In his role as the RBI's representative, Chaturvedi will support the IBBI in fostering a smooth and transparent resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. The Code aims to address stressed assets and promote credit discipline within the financial sector.

Foot notes:

- This appointment highlights the RBI's continued commitment to strengthening its collaboration with other regulatory and enforcement agencies within the insolvency framework.
- The IBBI board, which operates under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, includes members from key regulatory institutions such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the RBI and SEBI.
- The IBBI is responsible for implementing the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016, which aims to resolve stressed assets and enhance credit discipline in the financial sector.
- The RBI's involvement in the insolvency ecosystem is crucial, and Chaturvedi's appointment underscores the central bank's continued efforts to strengthen its synergy with other regulatory and enforcement agencies.
- The IBBI board comprises members from various regulatory bodies, including the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the RBI, and Sebi.

Sanjay Malhotra appointed as new RBI Governor

Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed as the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), succeeding Shaktikanta Das, whose term ends on December 10, 2024. Malhotra, a seasoned IAS officer from the Rajasthan cadre, brings over three decades of experience in finance, taxation, and IT. With degrees from IIT Kanpur and Princeton University, his leadership as Revenue Secretary and in other key roles positions him to guide the RBI through transformative times for India's economy.

Foot notes:

- Malhotra is a 1990-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Rajasthan cadre.
- He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur and a Master's degree in Public Policy from Princeton University.
- Malhotra has over 33 years of experience in finance, taxation, and public policy.
- His experience in fiscal policymaking and tax administration is expected to play a vital role in shaping India's monetary policy.
- He will need to balance the need to control inflation with the need to support economic growth.

Bharati Kolli Recognized as Rising Star Woman Leader in Banking

Bharati Kolli has been recognized as a Rising Star Woman Leader in Banking for 2024. She serves as the Director of the Data Management Office at the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), the largest bank globally. Kolli has an extensive background in working with Fortune 100 companies, leveraging data intelligence and analytics to create solutions for growth, cost savings, and regulatory compliance. Her contributions are part of an evolving approach to banking that emphasizes innovation and data-driven strategies.

Foot notes:

- Bharati Kolli has been honored by Women We Admire, a platform that recognizes women leaders in various fields, including banking.
- Kolli is the Director of the Data Management Office of the Industrial and Commercial Bank of
- China, China's largest bank and the largest bank in the world.
- She has worked with several Fortune 100 clients and built solutions that benefit growth, cost savings, risk, and regulatory compliance through data foundations, intelligence, and analytics.
- Bharati Kolli is a Telugu woman banker who has made a name for herself in the banking industry, inspiring others to follow in her footsteps.
- Kolli is one of the many women leaders recognized by Women We Admire as Rising Star Women Leaders of Banking for 2024, a list that includes other notable women in the banking industry.
- Bharati Kolli's achievement is an inspiration to women in banking and finance, showing them that they too can achieve great things with hard work and dedication.

Yes Bank appoints Manish Jain as Executive Director

Yes Bank has appointed Manish Jain as its new Executive Director, marking a strategic move to bolster its leadership team. With over three decades of experience in the banking and financial services sector, Jain brings extensive expertise in risk management, corporate banking, and strategic operations. His appointment aligns with Yes Bank's efforts to strengthen its governance and enhance growth prospects amid a competitive market. Jain has previously held key leadership roles in prominent banks, showcasing his ability to drive organizational

transformation. This move reflects Yes Bank's commitment to building a resilient and future-ready institution.

Foot notes:

- Manish Jain brings over three decades of experience in the banking and financial services industry, having held leadership positions at organizations like Standard Chartered Bank, Ernst & Young Consulting India, GE India, and Maruti Suzuki.
- Jain joined Yes Bank in 2023 as the Country Head of the Wholesale Banking Group, where he played a pivotal role in enhancing the Wholesale Banking business and driving growth.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Jain's appointment as Executive Director for a period of three years, until December 10, 2027.
- As Executive Director, Jain will oversee key strategic initiatives, focus on expanding the bank's business horizons, drive innovation, and ensure operational excellence.
- Jain's professional proficiency spans Wholesale Banking, Investment Banking, Transaction Banking, and Corporate Advisory Services, making him a valuable asset to Yes Bank.

About Yes Bank:

Headquarters: Mumbai

CEO: Prashant Kumar

Founded: 2004

**RBL Bank re-appoints R Subramaniakumar as MD and CEO**

RBL Bank has re-appointed R Subramaniakumar as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the bank for a three-year term, starting from December 2024. Subramaniakumar has been instrumental in steering the bank through its growth and challenges in recent years. His reappointment reflects the board's confidence in his leadership and strategic vision for the bank. During his tenure, RBL Bank has made significant strides in expanding its customer base and enhancing its digital banking capabilities. As MD and CEO, Subramaniakumar is expected to continue driving the bank's growth and operational excellence.

Foot notes:

- Subramaniakumar's re-appointment ensures continuity in leadership, which is crucial for the bank's growth and stability.

- The re-appointment is subject to approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which has already granted its approval.
- Subramaniakumar's new tenure will be for three years, starting from June 23, 2025, to June 22, 2028.
- With over 40 years of experience in the banking industry, Subramaniakumar brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the role.
- During his previous tenure, Subramaniakumar navigated the bank through challenging times, including concerns over its financial health.
- Under his leadership, the bank's net profit fell 24.3% to Rs 222.52 crore in Q2 FY25, but total income increased by 20.1% to Rs 4458.29 crore.

About RBL Bank:

Headquarters: Mumbai

South Indian Bank Inaugurates Second Mega Currency Chest in Kakkanad

South Indian Bank (SIB), a leading scheduled commercial bank in India, has expanded its banking infrastructure by inaugurating its second Mega Currency Chest in Kakkanad, Ernakulam, which also marks its sixth currency chest overall. The facility was officially opened today by Mr. Thomas Mathew, Regional Director for Kerala & Lakshadweep at the Reserve Bank of India, Thiruvananthapuram, along with key bank officials.

Foot notes:

- South Indian Bank has inaugurated a new currency chest at Kakkanad to serve its branches in Ernakulam and adjacent regions.
- The expansion is aimed at improving cash management, enhancing the bank's ability to handle high volumes of currency, and ensuring greater operational efficiency and faster service delivery.
- Thomas Mathew, Regional Director for Kerala and Lakshadweep at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), emphasized that currency management is central to the RBI's responsibilities and that such currency chests ensure quality currency notes are available to the public.
- The new currency chest strengthens South Indian Bank's infrastructure and enhances its position as a leading financial institution in the region.
- Mr. Thomas Mathew highlighted the partnership between RBI and South Indian Bank in providing reliable currency management services.
- The new addition is part of South Indian Bank's ongoing efforts to meet the changing needs of its customers across the region.

SPORTS NEWS

Pakistan won U-19 Asia Cup

Pakistan emerged as the champions of the U-19 Asia Cup, securing a dominant victory in the tournament. The team displayed exceptional skill and determination throughout the competition. Their performance highlighted their strength in youth cricket. The win adds another prestigious title to Pakistan's cricketing achievements. It also marks a significant milestone for the development of young cricketers in the country.

Foot notes:

- Pakistan clinched the U-19 Asia Cup title with a commanding performance in the final.
- The team showcased impressive skills and teamwork throughout the tournament.
- Their victory highlighted the emerging talent in Pakistan's youth cricket scene.
- The win adds a prestigious trophy to Pakistan's cricketing legacy.

Deepika Kumari rises to 3rd spot in World Archery Rankings

Indian recurve archer Deepika Kumari has climbed to third place in the latest World Archery Rankings with 237.5 points, trailing Casey Kaufhold of the USA (264.5) and leader Lim Sihyeon of Korea (305). After taking a break in 2023 following the birth of her child in December, Deepika returned to competition this year, securing a medal at the Asia Cup in Baghdad. The three-time Olympian finished fourth at the Yecheon 2024 Hyundai Archery World Cup Stage 2 in May..

Foot notes:

- Deepika's dominance is evident as the second-ranked Indian recurve archers, Ankita Bhakat and Bhajan Kaur, are tied at 34th with 111 points each.
- Despite missing the podium at the Paris Olympics, the 30-year-old made a strong comeback by winning a silver medal at the Archery World Cup Final in Mexico in October.
- Dola Banerjee remains the only Indian to win World Cup Final gold (Dubai, 2007).
- Deepika Kumari's Record: Sixth medal in nine World Cup Final appearances; first since becoming a mother in 2022. Runner-up in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, and 2024; bronze medalist in 2018.

Mizoram won 14th Hockey India Sub-Junior Women National Championship

On the fifth day of the 14th Hockey India Sub Junior Women National Championship 2024, held at the South Central Railways Sports Complex in Secunderabad, Telangana, Hockey Mizoram, Hockey Haryana, Hockey Bihar, Hockey Bengal, and Hockey Maharashtra each secured three points in their respective matches. The day began with a goalless draw between Kerala Hockey and Hockey Arunachal in Pool E.

Foot notes:

- Hockey Bengal defeated Le Puducherry Hockey 7-1 in Pool H.
- Captain Bulbul Kumari Shaw scored a hat-trick (2', 23', 55').
- Purba Chakraborty (24', 32') and Piyali Oraw (16', 29') scored braces.
- Manasvi B.U scored for Le Puducherry Hockey (50').
- In Pool F, Hockey Jammu and Kashmir forfeited their match against Hockey Bihar, and Hockey Bihar was awarded a 5-0 win.
- In the final match of the day, Hockey Maharashtra defeated Hockey Gujarat 1-0 in Pool G.
- Captain Yashasvi Kubde scored the winning goal in the second quarter (29').

About Mizoram:**Capital:** Aizawl**Chief Minister:** Lalduhoma**Historic Bronze Medal for India in e-Football at Asian E-sports Games**

Pavan Kampelli secured the bronze medal in eFootball at the 2024 Asian Esports Games in Bangkok, making India's first-ever podium finish in the event. Known as 'Mr. Tomboy', Kampelli triumphed over 2022 eFootball World Finals Winner (Mobile), Asgard Azizi of Indonesia, with a 2-1 victory. Despite a tough beginning against TXRO of Thailand, Kampelli displayed remarkable skill to clinch the bronze.

Foot notes:

- India's Pavan Kampelli secured the bronze medal in eFootball at the 2024 Asian Esports Games in Bangkok, marking the country's first-ever podium finish in the event.
- Known as 'Mr Tomboy,' Pavan defeated the 2022 eFootball World Finals Winner (Mobile), Asgard Azizi of Indonesia, 2-1 on his way to the bronze.
- Despite a challenging start against the eventual champion, TXRO of Thailand, Pavan displayed incredible resilience, bouncing back with 2-1 victories over players from Indonesia, Syria, and Laos to clinch the historic medal.
- Pavan advanced to the Lower Bracket Final, where he fought valiantly against TXRO for a place in the Grand Finals but was narrowly defeated.

Jay Shah Became a Youngest ICC Chairman in History

At 36, Jay Shah becomes the youngest Chairman in ICC history. He takes over from Greg Barclay, recognizing his impactful four-year tenure. Shah's appointment marks a pivotal moment for global cricket, with opportunities to expand the sport's reach and inclusivity.

Foot notes:

- Drive cricket's inclusion in the LA28 Olympic Games.
- Promote inclusivity and global popularity of cricket.
- Support the growth of women's cricket while maintaining a balance across formats.

- **Strategic Goals:** Engage and expand the global cricket fanbase. Enhance resources and opportunities for cricketers worldwide. Sustainably grow the sport through collaboration with ICC teams and member nations.
- **Administrative Experience:** He was secretary of BCCI since 2019, former district and state-level cricket administrator with the Gujarat Cricket Association (GCA).
- **Acknowledgment:** Expresses gratitude to Greg Barclay for his impactful leadership and contributions as ICC Chairman.

Gujarat's Urvil Patel becomes 1st batter to score two T20 centuries in U40 balls

Gujarat opener Urvil Patel struck his second T20 century in just six days during the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy match against Uttarakhand at the Emerald High School Ground. Patel raced to a 36ball century, guiding Gujarat to a dominant eightwicket win in just 13.1 overs. With this century, Patel became the first player in T20 cricket history to score two hundreds in under 40 balls. This achievement follows his recordbreaking 28ball century against Tripura on the same ground the previous week.

Foot notes:

- Chasing 183, Urvil Patel played a sensational knock, finishing unbeaten on 115 off 41 balls, including 8 fours and 11 sixes, leading Gujarat to victory with 41 balls to spare.
- In a previous game, Patel smashed an unbeaten 113 off 35 balls while chasing 156, including 12 sixes and 7 fours, securing a win in just 10.2 overs. His 28ball century was the fastest by an Indian in T20 cricket, and his strike rate of 322.86 is the secondhighest in T20s, only behind Estonia's Sahil Chauhan (27ball hundred).
- One year ago, Patel scored the secondfastest List A hundred in Indian cricket, reaching 100 in just 41 balls against Arunachal Pradesh.
- IPL 2023: Patel was part of the Gujarat Titans squad, picked for 20 lakh. Despite his explosive performances, he was released by the franchise ahead of the IPL 2024 auction.
- IPL 2025: Patel entered the Mega Auction with a base price of 30 lakh but went unsold.

Bangladesh won U19 Asia Cup

Defending champions Bangladesh clinched the ACC U19 Men's Asia Cup title by defeating India by 59 runs in the final held in Dubai. Set a target of 199, India, led by Mohamed Amman, was bowled out for 139 with over 14 overs remaining. Bangladesh's bowlers, Iqbal Hossain Emon and Azizul Hakim, were instrumental in the victory, claiming three wickets each. Earlier, after being put into bat, Bangladesh posted a total of 198, thanks to key contributions from Mohammad Shihab James (40), Rizan Hossan (47), and Farid Hasan (39).

Foot notes:

- The ACC Men's Under-19 Asia Cup, established by the Asian Cricket Council in 1989, showcases the best young talent from Asian nations.

- Over its 11 editions, the tournament has become a key platform for emerging cricketers, with the latest edition concluding in Dubai on Sunday.
- India is the most successful team in the competition's history, having won eight of the 10 previous tournaments.
- India missed the final only twice, in 2017 and 2023.
- Bangladesh claimed their maiden title in 2023 by defeating the United Arab Emirates in the final, held in Dubai.
- The young Tigers are on the brink of a second consecutive title, defeating India in the 2024 final by 59 runs.
- Batting first, Bangladesh set a target of 198 runs before delivering a clinical bowling performance to secure the victory.

England became 1st team to reach 500,000 Test cricket runs

The England cricket team has been outstanding on their tour of New Zealand, closing in on a dominant series victory. After securing an eight-wicket win in the first Test, they are poised to take an unassailable lead in the series. In the second Test, England built a commanding lead, nearing the 500-run mark. Despite being bowled out for 280 in their first innings, they staged a remarkable comeback by dismissing New Zealand for just 125. The Three Lions are firmly in control, leaving New Zealand with a daunting task ahead.

Foot notes:

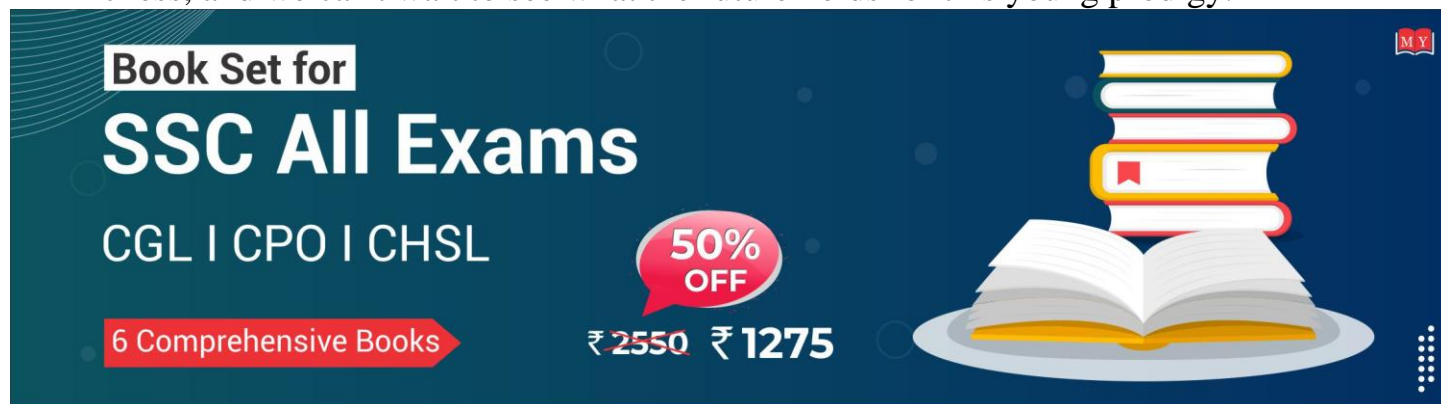
- **The Record-Breaking Moment:** England reached the 500,000-run milestone in their 1082nd Test match, spanning 147 years, with 18,900 individual innings played. They have now scored a total of 500,126 runs in Test cricket.
- **England's Dominance:** The team's achievement is a testament to their dominance in Test cricket. They have been playing the format for nearly a century and a half, with their first Test match dating back to 1877.
- **Top Run-Scorers:** England is followed closely by Australia, who have scored 428,794 runs in Test cricket, and India, who have scored 278,700 runs.
- **Most Centuries:** England also holds the record for the most centuries in Test cricket, with 929 centuries scored by their batsmen. Australia is second on this list, with 892 centuries.
- **A Historic Achievement:** England's achievement is a historic moment for the sport, marking a significant milestone in the team's illustrious cricketing history.

9-Year-Old Aarit Kapil Creates Chess History

Nine-year-old Aarit Kapil has made history by becoming the youngest chess player to win a national title in India. Competing in the 2024 National Under-9 Chess Championship, Aarit outperformed seasoned young competitors, demonstrating extraordinary strategic skills and maturity beyond his years. Born in 2015, Aarit has already achieved a peak Elo rating of 1825, which is remarkable for his age. His victory highlights his potential to make a significant impact on the international chess scene as he continues to grow and refine his game.

Foot notes:

- Aarit Kapil has become the youngest Indian to defeat a Grandmaster, achieving this feat at the age of 9 years, 2 months, and 18 days.
- He is now the third-youngest player in the world to defeat a Grandmaster, behind Singapore's Ashwath Kaushik and Serbia's Leonid Ivanovic.
- Aarit Kapil defeated 66-year-old Raset Ziatdinov from the United States in the ninth round of the KIIT Open International tournament.
- Throughout the match, Aarit showed calm composure and maturity that was way ahead of his age, ultimately capitalizing on Ziatdinov's crucial error to claim the win.
- Aarit Kapil will next compete in the Under-13 National Championship in Durgapur and the Under-9 National Championships in Pune.
- This historic win has cemented Aarit Kapil's position as a rising star in the world of chess, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for this young prodigy.



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Portugal football star Nani announces retirement

Portuguese football star Nani has announced his retirement, bringing an illustrious career to a close. Known for his incredible flair, speed, and creativity, Nani played a pivotal role in Portugal's Euro 2016 triumph. He enjoyed a successful club career, notably with Manchester United, where he won four Premier League titles and the UEFA Champions League. Over his two-decade career, Nani represented top clubs across Europe and the U.S., leaving a legacy as a dynamic and charismatic winger. His retirement marks the end of an era, inspiring football fans worldwide with memories of his exceptional talent and passion for the game.

Foot notes:

- Nani was born on November 17, 1986, in Amadora, Portugal, and began his youth career with Real Massamá before joining Sporting CP in 2003.
- Nani has played for several clubs, including Manchester United, Fenerbahçe, Valencia, Orlando City, Venezia, Melbourne Victory, and Adana Demirspor, winning numerous titles, including four Premier League titles and the UEFA Champions League.
- Nani made his Portugal debut in 2006 and has since earned 112 caps, scoring 24 goals and representing his country in three European Championships and two World Cups.
- Nani is known for his speed, skill, and versatility as a winger, making him a valuable asset to his teams.

- Nani has won several individual awards, including the SJPF Young Player of the Month, and has been named to the UEFA Champions League Squad of the Season.
- As mentioned earlier, Nani is still an active player and has not announced his retirement from professional football.

Afridi Becomes Youngest To Achieve 100 Wickets In All Formats

Shaheen Afridi has etched his name in cricket history by becoming the youngest player to achieve 100 wickets across all formats. The Pakistani pacer accomplished this remarkable feat through consistent performances and exceptional skill on the global stage. Known for his lethal swing and pace, Afridi has been a match-winner for Pakistan in Tests, ODIs, and T20Is. His achievement highlights his dedication and establishes him as one of the most promising bowlers of his generation. This milestone further cements Afridi's reputation as a cornerstone of Pakistan's bowling attack.

Foot notes:

- Afridi is the youngest player to claim 100 wickets across formats, breaking the previous record held by Tim Southee.
- He is the first Pakistani bowler to achieve this milestone, joining an elite club that includes Lasith Malinga, Shakib Al Hasan, and Tim Southee.
- Afridi took three wickets in the first T20I against South Africa, including the key wickets of Rassie van der Dussen, David Miller, and Nqabayomzi Peter, to reach the 100-wicket mark in T20Is.
- Afridi has 116 wickets in 31 Tests, 112 wickets in 56 ODIs, and 100 wickets in 74 T20Is, showcasing his impressive all-format skills.
- He is among the fastest bowlers to reach 100 T20I wickets, achieving the milestone in just 74 matches.
- Afridi's achievement is a testament to his incredible talent and dedication, inspiring the next generation of cricketers and cementing his status as one of Pakistan's finest bowlers.

Indian Shuttler Manav Choudhary Won in Odisha Masters 2024 Badminton

Indian shuttler Manav Choudhary emerged victorious in the Odisha Masters 2024 (Para), showcasing his exceptional talent and determination. The prestigious tournament witnessed top para-shuttlers from across the country, making Manav's win a remarkable feat. His agility, strategic gameplay, and resilience were key factors in securing the title. This victory not only highlights Manav's growing dominance in para-badminton but also serves as an inspiration for aspiring athletes in the field. It is a testament to his hard work and commitment to excelling on both national and international stages.

Foot notes:

- Manav Choudhary defeated Mohammed Munawar of the UAE with a convincing score of 21-16, 21-12.
- With this win, Choudhary has advanced to the next round of the tournament, where he'll face tougher competition.
- While Choudhary had a great start, other Indian players like Rajesh Srikar and Gagan Balyan faced tough challenges in the Men's Singles Qualification Round, losing to Chinese opponents.
- The Odisha Masters 2024 is an important tournament for Indian shuttlers, providing them with a platform to showcase their skills and gain valuable experience.
- This win is a significant milestone in Manav Choudhary's career, and we can expect to see more of him in upcoming tournaments.
- As Choudhary advances to the next round, he'll be facing stronger opponents, and it'll be exciting to see how he performs under pressure.

Japan won 20th Asian Women's Handball Championship

Japan clinched the title at the 20th Asian Women's Handball Championship, demonstrating their dominance in the sport. The tournament featured intense competition among the top teams from Asia, but Japan's consistent performance set them apart. Their players displayed remarkable skill, teamwork, and determination throughout the matches, earning well-deserved recognition. This victory further cements Japan's position as a powerhouse in Asian women's handball. The win also serves as a motivation for the team as they aim to achieve greater success on the global stage.

Foot notes:

- The 20th Asian Women's Handball Championship took place from December 3 to 10, 2024, in New Delhi, India, featuring eight teams from across Asia.
- Japan defeated title holders South Korea 25-24 in a thrilling final match, securing their second title in the championship.
- Japan's first title was won in 2004, and this victory marks a significant milestone in their handball history.

- As the winner of the Asian Women's Handball Championship, Japan has qualified for the 2025 World Women's Handball Championship, along with the top three teams - South Korea, Kazakhstan, and Iran.
- The championship saw a total of 20 matches played, with 1,061 goals scored at an average of 53.05 goals per match.
- Japan's team demonstrated exceptional skill and teamwork throughout the tournament, winning all their matches and ultimately emerging as champions.

Tan Kim Her Rejoins as India's Doubles Badminton Coach

Tan Kim Her has been reappointed as India's doubles badminton coach, a role he previously held from 2015 to 2019. Known for his expertise in grooming talent, Tan played a crucial role in nurturing doubles players such as Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy during his earlier tenure. His return aims to strengthen India's doubles contingent, especially ahead of key international tournaments like the Paris Olympics 2024. The Malaysian coach is recognized for his tactical acumen and ability to develop winning combinations in men's, women's, and mixed doubles. His comeback is expected to boost India's performance in global badminton competitions.

Foot notes:

- Tan Kim Her's reappointment was approved by the Indian sports ministry, and he will coach the team until the Asian Games 2026.
- During his first stint, Tan Kim Her played a crucial role in the advancement of the Indian doubles team, including Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who won the gold medal in doubles at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.
- This time around, Tan Kim Her will not only coach the doubles team but also be responsible for identifying and training Indian coaches with potential, as well as developing a revamped coaching system.
- Tan Kim Her has coached several national teams, including England, Malaysia, and South Korea, and was also the men's doubles coach for Japan, helping them win the 2021 World Championships and a bronze medal at the 2020 Summer Olympics.
- Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have welcomed Tan Kim Her's return, citing his conviction and guidance as key factors in their success.

Ajay Seth Assumes Additional Charge as Revenue Secretary

Ajay Seth, the current Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs, has assumed additional charge as the Revenue Secretary. His appointment comes at a critical time as India focuses on strengthening its fiscal policies and revenue collection mechanisms. With his extensive experience in economic and financial management, Seth is expected to drive reforms and ensure

seamless coordination between the two departments. This dual role highlights the government's confidence in his leadership and strategic vision.

Foot notes:

- Ajay Seth is a 1987-batch IAS officer from the Karnataka cadre, with over 33 years of experience in public finance and taxation.
- Seth has held various important positions in the Union Government, Karnataka state government, and the Asian Development Bank.
- He was awarded the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration in 2013 for transforming Karnataka's commercial tax administration.
- Seth will oversee the Department of Revenue, which handles tax administration, including direct and indirect taxes, and investigates economic offenses.
- Seth will hold both the positions of Economic Affairs Secretary and Revenue Secretary until a permanent replacement is appointed.
- This appointment ensures continuity in the Department of Revenue's functioning and reflects significant administrative shifts in India's financial governance.

Mohamed Al-Bashir appointed as Syria's caretaker Prime Minister

Mohamed Al-Bashir has been appointed as Syria's caretaker Prime Minister, a crucial role during a period of political transition. His appointment comes amidst ongoing challenges, including economic instability and efforts to rebuild the nation after years of conflict. Al-Bashir is expected to focus on stabilizing governance, addressing humanitarian needs, and preparing for the next electoral process. His leadership will be instrumental in fostering national unity and advancing Syria's reconstruction efforts. This development marks a significant step in the country's journey toward political and economic recovery.

Foot notes:

- Al-Bashir was appointed by the rebels who toppled President Bashar al-Assad, with the backing of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a former al Qaeda affiliate
- He will lead the interim authority until March 1, as announced in his address on state television.
- Rebuilding Syria will be a massive task, with the country facing significant challenges, including a devastated economy, destroyed cities, and a large number of refugees.
- The US has urged the rebels to ensure an inclusive transition process, respecting minority rights and preventing Syria from being used as a base for terrorism.
- Refugees have started returning to Syria, with some European countries pausing asylum applications from Syrians. Banks and shops have reopened in Damascus, and there are signs of normalcy returning.
- Al-Bashir's appointment has significant implications for the region, with Israel launching airstrikes on Syrian army bases and announcing plans to impose a "sterile defense zone" in southern Syria.

Smriti Mandhana became the first female cricketer to score 4 ODI centuries in a calendar year

Smriti Mandhana has made history by becoming the first female cricketer to score four ODI centuries in a single calendar year. The Indian batting sensation achieved this milestone through her consistent performances and remarkable skill at the crease. Her record-breaking feat underscores her status as one of the finest batters in women's cricket today. Mandhana's achievement is a testament to her dedication and ability to perform under pressure, inspiring young cricketers globally. This landmark further strengthens India's position in women's cricket, with Mandhana leading the charge in setting new benchmarks.

Foot notes:

- Mandhana achieved this feat in 2024, scoring 599 runs in 10 matches at an average of 59.90, with a highest score of 136.
- Her fourth century of the year came against Australia in Perth, where she scored 105 runs off 109 balls, although India lost the match by 83 runs.
- The previous record for most centuries in a calendar year in women's ODIs was three, shared by seven other batters, including Belinda Clark, Meg Lanning, and Laura Wolvaardt.
- Mandhana has been an outstanding performer in women's cricket, with several accolades to her name, including the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year award in 2018 and 2021.
- Mandhana is known for her aggressive batting style and has been a key player for the Indian women's cricket team, helping them reach the final of the 2017 Women's Cricket World Cup.
- Mandhana's achievement is an inspiration to young cricketers around the world, showcasing her dedication, hard work, and passion for the sport.

India Beat Hong Kong In Asian Women's Handball Championship

India kicked off their campaign in the 20th Asian Women's Handball Championship (AWHC) 2024 with a hard-fought 31-28 victory over Hong Kong China at the Indira Gandhi Arena in New Delhi. The win was powered by standout performances from Bhawana Sharma and Menika. The Indian team started strongly, with Priyanka Thakur scoring the tournament's opening goal for the hosts. Thakur, a key player in India's landmark triumph at the 2022 Asian Women's Junior Handball Championship, set the tone early in the game.

Foot notes:

- India commenced their campaign in the 20th Asian Women's Handball Championship (AWHC) 2024 with a thrilling 31-28 win over Hong Kong China at the Indira Gandhi Arena, New Delhi, on Tuesday.
- Bhawana Sharma and Menika delivered stellar performances, with Bhawana earning the Player of the Match honor, adding to her reputation as the Best Player from the Junior Championships.

- Thakur, a standout player in India's historic win at the 2022 Asian Women's Junior Handball Championship, set the tone for the match.
- Experienced campaigner Menika followed suit, contributing significantly to India's early advantage.
- Kazakhstan shocked favorites China with a 28-26 win, driven by a stellar performance from goalkeeper Zhannat Aitenova, who earned Player of the Match.

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Imad Wasim, Mohammad Amir Announced Retirement from Cricket

Pakistan cricketers Imad Wasim and Mohammad Amir have announced their retirement from international cricket, marking the end of significant careers. Imad, known for his all-round abilities and left-arm spin, played a key role in Pakistan's 2017 Champions Trophy triumph. Amir, celebrated for his swing bowling, made a remarkable comeback after a spot-fixing ban and was instrumental in Pakistan's victory in the 2009 T20 World Cup. Both players expressed gratitude to fans and teammates while citing personal reasons for their decisions. Their retirements leave a void in Pakistan cricket, sparking discussions about their contributions and legacies.

Foot notes:

- Both players cited the need to make way for the next generation of cricketers as the reason for their retirement. Imad Wasim stated that representing Pakistan was the greatest honor of his life, and every moment wearing the green jersey was unforgettable.
- Imad Wasim played 55 ODIs and 75 T20Is for Pakistan, scoring 1,540 runs and taking 117 wickets. Mohammad Amir featured in 36 Tests, 61 ODIs, and 62 T20Is, taking 271 international wickets and scoring 1,179 runs.
- Interestingly, both players had previously announced their retirement but reversed their decision to play in the 2024 T20 World Cup. Imad Wasim had retired last year, while Mohammad Amir had announced his retirement in 2020 at the age of 28.
- Imad Wasim was part of the Pakistan team that won the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy. Mohammad Amir was part of the 2009 ICC T20 World Cup winning squad and played a crucial role in the 2017 ICC Champions Trophy.

- Both players plan to continue playing domestic and franchise cricket. Imad Wasim expressed his desire to keep entertaining fans in new ways, while Mohammad Amir looks forward to watching the Pakistan team excel.

Jason Gillespie resigns as Pakistan Test team coach

Jason Gillespie has resigned as the head coach of Pakistan's Test cricket team, citing frustrations over not being consulted in key decisions, including the selection of the squad for an upcoming Test series against South Africa. Reports indicate that his working relationship with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had become strained, particularly after his recommendations, such as retaining high-performance coach Tim Nielsen, were disregarded. Gillespie, who was also involved with Pakistan's white-ball team, reportedly felt sidelined, with officials and selectors making decisions without his input. His tenure, which began earlier this year, saw mixed results, including a notable Test series win against England and an ODI series victory in Australia.

Foot notes:

- Gillespie's decision to leave was reportedly due to a breakdown in relations with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). He was unhappy about not being consulted on the non-renewal of Tim Nielsen's contract as high-performance red-ball coach, and also felt he had no say in team selections.
- Gillespie was appointed as Pakistan's Test coach in April 2024, alongside Gary Kirsten as white-ball coach. His tenure was marked by a Test series win against England in October, but he had expressed frustrations about not being involved in the selection process.
- Aaqib Javed, a former Pakistani fast bowler, has been appointed as the interim coach for the upcoming two-Test series against South Africa. Javed is currently the interim coach of Pakistan's white-ball teams and has been given full powers, including team selection.
- Gillespie's contract was set to expire in 2026, but he has chosen to leave early. It's unclear what his future plans are, but he has previously coached in county cricket with Yorkshire and Sussex.
- Gillespie's resignation is the second high-profile departure from Pakistan's coaching staff in recent months, following Gary Kirsten's exit in October. The PCB will need to find a permanent replacement to stabilize the team's coaching setup.

Mumbai Won Second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy Title

Mumbai clinched their second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy title, showcasing their dominance in domestic T20 cricket. The team delivered a stellar performance throughout the tournament, backed by consistent batting and disciplined bowling. In the final, Mumbai displayed resilience and strategic gameplay to secure a memorable victory. This win further cements Mumbai's legacy in Indian cricket as a powerhouse across formats.

Foot notes:

- The final was played at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, where Madhya Pradesh set a target of 174/8 in 20 overs, with Rajat Patidar scoring an unbeaten 81 off 40 balls.
- Mumbai chased down the target with ease, scoring 180/5 in 17.5 overs, thanks to Suryakumar Yadav's 48 off 35 balls and Suryansh Shedge's unbeaten 36 off 15 balls.
- Mumbai's first Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy title came in 2022, when they defeated Himachal Pradesh by three wickets in the final.
- The Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy is a domestic Twenty20 cricket championship in India, organized by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), featuring 38 teams from the Ranji Trophy.
- Suryansh Shedge was awarded the Player of the Match for his crucial knock, while Ajinkya Rahane was named the Player of the Tournament.
- This win marks Mumbai's second Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy title, with Tamil Nadu being the most successful team, having won the trophy three times.

India Clinches Women's Junior Asia Cup 2024

India has won the Women's Junior Asia Cup 2024, marking a historic achievement in women's hockey. The team delivered an outstanding performance throughout the tournament, demonstrating skill, teamwork, and determination. Their victory in the final highlights the growing strength of Indian women's hockey at the international level. This triumph not only boosts the confidence of the team but also sets a strong foundation for future successes in global competitions.

Foot notes:

- The final was played at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Muscat, Oman, where India and China were tied 1-1 at the end of regular time, leading to a penalty shootout.
- India's goalkeeper Nidhi made three crucial saves in the penalty shootout, while Ishika, Sakshi Rana, and Sunelita Toppo scored for India, securing a 3-2 win.
- Deepika, India's star player, finished as the top scorer of the tournament with 12 goals, including five from penalty corners.
- India dominated Pool A, securing significant victories over Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Thailand, before defeating Japan 3-1 in the semi-finals.
- This win also secured India's place in the 2025 FIH Women's Junior Hockey World Cup in Chile, along with China, Japan, South Korea, and Malaysia.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the team on their victory, praising their grit, determination, and passion for hockey.

Indian men's team secured 5th place in World Team Squash Championship 2024

The Indian men's squash team finished in 5th place at the 2024 World Team Squash Championship. The team showcased impressive performances throughout the tournament, competing against top international teams. Their strong teamwork and individual skills helped

them secure a place among the top five. This achievement highlights the growth of squash in India and the team's dedication. The result is a significant milestone for Indian squash on the global stage.

Foot notes:

- The team defeated hosts Hong Kong China 2-0 in the playoffs to finish fifth, with Velavan Senthilkumar and Abhay Singh delivering impressive performances.
- Velavan, ranked 45th in the squash world rankings, came from behind to beat world No. 44 Henry Leung 3-2 (12-10, 8-11, 5-11, 11-1, 11-8) in a thrilling match.
- Abhay Singh, ranked 54th, fended off world No. 40 Alex Lau in the tight opening game before cruising through the match to win it 3-0 (12-10, 11-7, 11-4).
- The Indian men's team had a remarkable run, finishing second in their group and defeating Malaysia to reach the quarterfinals, where they lost to France.
- The Indian men's and women's squads were named the "most improved team" at the tournament, a testament to their hard work and dedication.
- This 5th-place finish is India's best-ever result in the World Team Squash Championship, a milestone achievement for the team and Indian squash.

Kane Williamson became 1st batter to score five consecutive centuries at single venue

Kane Williamson has become the first batter in cricket history to score five consecutive centuries at a single venue. This remarkable feat was achieved at Seddon Park in Hamilton, New Zealand, showcasing Williamson's dominance and consistency at the ground. Known for his impeccable technique and composure, Williamson's achievement highlights his status as one of the modern greats of the game. His record-setting performance not only cements his legacy but also inspires aspiring cricketers worldwide. This historic milestone further strengthens New Zealand's cricketing prowess on the global stage.

Foot notes:

- Williamson's record-breaking streak at Seddon Park in Hamilton began in 2019 with an unbeaten 200 against Bangladesh, followed by a 104 against England, a double century against the West Indies, 133 against South Africa, and now 156 against England.
- Williamson's love affair with Seddon Park continues, with an astonishing average of 97.69 in 12 matches at the venue, accumulating 1563 runs.
- Williamson is now the joint-second fastest player to reach 33 Test centuries, alongside Steve Smith, and only behind Sachin Tendulkar and Ricky Ponting.
- Williamson's five consecutive centuries at Seddon Park surpass his own previous record, making him the first player to achieve this feat.
- Williamson now shares the joint-second spot with Steve Smith for the most Test centuries among active players, with 33 centuries each, behind Joe Root's 36.
- Williamson's 156-run knock has put England on the verge of defeat, with New Zealand leading by 538 runs in the ongoing Test match.

Riya Shirish Thatte won Gold in Women's 25m Pistol at 67th National Shooting Championship

Riya Shirish Thatte clinched the gold medal in the Women's 25m Pistol event at the 67th National Shooting Championship. Her exceptional marksmanship and focus set her apart in a highly competitive field. The victory marks a significant milestone in her shooting career, showcasing her talent and dedication to the sport. The championship featured top shooters from across the country, making her achievement even more commendable. Riya's triumph adds to her growing reputation as one of India's promising shooting stars.

Foot notes:

- At just 16 years old, Riya has stunned a top field of experienced shooters to claim her first senior national title.
- Riya got the better of Punjab's Simranpreet Kaur Brar 7-2 in a shoot-off for gold after both had tied at 31 hits in the eight series of five-shots decider.
- Rahi Sarnobat, a seasoned Olympian and former Asian Games champion, secured the third position with 25 hits.
- Despite the lack of a shooting range in her hometown of Aurangabad, Riya traveled 250 km to Pune's Balewadi range to train under Akshay Ashtaputre, also the mentor of Swapnil Kusale.
- Riya's father, Shirish, a former national-level shooter himself, has been her first coach and accompanied her to the championship.
- With this win, Riya has demonstrated her potential to excel in the sport and make a name for herself in the international shooting arena.

Kolkata's 16-year-old Anshul Mishra wins the 123rd All India Amateur golf title

Kolkata's 16-year-old Anshul Mishra made history by winning the 123rd All India Amateur Golf Championship. His victory highlights his exceptional skill and composure, particularly impressive given his young age. Competing against seasoned players, Anshul showcased remarkable consistency and precision throughout the tournament. This win marks a significant milestone in his budding golf career and places him among India's emerging golf talents. Anshul's achievement is a proud moment for Kolkata and a promising sign for the future of Indian golf.

Foot notes:

- At just 16 years old, Mishra has become one of the youngest winners of the prestigious tournament, showcasing his incredible talent and potential.
- Mishra defeated Varun Muthappa 4 & 3 in the 36-hole final, coming from behind to take the lead and ultimately securing the title.
- Despite Muthappa taking an early lead, Mishra played steady golf to extend his lead to 5-up after 28 holes, demonstrating his mental toughness and composure under pressure.

- The 31st hole proved to be a crucial turning point, as Mishra halved the hole to deny Muthappa a chance to win, and then went on to secure the championship on the 33rd hole.
- Mishra trains with Jesse Grewal and has been mentored by Inderjit Bhalotia at the Royal Calcutta Golf Course, highlighting the importance of guidance and support in his golfing journey.
- With this win, Mishra plans to pursue his dreams of playing in US College golf, marking an exciting new chapter in his golfing career.

Kritika Timsina Clinches Bronze at KIO Sub-Junior All India Karate Championship 2024

Kritika Timsina clinched the bronze medal at the KIO Sub-Junior All India Karate Championship 2024. Competing in the para category, Kritika showcased exceptional skill and determination throughout the tournament. Her strong performance earned her a podium finish, highlighting her dedication to the sport. The event saw participation from talented athletes across the country, making the competition fierce. Kritika's achievement is a proud moment, inspiring young para-athletes to pursue excellence in karate.

Foot notes:

- The KIO Sub-Junior All India Karate Championship is a prestigious national-level tournament that attracts top young karate athletes from across India.
- Kritika competed in the sub-junior category, which is for athletes under a certain age limit, showcasing her talent and potential at a young age.
- By winning a medal at this tournament, Kritika has represented her state or region at the national level, making her a proud ambassador for her community.
- Kritika's bronze medal win demonstrates her excellence in karate, a martial art that requires discipline, focus, and physical skill.
- This achievement is likely to boost Kritika's confidence and motivation, paving the way for future success in karate competitions and potentially even international events.

Bumrah became India's Top Wicket-Taker in Australia

Jasprit Bumrah has etched his name in history by becoming India's top wicket-taker in Australia across all formats. Known for his lethal pace and precision, Bumrah surpassed legends like Anil Kumble and Kapil Dev to achieve this milestone. His remarkable performances include memorable spells in Tests, where he dismantled Australia's formidable batting line-up. Bumrah's versatility and consistency in ODIs and T20Is have further cemented his dominance in Australian conditions. This achievement highlights his exceptional contribution to Indian cricket on foreign soil, making him a key asset for the team.

Foot notes:

- Bumrah now holds the record for the most Test wickets taken by an Indian bowler in Australia, with 52 wickets in 10 Test matches at an average of 17.21.
- Surpassing Kapil Dev: Bumrah broke Kapil Dev's record of 51 wickets in 11 Tests, achieving this feat in just 10 matches.
- Dominance in Australia: Bumrah has been in smoking hot form in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy, taking 21 wickets in just six innings at an average of 10.71.
- Fastest to 150 Wickets: Bumrah is also the fastest Indian pacer to take 150 wickets in Test cricket, showcasing his exceptional skills.
- Bumrah's consistency in taking wickets has been impressive, with three five-wicket hauls in Australia and a strike rate of 41.5.
- This achievement cements Bumrah's status as one of the greatest fast bowlers in Indian cricket history, and he continues to break records and create new benchmarks.

Nat Sciver-Brunt Sets Record for Fastest Test Century

England cricketer Nat Sciver-Brunt has set a new record for the fastest century in Women's Test cricket. She achieved this remarkable milestone in just 76 balls, breaking the previous record with her aggressive yet calculated batting. Sciver-Brunt's innings was marked by powerful strokes and strategic shot placement, showcasing her exceptional skill and composure under pressure. This feat highlights her dominance in the longest format and adds another accolade to her illustrious career. Her record-breaking performance is being celebrated as a landmark moment in women's cricket, inspiring future generations.

Foot notes:

- Sciver-Brunt surpassed Chamani Seneviratna's record of 106 balls, set in 1998, to become the fastest woman to score a Test century.
- Sciver-Brunt's century was part of a 174-run partnership with Maia Bouchier, who also scored her maiden Test ton in the same match.
- Sciver-Brunt's innings included several boundaries, showcasing her aggressive batting style and ability to dominate the opposition.
- Sciver-Brunt's century helped England take control of the match, with the team posting a strong total thanks to her contributions.
- This was Sciver-Brunt's second Test century, and she finished with a score of 128 before being run out.
- Sciver-Brunt's achievement is being hailed as a significant milestone in women's cricket, and she is receiving praise from fans and experts alike for her outstanding performance.

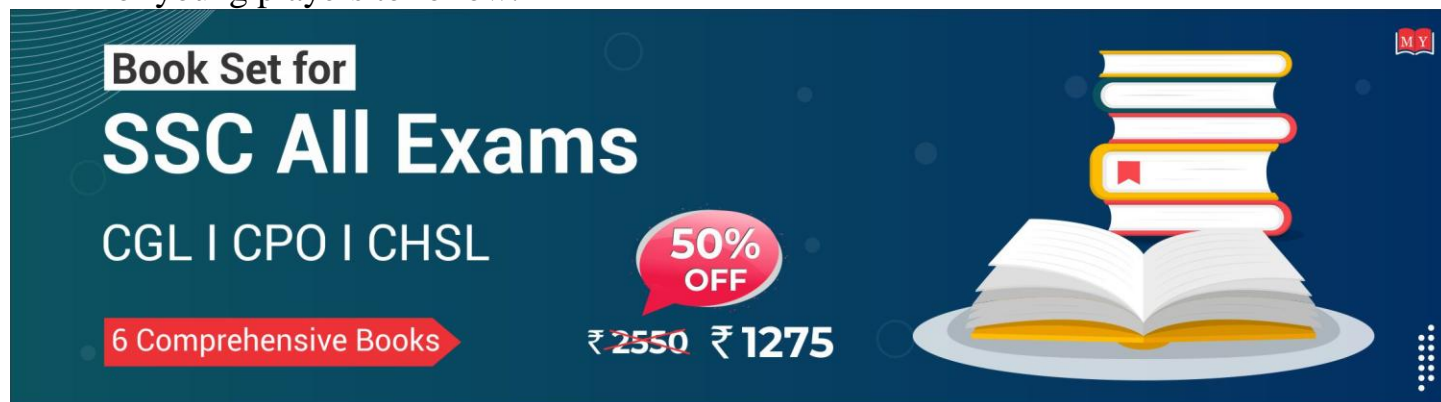
India's Pranav Venkatesh Makes History with FIDE World Under-18 Youth Rapid and Blitz

Indian chess prodigy Pranav Venkatesh has made history by winning the FIDE World Under-18 Youth Rapid and Blitz Championship. Displaying exceptional skill and composure, Pranav

dominated the competition, securing his place among the world's top young chess talents. His victory is a testament to India's growing prominence in the global chess arena, following the footsteps of legendary players like Viswanathan Anand and recent champion Gukesh Dommaraju. Pranav's achievement highlights the rising talent in Indian chess and serves as an inspiration for aspiring players across the nation. This milestone adds another feather to India's cap in the world of competitive chess.

Foot notes:

- Pranav scored 9.5/11 to clinch the gold medal, finishing a half point ahead of the field. FM Alexander Khripachenko took silver with 9/11, while FM Roman Pyrih secured bronze with 7.5/9.
- Pranav dominated the Blitz event, scoring 19.5/22 to claim gold and finishing four points ahead of the competition. Dmitry Mochalov took silver with 15.5/22, while Khripachenko secured bronze with 14.5/22.
- Pranav's performance in both events was impressive, with a gain of 7.7 Elo rating points in the Rapid event and 16.8 points in the Blitz event.
- As the top seed in both events, Pranav was expected to win, and he delivered without any great difficulty.
- Pranav's achievement is a proud moment for Indian chess, and he has set a high standard for young players to follow.



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Kiran Jadhav Wins Men's 50m Rifle 3P National Title

Kiran Jadhav has won the Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions (3P) National Shooting Championship title, showcasing his exceptional skill and precision. The victory adds to his growing list of achievements in the sport, marking a significant milestone in his career. Jadhav's performance in the competition was marked by consistency and composure across all three positions—prone, standing, and kneeling. This win strengthens his position as one of India's top shooting athletes and further solidifies the country's dominance in shooting sports. Jadhav's success serves as an inspiration for aspiring shooters aiming to excel at the national and international levels.

Foot notes:

- Jadhav clinched the title with a score of 465.8 in the final, leaving Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar in second place with a score of 463.1.

- Jadhav beat Paris Olympic bronze medalist Swapnil Kusale, who led the 45-shot final till the 40th shot but ultimately finished third with a score of 451.8.
- Swapnil had topped the qualification round with a world-class score of 593, while Jadhav qualified fourth with a solid 590.
- The turning point came when Swapnil failed to hit the 10-ring after his 40th shot, allowing Jadhav to capitalize and take the lead.
- In the junior final, West Bengal's Adriyan Karmakar, son of Olympian Jaideep Karmakar, won the title with a score of 462.0, four points ahead of Madhya Pradesh's Kushagra Singh Rajawat.
- Jadhav's victory is a proud moment for the Indian Navy, and his achievement is expected to inspire young shooters across the country.

Ravichandran Ashwin Announces Immediate Retirement from International Cricket

Indian cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin has announced his immediate retirement from international cricket, ending a distinguished career that spanned over a decade. Known for his exceptional skills as a bowler, Ashwin made significant contributions to Indian cricket, particularly in Test matches, where he became one of the country's most successful spinners. Throughout his career, he earned numerous accolades, including being one of the fastest to reach 400 Test wickets. Ashwin's decision to retire marks the end of an era for Indian cricket, with his leadership in the spin department being crucial to many victories.

Foot notes:

- Ashwin is India's second-highest wicket-taker in Test cricket, with 537 scalps in 106 games, behind only Anil Kumble (619 wickets). He also took 156 wickets in ODIs and 72 in T20Is.
- Ashwin stated that he feels there's still some cricket left in him, but he'd like to express that in club-level cricket. He also mentioned that he's had a lot of fun playing for India and has made many memories alongside his teammates.
- Indian captain Rohit Sharma said he had heard Ashwin was planning to retire and had convinced him to stay for the Adelaide Test. Sharma also praised Ashwin, saying he's been a big match-winner for India.
- Cricket legends like Sunil Gavaskar, Matthew Hayden, and Harbhajan Singh have paid tribute to Ashwin, praising his contributions to Indian cricket and his tactical brilliance on the field.
- Ashwin will continue to play club cricket, including the IPL, where he will return to play for Chennai Super Kings next year.

India Won 5th Junior Hockey Asia Cup

In an electrifying final in Muscat, the Indian men's junior hockey team clinched their fifth Junior Asia Cup title with a 5-3 victory over arch-rivals Pakistan on December 4, 2024. This

win marks India's third consecutive championship, following their triumphs in 2015 and 2023, and adds to their title wins in 2004 and 2008. The star of the match was Araiyeet Singh Hundal, who delivered a stellar performance by scoring four goals, leading India to a memorable victory.

Foot notes:

- Araiyeet Singh Hundal's Heroic Performance: Scored four goals, including three penalty corners and one field goal. 4th Minute Converted the first penalty corner. 18th Minute: Added another penalty corner goal.
- 47th Minute: Netted a field goal after a missed penalty corner. 54th Minute: Sealed the win with his third penalty corner conversion.
- Other Goal Contributions: Dilraj Singh scored a field goal in the 19th minute.
- Pakistan's Fightback: Sufyan Khan: Scored two penalty corner goals (30th and 39th minutes). Hannan Shahid: Scored a field goal in the 3rd minute.
- Match Dynamics: Both teams displayed high intensity, particularly in the first quarter.
- India gained momentum in the second quarter, turning the game in their favor.
- Bronze Medal Match: Japan: Defeated Malaysia 2-1 to claim third place in the tournament.
- Tournament Context: India's win was against an undefeated Pakistan team until the final.

Koyel and Nilam Won Silver at Asian Youth & Junior Weightlifting

Koyel and Nilam delivered outstanding performances at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships, securing silver medals for India. Their achievements reflect rigorous training, dedication, and exceptional skill in their respective categories. This success highlights the growing prominence of Indian weightlifters on the international stage. Koyel and Nilam's accomplishments have brought pride to the nation and inspired young athletes. Their medals are a testament to India's potential in weightlifting at global competitions.

Foot notes:

- Koyel Bar won three medals, including a silver medal in the overall women's 55kg youth category, with a total lift of 182kg. L. Nilam Devi also secured three silver medals in the 55kg women's junior category, lifting a total of 190kg.
- Nilam Devi leveled Mirabai Chanu's senior national record of 86kg in the snatch category. Koyel Bar broke the youth national record in the overall category of the women's 55kg category.
- The Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships saw India win a total of 42 medals, comprising 15 medals in the junior category and 27 in the youth category.
- India's medal count includes six gold, two silver, and four bronze medals in the youth category, and three gold, five silver, and seven bronze medals in the junior category.
- Other Indian weightlifters, such as Siddhanta Gogoi and Bedabrate Bharali, also won gold medals in their respective categories.

- The championships featured top weightlifters from across Asia, making Koyel and Nilam's silver medal wins a significant achievement for India on the global stage.

Indian U19 Women Win Inaugural T20 Asia Cup

India's U19 women's cricket team created history by winning the inaugural T20 Asia Cup. Their impressive performance throughout the tournament showcased their skill, determination, and teamwork. The victory marks a significant milestone for women's cricket in India, highlighting the growing strength of young talent. By clinching this title, the team has set a high benchmark for future tournaments. The win is being celebrated as a proud moment for Indian cricket on the international stage.

Foot notes:

- India scored 117/7 in 20 overs, while Bangladesh managed 76 runs in 18.3 overs.
- Gongadi Trisha was the star of the match, scoring a brilliant 52 off 47 balls, including 5 fours and 2 sixes.
- Aayushi Shukla took 3 wickets for 17 runs, while Sonam Yadav and Parunika Sisodia claimed 2 wickets each.
- The inaugural U19 Women's T20 Asia Cup featured six teams, including India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia.
- India topped Group B, winning three matches, while Bangladesh won three matches in Group A.
- Gongadi Trisha was declared the Player of the Series, scoring 159 runs in the tournament.

Third Fastest List-A Century Anmolpreet's Record Breaking Knock

Anmolpreet Singh delivered a remarkable performance by scoring the third-fastest century in List-A cricket. His record-breaking knock showcased exceptional timing, power, and composure at the crease. With this feat, he has cemented his place among the top performers in limited-overs cricket. The innings was celebrated widely, highlighting his potential as a future star. Anmolpreet's achievement adds a new chapter to the history of List-A cricket records.

Foot notes:

- Anmolpreet broke Yusuf Pathan's record for the fastest List-A century by an Indian, which stood at 40 balls.
- Anmolpreet's 35-ball century places him third in the list of fastest List-A centuries, behind Jake Fraser-McGurk (29 balls) and AB de Villiers (31 balls).
- Anmolpreet's knock of 115 not out off 45 balls included 12 fours and 9 sixes, helping Punjab chase down Arunachal Pradesh's target of 165 in just 12.5 overs.
- Punjab won the match by nine wickets, with Anmolpreet's century being the highlight of the game.
- The previous fastest List-A centuries were scored by Jake Fraser-McGurk (29 balls), AB de Villiers (31 balls), and Corey Anderson (36 balls).

- Anmolpreet has played for Mumbai Indians and Sunrisers Hyderabad in the IPL, but went unsold in the recent IPL auction.

Shahu Tushar Mane won gold in the men's 10m Air Rifle event

Shahu Tushar Mane clinched the gold medal in the men's 10m Air Rifle event, showcasing exceptional skill and precision. His victory highlights his dedication to the sport and marks a significant achievement in his shooting career. Mane's performance reinforces India's growing prominence in international shooting competitions.

Foot notes:

- Mane, representing Indian Railways, clinched his first senior national title, winning the 24-shot final by a narrow margin.
- He delivered a near-perfect performance, shooting nothing below 10.1 in the final, and held off a late surge by Dhanush Srikanth.
- Srikanth finished just 0.1 points behind Mane, with a score of 252.2, while Rajasthan's Yash Vardhan won the bronze medal.
- The 22-year-old from Kolhapur began shooting in 2015 and has already won an ISSF World Cup gold in the air rifle mixed team and an individual silver in the Youth Olympics.
- Rudranksh Balasaheb Patil, a former world champion, set a new world record en route to winning the junior title, while Haryana's Himanshu won gold in the youth category.
- The championship is being held at the MP State Academy Shooting range in Bhopal, featuring top shooters from across India competing in various events.

Nusrath Fatima Won Silver at Junior World Pencak Silat

Nusrath Fatima secured the silver medal at the Junior World Pencak Silat Championship, demonstrating remarkable talent and determination in this traditional martial art. Her achievement brings pride to the nation and highlights her potential to excel further in international competitions. Fatima's success also shines a spotlight on Pencak Silat, inspiring young athletes to pursue the sport.

Foot notes:

- The championship took place from December 18 to 22, with Nusrath competing in the 58 kg Junior category.
- This martial art form originated in Southeast Asia and involves strikes, grappling, and throwing, as well as the use of weaponry.
- Hailing from Sankoo, Kargil, Nusrath's victory highlights the untapped potential in India's far-flung regions like Ladakh.
- Nusrath's achievement emphasizes the importance of nurturing sports at the grassroots level and integrating athletes from every corner of the country into national and international platforms.

- The Government of India's efforts to promote sports infrastructure in remote areas have played a vital role in fostering talent like Nusrath.
- Nusrath's silver medal brings attention to the potential of youth from border regions, contributing to the nation's aspirations in international sports competitions.

Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy Won Women's World Rapid Chess Championship

Indian Grandmaster Koneru Humpy clinched the title at the Women's World Rapid Chess Championship, showcasing her exceptional strategic prowess. Her victory highlights her consistent performance on the global chess stage and reinforces her status as one of the top female players worldwide. Competing against a field of elite challengers, Humpy demonstrated resilience and brilliance in critical games. This achievement adds another prestigious accolade to her illustrious chess career. It serves as a testament to her dedication and the growing prominence of Indian players in the international chess arena.

Foot notes:

- Humpy's 2024 win marks her second time claiming the title, solidifying her position as a leading force in women's chess.
- Youngest Woman Grandmaster: Humpy became the youngest woman to achieve the title of Grandmaster at just 15 years old in 2002.
- International Recognition: She has represented India in numerous international tournaments, including the Chess Olympiad, Asian Games, and World Championships.
- Awards and Accolades: Humpy has received several prestigious awards, including the Padma Shri, Arjuna Award, and BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year.
- Inspiration to Young Players: As a trailblazer in Indian chess, Humpy's achievements serve as an inspiration to young players, especially girls, to pursue their passion for the game.
- Continued Success: With her 2024 win, Humpy continues to demonstrate her mastery of the game, and fans eagerly await her future performances.

Jasprit Bumrah Makes History by Surpassing 200 Wickets in Test Cricket

Indian pacer Jasprit Bumrah has etched his name in cricket history by surpassing the milestone of 200 wickets in Test cricket. Known for his unique bowling action and lethal precision, Bumrah achieved this remarkable feat in just 55 matches. His consistent performances have made him a cornerstone of India's bowling attack across formats. This achievement highlights his ability to excel in challenging conditions and against top international teams. Bumrah's milestone reinforces his legacy as one of the finest fast bowlers in the modern era of cricket.

Foot notes:

- Bumrah reached the 200-wicket mark in just 44 Test matches, equaling Ravindra Jadeja's record for the second-fastest Indian to achieve this feat.
- Best Average Among Bowlers with 200+ Wickets: Bumrah boasts an incredible average of 19.38, surpassing legends like Malcolm Marshall, Joel Garner, and Curtly Ambrose.

- **Fourth-Quickest to 200 Wickets Globally:** In terms of balls delivered, Bumrah achieved the milestone in 8,484 deliveries, ranking him fourth globally behind Waqar Younis, Dale Steyn, and Kagiso Rabada.
- **Most Wickets in a Series in Australia by an Indian Pacer:** Bumrah took 29 wickets in the series, setting a new record for the most wickets taken by an Indian pacer in a series in Australia.
- **Dominance in Melbourne:** Bumrah's impressive performance in Melbourne earned him 23 wickets at an average of 14.54, making him the leading wicket-taker among Indian pacers at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.
- **Legacy and Impact:** Bumrah's achievement is a testament to his hard work, dedication, and mastery of the art of fast bowling, inspiring aspiring bowlers worldwide and solidifying his position as one of the greatest pacers in cricket history.

Vijayveer Sidhu Clinched First National Title in Men's 25m RFP

Vijayveer Sidhu has achieved a significant milestone by clinching his first national title in the Men's 25m Rapid Fire Pistol (RFP) event. Displaying remarkable precision and composure, he outperformed his competitors to secure this prestigious victory. This triumph marks a new chapter in Sidhu's shooting career, showcasing his dedication and hard work in the sport. His achievement has earned him widespread recognition and serves as an inspiration for aspiring shooters across the country. With this success, Sidhu cements his place as a rising star in Indian shooting sports.

Foot notes:

- **Young Shooter:** Vijayveer Sidhu is a young and talented Indian shooter who has made a name for himself in the shooting sports.
- **Asian Games Medalist:** Vijayveer Sidhu won a bronze medal in the 25m rapid fire pistol event at the 2018 Asian Games.
- **National Champion:** He has also won several national championships, including the National Shooting Championship.
- **ISSF World Cup Medalist:** Vijayveer Sidhu has won medals at the ISSF World Cup, including a gold medal in the 25m rapid fire pistol event.
- **Olympic Aspirations:** Vijayveer Sidhu has his sights set on the Olympics and is training hard to represent India at the world's biggest sporting event.
- **Inspiration to Young Shooters:** Vijayveer Sidhu is an inspiration to young shooters in India, showing them that with hard work and dedication, they can achieve success in the sport.

Ganemat Sekhon Clinches National Title in Women's Skeet

Ganemat Sekhon has claimed the national title in women's skeet, showcasing her exceptional shooting talent. This victory highlights her dedication, precision, and consistent performance in the sport. As one of India's leading shooters, Ganemat's achievement adds to her growing list

of accolades and inspires upcoming athletes in the field. Her success reflects the increasing prominence of women in shooting sports and their ability to compete at the highest levels. With this triumph, Ganemat has further solidified her position as a key contender in future national and international competitions.

Foot notes:

- Sekhon has successfully defended her title, demonstrating her exceptional skill and consistency in the sport.
- The 67th National Shooting Championship was held at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range, where Sekhon competed against top shooters from across the country.
- Sekhon hit 50 out of 60 targets, securing the top spot and leaving her competitors behind. Asees Chhina from Punjab took silver with 46 hits, while Olympian Raiza Dhillon secured bronze.
- This victory marks Sekhon's second gold medal in the competition, as she had earlier won the women's team event alongside teammates Parinaaz Dhaliwal and Jasmeen Kaur.
- Sekhon's win has highlighted Punjab's dominance in skeet shooting, with several shooters from the state performing exceptionally well in the competition.
- With this impressive win, Sekhon has cemented her position as a top shooter in the country, and her fans can expect great things from her in future competitions.

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**Martina Devi Wins Silver at Asian Junior Weightlifting Championships**

Martina Devi has secured a silver medal at the Asian Junior Weightlifting Championships, a remarkable achievement that highlights her strength and determination. Competing against some of the best young weightlifters in Asia, she demonstrated exceptional skill and resilience. This silver medal is a testament to her hard work and dedication to the sport, reflecting her potential for future success on the global stage. Martina's accomplishment brings pride to the nation and serves as an inspiration to aspiring weightlifters. Her performance underscores the growing prominence of Indian athletes in international weightlifting events.

Foot notes:

- Martina Devi won silver medals in the women's junior +87kg category for both the total lift and clean and jerk events.
- Bronze Medal: She also won a bronze medal in the snatch event of the same category.

- **Total Lift:** Martina Devi's total lift of 225kg (96kg snatch + 129kg clean and jerk) secured her position among the top weightlifters in the competition.
- **Indian Contingent's Performance:** The Indian weightlifting contingent had a impressive showing at the championships, winning a total of 33 medals, including seven gold, 16 silver, and 10 bronze medals.
- **Competition Details:** The Asian Junior Weightlifting Championships 2024 took place from December 19-25, 2024, and featured competitions in 40 categories.
- **Future Prospects:** Martina Devi's performance at the championships is a promising sign for India's weightlifting future, and she will likely be one to watch in upcoming international competitions.

Paris Olympian Raiza Dhillon creates national record

Paris Olympian Raiza Dhillon has set a new national record, showcasing her exceptional talent and dedication to her sport. Her remarkable achievement highlights her relentless pursuit of excellence and commitment to pushing boundaries. As one of India's prominent athletes, Raiza continues to inspire with her record-breaking performance. This accomplishment not only adds to her list of accolades but also sets a new benchmark for future athletes in her field. Raiza's success underscores her status as a key figure in Indian sports and a role model for aspiring Olympians.

Foot notes:

- **Raiza Dhillon created a new national record** in the women's Skeet qualification round at the 67th National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC) for Shotgun events.
- **Score:** Dhillon scored 122, topping both the junior women's and women's qualification rounds.
- **Junior Record Broken:** Her score broke Simranpreet Kaur Johal's junior record of 120, set in the 2018 Jaipur Nationals.
- **Equalling Ganemat Sekhon's Record:** Dhillon's score also equalled Ganemat Sekhon's effort at the recently held ISSF World Cup Final in Delhi.
- **Competition Highlights:** Other notable performances included Munek Battula's junior men's Skeet qualification national record and Punjab's Fatehbir Singh Shergill topping the men's Skeet qualification.
- **Upcoming Finals:** Dhillon will compete in the women's Skeet final, scheduled for 10:30 am at the Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range.

APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

Harinath Mishra appointed secretary (security) in Cabinet Secretariat

Senior IPS officer Harinath Mishra, currently serving as Special Director General in the Intelligence Bureau, has been appointed as Secretary (Security) in the Cabinet Secretariat. A 1990-batch IPS officer from the Kerala cadre, Mishra's appointment was approved by the

Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). He will succeed Swagat Das in this role, as per an order issued by the Ministry of Personnel.

Foot notes:

- Mishra, a 1990-batch IPS officer (Kerala cadre), currently Special Director General, Intelligence Bureau.
- Appointed Secretary (Security) in the Cabinet Secretariat, succeeding Swagat Das, who retires Saturday.
- The Secretary (Security) oversees the Special Protection Group (SPG), responsible for the prime minister's security.
- ACC approved his re-employment term's curtailment "with immediate effect" at the request of the Election Commission.
- Mishra, a Bihar native, previously served as IG Crime Branch in his home cadre and held various district-level postings.

R Prasad Meena appointed as Director General in National Human Rights Commission

Senior IPS officer R. Prasad Meena has been appointed as the Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), according to an order from the Personnel Ministry. A 1993-batch IPS officer from the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, Meena currently serves as the Special Director General in the Border Security Force (BSF). His tenure as Director General (Investigation) in the NHRC will continue until his retirement on July 31, 2025, the order stated.

Foot notes:

- **Leadership Role:** As Director General, R Prasad Meena will play a crucial role in leading the National Human Rights Commission's efforts to protect and promote human rights in India.¹
- **Investigation Division:** Meena will likely oversee the Investigation Division, which is responsible for investigating human rights violations and recommending actions to the government.
- **Experience and Expertise:** Although Meena's background and experience are not specified, his appointment suggests that he has the necessary expertise and experience to lead the Commission's work.
- **Collaboration with Other Officials:** Meena will work closely with other officials, including the Secretary General, Bharat Lal, and the Registrar (Law), Joginder Singh, to ensure the effective functioning of the Commission.
- **Challenges Ahead:** As Director General, Meena will face significant challenges, including addressing human rights violations, promoting awareness about human rights, and ensuring the Commission's recommendations are implemented by the government.

Harish Duhan selected as CMD of SECL

Harish Duhan holds a Bachelor's degree in Mining from Nagpur University, a First Class Mine Manager Certificate, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Management. He joined Coal India in 1989, starting his career with Western Coalfields Limited (WCL). The Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB) has recommended Harish Duhan for the position of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a Schedule 'B' Central PSU.

Foot notes:

- Expertise in implementing First Mile Connectivity (FMC) projects, digitization initiatives, and developing solar projects for Coal India.
- Area General Manager of the Nigahi Project under Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL).
- General Manager of the Corporate Project Planning Department at NCL, a Coal India subsidiary.
- The management, officers, and employees of South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) have congratulated him on his selection as CMD.
- Duhan was selected for the position of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of SECL by the Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB).
- His appointment is subject to necessary clearances and approval by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) and will take effect after the retirement of P.S. Mishra on January 31, 2025.

Shammi Silva Takes Over as ACC President

Shammi Silva of Sri Lanka has assumed the role of President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding India's Jay Shah, who recently took over as Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). On behalf of the ACC, Silva expressed deep appreciation for Shah's outstanding leadership and significant contributions during his tenure. Silva's tenure comes at a crucial juncture, with the ACC focusing on the upcoming Asia Cup and working to solidify Asia's standing as a global cricket powerhouse.

Foot notes:

- New Leadership: Silva, the President of Sri Lanka Cricket, assumed the presidency of the ACC on December 6, 2024, and will lead the organization in promoting and developing cricket in Asia.
- Silva expressed his delight at being appointed, stating that it's a great honour to lead the ACC and that he looks forward to working closely with all member nations to elevate the game.
- Silva aims to build on the successes of his predecessor, Jay Shah, who achieved remarkable milestones during his tenure, including securing high-value commercial rights for ACC Asia Cup tournaments and introducing a new pathway events structure.
- As ACC President, Silva will face challenges such as addressing the evolving landscape of Asian cricket and ensuring the continent's continued dominance in the global cricketing scene.

- Silva brings valuable experience and expertise to the role, having served as the chairman of the ACC Finance & Marketing Committee before being appointed as President.

Rimtalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo appointed as Burkina Faso's PM

Burkina Faso's ruling military junta appointed a new prime minister a day after dissolving the government without offering an explanation. Rimtalba Jean Emmanuel Ouedraogo, who previously served as the communications minister and government spokesperson, has been appointed to the role. In Ghana, the ruling party's presidential candidate conceded defeat in Saturday's election. Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan carried out a cabinet reshuffle.

Foot notes:

- Ouedraogo's appointment comes after President Traore terminated the duties of the previous Prime Minister, Apollinaire Joachimson Kyelem de Tambela, and dissolved the government.¹
- Before becoming the Prime Minister, Ouedraogo served as the Minister of Communication, Culture, Arts, and Tourism.
- The appointment was announced through a presidential decree read out on public television by the General Secretary of the government, Mathias Traore.
- Ouedraogo's appointment marks a new chapter in Burkina Faso's governance, and it will be interesting to see how he navigates the country's challenges.
- As the new Prime Minister, Ouedraogo will play a crucial role in shaping Burkina Faso's relationships with other countries and international organizations.

Australian lender ANZ names former HSBC wealth chief Nuno Matos as CEO

Australian lender ANZ Group announced on Monday the appointment of Nuno Matos, a former HSBC executive, as its new CEO. He will succeed Shayne Elliott, who is set to retire in July 2025 after serving nine years in the role. Matos, 57, brings 30 years of experience in retail, commercial, and wholesale banking. He most recently served as the CEO of Wealth and Personal Banking at HSBC, leaving the bank in August after losing out on the CEO position.

Foot notes:

- Matos will succeed Shayne Elliott, who is retiring after a nine-year tenure as CEO of ANZ.
- Matos has over 30 years of experience in retail, commercial, and wholesale banking, having worked in various markets, including Hong Kong, the UK, the US, Spain, France, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru.
- Before joining ANZ, Matos held senior roles at HSBC, including CEO of HSBC Bank plc and HSBC Europe, where he oversaw the transformation of its European business.
- ANZ Chairman Paul O'Sullivan believes Matos' experience in leading bank transformations and integrations will be beneficial to the company, particularly with its recent acquisition of Suncorp Bank.

- Matos will receive a \$2.5 million fixed remuneration per annum, along with a short-term variable remuneration target of 80% of fixed remuneration and a long-term variable remuneration annual maximum opportunity at 135% of fixed remuneration

Cashfree Payments onboards Rajkummar Rao as brand ambassador

Cashfree Payments, a payment and API banking platform, has appointed Rajkummar Rao as its brand ambassador. In addition, the company launched a brand refresh campaign titled "Move Fast," highlighting its focus on speed and agility. The campaign positions Cashfree Payments as the ideal partner for businesses looking for quicker onboarding, faster payments, and efficient support.

Foot notes:

- Cashfree Payments offers the fastest onboarding process in the industry, enabling merchants to integrate and activate payment gateways in as little as one day.
- The company is known for quick resolution times for technical, fraud, chargeback, and compliance issues, minimizing business disruptions.
- Cashfree Payments guarantees on-time settlements, improving cash flow management and working capital for businesses.
- The company processes transactions worth over USD 80 billion annually and serves over 600,000 businesses.
- Cashfree Payments is a leader in redefining digital payments, onboarding, payouts, and more with its tech-first offerings.
- Recent industry-first products introduced by the company include Secure ID, flowWise for payment orchestration, KYC Link, and Risk Shield for fraud monitoring.

Jayen Mehta appointed as MD of Amul

Jayen Mehta has been appointed as the new Managing Director of Amul, one of India's largest dairy cooperatives. Jayen, a seasoned professional with extensive experience in the dairy industry, has taken the reins as the new Managing Director of Amul. With a proven track record of driving growth and innovation, Mehta is expected to lead Amul to new heights.

Foot notes:

- Experience: Jayen Mehta has over 25 years of experience in the dairy industry, having worked with various organizations, including Amul, where he has held various leadership positions.
- Leadership Skills: Mehta is known for his exceptional leadership skills, having successfully led teams and driven business growth in his previous roles.
- Innovation Focus: Mehta has a strong focus on innovation, having introduced several new products and technologies during his tenure at Amul.

- **Industry Expertise:** Mehta has in-depth knowledge of the dairy industry, having worked in various aspects of the business, including milk procurement, processing, and marketing.
- **Vision for Amul:** Mehta has outlined his vision for Amul, which includes expanding the cooperative's reach, improving efficiency, and driving growth through innovation and technology.
- **Successor to R S Sodhi:** Mehta takes over as the Managing Director of Amul from R S Sodhi, who has been at the helm of the organization since 2010 and has been instrumental in driving Amul's growth and success.

About Amul:**Founded:** 1946**Headquarters:** Anand**Devajit Saikia Appointed Acting Secretary of BCCI**

Devajit Saikia has been appointed as the Acting Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). A seasoned cricket administrator, Saikia steps into the role with a wealth of experience in sports governance. His appointment marks a significant moment for Indian cricket, as he takes on the responsibility of steering the board's administrative and operational functions. Known for his leadership and organizational skills, Saikia is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the future of cricket in the country.

Foot notes:

- **Constitutional Powers:** Binny used his constitutional powers to appoint Saikia as acting secretary, citing clause 7(1) (d) of the BCCI constitution.
- **Background and Experience:** Saikia, a former first-class cricketer from Assam, is currently the BCCI joint secretary and has also served as the Advocate General of Assam.
- **Tenure:** It is understood that Saikia will continue in this role until September next year before the vacancy is permanently filled up.
- **Responsibilities:** As acting secretary, Saikia will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the BCCI and ensuring a smooth transition until a permanent secretary is appointed.

Devajit Saikia Appointed as BCCI Acting Secretary

Devajit Saikia, currently the joint secretary of the BCCI, has been appointed as the acting secretary following Jay Shah's assumption of the ICC Chairman role on December 1, 2024. This decision, made by BCCI President Roger Binny, aligns with Clause 7(1)(d) of the BCCI constitution, which allows the president to delegate secretary responsibilities. Saikia, who also serves as the Advocate General of Assam, will hold this role until a permanent appointment is finalized, expected in September 2025.

Foot notes:

- Saikia hails from Assam and is a former first-class cricketer, having played four matches between 1990 and 1991 as a wicketkeeper-batter.
- He is currently the BCCI joint secretary and has been appointed as acting secretary by BCCI President Roger Binny in a stop-gap arrangement till a permanent secretary is appointed.
- Binny used his constitutional powers to appoint Saikia as acting secretary, citing clause 7(1) (d) of the BCCI constitution.
- Saikia will continue in this role till September next year before the vacancy is permanently filled up.
- Saikia has also served as the secretary of the Assam Cricket Association (ACA) and has been a part of the ACA administration since 2016.
- As acting secretary, Saikia will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the BCCI and ensuring the smooth functioning of the organization.



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Swede Joakim Alexandersson appointed India women's U-20 and U-17 chief coach

Swedish football coach Joakim Alexandersson has been appointed as the chief coach for the India women's U-20 and U-17 national teams. This appointment is part of a collaboration between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the Swedish Football Association. The AIFF has outlined plans for extensive training camps, exposure matches, and long-term development aimed at improving the country's performance in upcoming tournaments like the Asian Games 2026 and AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026.

Foot notes:

- Alexandersson, 48, has an extensive playing career as a defender, mostly for IF Elfsborg, and was a former Sweden U21 international. He began his coaching career as a youth director and coach at IF Elfsborg in 2014, leading multiple youth league titles and player promotions to senior teams.
- Alexandersson will commence his coaching stint in India with the two-month-long U20 national camp beginning in Bengaluru from December 10, 2024.
- Four Indian women coaches - Nivetha Ramadoss, Amrutha Aravind, Sradhanjali Samantaray, and Nidhi - along with two goalkeeper coaches, KK Hameed and Dipankar Choudhury, will assist Alexandersson.

- Two friendly matches between India U20 and Maldives are likely to be played on December 30, 2024, and January 2, 2025.
- The AIFF plans to have longer camps for seven to eight months for the women football teams and arrange 10-12 exposure matches a year against competitive opponents.
- Alexandersson aims to improve India's women's football team, currently ranked 13 in Asia, and is looking forward to the challenge, citing India's "big potential" in the sport.

Nilabhra Sengupta Takes Charge as CVO of BEL

Nilabhra Sengupta, a 1997 batch officer from the Indian Railway Service of Signal Engineers (IRSSE), has been appointed as the Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) of Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bengaluru. His role will focus on ensuring adherence to ethical practices, promoting transparency, and overseeing vigilance functions within the organization.

Foot notes:

- Sengupta, a 1997 batch IRSSE officer, has been appointed as CVO of BEL for a tenure of 3 years from the date of assumption of charge of the post.
- Prior to Sengupta's appointment, Ms. Kalyani Sethuraman, IRAS (1994 Batch), was holding the additional charge of CVO, BEL, since February 15, 2024.
- As CVO, Sengupta will be responsible for ensuring that the rules and procedures of the government and company are adhered to, and that discretionary powers are exercised judiciously.
- The Vigilance Department at BEL plays a vital role in preventing corruption and ensuring transparency in all official dealings. It focuses on preventive and punitive vigilance, as well as detective and surveillance activities.
- Sengupta's key responsibilities will include investigation of complaints, preventive vigilance, surprise inspections, and scrutiny of procurement and contracts files.
- Sengupta is a 1997 batch IRSSE officer, and his appointment as CVO of BEL is a significant development in his career.

FincFriends appoints Artem Andreev as Chief Executive Officer

FincFriends has announced the appointment of Artem Andreev as its new Chief Executive Officer, marking a strategic move to drive the company's growth and innovation. With extensive experience in fintech and financial services, Andreev is set to bring transformative leadership to the organization. His vision aligns with FincFriends' goal of delivering cutting-edge solutions to enhance customer experience and expand global reach. The appointment reflects the company's commitment to strengthening its executive team and scaling its operations. Under Andreev's leadership, FincFriends aims to solidify its position as a leader in the fintech industry.

Foot notes:

- Artem Andreev brings valuable leadership experience to FincFriends, having previously served as the Country Head of RupeeRedee.

- With Andreev at the helm, FincFriends is poised for growth, having recently closed a \$7.8 million funding round with a mix of equity and debt.
- Andreev's appointment is expected to improve operational efficiency, enabling FincFriends to better serve its customers and stay competitive in the market.
- Under Andreev's leadership, FincFriends aims to create more personalized solutions for its customers, tailoring its products and services to meet their unique needs.
- Andreev's expertise in the fintech industry will be invaluable in driving FincFriends' growth and innovation.
- With Andreev as CEO, FincFriends is well-positioned for future success, leveraging his experience and expertise to drive growth and expansion.

Zydus Wellness onboards Malaika Arora to promote Sugar Free Green

Zydus Wellness has onboarded Malaika Arora as the brand ambassador for its Sugar Free Green range, aiming to promote a healthier lifestyle. Known for her fitness and wellness advocacy, Malaika aligns perfectly with the brand's message of guilt-free indulgence for health-conscious consumers. The collaboration focuses on highlighting Sugar Free Green's natural sweetness, derived from stevia, as a healthier alternative to sugar. Through this partnership, Zydus Wellness seeks to expand its reach and resonate with a younger, fitness-driven audience. With Malaika's influence, the brand aims to inspire sustainable dietary choices while reinforcing its market presence.

Foot notes:

- Malaika will be featured in a three-part campaign, inspiring consumers to enjoy sweetness without the guilt.
- Sugar Free Green is made with 100% natural stevia, providing a guilt-free alternative to regular sugar.
- Sugar-Free has a 95% market share in the sweetener category, making it a trusted choice for over thirty years.
- Malaika has always been meticulous about her food choices and staying fit, making Sugar Free Green her go-to sweetener for a balanced diet.
- Malaika has shared her love for Yoga and staying home, and how she enjoys her tea, coffee, and favorite dessert Tiramisu with Sugar Free Green.
- The partnership symbolizes a shared belief in health, wellness, and responsible indulgence, building on Sugar-Free's legacy of providing natural and delicious sugar alternatives.

TransUnion CIBIL appoints Bhavesh Jain as Managing Director and CEO

TransUnion CIBIL has appointed Bhavesh Jain as its new Managing Director and CEO, effective immediately. Jain brings a wealth of experience in financial services and technology, making him well-suited to lead India's premier credit information company. Under his

leadership, TransUnion CIBIL aims to enhance its data-driven insights and expand its role in empowering individuals, businesses, and financial institutions. Jain's appointment reflects the company's commitment to innovation and growth in the rapidly evolving financial landscape. With a focus on driving inclusion and fostering trust in credit systems, Jain is set to steer TransUnion CIBIL towards new milestones.

Foot notes:

- Bhavesh Jain has been with TransUnion CIBIL for five years, serving as the Chief Revenue Officer, and has a decades-long career in financial services with stints at Thomson Reuters, Citi, and Kone.
- Jain holds a master's in management studies from the Welingkar Institute of Management and a bachelor's degree in engineering from VESIT, both at Mumbai University, and has completed the Senior Executive Leadership Program at Harvard Business School.
- As MD and CEO, Jain will focus on driving sustainable access to credit for millions of people and commercial entities, advancing financial inclusion, and easing the process of doing business.
- Rajesh Kumar, the outgoing CEO, led TransUnion CIBIL for five years, during which the company grew significantly, and he played a crucial role in its evolution.
- TransUnion CIBIL aims to strengthen trust between consumers and businesses in an increasingly digital world, and Jain's leadership is expected to further this vision.

Emcer onboards Kareena Kapoor as brand ambassador

Emcer, a leading brand in the tiles and ceramics industry, has onboarded Bollywood icon Kareena Kapoor as its brand ambassador. Known for her elegance and versatility, Kareena perfectly aligns with Emcer's ethos of style, sophistication, and quality. Her association is expected to enhance the brand's visibility and strengthen its appeal among premium consumers. Through this collaboration, Emcer aims to position itself as a trendsetter in the home décor segment. The partnership signifies a fusion of luxury and innovation, reinforcing the brand's commitment to excellence.

Foot notes:

- Emcer aims to solidify its position in the market through this partnership, leveraging Kareena's elegance, grace, and timeless appeal to showcase its innovative ceramic solutions.
- Emcer has launched its new brand proposition, #NotJustTiles, which positions the brand as a premium lifestyle choice that goes beyond just tiles. This campaign highlights Emcer's dedication to superior design, innovation, and functionality.
- Kareena Kapoor, known for her iconic style, exemplifies Emcer's vision of transforming everyday spaces into luxurious environments. She's excited to partner with Emcer, admiring their vision of creating beautiful and functional works of art.
- The #NotJustTiles campaign will unfold in multiple phases, rolling out across various platforms, including cinema, OTT, digital media, and outdoor advertising.

- With Kareena on board, Emcer is confident that her association will elevate their position as a symbol of luxury, design excellence, and modern living.

Praveen Tambe appointed as the bowling coach of Gujarat Giants

Praveen Tambe has been appointed as the bowling coach of the Gujarat Giants, marking a significant addition to the team's coaching staff. Tambe, known for his inspiring cricketing journey, brings a wealth of experience from his playing days, particularly in T20 leagues like the IPL and international circuits. His expertise in spin bowling and tactical acumen is expected to strengthen the team's bowling unit. This move reflects the franchise's commitment to nurturing talent and enhancing performance under seasoned mentorship.

Tambe's presence is anticipated to motivate players and contribute to the team's success in upcoming tournaments.

Foot notes:

- Tambe brings substantial coaching experience to the table, having worked with Kolkata Knight Riders and Lucknow Super Giants in the past.
- His expertise will undoubtedly benefit the Gujarat Giants' bowling unit.
- Tambe made his Indian Premier League (IPL) debut at the age of 41 with Rajasthan Royals in 2013, showcasing his skills and determination. This experience will likely help him connect with players and provide valuable insights.
- Michael Klinger will continue as the team's head coach, having joined last season. Klinger has extensive coaching experience, including stints with Melbourne Renegades and Sydney Thunder.
- The Gujarat Giants aim to build a robust squad for the upcoming season, and Tambe's appointment is a step in that direction. With his expertise and the team's new coaching staff, they're looking to make a strong impact in WPL 2025.

KT Professional onboards Jacqueline Fernandez as brand ambassador

KT Professional, a leading name in hair care and styling solutions, has onboarded Bollywood actress Jacqueline Fernandez as its brand ambassador. Known for her elegance and vibrant personality, Jacqueline perfectly aligns with the brand's commitment to modern beauty and innovation. The collaboration aims to strengthen KT Professional's presence in the Indian market and enhance its appeal among young, style-conscious consumers. As the face of the brand, Jacqueline will promote its range of products designed for diverse hair care needs. This partnership reflects the brand's focus on empowering individuals to express themselves confidently through their style.

Foot notes:

- As the new face of KT Professional, Fernandez will represent the brand's range of premium hair care products, leveraging her popularity to boost the brand's image.
- Fernandez has been associated with several brands in the past, including (link unavailable), where she was appointed as the brand ambassador in August 2024.

- Fernandez has also been the brand ambassador for FairPlay, a role that utilizes her "contagious energy and fun-loving" personality to promote the brand.
- Fernandez has been involved with several beauty and hair care brands, including Lotus Herbals, where she was appointed as the brand ambassador in March.
- With her large following and influence in the beauty and lifestyle space, Fernandez is expected to help KT Professional expand its customer base and increase brand awareness.
- The partnership aims to promote KT Professional's premium hair care products and establish the brand as a leader in the professional hair care market.

AiDASH appoints Vishal Jain as Head of AI

AiDASH, a leading AI-powered operations, maintenance, and sustainability platform, has appointed Vishal Jain as its Head of AI. Jain brings extensive expertise in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data-driven innovation to this critical role. His appointment is aimed at strengthening AiDASH's technological capabilities and driving advancements in AI solutions for its global clientele. With a proven track record in creating transformative AI strategies, Jain is expected to lead initiatives that enhance operational efficiency and sustainability. This move underscores AiDASH's commitment to leveraging cutting-edge technology to deliver innovative and impactful solutions.

Foot notes:

- With over 15 years of expertise in perception and mapping, Jain brings a wealth of experience in leveraging aerial, satellite, and terrestrial data, including LiDAR, infrared, and optical imagery.
- Jain has held key positions at notable companies, including Velodyne LiDAR, where he led the software engineering division responsible for building real-time LiDAR perception systems. He also co-founded Vision Systems, developing cutting-edge aerial and satellite imaging systems for large-scale reconnaissance and change detection.
- As Head of AI at AiDASH, Jain will lead AI innovation on the company's integrated Platform for Grid Inspection and Monitoring, focusing on making critical infrastructure more climate-resilient and sustainable.
- AiDASH has experienced rapid growth, with over 150 global customers and a track record of doubling annual revenue since 2019. Jain's expertise will support the company's goal of empowering critical infrastructure industries to make data-informed decisions.
- Abhishek Singh, CEO and Co-Founder of AiDASH, welcomed Jain's appointment, stating that his technical expertise and vision will help deliver critical insights to adapt to the increasing challenges posed by climate change on vital infrastructure.

Vijay Chandok Joins as MD & CEO of NSDL

Ay Chandok has been appointed as the Managing Director and CEO of the National Securities Depository (NSDL). He will lead the organization through a transformative phase, focusing on

improving market operations and providing secure, efficient, and innovative solutions for stakeholders. With nearly 30 years of leadership experience, Chandok specializes in corporate finance, relationship management, credit risk, credit analysis, and risk management.

Foot notes:

- Chandok has over three decades of experience in the BFSI sector.
- Held pivotal roles in the ICICI Group, including: Executive Director on the Board of ICICI Bank, Managing Director and CEO of ICICI Securities Ltd, Currently associated with NSDL.
- Have studied Master's in Management Studies (MMS) from NarseeMonjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Mumbai. Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering from IIT-BHU, Varanasi (formerly IT-BHU).
- Recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award from NMIMS in 2017.
- Career Milestones at ICICI: Joined ICICI Bank as a management trainee in 1993. Progressed to general manager before becoming president in 2010. Elevated to Executive Director of the bank in 2016.

About NSDL:

Founded: 1996

CEO: Padmaja Chunduru

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala's Reappointed as WTO Director-General

Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala assumed office as the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO). A distinguished global finance expert and economist, she brings over 40 years of experience spanning Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America. Previously, she served as Chair of the Board for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and was a board member for Standard Chartered PLC and Twitter Inc. Dr. Okonjo-Iweala also held key roles as the African Union (AU) Special Envoy, tasked with securing international financial support to combat COVID-19 and as the WHO Special Envoy for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator.

Foot notes:

- Consensus Builder: Renowned for her ability to foster trust and build consensus among governments and stakeholders.
- Trailblazing Minister: Served as Nigeria's Finance Minister (2003–2006, 2011–2015) and briefly as Foreign Minister in 2006, the first woman to hold both roles.
- Reform Advocate: Led significant reforms that enhanced the efficiency of Nigeria's ministries and government operations.
- World Bank Career: Spent 25 years as a development economist, rising to Managing Director, overseeing an \$81 billion portfolio and spearheading critical initiatives during global crises.
- Trade Advocate: Championed trade as a tool for poverty reduction and economic growth, contributing to Nigeria's trade policy overhaul.

- World Bank Presidency: First African and female candidate for World Bank President in 2012, with global backing.
- Global Influence: Featured in Forbes' Top 100 Most Powerful Women (7 times) and TIME's Most Influential People (2014, 2021).
- Anti-Corruption Fighter: Recognized by Transparency International among inspiring female anti-corruption leaders.

Indian-Origin Kash Patel Takes Charge of Director of FBI

US President-elect Donald Trump has named Kash Patel as the next Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), succeeding Christopher Wray. Patel, a staunch Trump supporter, is recognized for his firm backing of Trump's policies and his outspoken criticism of federal agencies, including the FBI, which he has accused of undermining the former president's agenda.

Foot notes:

- Career Transition: Shifted from law to politics in 2016 as an aide to Devin Nunes.
- Russiagate Role: Played a pivotal role in investigating FBI wiretapping of Carter Page and the Steele dossier, solidifying his status as a Trump loyalist.
- Impeachment Defense: Defended Trump during his first impeachment trial over alleged Ukraine misconduct.
- Author of Government Gangsters: Advocates for aligning government with Trump's principles and removing officials obstructing Trump's agenda.
- Post-Administration Actions: Supported Trump during the Mar-a-Lago documents investigation. Backed claims of a standing declassification order.
- Key Roles: Aide to Devin Nunes, Russiagate investigator, impeachment defense.
- Significance: Embodies Trump's vision to reshape federal institutions.

Eurogrip Tyres Appoints M.S. Dhoni as Brand Ambassador

Eurogrip Tyres, a prominent Indian brand known for its 2 and 3-wheeler and off-highway tyres, has appointed M.S. Dhoni, the iconic cricketer, as its brand ambassador. This collaboration reflects Eurogrip Tyres' core values of performance, reliability, and safety, aiming to boost the brand's visibility and trust among consumers. M.S. Dhoni's strong affinity for motorcycles and his focus on performance, reliability, and passion for riding align perfectly with the brand's

Foot notes:

- Eurogrip Tyres and M.S. Dhoni share common values such as performance, dependability, and a passion for riding.
- Dhoni has a strong connection to motorcycles, which dates back before his cricket career.
- He emphasizes the importance of choosing the right tyres to ensure a safe and enjoyable ride.

- P. Madhavan, EVP of Marketing & Sales at TVS Srichakra Ltd., expressed enthusiasm about the partnership, noting that Dhoni embodies the brand's core values.
- The collaboration highlights innovation, reliability, and performance for modern riders.
- Eurogrip Tyres has over 40 years of experience in tyre design and manufacturing.
- The brand offers a wide variety of products for diverse needs and applications.
- Eurogrip's products are designed in Milan, Italy, and undergo global testing and certification, ensuring high-quality standards.

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Amit Narang appointed next ambassador of India to Slovenia

Shri Amit Narang (IFS: 2001), presently Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Slovenia. Born on January 28, 1975, Narang assumed his role as Ambassador to Oman on October 24, 2021. Prior to this, he led the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Division of the MEA, managing India's bilateral relations with key maritime neighbors, as noted by the Embassy of India in Oman.

Foot notes:

- MEA Roles: Served as Chief Vigilance Officer of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). Oversaw India's consular and visa policy, focusing on welfare initiatives for the overseas Indian diaspora.
- China Expertise: Holds an Advanced Diploma in Chinese language.
- Served in China twice: 2003-2007: Worked on bilateral economic and commercial relations.
- 2016-2018: Served as Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of India, Beijing.
- India's lead negotiator for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, The Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- Counselor at the Permanent Mission of India to the UN in New York (2013-2016).
- He represented India in UNFCCC climate change negotiations at COP meetings in Cancun, Durban, Doha, Lima, and Paris, culminating in the adoption of the Paris Agreement (COP21) in 2015.

IFS officer Ashok Kumar appointed as Indian envoy to Belarus

Ashok Kumar, currently serving as the High Commissioner of India to Zambia, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Belarus, according to a statement by the Ministry of External Affairs. University of Delhi Alumnus: Holds a B.Sc. (Hons) in Geology, an M.Sc. in Applied Geology, and an M.Phil. in Engineering Geology. He had 23 years in the Indian Foreign Service, handling diverse assignments in diplomacy, administration, and cultural promotion.

Foot notes:

- Early Posting: Began his diplomatic career at the Embassy of India in Syria (2000-2003), where he learned Arabic and served as Second Secretary.
- Jeddah Posting: Assigned to the Consulate General of India in Jeddah in 2004, handling the Commercial and Community Welfare departments.
- Headquarters Role: Returned to New Delhi in 2006 as Deputy Secretary in the East and Southern Africa Division, overseeing EAC, COMESA, SADC, and development cooperation projects.
- Finance Division: Later transferred to the Integrated Finance Division of the Ministry of External Affairs.
- His extensive experience in diplomatic and administrative roles positions him well for his new assignment in Belarus

Strch ropes in Vaani Kapoor as brand ambassador

Strch, a leading active wear brand in India, has announced Bollywood actress Vaani Kapoor as its new brand ambassador. The collaboration emphasizes the brand's commitment to promoting an active and confident lifestyle. Vaani Kapoor, known for her fitness-focused image, aligns with Strch's ethos of providing premium, modern, and functional activewear. Speaking about the partnership, Kapoor expressed her excitement to work with a brand that prioritizes both style and comfort, aiming to inspire fitness enthusiasts across India. Strch offers its products through multiple platforms, including its website, mobile app, and major e-commerce sites like Myntra, Nykaa, Amazon, and Flipkart, along with flagship stores.

Foot notes:

- STRCH aims to redefine active wear with a focus on comfort, functionality, and style, catering to the modern, fitness-conscious audience. Vaani Kapoor's partnership with the brand is expected to help achieve this goal.
- Vaani Kapoor's active lifestyle and effortless style align seamlessly with STRCH's brand philosophy, which emphasizes empowering individuals to lead active and confident lives.
- STRCH's activewear is crafted with quality fabric technology, featuring buttery-soft, lightweight nylon with moisture-wicking properties, and a 4-way stretch for optimal comfort and flexibility.
- STRCH's products are available through its website, mobile app, and e-commerce platforms such as Myntra, Nykaa, Amazon, and Flipkart, as well as flagship stores and pop-up experiences in key locations.

- Vaani Kapoor hopes that this collaboration will empower like-minded individuals to stay active and feel confident, while STRCH's founder, Prithvi Bhagat, believes that Vaani's partnership will help revolutionize the activewear segment in India.

Mukesh Ambani appoints Ira Bindra as Group President for HR at Reliance

Mukesh Ambani has appointed Ira Bindra as the Group President of Human Resources (HR) at Reliance Industries. Bindra is the first non-family woman and the youngest member to join the company's powerful Executive Committee. She brings extensive global HR experience from her previous roles, including Head of HR and Vice President at Medtronic, USA. Her responsibilities will include driving organizational transformation and enhancing Reliance's HR and leadership practices across all business verticals. This strategic move aligns with Reliance's focus on fostering people-centric leadership and world-class HR initiatives.

Foot notes:

- Bindra joins Reliance from Medtronic, USA, where she served as the Head of Human Resources and Vice President - Global Regions.
- She has a strong background in HR, having worked with GE Capital, GE India, GE Healthcare, and GE Oil & Gas.
- Bindra will focus on advancing the company's people strategies, fostering cultural transformation, and enhancing leadership development initiatives across its diverse operations.
- She will work closely with Mukesh Ambani, Isha Ambani, Akash Ambani, Anant Ambani, and the entire Executive Committee to drive transformation.
- Bindra is the first non-family woman and the youngest to be on the all-powerful Executive Committee of the Reliance Group. Her appointment is expected to bring fresh perspectives and propel the company to achieve even higher levels of performance.
- She brings expertise in blending business, data, and people strategies to impact results. Her leadership roles have spanned HR business partner, talent development, technology R&D, commercial, compliance, and business transformation.

Vinay Kumar Appointed New DGP of Bihar

Vinay Kumar has been appointed as the new Director General of Police (DGP) of Bihar, bringing with him a wealth of experience in law enforcement. His leadership is expected to strengthen policing and enhance public safety across the state. As DGP, he aims to focus on crime prevention, efficient law enforcement, and maintaining communal harmony. Kumar's appointment signals the state's commitment to ensuring robust security measures and fostering trust between the police and citizens.

Foot notes:

- Vinay Kumar has over 33 years of professional service, with a strong track record of leadership and administration. He has held critical roles such as Superintendent of Police in key districts and senior positions at police headquarters.

- Kumar is an IIT Kharagpur alumnus and was raised in a family that valued education. His father, Ram Iqbal Shukla, was a teacher, and Kumar pursued his early education locally before moving to Patna for advanced studies.
- Kumar's tenure as DGP will span a minimum of two years, as per a Supreme Court mandate. He is expected to bring new dynamism to Bihar's police force, with a focus on experienced leadership to drive law enforcement reforms and public safety measures forward.
- Before becoming DGP, Kumar held the post of Additional Director General (ADG) of the Crime Department. He has also served as ADG Law and Order and ADG CID, with notable achievements in strategic execution and impactful results.
- As DG-cum-CMD of the Bihar Police Building Construction Corporation, Kumar spearheaded significant infrastructure projects, showcasing his ability to manage complex initiatives.

About Bihar:**Capital:** Patna**Chief Minister:** Nitish Kumar**Governor:** Rajendra Arlekar**Google Appointed Preeti Lobana as New Country Manager for India**

Google has appointed Preeti Lobana as the new Country Manager for India, marking a significant leadership transition in one of its key markets. With her extensive experience in the technology sector, she is expected to drive Google's strategic initiatives and strengthen its presence in India. Lobana will focus on fostering innovation, enhancing user engagement, and expanding Google's services across the country. Her appointment underscores Google's commitment to empowering India's digital growth and supporting its diverse user base.

Foot notes:

- As Country Manager, Lobana will spearhead Google India's sales and operations, driving the company's commitment to the burgeoning digital economy in the country.
- She brings over 30 years of experience in senior leadership roles across the technology and financial industries, with a deep understanding of the evolving Indian landscape.
- Lobana has been associated with Google for the last eight years, serving as Vice President, gTech - Process, Partner, Publisher Operations, Ads Content, and Quality Operations.
- She will partner deeply with Roma Datta Chobey, who led as the interim country manager, and will continue her leadership as Managing Director for Google India's Digital Native Industries.
- Lobana's leadership will focus on leveraging AI advancements to accelerate digital inclusion and unlock unprecedented economic opportunities for every Indian.

About Google:**CEO:** Sundar Pichai

Founders: Larry Page, Sergey Brin

Founded: 1998

Hardeep Singh appointed as State General Secretary of the All India Consumer Welfare Council

Hardeep Singh has been appointed as the State General Secretary of the All India Consumer Welfare Council (Para), marking a significant step in strengthening the organization's leadership. In this role, he will focus on advocating for consumer rights and addressing grievances to ensure fair practices in the marketplace. His appointment reflects the council's commitment to promoting transparency, accountability, and awareness among consumers.

Foot notes:

- As State General Secretary, Hardeep Singh will play a crucial role in leading the All India Consumer Welfare Council's efforts to protect consumer rights and promote consumer welfare in the state.
- The council's primary objective is to safeguard consumer interests and ensure that consumers receive fair treatment in the marketplace. Hardeep Singh's experience and expertise will be invaluable in driving this mission forward.
- As a key member of the council, Hardeep Singh will have the opportunity to shape consumer protection policies and advocate for consumer-friendly laws and regulations.
- The council works closely with various stakeholders, including government agencies, consumer organizations, and businesses. Hardeep Singh's appointment will help strengthen these partnerships and foster greater collaboration.
- Through education, awareness, and advocacy, the council aims to empower consumers to make informed choices and demand their rights. Hardeep Singh's leadership will be instrumental in achieving this goal.

Rohan Jaitley re-elected as the president of the DDCA

Rohan Jaitley has been re-elected as the president of the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA). His victory highlights continued confidence in his leadership and vision for cricket development in Delhi. Under his tenure, the focus has been on improving infrastructure and promoting grassroots cricket. Jaitley's re-election is expected to bring further stability and progress to the association. His leadership will play a key role in shaping the future of cricket in the region.

Foot notes:

- Jaitley secured 1,577 votes, while Azad managed only 777 votes out of the total 2,413 votes cast, with a minimum of 1,207 votes required to win.
- Rohan Jaitley is the son of late Arun Jaitley, who served as DDCA president from 1999 to 2013, and has continued his father's legacy in Delhi cricket.

- Members from Jaitley's camp won key positions, including Shikha Kumar as vice-president, Ashok Sharma as secretary, Harish Singla as treasurer, and Amit Grover as joint secretary.
- Kirti Azad alleged corruption within the DDCA, claiming that only a fraction of the Rs 140 crore received from the BCCI last year was spent properly.
- Under Jaitley's leadership, the Arun Jaitley Stadium hosted five World Cup matches last year and the inaugural edition of the Delhi Premier League (DPL).
- Jaitley emphasized that the members have seen the positive work done over the past three years and have given him another opportunity to serve them.

Kissht onboards Sachin Tendulkar as strategic investor and brand ambassador

Fintech company Kissht has announced that cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar has joined as a strategic investor and brand ambassador. Tendulkar's association aims to boost the company's brand value and expand its reach across India, particularly in fostering trust among its customers. As a strategic investor, he will play a role in shaping the company's vision and growth strategies. Kissht, known for providing easy and accessible financing options, sees Tendulkar as an ideal partner due to his immense credibility and inspirational journey. This collaboration is expected to strengthen Kissht's position in the competitive fintech market.

Foot notes:

- Tendulkar's investment in Kissht marks his entry into the fintech sector, showcasing his interest in innovative and disruptive technologies.
- As brand ambassador, Tendulkar will participate in various campaigns and integrated marketing initiatives to promote Kissht's services and values.
- This is not Tendulkar's first business venture; he has invested in several startups, including Spinny, Smartron, Smaaash Entertainment, and JetSynthesys, across various sectors like used car retail, IoT, sports entertainment, and digital entertainment.
- Kissht's partnership with Tendulkar is expected to accelerate the company's growth, leveraging his reputation and fan base to expand its customer reach.
- Tendulkar has endorsed several brands in the past, including Hafele, a global leader in interior solutions, where he promoted their products and values.
- Tendulkar's association with Kissht may attract more attention and investment to the fintech sector, promoting innovation and financial inclusion in India.

Rama Mohan Rao Amara Appointed as SBI Managing Director

Rama Mohan Rao Amara has been appointed as the Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest public sector bank. With over three decades of experience in the banking sector, Amara has held various leadership roles within SBI, showcasing his expertise in corporate banking, credit, and risk management. His appointment comes at a time when the bank is focusing on digital transformation and expanding its global footprint. Known for his

strategic vision, he is expected to play a crucial role in strengthening SBI's position in the banking industry.

Foot notes:

- Amara has been with SBI since 1991, initially joining as a probationary officer, and has extensive experience in various roles, including credit, risk, retail and international banking.
- He served as the Deputy Managing Director and Chief Risk Officer of SBI and was also the MD & CEO of SBI Card from January 30, 2021, to August 11, 2023.
- Amara has held key leadership positions in global markets, including CEO of SBI's Chicago branch and President and CEO of SBI California.
- The Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) recommended Amara's name after interviewing nine candidates, and his appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC).

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NielsenIQ appoints Joe Ellis as Managing Director for India

NielsenIQ has announced the appointment of Joe Ellis as the Managing Director for India. Ellis brings over two decades of experience in market research and analytics, with a strong track record in driving business growth and innovation. In his new role, he will focus on strengthening NielsenIQ's presence in the Indian market and fostering client-centric solutions. Ellis emphasized his commitment to leveraging technology and data insights to help businesses navigate India's dynamic consumer landscape. Under his leadership, NielsenIQ aims to accelerate its growth trajectory and deliver enhanced value to clients across diverse industries.

Foot notes:

- Joe Ellis brings over 25 years of experience with NielsenIQ, having held various leadership roles across regional and global verticals.
- Ellis has worked in India twice before, establishing the company's proprietary simulated test marketing division, BASES, in 2004, and later spearheading the expansion and digitization of NIQ's retail measurement services in 2013.
- NielsenIQ's India operations encompass three regional commercial offices and the world's largest traditional trade measurement panel, employing over 10,000 associates in India.

- Ellis aims to ensure NielsenIQ stays ahead in helping clients achieve their growth objectives with its world-class suite of products and services.
- Ellis believes India is an energizing and exciting market, with a diverse economic base, vast untapped consumer market, and rapid digitization.

Salman Khan Named Brand Ambassador for Kho Kho World Cup

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan has been announced as the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup. Known for his widespread popularity and philanthropic efforts, Khan aims to bring global attention to the traditional Indian sport. His association is expected to enhance the sport's visibility and inspire younger generations to embrace it. The Kho Kho World Cup will feature teams from multiple countries, promoting cultural exchange and sportsmanship. Khan expressed his enthusiasm, stating that supporting Indian heritage sports aligns with his commitment to fostering grassroots talent.

Foot notes:

- The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) announced Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup, set to take place in New Delhi from January 13 to 19, 2025.
- Salman Khan expressed his enthusiasm for the tournament, reminiscing about his own connection to the sport. He stated that Kho Kho is a sport that everyone has played at some point in their lives.
- The Kho Kho World Cup 2025 will feature 21 men's teams and 20 women's teams, representing 24 nations, competing over a week in the Indian capital.
- As the brand ambassador, Salman Khan aims to promote the sport globally and draw attention to the World Cup. His involvement is expected to spark interest across the nation.
- The KKFI has made significant strides to ensure gender equality in the sport, setting up a platform that offers equal opportunities to both men and women participants.

Piramal Pharma ropes in Mrunal Thakur as brand ambassador for Lacto Calamine

Piramal Pharma has appointed Bollywood actress Mrunal Thakur as the brand ambassador for its popular skincare brand, Lacto Calamine. Known for her natural beauty and relatable charm, Thakur perfectly embodies the brand's ethos of healthy and radiant skin. As the face of Lacto Calamine, she will promote its range of products that focus on oil control, hydration, and skincare solutions. Thakur expressed her excitement about the partnership, highlighting her personal connection to the brand's legacy in skincare. This collaboration aims to strengthen Lacto Calamine's market presence and connect with a younger audience.

Foot notes:

- Piramal Pharma has announced its association with popular actress Mrunal Thakur as the new brand ambassador for its flagship skincare brand, Lacto Calamine.

- Lacto Calamine has long been a trusted name in skincare, recognized for its expertise and versatile benefits. It's valued for its gentle yet effective formula, addressing various skincare concerns.
- Lacto Calamine is launching its new multi-media campaign 'Oily skin hai to Lacto Calamine' with Mrunal Thakur for its range of products.
- In the next 18-24 months, the brand plans to expand its presence with a wider range of products and in newer channels and stores, accelerating growth on e-commerce portals.
- Nandini Piramal, Chairperson of Piramal Pharma, stated that Mrunal Thakur's association will help the brand connect with a wider audience and strengthen its position as a trusted skincare brand.

QualiZeal appoints Satish Sureddi as Chief Financial Officer

QualiZeal has announced the appointment of Satish Sureddi as its new Chief Financial Officer. With a wealth of experience in financial management, Sureddi is expected to play a key role in the company's growth and strategic planning. His leadership aims to strengthen the organization's financial framework and drive operational efficiency. The appointment reflects QualiZeal's commitment to bolstering its leadership team with seasoned professionals. Sureddi's expertise will be instrumental in achieving the company's long-term objectives.

Foot notes:

- Satish brings over 23 years of expertise in financial management, corporate strategy, and business leadership across the IT, ITES, and Technology sectors.
- Before joining QualiZeal, Satish served as Senior Director – Finance at Qualcomm Inc. for eight years and held the position of Vice President – Finance at Virtusa for 12 years.
- Satish is a distinguished finance professional and holds qualifications as a Chartered Accountant, Company Secretary, and Cost Accountant.
- As CFO, Satish will drive QualiZeal's financial excellence and advance the company's financial and operational vision for the future.
- Satish joins QualiZeal at an exciting time in its growth trajectory, with the company recognized for its industry-leading growth rate since inception.
- Satish looks forward to collaborating with the leadership team to support the company's growth journey, drive profitability, and deliver value to clients and teams.

Justice Madan Lokur Appointed Chairperson of UN IJC

Justice Madan Lokur has been appointed as the Chairperson of the United Nations International Justice Commission (UN IJC). His vast experience and distinguished career in the judiciary make him an ideal choice for this prestigious role. This appointment underscores his global recognition as a champion of justice and legal excellence. Justice Lokur is expected to bring his expertise to addressing complex international legal issues. His leadership will strengthen the commission's efforts in promoting fairness and upholding the rule of law globally.

Foot notes:

- As Chairperson, Lokur will oversee the IJC's functions, including identifying and interviewing candidates for vacancies in the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) and the UN Appeals Tribunal (UNAT).
- IJC Composition: The IJC consists of five members, including a staff representative, a management representative, two distinguished external jurists, and a chairperson selected by consensus.
- The other members of the IJC include Carmen Artigas (Uruguay), Rosalie Balkin (Australia), Stefan Brezina (Austria), and Jay Pozenal (USA).
- Significance: Lokur's appointment marks the first time an Indian jurist has held this prestigious position, reflecting India's growing influence in international legal circles.
- Justice Lokur's Background: A retired Supreme Court judge, Lokur has a distinguished career spanning over four decades, with notable contributions to social justice, environmental protection, and human rights.

Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, a retired Indian Supreme Court judge appointed to the BICC

Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, a retired judge of the Indian Supreme Court, has been appointed to the Board of International Commercial Courts (BICC). Known for his expertise in constitutional and commercial law, Justice Kaul brings years of judicial experience to this global platform. His appointment reflects his significant contributions to the legal field and highlights India's growing influence in international judicial forums.

Foot notes:

- Justice Kaul has had a distinguished career, serving as a judge of the Supreme Court of India from 2017 to 2023.
- He has extensive judicial experience, having served as the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and the Madras High Court.
- Justice Kaul has delivered several notable judgments, including the ruling that privacy is a fundamental right in India.
- His appointment to the BICC reflects his international recognition as a jurist and his expertise in commercial law.
- The BICC is a commercial court that aims to resolve business disputes efficiently and effectively, and Justice Kaul's appointment is expected to enhance its credibility and expertise.

Wipro appoints Ranjita Ghosh as Global Chief Marketing Officer

Wipro has announced the appointment of Ranjita Ghosh as its Global Chief Marketing Officer. With a wealth of experience in marketing and brand strategy, Ghosh is set to lead Wipro's global marketing initiatives, focusing on enhancing the company's brand presence and driving growth in key markets. Her appointment underscores Wipro's commitment to innovation and customer-centric strategies in a competitive global landscape.

Foot notes:

- Ghosh was previously the CMO of Wipro's Asia Pacific, Middle East & Africa (APMEA) strategic market unit.
- She takes over from Laura Langdon, who has decided to explore career opportunities outside Wipro.
- As Global CMO, Ghosh will lead all marketing activities for Wipro across its geographies, shaping the company's brand and contributing to its growth.
- She will report to Hari Shetty, Chief Strategist & Technology Officer.
- Ghosh has nearly two decades of diverse experience in the global technology services industry, with expertise in sales, business development, growth marketing, and ecosystem partnerships.
- She has managed marketing for multiple high-value portfolios and led teams across North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.

Oil India Limited Appointed Abhijit Majumder as CFO

Oil India Limited has appointed Abhijit Majumder as its Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Majumder, with extensive experience in financial management and strategic planning, will oversee the company's financial operations and drive its fiscal strategies. His leadership is expected to strengthen Oil India's financial framework and support its growth objectives in the energy sector.

Foot notes:

- Majumder will replace Rupam Barua, the former Executive Director (F&A), and hold the position of Director (Finance).
- Majumder brings over 32 years of experience in financial management, corporate governance, and risk management, making him a seasoned professional in the field.
- He is a member of the Institute of Cost & Management Accountants of India and holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Law, as well as a post-graduate diploma in Forex Management.
- Majumder's appointment marks a significant milestone for Oil India, bringing in a professional with extensive experience in financial management and corporate governance.
- As a state-owned Maharatna company, Oil India is engaged in the exploration, development, and production of crude oil and natural gas.

Justice V. Ramasubramanian Appointed NHRC Chairperson

Justice V. Ramasubramanian, a distinguished former judge of the Supreme Court of India, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Known for his judicial acumen and dedication to upholding justice, his appointment is expected to strengthen the Commission's efforts in promoting and protecting human rights across the

country. Justice Ramasubramanian's leadership is anticipated to bring valuable insights and enhance the effectiveness of the NHRC's initiatives.

Foot notes:

- Justice Ramasubramanian is a former Supreme Court judge, who completed his law degree from Madras Law College and was enrolled as a member of the bar on February 16, 1983.
- His appointment was made by the President of India, based on the recommendation of a selection committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- The post of NHRC Chairperson had been lying vacant since June 1, after Justice Arun Kumar Mishra completed his tenure.
- As the new Chairperson, Justice Ramasubramanian will lead the NHRC in promoting and protecting human rights in India, including inquiring into human rights violations and reviewing laws related to human rights.

Justice GS Sandhawalia appointed as Chief Justice of HP High Court

Justice GS Sandhawalia has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court. His elevation to this esteemed position highlights his significant contributions to the judiciary. Known for his profound legal expertise and integrity, Justice Sandhawalia has a distinguished track record in delivering judgments on complex legal issues. His appointment is expected to further strengthen the judicial system in Himachal Pradesh.

Foot notes:

- Justice GS Sandhawalia has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court.
- Before this appointment, Justice Sandhawalia served as a judge at the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
- He has extensive experience in handling various types of cases, including civil, constitutional, and service matters.
- Prior to his elevation, he worked as an Additional Advocate General for the state of Punjab.
- Justice Sandhawalia's appointment as Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court is a significant development in the Indian judiciary, bringing his expertise and experience to the state's highest court.

India appoints IAS Arunish Chawla as the new Revenue Secretary

The Government of India has appointed IAS officer Arunish Chawla as the new Revenue Secretary. A seasoned bureaucrat with extensive administrative experience, Chawla's expertise is expected to bring efficiency to the revenue department. His appointment comes at a crucial time when the government is focused on strengthening revenue collection and implementing key reforms. Chawla has previously held significant positions, showcasing his capability in handling complex fiscal matters.

Foot notes:

- Chawla, a 1992-batch IAS officer from the Bihar cadre, has held various significant positions, including Secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals and Joint Secretary in the Expenditure Department of the finance ministry.
- Chawla holds a postgraduate and PhD in economics from the London School of Economics, making him well-equipped to handle the complexities of revenue management.
- The appointments committee has also made other significant appointments, including Amit Agrawal as the new Pharmaceuticals Secretary, Vineet Joshi as the Higher Education Secretary, and Rachna Shah as the Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training.
- Chawla has more than three years of service left, with his tenure scheduled to end in July 2028.

The MediaLab appoints Rajeev Kumar Jha as Chief Investment Officer

The MediaLab has announced the appointment of Rajeev Kumar Jha as its new Chief Investment Officer (CIO). With extensive experience in strategic investments and financial management, Jha is expected to play a pivotal role in driving the organization's growth initiatives. His appointment reflects The MediaLab's focus on innovation and long-term value creation in a competitive media landscape. As CIO, Jha will oversee investment strategies, asset allocation, and risk management to enhance the company's portfolio. This move underscores The MediaLab's commitment to leveraging expertise for sustainable development and expansion.

Foot notes:

- Rajeev Kumar Jha has joined The MediaLab as its Chief Investment Officer, marking a significant addition to the company's leadership team.
- Professional Background: Jha brings a wealth of experience to his new role, having worked with prominent agencies like Zenith Media, Madison Media, Universal McCann, and Mindshare.
- Company Overview: The MediaLab is a media agency that partners with marketers to drive growth, and Jha's appointment is expected to further enhance the company's capabilities.
- Industry Recognition: Jha's appointment has been recognized by industry publications, including Exchange4media, which highlighted his new role as a significant development in the media industry.
- Leadership Team: As Chief Investment Officer, Jha will play a key role in shaping The MediaLab's investment strategy and driving business growth.
- Future Outlook: With Jha on board, The MediaLab is poised to strengthen its position in the media industry, offering innovative solutions to marketers and driving business success.

Esha Sahaj Disha India appoints Kapil Dev as brand ambassador for Golden Yug

Esha Sahaj Disha India has appointed cricket legend Kapil Dev as the brand ambassador for its ambitious initiative, Golden Yug. This program aims to promote holistic wellness and a sustainable lifestyle among individuals. Kapil Dev, known for his leadership and discipline, aligns with the vision of inspiring a healthier and more balanced approach to living. Through this collaboration, Esha Sahaj Disha India seeks to amplify its message and connect with diverse audiences across the nation. The partnership symbolizes a commitment to fostering a golden era of physical, mental, and environmental well-being.

Foot notes:

- Located in Tarana, Indore, the resort is designed exclusively for senior citizens, offering luxury, sustainability, and state-of-the-art facilities.
- As brand ambassador, Kapil Dev will promote the resort and its vision of providing a dignified and fulfilling lifestyle for senior citizens.
- Golden Yug boasts 150 luxurious flats, a serene walking trail, a one-acre lake, an organic farm, and 24/7 in-house dining services.
- The resort emphasizes sustainability, with solar-powered electricity and eco-friendly practices.
- Golden Yug was inaugurated on December 28, 2024, by Bollywood actress and brand ambassador Adah Sharma.
- Kapil Dev emphasized the importance of providing senior citizens with spaces where they can live with dignity, comfort, and joy, stating that Golden Yug is setting a benchmark in senior living.

M Raghu & Devika Sihag crowned 2024 Sr National Badminton Champion

M Raghu and Devika Sihag have been crowned the 2024 Senior National Badminton Champions, showcasing their exceptional talent and determination. Raghu claimed the men's singles title with a commanding performance, solidifying his position as one of the country's top players. In the women's singles category, Devika Sihag displayed remarkable skill and composure, earning her a well-deserved victory. Their triumphs highlight the growing competitive spirit in Indian badminton and inspire aspiring players nationwide.

Foot notes:

- M Raghu from Karnataka clinched the title by defeating former champion Mithun Manjunath 14-21, 21-14, 24-22 in a thrilling match.
- Women's Singles Champion: Devika Sihag from Haryana secured the women's title with a comfortable 21-15, 21-16 win against Shriyanshi Valishetty.
- Raghu's Journey: Raghu, who wasn't ranked high enough for a direct entry, was given one of the two extra spots reserved for the host Karnataka Badminton Association. He made the most of this opportunity, upsetting top seed Sathish Kumar in the semi-finals.

- Valishetty's Impressive Run: Shriyanshi Valishetty, seeded 12th, had an impressive run, knocking out last year's champion Anmol Kharb and Tasnim Mir before reaching the final.
- Other Winners: Sanskar Saraswat and Arsh Mohammad won the men's doubles title, while Arathi Sara Sunil and Varshini VS clinched the women's doubles title. Ayush Agarwal and Shruti Mishra emerged victorious in the mixed doubles category.
- Tournament Details: The 86th Senior National Badminton Championships 2024 took place in Bengaluru from December 20 to 24, 2024, and was organized by the Badminton Association of India.

Parv Chaudhary secured bronze medals at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting

Parv Chaudhary made India proud by securing bronze medals at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships. Competing against some of the best young talents in the region, he showcased remarkable strength and technique. His achievement highlights the growing prowess of Indian athletes in international weightlifting competitions. Parv's success serves as an inspiration for young weightlifters across the country.

Foot notes:

- Chaudhary won bronze medals in the clean and jerk and total sections with a total lift of 303 kg (135 kg snatch + 168 kg clean and jerk).
- Competition Venue: The championships took place in Doha, Qatar, featuring competitions in 40 categories, with 20 each at the junior and youth levels.
- India's Medal Tally: Chaudhary's medals contributed to India's impressive tally of 33 medals, including 21 medals won by the youth lifters and 12 medals won by the junior lifters.
- Youth and Junior Records: The Indian contingent broke multiple national records, with Sairaj Pardeshi, Jyoshna Sabar, and Payal setting new records in their respective categories.
- Notable Performances: Other notable performances included Martina Devi Maibam's two silver and one bronze medal in the junior 87+ kg category and Sanjana's five silver medals across junior and youth divisions.
- Chaudhary's achievement, along with the impressive performances of other Indian weightlifters, indicates a bright future for Indian weightlifting.

General Dr. Vijay Kumar Singh Appointed As Governor of Mizoram Background

General Dr. Vijay Kumar Singh, a distinguished retired Army officer and former Union Minister, has been appointed as the Governor of Mizoram. With a decorated military career, he served as the Chief of Army Staff and played a pivotal role in modernizing the Indian Army. After retiring from the military, he transitioned into politics, serving in key ministerial roles, including handling road transport, highways, and external affairs.

Foot notes:

- General Singh was born on May 10, 1951, and was commissioned into the Indian Army in 1970 after graduating from the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy.
- He served as the 24th Chief of Army Staff from 2010 to 2012 and has a distinguished military career spanning over 42 years, including serving in Jammu and Kashmir and Sri Lanka.
- General Singh has been awarded several honors, including the Param Vishisht Seva Medal, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, and Yudh Seva Medal.
- After retiring from the military, General Singh joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 2014 and was elected as a Member of Parliament from Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh.
- He has served as Minister of State for External Affairs, Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region, and Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation.

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Bata India appoints Amit Aggarwal as Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance

Bata India has announced the appointment of Amit Aggarwal as its new Chief Financial Officer and Director of Finance. With extensive experience in financial management and strategic planning, Aggarwal brings a wealth of expertise to the organization. His appointment comes as Bata India aims to strengthen its market position and drive sustainable growth. Aggarwal is expected to play a key role in streamlining financial operations and supporting the company's expansion strategies.

Foot notes:

- Aggarwal brings over 20 years of experience in financial management, business strategy, and digital transformation across the FMCG and D2C sectors.
- He joins Bata India from SUGAR Cosmetics, where he served as CFO. Aggarwal has also worked with reputable organizations like Marico and Nestle India.
- Aggarwal is a qualified chartered accountant (ICAI, 2002) with an advanced general management certification from IIM Kolkata.
- He combines technical proficiency with visionary leadership to deliver impactful results, making him an ideal fit for Bata India's financial leadership.

- As CFO and Director of Finance, Aggarwal will be responsible for driving profitability, optimizing costs, mitigating risks, and strengthening governance frameworks at Bata India.
- Durgesh Singh, who was appointed as interim CFO, has ceased to hold the position, ensuring a smooth transition for Aggarwal.

Justice Narender G becomes the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court

Justice Narender G has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court, a significant milestone in his illustrious judicial career. Known for his legal acumen and fair judgments, he brings a wealth of experience to this esteemed position. As Chief Justice, he is expected to uphold the principles of justice and strengthen the legal framework in the state. His leadership is anticipated to ensure efficiency, transparency, and impartiality in the functioning of the judiciary. This appointment underscores his dedication to the rule of law and his commitment to serving the nation.

Foot notes:

- **Preceding Chief Justice:** Prior to Justice Narender G's appointment, Manoj Kumar Tiwari held the position of Acting Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.
- **Uttarakhand High Court:** The Uttarakhand High Court, located in Nainital, was established on November 9, 2000, after the state of Uttarakhand was formed.
- **Judicial Background:** Unfortunately, I couldn't find information on Justice Narender G's judicial background and experience. Typically, a Chief Justice has a distinguished career as a judge and lawyer.
- **Key Responsibilities:** As Chief Justice, Justice Narender G will oversee the administration of justice in the state of Uttarakhand, ensuring the efficient functioning of the High Court.
- **Significance of the Position:** The Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court plays a crucial role in upholding the rule of law and protecting the rights of citizens in the state.

IAS Officer Arunish Chawla Appointed As New Revenue Secretary

IAS officer Arunish Chawla has been appointed as the new Revenue Secretary, taking on one of the most critical roles in the government. Known for his administrative expertise and strategic vision, he is well-equipped to handle the complex fiscal and revenue-related challenges facing the country. His appointment signals a focus on ensuring efficient tax administration, revenue generation, and policy reforms. With a proven track record of excellence in public service, Chawla is expected to bring innovative approaches to streamline revenue operations. His leadership will be instrumental in shaping policies that drive economic growth and financial stability.

Foot notes:

- Chawla was serving as the Secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals in the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers since November 1, 2023.

- **Additional Charge:** He will also hold the additional charge of Secretary in the Ministry of Culture until a regular appointment is made.
- **Replacement:** Chawla replaces Sanjay Malhotra, who was appointed as the RBI Governor.
- **Experience:** Chawla has held various significant positions, including Managing Director of the Metro Rail Project Patna, Senior Economist at the International Monetary Fund, and Joint Secretary in the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance.
- **Education:** Chawla holds a postgraduate and PhD in economics from the London School of Economics.
- **Key Responsibilities:** As Revenue Secretary, Chawla's responsibilities will include implementing a comprehensive review of the Income Tax Act, rationalizing GST rates, and conducting a review of Customs duty, among others.

J&K Bank Appoints Amitava Chatterjee as New MD & CEO

J&K Bank has appointed Amitava Chatterjee as its new Managing Director and CEO, marking a new chapter for the institution. With his extensive experience in banking and financial management, Chatterjee is expected to lead the bank towards greater growth and innovation. His appointment comes at a crucial time as J&K Bank looks to strengthen its position in the competitive banking sector. Chatterjee's leadership is anticipated to bring a fresh perspective to the bank's operations and customer service. Under his guidance, the bank aims to enhance its financial products and services, contributing to the region's economic development.

Foot notes:

- Amitava Chatterjee has been appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of J&K Bank for a period of three years, effective from December 30, 2024.
- **Background and Experience:** Chatterjee is currently the Deputy Managing Director of State Bank of India (SBI) and has also served as MD and CEO of SBI CAPS. He has over three decades of experience in the banking sector.
- **Expertise:** Chatterjee has expertise in managing large-scale banking operations and driving strategic initiatives. He has headed SBI's operations as CGM New Delhi, circle and Jaipur Circle, with high-end clientele like PSUs, NBFCs, and DISCOMs.
- **J&K Bank's Expectations:** The bank expects Chatterjee to lead it through its next phase of growth, focusing on strengthening operations, improving efficiency, enhancing governance, and expanding digital banking services.

Vishwanath Arlekar appointed as Governor of Kerala

Vishwanath Arlekar has been appointed as the Governor of Kerala, marking a significant milestone in his career. As the constitutional head of the state, he is expected to play a pivotal role in upholding democratic principles and facilitating smooth governance. This appointment highlights the trust and confidence placed in his leadership abilities by the central government. Arlekar's extensive experience and commitment to public service make him well-suited for this

prestigious position. His tenure is anticipated to bring a constructive and collaborative approach to Kerala's administrative and political landscape.

Foot notes:

- Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar has been appointed as the Governor of Kerala, replacing Arif Mohammed Khan.
- Prior to this appointment, Arlekar was serving as the Governor of Bihar since February 2023.
- Arlekar has had a distinguished career in politics, serving as a Cabinet Minister in the Government of Goa and as the Speaker of the Goa Legislative Assembly.
- The appointment is part of a reshuffle of governors, with Arif Mohammed Khan being transferred to another state.
- The exact date of Arlekar's assumption of office as Governor of Kerala is not specified, but it is expected to be soon

Kalinga Lancers appoint Valentin Altenburg as head coach

The Kalinga Lancers have appointed Valentin Altenburg as their head coach for the upcoming Hockey India League (HIL) season. Altenburg, 43, is a highly regarded figure in international hockey, renowned for his tactical acumen, leadership qualities, and extensive experience with the German national team. Altenburg made history as the youngest senior men's coach in the German Hockey Association (DHB). Led the German men's team to a bronze medal at the 2016 Rio Olympics.

Foot notes:

- Altenburg has expressed excitement about joining the Kalinga Lancers as head coach.
- Praised Indian hockey and looks forward to contributing to the team's success.
- The squad includes a mix of young talent and experienced players.
- Altenburg's Olympic experience is expected to be a key asset.
- Upcoming Match: The Kalinga Lancers are set to face UP Rudras in their opening match on December 30.

AWARD NEWS

Dr. Basant Goel honored with UN Global Excellence Award

Dr. Goel's global reputation was further enhanced with the 'Bharat Kirtimaan' Award from the British Parliament, recommended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He was appointed as the Global Ambassador for the International Siddhashram Shakti Centre for the U.S.A., U.K., and India, an announcement made during King Charles III's birthday celebration on November 14, 2024. His commitment to healthcare and philanthropy, along with visionary leadership, continues to inspire change and strengthen cultural and international ties.

Foot notes:

- Dr. Basant Goel was honored as the Guest of Honor at the United Nations Global Excellence Award in Dubai.
- He was awarded a Doctorate (Honoris Causa) by the United States of America International University for his exceptional contributions to healthcare and philanthropy.
- Dr. Goel holds a Bachelor of Pharmacy, a Ph.D. in Diabetes, and a Doctorate in Health Science from prestigious U.S. institutions.
- His humanitarian efforts gained international recognition, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, earning accolades from the World Book of Records (London).
- His leadership in organizing blood donation drives led to a Guinness World Record for the most blood donations in a single camp, with 200 units of blood donated daily across India.

Vikrant Massey Honored as Indian Film Personality of the Year at IFFI

Actor Vikrant Massey was honored with the esteemed Indian Film Personality of the Year award at the grand finale of the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa. The award was presented by Goa Chief Minister Shri Pramod Sawant and Shri Sanjay Jaju, Secretary of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, in acknowledgment of Massey's outstanding contributions to Indian cinema.

Foot notes:

- Vikrant Massey's journey is a powerful example of how dreams and perseverance can lead to remarkable success.
- He expressed excitement about the future, highlighting that many aspects of his acting skills are yet to be discovered, urging audiences to stay tuned.
- Massey's notable films include: Dil Dhadakne Do (2015), A Death in the Gunj (2016), Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare (2019), Ginny Weds Sunny (2020), Cargo (2020).
- His performances have earned critical and audience acclaim, showcasing his versatility and dedication.
- Known for portraying relatable characters, he has become a true representation of the common man's voice in cinema.
- As he explores new acting dimensions, Massey's contributions are expected to leave a lasting impact on the Indian film industry.

Scottish Sikh Artist Jasleen Kaur Won 2024 Turner Prize

Scottish Sikh artist Jasleen Kaur, born in Glasgow, has won the 2024 Turner Prize, one of the most prestigious awards in contemporary art. Renowned for her poignant exploration of personal, political, and spiritual themes, Kaur was recognized for her solo exhibition *Alter Altar*. The exhibition weaves together sculpture, sound, and music to delve into themes of community, cultural inheritance, and anti-colonial struggles. Kaur's work is acclaimed for its

inventive storytelling, using everyday objects to convey powerful narratives of resilience, memory, and identity.

Foot notes:

- Her exhibition *Alter Altar* at Tate Britain, featuring sculptures brought to life through sound and music.
- Skillful weaving of personal, political, and spiritual themes in her artwork.
- Audience participation, reflecting Sikh community traditions of inclusivity and interaction.
- Celebrated for addressing themes of family memory, community struggles, and cultural resilience.
- Earned widespread recognition from the Sikh community and her upbringing circles in Glasgow.
- Studied jewelry-making and applied art, sparking her interest in storytelling through objects.
- Commended by the Turner Prize jury for evoking solidarity and joy through playful combinations of materials and sound.



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India Won ISSA Good Practice Award for Asia-Pacific 2024

India has been honored with the prestigious ISSA Good Practice Award for Asia and the Pacific 2024, presented by Dr. Mohammed Azman, President of the International Social Security Association (ISSA), at the Regional Social Security Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) was also recognized with five Certificates of Merit for its innovative social security delivery practices. These awards highlight EPFO's efforts to improve service delivery, communication, and inclusivity, benefiting its extensive and diverse workforce.

Foot notes:

- India's EPFO was awarded the prestigious ISSA Good Practice Award for its continuous efforts in reforming and enhancing the country's social security systems.
- The award was presented at the Regional Social Security Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, a key platform for discussing social security issues.

- EPFO transformed the judicial inquiry process by moving to online e-proceedings, reducing delays, increasing transparency, and ensuring fairness in determining dues from defaulting employers.
- The Nidhi Aapke Nikat 2.0 programme brings EPFO services closer to members by holding grievance resolution camps on the 27th of each month across the country, improving access to essential services like claim submission and grievance redressal.
- EPFO established multilingual call centres to assist members in 12 major regional languages, improving member satisfaction by resolving issues in their preferred language.
- The Prayaas Initiative ensures Pension Payment Orders (PPO) are issued on the day of retirement for members of the Employees' Pension Scheme (1995), improving the pension disbursement process and prioritizing pensioners.

Maria Victoria Juan Wins Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024

Nurse Maria Victoria Juan from the Philippines, a Consultant with the Philippine Army Health Services and Colonel in the Reserve Force of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, has been honored with the Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024. She received a prize of USD 250,000 at a prestigious ceremony held in Bengaluru, India. The announcement was made by Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman of Aster DM Healthcare, in the presence of government officials, Bollywood actress Sonali Bendre, Alisha Moopen (Managing Director and Group CEO, Aster DM Healthcare), T J Wilson (Executive Director and Group Head, Governance & Corporate Affairs, Aster DM Healthcare), and other distinguished guests.

Foot notes:

- **Launch and Purpose:** The Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award was initiated in 2021 by Aster DM Healthcare to honor and celebrate the remarkable contributions of nurses globally.
- **2024 Participation:** The 2024 edition received 78,000 applications from nurses in 202 countries, reflecting a 50% growth compared to 2023.
- **Recognition of Excellence:** Dr. Azad Moopen, Founder Chairman of Aster DM Healthcare, emphasized the vital role of nurses in healthcare, describing them as the "backbone of healthcare" who provide compassionate care and significantly impact the healthcare system.
- **Inspiration and Impact:** Dr. Moopen highlighted Maria Victoria Juan as a model of nursing excellence, inspiring the global healthcare community, and applauded the efforts of all top 10 finalists and participants.
- **Global Acknowledgment:** A special message from Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, congratulated the finalists and commended Aster DM Healthcare for recognizing the essential role of nurses.
- **Goal of the Awards:** The initiative aims to spotlight and celebrate the often-overlooked contributions of nurses who go above and beyond to make a difference in patients' lives and their communities.

Hyderabad girl Diya Loka won The Diana Award for 2024

Diya Loka, an ardent environmentalist and founder of E-Cycle, has been honoured with The Diana Award for 2024. This prestigious accolade, named in memory of Princess Diana, recognizes young individuals for their outstanding contributions to social action and humanitarian efforts. Supported by The Duke of Cambridge and The Duke of Sussex, the award is regarded as one of the highest honours a young person can achieve.

Foot notes:

- Seventeen-year-old Diya Loka is committed to combating e-waste, a critical environmental issue, through impactful local and global awareness campaigns.
- At the age of 14, she founded E-Cycle, an initiative aimed at raising awareness and collecting electronic waste, with a primary focus on Hyderabad.
- Her efforts have resulted in the collection of over 10,000 kilograms of e-waste and the mentoring of more than 5,000 individuals.
- E-Cycle has evolved into a global movement, engaging hundreds of young change makers worldwide.
- Diya's work has gained national recognition, earning sponsorships from prominent organizations such as Meta, The Wall Street Journal, and SOIF Futures.
- She has collaborated with renowned institutions like CIE, IIIT, and Recykal, contributing to projects focused on advocacy and digital marketing for environmental causes.

About Hyderabad:

Chief Minister: Revanth Reddy

Mayor: Gadwal Vijayalakshmi

SECI Won PSU Transformation Award for Innovation

The Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), a government-owned entity under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, has been honored with the 3rd PSU Transformation Award in the "Innovative Product Development" category. This recognition was awarded for their innovative model of providing "Firm and Dispatchable Renewable Energy (FDRE) Supply to DISCOMs on a Demand Following Basis." The award was presented during a ceremony held on December 5, 2024, in New Delhi.

Foot notes:

- Award Recognition: The Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) has won the 3rd PSU Transformation Award for "Innovative Product Development".
- Innovative Initiatives: SECI was recognized for its innovative initiatives in developing new products and services, which have helped to promote the growth of renewable energy in India.
- Renewable Energy Solutions: SECI has been at the forefront of developing innovative renewable energy solutions, including solar, wind, and hybrid power projects.

- Government's Renewable Energy Goals: SECI's innovative product development has helped to support the government's ambitious renewable energy goals, which aim to increase the share of non-fossil fuels in India's energy mix.
- Industry Recognition: The award is a testament to SECI's commitment to innovation and excellence in the renewable energy sector, and recognizes its position as a leader in the industry.

Kapil Sharma won 'Global Entertainer of the Year' award

Comedian and actor Kapil Sharma has been honored with the prestigious 'Global Entertainer of the Year' award. Renowned for his exceptional talent and humor, Kapil has captivated audiences worldwide through his television shows, stand-up performances, and films. This recognition celebrates his outstanding contribution to the entertainment industry and his ability to bring joy to millions across the globe. The award reaffirms Kapil Sharma's position as a leading figure in the world of comedy and entertainment.

Foot notes:

- Kapil Sharma recalled his humble beginnings, sharing a heartfelt memory of performing as a chorus singer at the same hotel 20 years ago.¹
- Kapil reflected on his eventful journey in the entertainment industry, from starting with theatre in Delhi to landing in Mumbai and eventually becoming a renowned comedian and actor.
- He mentioned that his show was initially made for a period of 3 months, but it has now been 12 years since its inception, showcasing his enduring success.
- Kapil shared his thoughts on the growing obsession with social media, emphasizing the importance of minimizing its use and being more aware of our surroundings.
- He acknowledged the ups and downs in his life, but expressed gratitude for the opportunities he has received and the path he has taken.
- Kapil expressed his heartfelt thanks to God for showing him the path and helping him achieve this milestone, making him feel truly grateful and humbled.

About BCCI:

President: Roger Binny

Headquarters: Mumbai

Founded: 1928

Lattice Won 2024 Global Semiconductor Alliance Award

Lattice Semiconductor has been honored with the 2024 Global Semiconductor Alliance (GSA) Award. This prestigious recognition underscores Lattice's contributions to the semiconductor industry, particularly its innovative solutions in low-power programmable technology. The award highlights the company's commitment to advancing cutting-edge technologies that drive efficiency and performance across a wide range of applications. Lattice's achievement reflects its leadership and excellence in a highly competitive industry.

Foot notes:

- The award recognizes companies that demonstrate excellence through their vision, innovation, execution, and future opportunity, as determined by votes from GSA members.
- Ford Tamer, CEO of Lattice Semiconductor, expressed his honor and pride in accepting the award, thanking customers and partners for their support.
- Jodi Shelton, GSA CEO and co-founder, congratulated Lattice Semiconductor on its win, acknowledging the company's contributions to the industry.
- As the low power programmable leader, Lattice Semiconductor solves customer problems across the network, from the Edge to the Cloud, in various growing markets.
- The GSA Awards celebrate the accomplishments of the semiconductor industry, honoring top performing companies and leaders, with members representing 70% of the \$550B+ semiconductor industry.
- The company remains committed to world-class support, enabling customers to quickly and easily unleash their innovation and create a smart, secure, and connected world.

HSL Triumphs at 3rd PSU Transformation Awards 2024

Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) has emerged victorious at the 3rd PSU Transformation Awards 2024, showcasing its commitment to innovation, efficiency, and excellence in public sector undertakings. This accolade recognizes HSL's significant strides in modernization and its efforts to align with global standards in shipbuilding and repair. The award reflects HSL's transformative journey and its pivotal role in strengthening India's maritime and defense capabilities.

Foot notes:

- Transformation Initiatives: HSL has undertaken various initiatives to transform its operations, including modernization of infrastructure, adoption of new technologies, and enhancement of its workforce skills.
- Improved Efficiency: The shipyard has achieved significant improvements in efficiency, productivity, and quality, enabling it to deliver projects on time and within budget.
- Diversification of Services: HSL has diversified its services to include shipbuilding, ship repair, and offshore platform construction, making it a one-stop solution for maritime needs.
- Innovation and R&D: The company has established a strong focus on innovation and R&D, developing new technologies and processes to stay ahead of the competition.
- Awards and Recognition: This award is a recognition of HSL's efforts to transform itself into a world-class shipyard, and it reinforces the company's commitment to excellence.
- Future Plans: With this award, HSL is poised to take its transformation journey to the next level, exploring new opportunities and expanding its presence in the global maritime industry.

Shaji N Karun Wins JC Daniel Award 2023

Renowned filmmaker Shaji N. Karun has been honored with the 2023 J.C. Daniel Award, the highest recognition in Malayalam cinema. This lifetime achievement award acknowledges his significant contributions to the industry, including works that have garnered national and international acclaim. The award includes a cash prize of 5 lakh, a citation, and a statuette. Known for films like Kutty Srank, which won Best Feature Film in 2010, Karun has played a pivotal role in the new wave of Malayalam cinema.

Foot notes:

- The JC Daniel Award 2023 includes a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, and a statuette.
- The jury, chaired by TV Chandran, praised Shaji for infusing creative energy into new-wave Malayalam cinema, a movement that redefined the way Malayalam films were perceived globally.
- Shaji's films have earned international acclaim, showcasing Malayalam cinema on the global stage. His films, such as 'Piravi', 'Swam', and 'Vanaprastham', have been screened at over 70 international film festivals, including Cannes.
- Shaji has won seven National Film Awards and seven State Film Awards for his contributions to Malayalam cinema. He was also awarded the Padma Shri by the Union Government and 'The Order of Arts and Letters' by the French government.
- Shaji was the founding chairman of the Kerala State Chalachithra Academy and currently serves as the chairman of the Kerala State Film Development Corporation (KSFD).
- Shaji N Karun's work has had a significant impact on Malayalam cinema, and this award is a testament to his immense influence on the industry, both in India and internationally.

Lt Gen KJS Dhillon Won Crossword Books Award

Lieutenant General (Retired) K.J.S. Dhillon, also known as "Tiny" Dhillon, has won the Crossword Book Award in the Best Non-Fiction category for his memoir, Kitne Ghazi Aaye Kitne Ghazi Gaye. The award ceremony took place in Mumbai, where the honor was presented by journalist Bachi Karkaria. The book offers a detailed account of Dhillon's experiences, from his childhood to his tenure as the Commander of the Chinar Corps in Kashmir. This recognition highlights the memoir's compelling narrative and Dhillon's contributions to India's defense and leadership.

Foot notes:

- The Crossword Books Award is one of the most respected literary awards in India, recognizing excellence in writing across various genres.
- "Operation Khukri" is a gripping narrative that recounts the true story of the Indian Army's daring mission to rescue over 1,000 Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) soldiers who were trapped in Sierra Leone in 2000.
- Lt Gen KJS Dhillon is a highly decorated military officer with over 35 years of service. He has commanded various units and formations, including the IPKF, and has been involved in several counter-terrorism operations.

- The Crossword Books Award is a testament to Lt Gen Dhillon's exceptional writing skills and his ability to tell a compelling story that showcases the bravery and sacrifice of Indian soldiers.
- "Operation Khukri" has received widespread critical acclaim for its authentic and engaging portrayal of military operations. The book has been praised for its attention to detail and its ability to convey the complexities of modern warfare.

Ang Lee to Receive DGA Lifetime Achievement Award

Acclaimed filmmaker Ang Lee will receive the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing his extraordinary contributions to cinema. Known for his diverse and groundbreaking films like *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Life of Pi* and *Brokeback Mountain*, Lee has consistently pushed the boundaries of storytelling and visual artistry. This prestigious honor celebrates his ability to blend cultural narratives with universal themes, inspiring filmmakers worldwide. As a two-time Academy Award-winning director, Lee's work has set new standards for innovation and emotional depth in filmmaking. The DGA Lifetime Achievement Award underscores his enduring impact on the art of cinema.

Foot notes:

- Ang Lee's impressive filmography showcases his versatility and innovative storytelling, with notable works including:
- *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) - a martial arts film that won him a DGA Award
- *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) - a romantic drama that earned him an Academy Award for Best Director
- *Life of Pi* (2012) - a fantasy adventure film that won him another Academy Award for Best Director
- The DGA President, Lesli Linka Glatter, praised Lee's dynamic body of work, saying, "Ang Lee is truly a master filmmaker."
- Lee has also received other notable awards, including the BAFTA Fellowship in 2021 and the Praemium Imperiale in 2024, making him the first Taiwanese recipient of the latter award.

ESIC Wins 4 Awards at Asia-Pacific Social Security Forum

The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) received one Certificate of Merit with Special Mention for its mobile application (Ask An Appointment - AAA+) and three Certificates of Merit in the categories of Occupational Accident and Disease, Sustainable Investment, and System Resilience at the Regional Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific (RSSF Asia-Pacific). The forum, organized by the International Social Security Association (ISSA), took place in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on December 3, 2024. Shri Ashok Kumar Singh, Director General of ESIC, received the awards on behalf of the corporation.

Foot notes:

- Recognition at RSSF Asia-Pacific: ESIC received four prestigious awards at the Regional Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific (RSSF Asia-Pacific) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. These included one Certificate of Merit with Special Mention for the "Ask An Appointment - AAA+" mobile app and three Certificates of Merit in categories such as Occupational Accident and Disease, Sustainable Investment and System Resilience.
- Acknowledgement for Excellence: The awards were presented for ESIC's outstanding service delivery in various social security benefits, highlighting its commitment to innovation, efficiency, and social inclusion in healthcare and social security services for India's working population.
- Impact on ESIC's Global Reputation: This recognition boosts ESIC's international standing and reinforces its commitment to sharing best practices and improving the global effectiveness of social security systems.
- AAA+ Mobile App Features: Available on Android and iOS, the app serves insured persons, beneficiaries, staff, and ESI pensioners, offering access in eight languages, including English, Hindi, and six regional languages.
- ISSA, founded in 1927 under the ILO, is the global leader in social security systems, connecting institutions, government departments, and professionals.

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TG Transco bags award for best State Load Dispatch Centre

Telangana State Transmission Corporation (TG Transco) has won the prestigious award for the Best State Load Dispatch Centre, recognizing its excellence in managing power grid operations. The award highlights TG Transco's efficient real-time monitoring, load balancing, and seamless integration of renewable energy sources. This achievement underscores the organization's commitment to ensuring uninterrupted power supply and maintaining grid stability. TG Transco's innovative practices and adoption of advanced technology have set a benchmark in the power sector across India.

Foot notes:

- The award was given in the category of Best State Load Dispatch Centre, which recognizes the SLDC's efforts in ensuring reliable and efficient power supply to the state.
- The award was judged based on various parameters such as grid stability, peak demand management, and renewable energy integration.

- The State Load Dispatch Centre plays a crucial role in managing the power grid, ensuring that supply meets demand, and maintaining grid stability.
- TG Transco has made significant strides in improving the power infrastructure in Telangana, including the establishment of a state-of-the-art SLDC.
- The award is a recognition of TG Transco's efforts in providing reliable and efficient power supply to the state, and its commitment to excellence in power transmission and distribution.

Suraj Prakash Vaid Honored with Cheistha Kochhar Good Samaritan Award

Suraj Prakash Vaid has been honored with the prestigious Cheistha Kochhar Good Samaritan Award for his outstanding contributions to society. Known for his selfless service and dedication, Vaid has worked tirelessly to uplift underprivileged communities and promote social welfare. His initiatives have had a significant impact, inspiring others to engage in acts of kindness and compassion. The award recognizes individuals who exemplify humanitarian values and make a meaningful difference in people's lives. Suraj Prakash Vaid's recognition highlights his role as a true beacon of hope and positivity in society.

Foot notes:

- Vaid has been helping road accident victims in Delhi for over 35 years, rushing them to hospitals and providing support during their time of need.
- Going Above and Beyond: He not only saves lives but also completes legal processes, such as registering accident cases and appearing in court as an eyewitness, and safeguards victims' valuables until their next of kin arrives.
- The award is a tribute to Cheistha Kochhar's life, who was a young and dynamic student who lost her life in a tragic accident in London on March 19th, 2024.
- Vaid's presence has inspired many, showcasing the impact of a good Samaritan in society, and he hopes others will follow in his footsteps to create a better society.
- The Cheistha Kochhar Good Samaritan Award honors exceptional societal contributions and includes financial support, resources and a platform for sharing initiatives.
- Vaid feels proud to receive this prestigious award and is humbled by the recognition of his selfless service to society.

Brazilian Vinicius Jr wins FIFA Best Male Awards 2024

Brazilian football sensation Vinicius Jr. has been awarded the FIFA Best Men's Player Award 2024, recognizing his exceptional performances over the year. The Real Madrid star showcased incredible skill, speed, and goal-scoring prowess, becoming a pivotal player for both his club and the Brazilian national team. His contributions include decisive goals in critical matches and consistent displays of flair and creativity on the field. Vinicius Jr.'s win marks a significant achievement, celebrating his rise as one of the most influential players in world football. This accolade cements his status as a global icon and an inspiration for young footballers.

Foot notes:

- Vinicius Jr's impressive performance earned him the top spot, with 32 goals for his club across the calendar year.
- The ceremony took place in Doha, Qatar, where Vinicius Jr was in attendance, as Real Madrid prepares for the FIFA Intercontinental Cup final against Pachuca.
- Aitana Bonmati won the Women's Player of the Year award for the second consecutive time, while Carlo Ancelotti took home the Best Men's Coach award.
- Alejandro Garnacho won the Puskas Award for his stunning overhead kick against Everton in the Premier League.
- Marta won the inaugural Marta Award for the best goal in women's football, taking the prize named in her honor for her goal against Jamaica.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw Wins Jamsetji Tata Award for Biosciences Leadership

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, the Executive Chairperson of Biocon, has been honored with the prestigious Jamsetji Tata Award for Biosciences Leadership. This accolade recognizes her pioneering contributions to biotechnology and her role in transforming India's biopharmaceutical industry. Under her leadership, Biocon has achieved groundbreaking advancements in affordable healthcare solutions, particularly in the fields of diabetes, oncology, and immunology. The award celebrates her visionary leadership and commitment to fostering innovation in biosciences. Mazumdar-Shaw's achievement underscores her enduring impact on global healthcare and her dedication to societal well-being.

Foot notes:

- The Jamsetji Tata Award was presented to Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw on December 14, 2024, in Bengaluru, Karnataka, during the ISQ Annual Conference 2024.¹
- The Indian Society for Quality recognized Mazumdar-Shaw's achievements, stating that she has been a pioneer in the bioscience movement in India since 1978 and has established Biocon Limited and associated companies to serve customers globally.
- The Jamsetji Tata Award has previously been presented to notable industry leaders, including Nandan Nilekani, Co-Founder of Infosys, and T.V. Narendran, CEO of Tata Steel.
- Mazumdar-Shaw is a pioneering biotech entrepreneur and founder of Biocon, a global biopharmaceuticals enterprise. She has received numerous awards, including the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan, and has been recognized as a leading woman in science and a global role model.
- Under Mazumdar-Shaw's leadership, Biocon has become a leading player in the global biopharmaceutical industry, with a strong commitment to quality and innovation.

Aitana Bonmati won Best FIFA Women's Player 2024 award

Spain's Aitana Bonmatí has been named the Best FIFA Women's Player for 2024, cementing her status as one of the world's top footballers. Bonmatí, a key player for both FC Barcelona

and the Spanish national team, had an exceptional year, showcasing her skill, vision, and leadership on the field. She played a pivotal role in Spain's FIFA Women's World Cup 2024 triumph and helped Barcelona secure multiple titles. This prestigious award recognizes her outstanding contributions to the sport and her influence as a role model for aspiring footballers worldwide. Bonmatí's win highlights her remarkable achievements and impact in women's football.

Foot notes:

- Bonmati's back-to-back wins are a testament to her consistency and dedication to the sport.
- Bonmati emphasized that her award is a team effort, thanking her teammates, coaches, and family for their support.
- Bonmati's victory is a reflection of Barcelona's dominance in women's football, with the team winning multiple titles in 2024.
- Bonmati's win is a proud moment for Spanish football, with her achievement being recognized globally.
- Bonmati's success will undoubtedly inspire young female footballers around the world to pursue their dreams.
- Bonmati was also named to The Best FIFA Women's 11, alongside other top players in the world, including Alyssa Naeher, Irene Paredes, and Caroline Graham Hansen.

Tom Cruise actor recently been honored with the 'Civilian Award' by the US Navy

Hollywood superstar Tom Cruise has recently been honored with a prestigious 'Civilian Award' by the US Navy, recognizing his significant contributions to the military community. Cruise, known for his iconic portrayal of a naval aviator in the Top Gun film series, has been credited with inspiring a new generation to appreciate the Navy's service and sacrifice. The award acknowledges his efforts in promoting the Navy's values and fostering a greater understanding of its role through his work in cinema. Cruise expressed his gratitude for the honor, emphasizing his admiration for the bravery and dedication of the armed forces. This accolade further solidifies his unique connection with the military, both on and off screen.

Foot notes:

- The award was presented to Cruise by US Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro in a ceremony at Longcross Studios near London.
- The actor expressed his pride in receiving the "extraordinary acknowledgement" and emphasized that "to lead is to serve," highlighting his admiration for servicemen and women.
- The US Navy recognized Cruise for increasing public awareness and appreciation for the highly trained personnel and the sacrifices they make while in uniform.
- The original 1986 movie "Top Gun" drove a spike in military enlistment, and the 2022 sequel "Top Gun: Maverick" reinvigorated interest in the Navy among younger audiences.

- Cruise was also commended for his roles in "Born on the Fourth of July," "A Few Good Men," and "Mission: Impossible" movies.
- Cruise has several projects lined up, including "Mission: Impossible: The Final Reckoning," "Judy," and an untitled SpaceX project aiming to film in outer space.

Naga writer Easterine Kire's "Spirit Nights" won Sahitya Akademi Award 2024

Naga writer Easterine Kire's book *Spirit Nights* has won the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Award 2024. The novel, which delves into the complexities of Naga identity, culture, and history, explores the deep emotional and social landscapes of the region. Kire, a celebrated author known for her contributions to Naga literature, has garnered widespread recognition for her ability to weave traditional narratives with contemporary concerns. *Spirit Nights* is lauded for its evocative storytelling and its portrayal of the resilience and struggles of indigenous communities. This honor further solidifies Kire's place as a significant voice in Indian literature.

Foot notes:

- The Sahitya Akademi Awards are among India's most prestigious literary honors, recognizing outstanding works in 21 Indian languages.
- The Jury unanimously selected "Spirit Nights" for the award, a testament to the novel's literary merit.
- Easterine Kire is a renowned Naga writer, and her novel "Spirit Nights" contributes significantly to the literary landscape of India.
- Kire will receive a cash prize of 1 lakh, a copper plaque, and a shawl at the award ceremony on March 8, 2025.
- The Sahitya Akademi Awards have been conferred upon many notable writers, including Gagan Gill, who won the award for her Hindi poetry collection "Main Jab Tak Aai Bahar".
- The Sahitya Akademi Awards play a vital role in promoting Indian literature and encouraging writers to produce outstanding works.

Madhav Gadgil Honored with UNEP's Lifetime Achievement Award 2024

Renowned Indian ecologist and environmentalist Madhav Gadgil has been awarded the UNEP's Lifetime Achievement Award 2024. Recognized for his groundbreaking contributions to environmental conservation, Gadgil is celebrated as the architect of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (WGEEP) report. His work has been pivotal in promoting sustainable development and preserving biodiversity in India. The UNEP highlighted his unwavering commitment to balancing ecological preservation with human development needs. This prestigious honor underscores Gadgil's enduring legacy in advocating for a harmonious relationship between nature and society.

Foot notes:

- Gadgil has had a illustrious career spanning six decades, with numerous contributions to environmental conservation and sustainability.
- His landmark work, known as the Gadgil Report, highlighted the importance of protecting India's ecologically sensitive Western Ghats mountain range.
- Gadgil has been a strong advocate for community-led conservation efforts, working closely with forest dwellers, farmers, and fishing communities to promote sustainable development.
- This Lifetime Achievement Award is not Gadgil's first recognition; he has also received India's highest civilian honors, including the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan awards.
- Gadgil continues to inspire future generations, mentoring village youths about their community forest rights and helping them understand their surrounding ecosystems.

PM Modi Honoured With Kuwait's Top Civilian Award

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been honored with Kuwait's highest civilian award in recognition of his contributions to strengthening bilateral relations. This prestigious honor highlights Modi's role in fostering deeper diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties between India and Kuwait. The award reflects the respect and admiration Modi has garnered on the global stage. His leadership has been instrumental in enhancing India's international stature, particularly in the Middle East. The recognition further solidifies the enduring friendship between India and Kuwait.

Foot notes:

- This is Kuwait's highest knighthood order, conferred upon Heads of State, foreign sovereigns, and members of royal families as a gesture of friendship and goodwill.
- Notable recipients of this award include Bill Clinton, Prince Charles, and George Bush.
- PM Modi's Visit to Kuwait: During his two-day official visit to Kuwait, PM Modi held bilateral discussions with the Amir of Kuwait, the Crown Prince, and the Prime Minister of Kuwait.
- This honor underscores the strong diplomatic ties between India and Kuwait and recognizes PM Modi's efforts in strengthening bilateral relations.
- He dedicated this honor to the people of India and the enduring friendship between the two nations.
- This award is a testament to PM Modi's growing global recognition, with previous international honors including the Order of King Abdulaziz from Saudi Arabia and the Legion of Merit from the United States.

Dr. Vishakha Tripathi Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Vishakha Tripathi has been honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of her exceptional contributions to her field. With a distinguished career marked by significant achievements, Dr. Tripathi has made a lasting impact through her dedication, expertise, and

leadership. This prestigious award celebrates her outstanding work and the influence she has had on her industry and community.

Foot notes:

- The award acknowledges Dr. Tripathi's lifelong dedication to compassion, philanthropy, and selfless service, which has left a lasting impact on society.
- As the leader of Jagadguru Kripalu Parishat (JKP), Dr. Tripathi oversaw various initiatives, including providing free medical care to nearly 500,000 people annually and educating over 60,000 girls.
- She spearheaded charitable initiatives, distributing essential supplies to underprivileged individuals and ensuring dignity and safety for women through the construction of hundreds of toilets in Pratapgarh.
- Dr. Tripathi demonstrated exemplary leadership during times of crisis, coordinating relief efforts during the flooding in Vrindavan and contributing to the PM CARES Fund during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The APVS recognized Dr. Tripathi's monumental contributions, stating that her life continues to inspire those striving to create a better world.

Goa's Manohar International Airport bags "Best Domestic Airport" award

Goa's Manohar International Airport has been honored with the prestigious "Best Domestic Airport" award. This recognition highlights the airport's exceptional service quality, modern infrastructure, and seamless passenger experience. Since its inception, the airport has set new benchmarks in operational efficiency and customer satisfaction. The award underscores its significant contribution to enhancing domestic travel and promoting Goa as a premier travel destination. This achievement reinforces the airport's reputation as a leader in India's aviation sector.

Foot notes:

- Manohar International Airport in Goa has been awarded the prestigious "Best Domestic Airport" award, recognizing its excellence in airport operations and customer service.
- Airports Authority of India (AAI) Recognition: The award was given by the Airports Authority of India (AAI), which is responsible for the development and management of airports in India.
- Excellence in Operations: The airport was recognized for its excellence in operations, including its efficient handling of passengers, baggage, and cargo, as well as its adherence to safety and security protocols.
- World-Class Facilities: Manohar International Airport has undergone significant modernization and expansion in recent years, with the addition of world-class facilities such as a new terminal building, improved air traffic control systems, and enhanced security features.
- Boost to Tourism: The award is expected to give a boost to tourism in Goa, which is already a popular destination for domestic and international travelers. The airport's

recognition as the best domestic airport in India will help to increase confidence among travelers and attract more visitors to the state.

- Competition from Other Airports: Manohar International Airport competed with other major domestic airports in India, including those in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad, to win the award. The recognition is a testament to the airport's commitment to providing high-quality services and facilities to its passengers.

Tata Power-DDL recognised with the North India Best Employer Brand Award 2024

Tata Power-DDL has been honored with the prestigious North India Best Employer Brand Award 2024. This recognition celebrates the company's exemplary efforts in fostering a positive and inclusive workplace culture. Known for its innovative HR practices and employee-centric initiatives, Tata Power-DDL has consistently demonstrated its commitment to nurturing talent and promoting professional growth. The award underscores the organization's leadership in setting benchmarks for employer excellence in the region. With this achievement, Tata Power-DDL reaffirms its reputation as one of North India's most sought-after employers.

Foot notes:

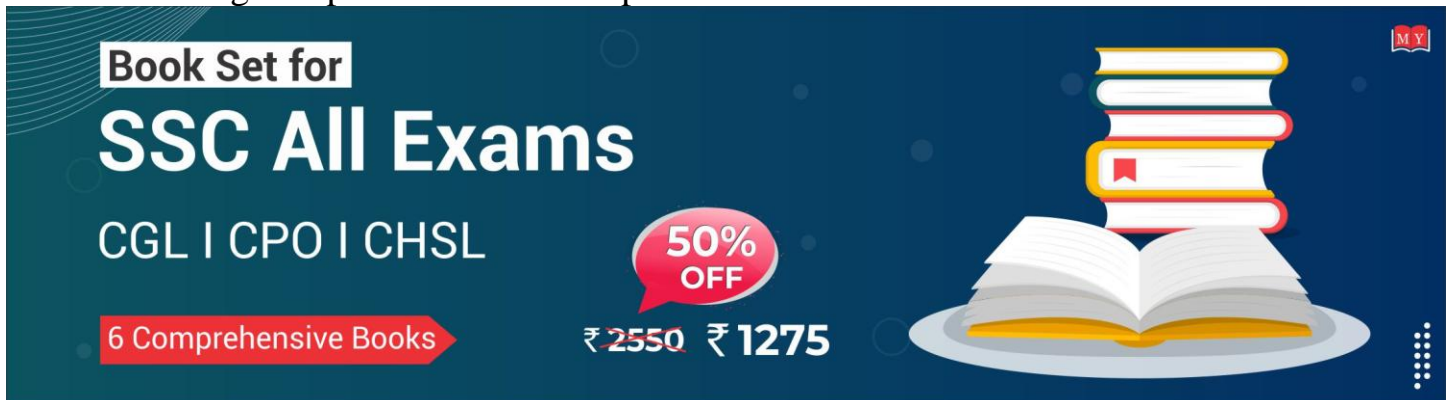
- Tata Power-DDL's HR practices have been recognized for their excellence, demonstrating the company's dedication to creating a positive work environment.¹
- The company's employee-centric approach has led to high employee satisfaction and engagement, making it an attractive employer in the region.
- This award is a recognition of Tata Power-DDL's efforts to create a workplace culture that fosters growth, innovation, and collaboration.
- The Best Employer Brand Award will help Tata Power-DDL attract and retain top talent in the industry, further strengthening its position as a leader in the power distribution sector.
- This award reinforces Tata Power-DDL's commitment to excellence in all aspects of its operations, including employee engagement and development.
- Tata Power-DDL's achievement will inspire other organizations to strive for excellence in their HR practices, contributing to a more positive and productive work environment across the industry.

Liberty General Insurance Won 'Prompt Insurer' Award

Liberty General Insurance has been honored with the prestigious 'Prompt Insurer' Award, recognizing its excellence in delivering timely and efficient services. This accolade highlights the company's commitment to customer satisfaction and its dedication to setting high industry standards. Known for its quick response and seamless claim settlements, Liberty General Insurance continues to strengthen its reputation as a trusted and reliable insurer. The award serves as a testament to the organization's consistent efforts to prioritize customer needs. With this achievement, the company reaffirms its position as a leader in the insurance sector.

Foot notes:

- **Recognition of Excellence:** Liberty General Insurance has been recognized for its exceptional service and prompt claim settlement, earning it the prestigious 'Prompt Insurer' Award.
- **Commitment to Customer Satisfaction:** This award is a testament to Liberty General Insurance's commitment to providing top-notch service and ensuring customer satisfaction through prompt and efficient claim settlement.
- **Industry Benchmark:** The 'Prompt Insurer' Award sets a benchmark for the insurance industry, highlighting the importance of timely claim settlement and customer-centric service.
- **Enhanced Customer Trust:** Winning this award enhances customer trust and confidence in Liberty General Insurance, reinforcing its reputation as a reliable and responsive insurer.
- **Differentiation in the Market:** The 'Prompt Insurer' Award differentiates Liberty General Insurance in a competitive market, showcasing its unique value proposition and commitment to excellence.
- **Motivation for Continued Excellence:** This award serves as a motivation for Liberty General Insurance to continue striving for excellence, innovating its services, and delivering exceptional customer experiences.



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Kartik Aaryan Won Best Actor of the Year Award

Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan has been honored with the prestigious Best Actor of the Year award for his outstanding performance in a leading role. Known for his versatility and charm, Kartik delivered a remarkable performance that resonated with both critics and audiences alike. This recognition marks a significant milestone in his career, further solidifying his position as one of the top actors in the industry.

Foot notes:

- Kartik Aaryan won the Performer of the Year award for his role in "Satyaprem Ki Katha" at the Zee Cine Awards 2024.
- He received the Best Actor award for his performance in "Satyaprem Ki Katha" at the Bollywood Life Awards 2024.
- Aaryan was nominated for the Best Actor in a Leading Role - Male award for his role in "Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2" at the IIFA Awards 2023.

- Kartik Aaryan has also won several other awards, including the Stardust Award for Best Actor In A Comic Role for "Pyaar Ka Punchnama 2" and the Lions Gold Award for Best Actor Critics for "Dhamaka".

Tamil Nadu wins FICCI award for best state promoting sports

Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin met Chief Minister M.K. Stalin at the Secretariat on Wednesday to present the 'Best State Promoting Sports' award, which Tamil Nadu received at the FICCI Turf 2024 14th International Sports Meet in New Delhi. The award recognizes Tamil Nadu's efforts in promoting sports through initiatives such as providing incentives worth 104.22 crore to 3,345 medal-winning sportspersons, a scheme introduced by the DMK government after assuming office.

Foot notes:

- Award Recognition: Tamil Nadu was honored with the 'Best State Promoting Sports' award at the FICCI Turf 2024 14th International Sports Meet in New Delhi.
- 104.22 crore disbursed as incentives to 3,345 medal-winning sportspersons.
- 13.33 crore allocated through the Tamil Nadu Champions Foundation to 585 sportspersons for purchasing kits and equipment.
- Kalaigiar Sports Kits Initiative: Distributed sports equipment to 12,525 village panchayats.
- Sporting Events: The State hosted a series of sports events, showcasing its commitment to promoting athletic excellence.
- Award Ceremony: Atulya Misra, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Youth Welfare and Sports Development, and J. Meghanatha Reddy, Member Secretary, Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu, received the award on November 30 in New Delhi.

About Tamil Nadu:

Capital: Chennai

Chief Minister: M K Stalin

Governor: R. N. Ravi

IMPORTANT DAYS NEWS

World Computer Literacy Day is observed on 2nd December

World Computer Literacy Day is observed annually by the National Institute of Information Technology (NIIT) to commemorate the company's 20th anniversary. The day aims to promote computer literacy, particularly among women and children. As computers play an increasingly crucial role in future work environments due to their technological contributions, Computer Literacy Day 2024 serves as a reminder that many people still lack basic computer skills. The

day focuses on connecting women and children with technology, fostering an environment conducive to new innovations.

Foot notes:

World Computer Literacy Day was launched in 2001 by NIIT to celebrate its 20th anniversary.

- NIIT (National Institute of Information Technology) was founded in 1981 by Rajendra Singh Pawar and Vijay K. Thadani.
- Since its establishment in 1981, NIIT has expanded its reach to over 30 countries worldwide.
- World Computer Literacy Day celebrates the transformative impact of computers and technology on the world.
- For World Computer Literacy Day 2024, consider donating to charities to help increase access to computers and enhance computer literacy skills.
- Encourage using computers for more than just gaming or email—celebrate the day by putting them to productive use.
- Celebrate by posting on social media with the hashtag #computerliteracyday to raise awareness about the importance of computer literacy.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed on 3rd December

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD), observed every year on December 3, honors the resilience, contributions, and leadership of persons with disabilities (PwDs) around the world. It serves as a reminder of the global commitment to fostering inclusivity, advocating for PwD rights, and creating equitable opportunities for all. This year's theme, “Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future,” highlights these efforts. To address policy issues and enhance the welfare and empowerment of PwDs, the Department of Disability Affairs was established on May 12, 2012, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. It was later renamed the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on December 8, 2014.

Foot notes:

- **Focus:** Ensure equal opportunities, social justice, and empowerment of PwDs, and support the implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- Assistance to Persons with Disabilities for Purchase/Fitting of Aids/Appliances (ADIP) Scheme:
- **Objective:** Provide grants-in-aid to implementing agencies to assist PwDs in acquiring durable, scientifically manufactured aids and appliances.
- **Goal:** Enhance physical, social, and psychological rehabilitation and improve economic potential by reducing the effects of disabilities.
- Schemes for Implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 (SIPDA):
- **Purpose:** A comprehensive Central Sector Scheme to implement the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

- Structure: Includes 10 sub-schemes, revised in August 2021 for operation from 2021–22 to 2025–26.

Indian Navy Day observed on 4th December

Indian Navy Day, observed every year on December 4, honors the courage, achievements, and steadfast commitment of the Indian Navy in protecting the nation's maritime boundaries. It also marks the success of Operation Trident during the 1971 IndoPak War, a key event in India's military history. Indian Navy Day is more than just a ceremonial occasion; it serves as a tribute to the brave personnel of the Indian Navy who tirelessly safeguard the country's maritime sovereignty. The day recognizes their sacrifices and celebrates their exceptional skills in ensuring security across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Foot notes:

- Indian Navy Day is not just a ceremonial event. It honours the brave personnel of the Indian Navy who defend the nation's maritime sovereignty, acknowledging their sacrifices and exceptional skills in securing the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- India's Maritime Assets: Coastline is over 7,500 kilometers, Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): Spans more than 2 million square kilometres, the Indian Navy plays a key role in protecting these vast assets, reinforcing India's position as a major regional power.
- History Behind Indian Navy Day: The origins trace back to Operation Trident during the 1971 IndoPak War. On the night of December 4, 1971, the Indian Navy, led by Commodore Kasargod Pattanashetti Gopal Rao, launched a missile attack on Pakistan's Naval Headquarters in Karachi, crippling Pakistan's maritime capabilities.
- Key Highlights of Operation Trident: Use of missile boats: INS Veer, INS Nipat, INS Nirghat. Sinking of three Pakistani ships, including PNS Khaibar. Minimal Indian casualties. Significant damage to Pakistan's naval infrastructure.
- Theme: "Strength and Capability through Innovation and Indigenization" – highlighting the Navy's focus on achieving selfreliance in defense technologies, aligning with India's vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat (SelfReliant India) for enhanced maritime security and operational efficiency.

International Volunteer Day is observed on 5th December

The United Nations (UN) observes International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development on December 5 each year. Also known as International Volunteer Day (IVD), this occasion offers a platform for volunteers worldwide to unite and showcase their vital contributions to social and economic development. It serves as a reminder of the transformative impact of volunteerism in tackling global challenges and promoting sustainable progress at local, national, and international levels.

Foot notes:

- Most evident during challenging times such as combating climate change, addressing conflicts, and tackling social injustices.
- Volunteers are often the first responders, demonstrating unmatched courage, dedication, and selflessness.
- Volunteers enrich communities by promoting a culture of service and strengthening intergenerational bonds.
- They contribute to progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Volunteerism bridges gaps, fosters understanding, and empowers individuals to take charge of their own development.
- Described as an intergenerational cycle, where each generation contributes to and learns from the collective effort.
- 1985: The UN General Assembly established International Volunteer Day on December 17, 1985 (Resolution 40/212), encouraging governments worldwide to observe it annually on December 5.
- The goal was to raise awareness of volunteer service and inspire greater participation.

All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Day observed on 6th December

All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Day is observed annually on December 6 to honor the dedication and contributions of the Home Guards and Civil Defence organizations. The day also commemorates the establishment of the Home Guard force, which was first formed on December 6, 1946, in the Bombay Province as a voluntary citizen force to support the police in maintaining law and order. Over time, the force has grown into a vital auxiliary unit, playing a crucial role in responding to crises, natural disasters, and emergencies. The Home Guards concept originated in pre-independence India to create a voluntary force that could assist the police during civil unrest and communal tensions.

Foot notes:

- The initiative began in the Bombay Province, which became the first to establish the force, later serving as a model adopted by other states.
- Following the 1962 Chinese aggression, the central government emphasized the need for a unified voluntary force.
- States and Union Territories were advised to merge their voluntary organizations into a uniform structure.
- The Home Guards were formally established under the Home Guards Act and Rules, which differ by state and Union Territory.
- Maintain essential services, promote communal harmony, and protect vulnerable groups.
- Participate in socio-economic welfare initiatives.
- Engage in border patrolling, anti-dacoity operations, crime prevention, election duties, and prohibition enforcement.

International Civil Aviation Day observed on 7th December

International Civil Aviation Day (ICAD) is observed annually on December 7 to recognize the significant role of civil aviation in global development. Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1996, the day emphasizes the crucial contribution of aviation to economic growth, cultural exchange, and worldwide connectivity. ICAD was first celebrated in 1994 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Chicago Convention, a pivotal agreement that established international aviation standards.

Foot notes:

- **Promote Aviation's Role:** Recognize aviation's critical role in global trade, tourism, and cultural exchange.
- **Highlight Sustainability:** Emphasize efforts to minimize aviation's environmental impact, aiming for net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- **Encourage Innovation:** Inspire advancements in aviation technology, safety, and operational efficiency.
- **Foster Global Cooperation:** Strengthen international partnerships to establish unified aviation standards and practices.
- **Acknowledge Contributions:** Appreciate the dedication of aviation professionals, including pilots, engineers, air traffic controllers, and regulatory authorities.

International Anti-Corruption Day observed on 9th December

International Anti-Corruption Day is observed annually on December 9 to highlight the harmful effects of corruption and promote the values of transparency, accountability, and integrity in governance and society. The day serves as a global call to action, encouraging individuals, governments, and organizations to work together to combat corruption and its widespread consequences.

Foot notes:

- Corruption weakens democratic institutions, slows economic growth, and erodes public trust. This day focuses on advancing transparency and holding governments accountable to their citizens.
- The day highlights the critical role of young people in shaping a corruption-free future, encouraging them to advocate for integrity, justice, and accountability in governance and society.
- By emphasizing the need for strict legal frameworks, the day aims to improve governance structures and address corruption-related challenges effectively.
- Corruption disrupts economic progress, undermines societal peace, and increases inequality. This observance connects anti-corruption efforts with security, social harmony, and sustainable development.

- It fosters international collaboration, uniting countries in their shared commitment to combat corruption and unethical practices.

International Human Rights Day celebrated on 10 December

World Human Rights Day, celebrated annually on December 10, serves as a powerful reminder of the global commitment to equality, freedom, and human dignity. This day highlights the importance of human rights, which are fundamental to a just and fair society. Human rights act as a preventative, protective, and transformative force for good, ensuring that people everywhere can live with respect and dignity. On this day, individuals, communities, and nations unite to reaffirm their dedication to creating a better, more equitable future.

Foot notes:

- On December 10, 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the UDHR, a historic milestone in the pursuit of global justice and equality. It was the first global enunciation of human rights, outlining the fundamental rights and freedoms to which all individuals are entitled, regardless of race, religion, gender, or nationality.
- World Human Rights Day is not just a commemoration but also a call to action for nations, organizations, and individuals to prioritize the protection and promotion of human rights.
- The day underscores the importance of tackling discrimination, oppression, and inequality. It serves as both a reminder of the ongoing struggles and a celebration of the progress made in defending human rights.
- World Human Rights Day recognizes the relentless work of activists, organizations, and governments in protecting the rights of individuals. It also serves to encourage further participation in the global fight for fairness.
- Theme: The theme for this year's observance is: "Our rights, our future, right now." This emphasizes the urgency of securing human rights for all, today, as the foundation for a just and equal future.

UNICEF day celebrated on 11th December

The UNICEF Foundation Day commemorates the establishment of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and its vital role in protecting the rights and well-being of children globally. In 2024, this observance holds special importance as the world celebrates 78 years of UNICEF's unwavering commitment to enhancing children's lives. Initially created to address the urgent needs of children in countries ravaged by World War II, its primary mission was to provide emergency assistance, focusing on nutrition and healthcare for war-affected children and mothers across Europe and China.

Foot notes:

- Advocacy for Children's Rights: UNICEF has consistently championed the protection of children's rights, ensuring they are safeguarded from exploitation, abuse, and violence, while promoting equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their background.

- **Focus on Health and Nutrition:** A core goal of UNICEF is improving child health and nutrition. Through initiatives addressing malnutrition and providing vaccines against deadly diseases, UNICEF has impacted millions of children, significantly lowering mortality rates and improving overall health outcomes.
- **Education for All:** UNICEF is dedicated to ensuring children in marginalized communities have access to quality education. Its programs aim to reduce the education gap between privileged and underprivileged children, promoting inclusive learning environments.
- **Protection from Exploitation:** UNICEF continues to fight against child labor, trafficking, and exploitation. Its global campaigns advocate for stronger policies and legal frameworks to protect children from various forms of harm.
- **Global Collaboration:** UNICEF Foundation Day emphasizes the importance of global cooperation in addressing children's challenges. Partnerships with governments, NGOs, and local communities ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to meeting the needs of children worldwide.



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National Energy Conservation Day is observed on 14th December

National Energy Conservation Day is observed annually on 14th December in India. Initiated by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power, this day aims to raise awareness about the importance of energy conservation and the need to adopt sustainable practices. Various campaigns and programs are organized nationwide to educate individuals, industries, and organizations about efficient energy use. The day also celebrates advancements in renewable energy and innovative energy-saving technologies. Awards and recognition are given to institutions and individuals contributing significantly to energy efficiency and conservation.

Foot notes:

- The main objective of National Energy Conservation Day is to promote energy conservation and efficient use of energy resources among the public, industries, and other stakeholders.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) initiated National Energy Conservation Day in 2001 to commemorate the Energy Conservation Act, 2001, which was enacted by the

Government of India to promote energy conservation and efficient use of energy resources.

- Each year, a theme is chosen to focus on specific energy conservation issues, such as "Energy Efficiency: A Roadmap for Carbon Neutrality" or "Energy Conservation for a Sustainable Future".
- Various activities are organized on National Energy Conservation Day, including seminars, workshops, exhibitions, and awareness campaigns to educate the public about the importance of energy conservation and promote energy-efficient practices.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency also presents National Energy Conservation Awards to recognize and reward industries, institutions, and individuals who have made significant contributions to energy conservation and efficient use of energy resources.

International Human Solidarity Day observed on December 20th

International Human Solidarity Day is observed annually on December 20th to promote the importance of unity in achieving shared goals, especially in the context of social and economic development. It serves as a reminder of the global need for cooperation to address issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental challenges. The day also highlights the role of solidarity in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It encourages individuals, organizations, and governments to work together to support vulnerable populations and foster inclusive societies. The celebration of solidarity on this day underscores the collective responsibility to contribute to a better and more equitable world for all.

Foot notes:

- Celebrating Unity in Diversity: Emphasize the importance of cultural and ideological diversity in achieving shared global objectives.
- Encouraging Government Accountability: Remind nations to honor international agreements aimed at reducing inequality and promoting sustainable development.
- Raising Public Awareness: Educate communities on the role of solidarity in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Promoting New Initiatives: Advocate for the creation of innovative global efforts to combat poverty and improve social welfare.
- Social and Solidarity Economy: Promote sustainable development models that benefit communities through mutual cooperation.
- Human Rights Advocacy: Support international initiatives focused on advancing human rights for all individuals.
- Addressing Global Issues: Highlight the need for global unity in tackling challenges such as climate change to achieve common goals.

International Migrants Day celebrated on 18 December

International Migrants Day is observed annually on 18 December to highlight the contributions and challenges faced by migrants worldwide. The day was proclaimed by the United Nations in

2000, commemorating the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990. It aims to promote awareness about migrants' rights, celebrate their positive impact on host societies, and advocate for policies ensuring safe and dignified migration.

Foot notes:

- The day was proclaimed by the United Nations in 2000 to honor migrant workers and their contributions.
- It commemorates the adoption of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990.
- The day aims to raise awareness about the rights and challenges faced by migrants worldwide.
- It encourages the protection of migrants' dignity and highlights their significant role in economic, cultural, and social development.
- Events, discussions, and campaigns are held to promote solidarity and global cooperation on migration issues.

National Farmer's Day celebrated on December 23

National Farmers' Day is celebrated on December 23 each year to honor the invaluable contributions of farmers to the nation's progress. The day recognizes the hard work and dedication of farmers, who play a vital role in ensuring food security and the agricultural economy. It serves as a reminder of the challenges farmers face and the need to support and empower them. Various events and activities are held across the country to acknowledge their efforts. National Farmers' Day highlights the importance of agriculture in India's development and future growth.

Foot notes:

- National Farmer's Day highlights the crucial role farmers play in India's economy and food security, acknowledging the challenges they face, such as climate change, modern technology, and fair pricing.
- This year's theme is "Empowering 'Annadatas' for a Prosperous Nation," emphasizing the need to support farmers for sustainable agricultural growth.
- The day is marked by various events, including conferences, seminars, awards, and agricultural exhibitions, to promote awareness about farmers' issues and government initiatives.
- Farmers are the backbone of India's economy, and this day serves as a reminder to appreciate their hard work and dedication to feeding the nation.
- The government of India designated December 23 as National Farmer's Day to honor Chaudhary Charan Singh's legacy and contributions to Indian agriculture.

National Consumer Rights Day observed on 24th December

National Consumer Rights Day is observed on 24th December each year to raise awareness about the rights of consumers and to promote the protection of consumer interests. The day highlights the importance of fair trade practices, consumer education, and the need for robust mechanisms to address grievances. In 2024, this observance serves as a reminder of the continued efforts needed to safeguard consumers against exploitation and to ensure their access to goods and services of acceptable quality.

Foot notes:

- **Objective:** The day aims to educate consumers about their rights, promote awareness about consumer protection laws, and encourage responsible consumer behavior.
- **Consumer Protection Act:** The Consumer Protection Act, 1986, is the primary legislation governing consumer rights in India, providing a framework for redressal of consumer grievances.
- **Theme for 2024:** The theme for National Consumer Rights Day 2024 is "Empowering Consumers through Knowledge and Action," emphasizing the importance of consumer education and awareness.
- **Events and Activities:** Various events, such as seminars, workshops, and rallies, are organized across India to promote consumer awareness and celebrate National Consumer Rights Day.
- **Consumer Rights:** The day highlights the six basic rights of consumers, including the right to be informed, the right to choose, the right to seek redressal, and the right to consumer education.
- **Importance:** National Consumer Rights Day serves as a reminder of the importance of protecting consumer interests and promoting fair business practices in India.

Good Governance Day (India) celebrated on December 25th

Good Governance Day in India is celebrated on December 25th every year, marking the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The day aims to promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in governance while encouraging the government to work towards the welfare of the people. On this occasion, various initiatives, seminars, and discussions are held across the country to highlight the importance of good governance.

Foot notes:

- The day aims to promote awareness about good governance and accountability in government, while encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process.
- Government of India also celebrates Good Governance Week (SushasanSaptah) every year from December 19 to 25, focusing on transparency, accountability, and effective governance.
- Each year, Good Governance Week adopts a specific theme; this year's theme is "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" or "Good Governance Towards Rural Areas".
- Good Governance Day serves as a reminder of the importance of accountable, transparent, and responsive governance in improving the lives of citizens.

- The day is celebrated across India with various events, including seminars, workshops, and rallies, to promote awareness about good governance and its significance in nation-building.

OBITUARY NEWS

Malaysian billionaire tycoon Ananda Krishnan passed away

Ananda Krishnan, one of Malaysia's wealthiest tycoons with a diverse business empire spanning telecommunications, media, petroleum, and real estate, has passed away at the age of 86. His investment holding company, Usaha Tegas, confirmed his death on Thursday, stating that he died peacefully, with the family requesting privacy. The cause of death was not disclosed. Ranked as Malaysia's sixth-richest individual by Forbes, Ananda Krishnan had a net worth of \$5.1 billion (22.6 billion ringgit). He amassed most of his wealth during the 1980s and 1990s.

Foot notes:

- Ananda Krishnan was a founding director of the state oil company Petronas.
- He pitched the idea of building the 88-story Petronas Twin Towers to then-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and led its construction, transforming a horse racing track into an iconic landmark, reshaping Kuala Lumpur's skyline.
- Ananda made significant contributions to education, the arts, sports, and humanitarian causes in Malaysia.
- His wealth was impacted in 2018 when Indian authorities linked him to a major corruption scandal involving top government officials. Arrest warrants were issued for him and his former deputy, but neither was apprehended or extradited.
- His only son became a Buddhist monk in Thailand, and his two daughters were not involved in his business ventures.

Dr.Prithwindra Mukherjee passed away

Dr.Prithwindra Mukherjee was a distinguished intellectual, passionate about music, poetry, and preserving India's history. He made significant contributions to strengthening India-France ties. He was the grandson of the renowned revolutionary Jatindranath Mukherjee (Bagha Jatin). He joined the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in 1948 and was involved in both studying and teaching at the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. Dr. Mukherjee was recognized as a poet before the age of twenty by the Sahitya Akademi, which featured him in its manuals and anthologies. He passed away on 30th November.

Foot notes:

- He translated works of French authors such as Albert Camus, Saint-John Perse, and René Char into Bengali, and also translated Bengali authors into French.
- In 1966, he moved to Paris on a French Government Scholarship.
- He defended his Doctorat d'Université thesis on Sri Aurobindo at the Sorbonne.
- He lectured at two Paris faculties, worked as a producer on Indian culture and music for Radio France, and was a freelance journalist for both Indian and French press.
- His works and compositions, alongside his efforts to preserve historical knowledge and promote cultural exchange, will continue to be admired.

Former Australia cricketer Ian Redpath passed away

Former Australia batter Ian Redpath has passed away at the age of 83. Redpath, known for his resolute opening stance, had a distinguished international career spanning from 1964 to 1976, during which he played 66 Tests and five One Day Internationals (ODIs). He came agonizingly close to scoring a century on his Test debut against South Africa at the MCG, dismissed for 97 by Joe Partridge. Reflecting on the moment, Redpath once recalled, "I hit an off-drive for four, and there was another one I thought was in the same spot, and I licked my chops. Beautiful follow-through, it was," in an interview with Nine newspapers last year.

Foot notes:

- Ian Redpath scored seven more centuries after his Test debut, including a career-best 171 against England at Perth in 1970.
- He ended his Test career with three centuries in four innings against West Indies in 1975-76.
- On his first century in that series at the MCG, Wisden wrote that Redpath "ducked and weaved" effectively, completing an important century for Australia that demonstrated his long-term value.
- Gideon Haigh described Redpath as a tough batsman to dismiss, known for playing straight, with a short pick-up, mostly off the back foot, and adept at swaying and ducking bouncers in pre-helmet days.
- He was the last Australian to play as an amateur, turning down his match fee in 1963-64 to maintain his amateur Australian Rules Football career.
- Redpath served as vice-captain to both Ian and Greg Chappell, and batted alongside Greg when he scored a debut century against England in 1970-71.

Former CBI Director Vijay Shankar passed away

Former CBI Director Vijay Shankar passed away on Tuesday at the age of 76 after a prolonged illness, according to his family. He had been hospitalized at a private facility in Noida. In line with his final wish, his mortal remains will be donated to AIIMS. A 1969 batch IPS officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, Shankar served as the Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) from December 12, 2005, to July 31, 2008.

Foot notes:

- Vijay Shankar served as Inspector General in the Border Security Force (BSF) and was posted in Jammu and Kashmir during the peak of militancy in the 1990s.
- He headed the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), responsible for securing India's borders with Nepal and Bhutan.
- Shankar was a recipient of the prestigious President's Police Medals for Distinguished and Meritorious Service.
- He served in the Uttar Pradesh Police and was posted in Moscow under the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Before being appointed as the CBI Director, Shankar led the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Civil Defence, and Home Guards.

Australian Davis Cup Icon Neale Fraser passed away

Neale Fraser, one of Australia's most revered tennis players and captains, has passed away at the age of 91. A legendary figure in the sport, Fraser's impact as both a player and Davis Cup captain defined a golden era for Australian tennis. Known for his skill in both singles and doubles, Fraser won 19 Grand Slam titles and guided Australia to eight Davis Cup victories, cementing his status as a tennis icon.

Foot notes:

- Davis Cup Contributions: Played a key role in Australia's Davis Cup victories in 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1962 under coach Harry Hopman.
- Captaincy Legacy: Served as the Australian Davis Cup captain from 1970 to 1993, leading the team to victories in 1973, 1977, 1983, and 1986. His 24-year tenure as captain is among the longest and most successful in Davis Cup history.
- Philippe Chatrier Award: Honored by the International Tennis Federation in 2008 for his exceptional contributions to tennis.

- **World Number One:** Regarded as one of the best players of his era, dominating during Australia's golden age in tennis.
- **Golden Era of Tennis:** Fraser was integral to Australia's dominance in tennis during the mid-20th century.
- **Mentorship:** As captain, he guided and mentored generations of Australian tennis players, leaving a lasting influence on the sport.
- **Cultural Icon:** Fraser's contributions went beyond tennis, inspiring a legacy of sportsmanship and excellence.

Former Chief Minister of Puducherry MDR Ramachandran passed away

Former Chief Minister of Puducherry, MDR Ramachandran, has passed away. A prominent leader and influential figure in Puducherry's political landscape, Ramachandran's contributions to the region's development and governance remain significant. His tenure as Chief Minister marked a pivotal era in Puducherry's history, characterized by his dedication to public welfare and progressive policies. His demise is a profound loss to the political community and the people of Puducherry.

Foot notes:

- **Early Life and Politics:** Ramachandran was born on January 31, 1934, and began his political journey in 1969, contesting from the Nettappakkam constituency on a Dravida MunnetraKazhagam (DMK) ticket.²
- **Chief Ministerial Tenure:** He served as the Chief Minister of Puducherry twice, first from January 16, 1980, to June 23, 1983, and then from March 8, 1990, to March 2, 1991, while he was with the DMK.
- **Switch to Congress:** Ramachandran quit the DMK and joined the Congress in 2000, later becoming the Speaker of the Puducherry Assembly from June 11, 2001, to May 26, 2006.
- **Awards and Recognition:** Although there is no information on specific awards received by Ramachandran, his contributions to Puducherry's development and his commitment to public service have been widely recognized.
- **Tributes and Condolences:** Puducherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy announced three days of mourning for the former CM, and his last rites will be performed with full state honors.

Former Karnataka CM SM Krishna passed away

Former Karnataka Chief Minister S.M. Krishna passed away on December 10, 2024, at the age of 92. He had been ailing for some time and passed away at his residence in Bengaluru. Krishna served as Karnataka's Chief Minister from 1999 to 2004, during which he was instrumental in transforming Bengaluru into a global IT hub. He also held other significant positions, including

External Affairs Minister of India from 2009 to 2012 and Governor of Maharashtra from 2004 to 2008.

Foot notes:

- Krishna was a remarkable leader admired by people from all walks of life.
- Krishna played a crucial role in developing Bengaluru into a tech hub, significantly impacting the fortunes of Karnataka and India as a key player in the global IT map.
- In 2023, Krishna received the Padma Vibhushan at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi for his contribution to the field of Public Affairs.
- Krishna served as Karnataka's 16th Chief Minister from October 1999 to May 2004 and was the External Affairs Minister from 2009 to 2012. He was also the Governor of Maharashtra from 2004 to 2008.
- Tributes poured in for Krishna, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing him as a remarkable leader who always worked tirelessly to improve the lives of others.

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Nikki Giovanni, Black Arts Icon passed away

Nikki Giovanni, celebrated poet and icon of the Black Arts Movement, has passed away, leaving behind a profound literary and cultural legacy. Known for her powerful and evocative poetry, Giovanni championed themes of social justice, Black empowerment, and personal introspection. Her works, such as *Ego-Tripping* and *Black Feeling*, *Black Talk*, resonated deeply, inspiring generations of readers and activists. Beyond her writing, Giovanni was a beloved educator and speaker, using her voice to advocate for equality and artistic expression. Her passing marks the end of an era, but her words and influence will continue to shape the cultural landscape for years to come.

Foot notes:

- Giovanni attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, where she began to develop her writing skills and became involved in the Civil Rights Movement.

- Giovanni's poetry and writings have been widely acclaimed for their emotional depth, honesty, and unflinching portrayal of the African American experience. Her notable works include "Black Feeling, Black Talk," "Black Judgement," and "Re: Creation."
- Giovanni has received numerous awards and honors, including the Langston Hughes Medal, NAACP Image Award, and 27 honorary degrees from various colleges and universities.
- Giovanni has taught at several universities, including Virginia Tech, where she is currently a University Distinguished Professor. She has also been an outspoken advocate for social justice, women's rights, and racial equality.
- Giovanni's work has had a profound impact on American literature and culture. She continues to be a celebrated figure in the literary world and an inspiration to generations of writers, activists, and artists.

Legendary Gujarati Singer Purushottam Upadhyay passed away

Legendary Gujarati singer and composer Purushottam Upadhyay has passed away, leaving behind an indelible mark on Indian music. Renowned for his contributions to Gujarati Sugam Sangeet, he was celebrated for blending classical music with lyrical depth. Over his illustrious career, he composed and sang numerous timeless tracks, earning accolades and the admiration of music lovers. His soulful voice and dedication to promoting Gujarati culture made him a beloved figure in the state and beyond. Upadhyay's demise is a significant loss to the music world, and his legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

Foot notes:

- Upadhyay's melodious voice and compositions significantly contributed to Gujarati music, making him a household name in Gujarat and beyond.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his condolences on social media, saying he was "deeply pained" to hear about Upadhyay's passing and that his music would "always live in our hearts".
- Although there's no information on specific awards won by Upadhyay, his legacy and impact on Gujarati music are undeniable.
- Upadhyay's music catalog includes several popular albums, such as "Shiv Upasana, Vol. 2", "Jay Shree Swaminarayan", and "Vaishnav Janh - Ashram Bhajans".
- Upadhyay's passing marks the end of an era, and his contributions to Gujarati music will be cherished by millions. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of musicians and music lovers alike.

Epigamia Co-Founder Rohan Mirchandani passed away

Rohan Mirchandani, the co-founder of Epigamia, tragically passed away, leaving a significant void in the entrepreneurial community. His innovative contributions to the food industry, particularly in the realm of dairy alternatives, earned him widespread recognition. Under his leadership, Epigamia became a pioneering brand in the Indian market, known for its yogurt products and health-focused approach. Mirchandani's untimely passing is a great loss to both the business world and the startup ecosystem. His legacy of innovation, dedication, and impact on the food industry will continue to inspire many.

Foot notes:

- Mirchandani co-founded Drums Food International, the parent company of Epigamia, in 2013 with his classmates Ankur Goel and Uday Thakkar.
- Under Mirchandani's leadership, Epigamia became a popular Greek yogurt brand in India, with a net worth of around \$160 million.
- He owned around 4.68% of the company's holdings, making him the largest shareholder among the founding members.
- entrepreneurs, with several other founders and business executives passing away due to cardiac arrests in recent years.
- The news of Mirchandani's passing has been met with an outpouring of tributes and condolences from the business community and beyond.
- Mirchandani's legacy will continue to inspire young entrepreneurs, and his contribution to the Indian startup ecosystem will be remembered for years to come.

Legendary Filmmaker Shyam Benegal passed away

Legendary filmmaker Shyam Benegal has passed away, leaving behind an indelible mark on Indian cinema. Known for his pioneering work in parallel cinema, Benegal's films often explored social, political, and cultural issues with depth and sensitivity. His contributions to the industry earned him numerous accolades, including national awards, and his legacy continues to inspire filmmakers and audiences alike. His passing is a significant loss to the world of Indian cinema.

Foot notes:

- Benegal was born in December 1934 in Hyderabad, southern India. He earned an Economics degree from Osmania University and established the Hyderabad Film Society.
- Career Highlights: Benegal was a renowned director, editor, and screenwriter who pioneered a new wave cinema movement in the 1970s. His notable films include "Ankur" (1974), "Nishant" (1975), "Manthan" (1976), and "Bhumika" (1977).
- Awards and Recognition: Benegal received widespread critical acclaim and numerous awards for his contributions to Indian cinema.
- Mentorship: He mentored top Indian actors, including Shabana Azmi, Smita Patil, Naseeruddin Shah, and Om Puri.
- Television Work: Benegal directed the landmark 53-episode television series "Bharat Ek Khoj," based on Jawaharlal Nehru's book "Discovery of India."

- Legacy: Benegal is survived by his wife Nira Benegal and daughter Piya. His passing has been mourned by the film fraternity and fans, with tributes pouring in on social media.

Renowned writer Shri MT Vasudevan Nair passed away

Renowned writer Shri MT Vasudevan Nair has passed away, leaving behind a rich legacy in Indian literature. Known for his profound contributions to Malayalam literature, Nair's works have touched the hearts of generations of readers. His storytelling, which often explored deep human emotions and social issues, earned him numerous accolades, including prestigious awards. Nair's influence extended beyond literature, with his works being adapted into films, further solidifying his cultural impact. His passing marks the end of an era for Malayalam literature, but his timeless works will continue to inspire and resonate with readers for years to come.

Foot notes:

- Nair was a prolific and versatile writer in modern Malayalam literature, known for his novels, short stories, and screenplays. His writing often explored the social and cultural crisis in contemporary Kerala life.
- Awards and Recognition: Nair was a recipient of the Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary honor, in 1995. He also won the Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian honor, in 2005.
- Film Career: Nair was a renowned screenplay writer and director in Malayalam cinema, with credits in over 54 films. He won the National Film Award for Best Screenplay four times.
- Impact on Malayalam Literature: Nair's writing had a significant impact on Malayalam literature, and he is considered one of the masters of post-Independence Indian literature.
- Legacy: Nair's legacy continues to inspire writers, filmmakers, and readers alike, and his contributions to Malayalam literature and cinema remain unparalleled.

Olivia Hussey, Star of Romeo and Juliet, passed away

Olivia Hussey, the acclaimed actress renowned for her portrayal of Juliet in Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 film adaptation of "Romeo and Juliet," passed away on December 27, 2024, at the age of 73. She died peacefully at her home, surrounded by loved ones. The cause of death is believed to be cancer; Hussey had been diagnosed with breast cancer in 2008 and had been in remission for almost a decade. Her performance as Juliet garnered international acclaim, earning her a special David di Donatello Award and a Golden Globe. Beyond "Romeo and Juliet," Hussey's notable works included roles in "Jesus of Nazareth" and "Death on the Nile." She is survived by her three children.

Foot notes:

- Hussey began her acting career at a young age, making her film debut in "The Battle of the Villa Fiorita" (1965).

- Breakthrough Role: Her portrayal of Juliet in Franco Zeffirelli's "Romeo and Juliet" (1968) earned her a Golden Globe award and international recognition.
- Diverse Filmography: Hussey appeared in a range of films, including "Black Christmas" (1974), "Death on the Nile" (1978), and "Jesus of Nazareth" (1977).
- Voice Acting: She also lent her voice to several video games, including the "Star Wars" franchise.
- Personal Life: Hussey was married three times and had two children.
- Tributes: Her "Romeo and Juliet" co-star Leonard Whiting paid tribute to Hussey, remembering her as a "beautiful, talented, and kind" person.

Padma Bhushan Ustad Zakir Hussain passed away

Padma Bhushan Ustad Zakir Hussain, the legendary tabla maestro, has passed away, leaving behind an unparalleled legacy in Indian classical music. Renowned globally for his virtuosity and innovation, he was a cultural icon who bridged traditional and contemporary music. His contributions to world music and collaborations with artists across genres earned him numerous accolades, including the Padma Bhushan. Ustad Zakir Hussain's demise marks the end of an era, but his music will continue to inspire generations.

Foot notes:

- Ustad Zakir Hussain passed away on Sunday, December 15, at the age of 73, leaving behind a legacy of incredible music and unforgettable performances.
- He had been hospitalized for two weeks in a San Francisco hospital and was moved to the ICU as his condition worsened due to complications from idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.
- With a career spanning over six decades, Hussain elevated the tabla to an international stage, blending tradition with innovation and collaborating with renowned artists from around the world.
- He was a recipient of numerous prestigious awards, including the Padma Shri (1988), Padma Bhushan (2002), and Padma Vibhushan (2023), as well as four Grammy Awards and seven nominations.
- Hussain's influence on Indian classical music is immeasurable, and his contributions to the genre have inspired generations of musicians and music lovers alike.

Singer, musician Pandit Sanjay Marathe passed away

Renowned singer and musician Pandit Sanjay Marathe has passed away, leaving a significant void in the world of Indian classical music. Known for his soulful renditions and mastery over traditional compositions, he earned deep respect and admiration throughout his illustrious career. Pandit Marathe was celebrated for his contribution to preserving and promoting classical music among younger generations. His passing is a great loss to the music fraternity and his countless admirers. He will be remembered for his dedication, artistry, and the timeless music he shared with the world.

Foot notes:

- He began his journey in Indian classical music at an early age and was particularly celebrated for his expertise with the harmonium.
- His renditions combined technical brilliance with a soul-stirring quality that connected deeply with audiences.
- He was instrumental in keeping the traditions of Marathi musical theatre alive, most notably through the revival of the celebrated play Sangeet Mandarmala, a tribute to his father's legacy.
- In 2024, Marathe played a significant role in celebrating the birth centenary of his father, Pandit Ram Marathe, by organizing commemorative concerts and performances.
- He collaborated with his younger brother Mukund Marathe to rejuvenate Sangeet Mandarmala, balancing innovation with tradition, and appealing to both purists and contemporary audiences.
- Marathe's passing has left a profound void in the Indian classical music community, but his legacy will continue to inspire future generations of musicians and music lovers.

Former Haryana CM Om Prakash Chautala passed away

Former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala passed away at the age of 89. A prominent political figure, Chautala served as the Chief Minister of Haryana for three terms and was a key member of the Indian National Congress before founding the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD). Known for his influence in Haryana politics, he played a crucial role in shaping the state's political landscape. His death marks the end of an era for the INLD, a party that he led for several decades. Chautala's passing is being mourned by his supporters and political peers, remembering his contributions to the state's development and politics.

Foot notes:

- Born on January 1, 1935, in a village near Sirsa, Chautala was the son of Chaudhary Devi Lal, a significant figure in Indian politics who served as Deputy Prime Minister.
- Chautala served as the Chief Minister of Haryana four times: briefly in 1989-1990 and again from 1999 to 2005.
- Indian National Lok Dal (INLD): Chautala was the president of the INLD, a regional party in Haryana, which he founded in 1996.
- Chautala made significant contributions to Haryana's development, and his legacy continues to be felt in the state's politics.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, and other political leaders have expressed their condolences and paid tribute to Chautala's life and legacy.
- Chautala is survived by his two sons, Abhay Singh Chautala and Ajay Singh Chautala, and his grandson, Dushyant Chautala, who is the leader of the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) and serves as Haryana's Deputy Chief Minister.

Padma Shri Awardee Tulsi Gowda passed away

Renowned environmentalist and Padma Shri awardee Tulsi Gowda has passed away, leaving behind a legacy of remarkable contributions to environmental conservation. Known as the "Encyclopedia of Forests," she dedicated her life to protecting nature and promoting afforestation, planting over 30,000 trees during her lifetime. Despite having no formal education, her vast knowledge of plants and ecology gained her widespread recognition. Awarded the Padma Shri in 2020, she became an inspiration for environmental activists worldwide. Tulsi Gowda's passing is a profound loss, but her work will continue to inspire efforts toward a greener and sustainable future.

Foot notes:

- Gowda worked at a forest nursery, caring for seeds in the Karnataka Forest Department's Agasur project, and later became a daily wage worker for 35 years before gaining a permanent position.
- She planted and nurtured over 1 lakh trees across Karnataka and contributed to strengthening one community reserve, five tiger reserves, 15 conservation reserves and 30 wildlife sanctuaries.
- Tulsi Gowda received the Padma Shri award in 2020 for her exceptional dedication to afforestation and ecological preservation. She was also awarded the Indira Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Award in 1986 and the Karnataka Rajyotsava Award in 1999.
- Gowda's work serves as a blueprint for ecological preservation, inspiring generations to protect nature. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed her as an enduring inspiration for environmental conservation.
- Despite her remarkable achievements, Gowda remained humble and continued to live in her village, inspiring others with her dedication to environmental conservation.

Thomas Burleigh Kurishungal, Veteran Actor-Director passed away

Veteran actor and director Thomas Burleigh Kurishungal has passed away, leaving behind a rich legacy in the world of cinema and theater. Known for his versatile acting and creative direction, Kurishungal was a prominent figure in the entertainment industry, contributing significantly to both mainstream and art-house projects. His career spanned several decades, during which he earned accolades for his compelling performances and innovative storytelling. Fans and colleagues remember him as a dedicated artist who inspired many with his passion for the arts. His demise marks the end of an era, and he will be deeply missed by the film and theater fraternity.

Foot notes:

- Kurishungal was born on September 1, 1932, to Kurishungal K. J. Berly, a freedom fighter, and Annie Burleigh, a woman activist and leader of the pre-independence era.
- He began his acting career at 21 with the movie "Thiramala" in 1953 and went on to act in several Hollywood movies, including "Never So Few" with Frank Sinatra and Gina

LollobrigidaKurishingal made his directorial debut with the suspense movie "IthuManushyano" in 1973 and produced an English movie, "Maya," for children.

- He was a writer, cartoonist, and musician, and published several books, including "Beyond Heart," "Fragrant Petals," and "O Kerala".
- Kurishingal's contributions to Malayalam and Hollywood films have left a lasting impact on the industry, and his legacy continues to inspire future generations of actors and filmmakers.



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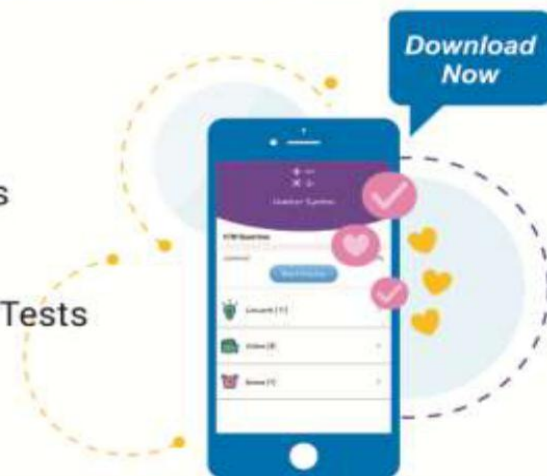
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