

Weekly One Liners 11th to 17th of December 2023

Supreme Court Upholds Abrogation of Article 370: Key Judgement Highlights

The Supreme Court's landmark decision on December 11, 2023, upheld the Union Government's 2019 move to abrogate the **special status of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) under Article 370** of the Constitution. The judgment, delivered by a Constitution bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, addressed key constitutional questions and outlined significant conclusions.

1. Upholding the Abrogation of Article 370

The **Supreme Court validated** the Union Government's decision to revoke the special status of J&K under Article 370, emphasizing that the state had no internal sovereignty. The court clarified that the concurrence of the State Government was not necessary, and Article 370 was deemed a temporary provision.

2. Status of Union Territory (UT) and Election Directive

The Court refrained from adjudicating on the reorganization of J&K into a Union Territory but upheld the **creation of Ladakh as a UT**. It directed the Election Commission to conduct **elections for the J&K Legislative Assembly by September 30, 2024**.

3. Constitutional Order 272 and Validity of Presidential Actions

The Court addressed the modification of Article 367 through **Constitutional Order 272**, stating that changes made were ultra vires Article 370. However, this finding did not impact the overall judgment, as the recommendation of the J&K Constituent Assembly was deemed unnecessary for the President to declare Article 370 inoperative.

4. Recognition of J&K's Integration with India

The judgment underscored that Jammu and Kashmir did not retain an element of sovereignty upon joining the Union of India. The constitutional setup indicated that J&K became an integral part of India, with Article 370 being a feature of asymmetric federalism, not sovereignty.

5. Article 370 as Temporary Provision

The Court affirmed that Article 370 was a temporary provision, and the power of the President under Article 370(3) to declare it inoperative persisted even after the dissolution of the J&K Constituent Assembly. The recommendation of the Constituent Assembly was not binding on the President.

6. Presidential Power under Article 370(1)(d)

The Court held that the President's exercise of power under Article 370(1)(d) to apply all provisions of the Constitution to J&K did not require the concurrence of the State government. The principle of consultation and collaboration was not mandatory, and the President's action was deemed valid.

7. Validity of J&K Reorganisation Act 2019

The Court did not find it necessary to adjudicate on the validity of the J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, considering the Solicitor General's assurance that J&K's statehood would be restored. The reorganization of Ladakh as a Union Territory was upheld.

8. Directive for Truth and Reconciliation Committee

Justice SK Kaul recommended the establishment of a "Truth and Reconciliation Committee" to investigate human rights violations in J&K since the 1980s and propose reconciliation measures. However, the manner of setting up the committee was left to the government, considering the sensitivity of the issues involved.

9. Restoration of J&K's Statehood

The Court directed the Election Commission to conduct elections for the J&K Legislative Assembly by September 30, 2024, and emphasized the restoration of J&K's statehood as soon as possible.

Tiriyani Block Clinched Top Spot In NITI Aayog's Inaugural Delta Rankings

In a significant milestone for the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP), **Tiriyani Block** of Kumuram Bheem Asifabad district, **Telangana**, has secured the **top position** in the **first delta rankings announced by NITI Aayog**. The rankings, revealed during a virtual event at NITI Aayog, showcased the outstanding performance and progress achieved by blocks across the country in the month of June 2023.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Drive Competitiveness

- The rankings were determined based on the performance of blocks and progress achieved in the **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** during the month.
- This strategic approach aligns with the spirit of competitive and cooperative federalism, marking the first time that the ranking of blocks has been calculated as part of the Aspirational Blocks Programme.



ADP Rankings Recognize Achievements in October 2023

- In addition to ABP, the event also announced the **Achievers of Development Programme (ADP)** rankings for October 2023.
- Rayagada in Odisha** and **Jamui in Bihar** secured the first and second ranks, respectively, in this initiative.
- The top-performing blocks and districts in thematic and overall categories were felicitated, emphasizing the dual focus on both blocks and districts.

Wall of Fame: Showcasing Excellence and Impact

- A novel initiative was unveiled during the event, where the top rankers of ABP and ADP will be displayed on the Wall of Fame at NITI Aayog.
- The **Wall of Fame** serves as a testament to the endeavors and projects undertaken by Aspirational Blocks and Districts to improve their indicators and achieve notable progress.
- Hon'ble Vice Chairman, along with Hon'ble Members of NITI Aayog, inaugurated the Wall of Fame, celebrating the achievements of the best-performing Aspirational Blocks and Districts in the country.

Zonal Rankings Highlight Regional Success

- Geographically dividing the blocks into six zones, the rankings recognized the top performers in each zone.
- Notable winners include:

Zone	Rank	Block	District	State
1	1	Amri	West Karbi Anglong	Assam
1	2	Ngopa	Saitual	Mizoram
2	1	Harraiya	Basti	Uttar Pradesh
2	2	Virno	Ghazipur	Uttar Pradesh

- Winners from Zones 3 to 6 were:

Blocks	Districts	States
Maski	Raichur	Karnataka
Narnoor	Adilabad	Telangana
Sironcha, Aheri	Gadhichiroli	Maharashtra
Tirla, Pati	Dhar, Barwani	Madhya Pradesh
Andar	Siwan	Bihar
Ramgarh	Dumka	Jharkhand

Recognition and Rewards for Zonal Winners

- The winners from each zone will be felicitated with a prize amount of **Rs. 1.5 crores** for the top rank and **Rs. 1 crore** for the second rank in all zonal categories, acknowledging their exceptional efforts and progress.

About Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)

- Launched on **January 7, 2023**, ABP focuses on improving governance to enhance the quality of life in the most challenging and underdeveloped blocks of India.

- The program includes 500 blocks from 329 districts across 27 states and 4 Union Territories, emphasizing convergence of existing schemes, defining outcomes, and constant monitoring.

Strategic Approach: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Baseline Data

- In consultation with various stakeholders, **40 key performance indicators (KPIs)** were chosen to measure progress, grouped into 5 themes.
- Baseline data as of March 31, 2023, and the first quarter on June 30, 2023, of 500 Aspirational Blocks were sourced through the Management Information System of 11 ministries.
- The first Delta rank was calculated **based on the improvement made in the first quarter**.

Chandrayaan, Jawan, and IPL Dominate India's 2023 Google Search

As 2023 draws to a close, **Google** releases its annual insights into India's search trends, revealing a fascinating tapestry of interests and curiosities that captivated the nation. This year, the data highlights a captivating mix of scientific pursuits, cinematic anticipation, and enduring love for cricket.

Here are the top 10 events that generated interested among internet users in India

- Chandrayaan-3
- Karnataka Election Results
- Israel News
- Satish Kaushik
- Budget 2023
- Turkey Earthquake
- Atiq Ahmed
- Matthew Perry
- Manipur News
- Odisha Train Accident

The list shows that the conflict between Israel and Hamas, which began after the surprise October 7 attack by Hamas operatives inside the Israeli territory, also caught the interest of the users.

Google Search Trends in India: Year in Search 2023

Google Search trends offer valuable insights into the collective interests and curiosities of India's diverse population. From scientific advancements and legal reforms to sporting passions and practical how-to guides, these trends reflect the nation's dynamic and evolving landscape.

What's Trending:

- G20:** Interest in India's G20 presidency highlights the nation's growing global prominence.
- UCC:** Queries concerning the Uniform Civil Code reflect ongoing discussions about legal reform.

- **ChatGPT:** Rising awareness and curiosity around AI technology.
- **Hamas:** Global events continue to capture attention, with searches about the Palestinian organization Hamas.
- **Chandrayaan-3:** India's ambitious space mission generates excitement.
- **Instagram Threads:** Users explore the platform's new feature.
- **Timed Out in Cricket:** Basic cricket rules remain a topic of interest.
- **Impact Player in IPL:** New IPL rule sparks curiosity.
- **Sengol:** A specific term or topic generates significant searches.

How-to Guides:

- **Sun Damage Prevention:** Focusing on natural solutions for skin and hair.
- **YouTube Growth:** Aspiring creators seek advice on audience building.
- **Kabaddi Skills:** The popular Indian sport continues to attract interest.
- **Car Mileage Improvement:** Practical tips for fuel efficiency.
- **Chess Mastery:** Aspiring chess players seek guidance.
- **Rakshabandhan Surprise:** Celebrating the special bond between siblings.
- **Kanjivaram Saree Identification:** Discerning authentic silk sarees.
- **PAN and Aadhaar Linking:** Navigating the legal requirements.
- **WhatsApp Channels:** Building communities on the popular messaging platform.
- **Instagram Verification:** Aspiring influencers seek recognition.

Sports Dominated by Cricket:

- **Indian Premier League:** The nation's premier cricket tournament reigns supreme.
- **Cricket World Cup:** International cricket continues to captivate fans.
- **Asia Cup:** Regional competition holds significant appeal.
- **Women's Premier League:** New women's cricket league generates excitement.
- **Asian Games:** Multi-sport event attracts attention.
- **Indian Super League:** Domestic football league gains traction.
- **Pakistan Super League:** Interest in neighboring country's cricket league.
- **The Ashes:** The historic cricket rivalry continues to enthrall.
- **Women's Cricket World Cup:** Women's cricket gains global recognition.
- **SA20:** South Africa's new cricket league makes its mark.

National Affairs

- India voted in favor of a **UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution** calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas conflict and the unconditional release of hostages. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- India has taken a significant step towards addressing the challenges posed by climate change by joining the United Nations' **'Race to Resilience'** global campaign. This decision, announced during the recently concluded COP28 event in Dubai, reflects India's commitment to building climate resilience in its urban areas. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Mr. Sanjay Kumar Agarwal, Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC), inaugurated the **India-Korea Electronic Origin Data Exchange System (EODES)** on December 6, 2023, in New Delhi. The ceremony was attended by Mr. KO Kwang Hyo, Commissioner of Korea Customs Service (KCS), and his delegation. ([Click here to read the article](#))

States in the News

- A high-level delegation from the Uttar Pradesh government is set to participate in the **World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos, Switzerland**, scheduled from January 15 to 19. The delegation aims to showcase the state's strides towards becoming a trillion-dollar economy and transforming metropolitan towns into focal points across various sectors. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, **Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman**, inaugurated the **Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram in Vijayawada**. The event took place in the presence of notable dignitaries, including **Smt R K Roja**, Minister for Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, and **Shri Buggana Rajendranath**, Minister for Finance, Government of Andhra Pradesh. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Bhajan Lal Sharma**, a prominent figure in Rajasthan's political landscape, is set to become the **state's next Chief Minister**. At 56 years old, he brings a wealth of political experience and accomplishments to the position. This article delves into his background, political journey, recent electoral victory, and key details about the upcoming leadership in Rajasthan. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Punjab Chief Minister **Bhagwant Mann** and AAP national convenor **Arvind Kejriwal** recently launched the **"Bhagwant Mann Sarkar, Tuhade Dwaar"** scheme in **Ludhiana**, marking a historic day for the state. This initiative, inspired by the successful Delhi Model, aims to revolutionize governance by **providing doorstep delivery of essential services**. Mann and Kejriwal inaugurated the "Mobile Sahayaks," a fleet of delivery men adorned in distinctive yellow T-shirts featuring Mann's image. These sahayaks will play a crucial role in providing doorstep delivery of 43 critical services to the citizens of Punjab.

- Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) worth an impressive **Rs 50,530 crore** have been successfully inked with approximately 300 companies, reflecting a resounding success for Bihar. These agreements span diverse sectors, underlining the state's appeal to investors. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Telangana**, known for its vibrant culture and rapid urbanization, is set to embark on a transformative journey as the state government unveils its ambitious plan to decentralize development. Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan recently announced the **strategic division of the state into three zones**, positioning **Hyderabad as the central hub** for this groundbreaking initiative. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a landmark decision, the Indian Parliament has given its nod to the establishment of the **Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University** in Telangana. The approval comes in the form of **The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2023**, which successfully passed through the Rajya Sabha, having been previously cleared by the Lok Sabha. This move signifies a significant stride towards providing quality education in tribal regions and fostering inclusive learning environments. ([Click here to read the article](#))

International Affairs

- **China** has achieved a significant milestone in its quest to shift away from traditional coal-fired power plants and decrease its reliance on foreign technologies. Recently, the **Shidao Bay nuclear power plant** in eastern Shandong province commenced commercial operations, heralding the era of next-generation gas-cooled nuclear reactors. This development is crucial for China's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and securing a sustainable energy future. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a historic vote on **December 11**, former EU leader **Donald Tusk** returned as **Poland's Prime Minister** after nearly a decade, marking a significant shift from **eight years** of stormy national conservative rule. Tusk's leadership is expected to usher in a new-pro-European era, with promises to restore democratic standards and improve ties with European allies. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **United Nations** has officially ended its decade-long peacekeeping **mission in Mali after 10 years**, responding to the government's claim that the force was inadequate in addressing the escalating threat of violent extremism. This move marks the conclusion of the deadliest peacekeeping mission globally, with over **300 personnel casualties**. The withdrawal comes as Mali grapples with persistent challenges from Islamic extremist insurgency **since 2012**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- In a surprising turn of events, the long-standing stand-off between **Azerbaijan and Armenia** has found an unexpected resolution, setting the stage for **Baku, Azerbaijan**, to host the **United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP29) in 2024**. The resolution emerged as part of a prisoner swap settlement, underscoring the intricate relationship between geopolitical dynamics and global efforts to combat climate change. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Myanmar** has emerged as the world's largest source of **opium in 2023**, surpassing **Afghanistan**, according to a new report by the United Nations. This shift is attributed to a third consecutive year of expanding cultivation fueled by Myanmar's civil war and a significant decline in opium cultivation in Afghanistan. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **China and Egypt** have achieved a significant breakthrough in their collaborative efforts with the successful launch of the **MisrSat-2 satellite**. Developed and assembled jointly by the two nations, this marks a pivotal moment in their burgeoning space partnership. The satellite, assembled in Egypt with Chinese support, was launched from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China, utilizing the **Long March-2C carrier rocket**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- On Sunday, December 10, a significant cultural milestone unfolded in the **French town of Cergy** with the inauguration of a **statue dedicated to Thiruvalluvar**, a revered cultural icon among Tamilians. This event holds special significance, emphasizing the enduring cultural ties between India and France. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a groundbreaking development, **China** has achieved a significant milestone in the field of physics with the operationalization of the **world's deepest and largest underground laboratory**. According to a report, the physics laboratory, known as the Deep Underground and Ultra-low Radiation Background Facility for Frontier Physics Experiments (DURF), reaches an impressive depth of **2,400 meters**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

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- The digital age has ushered in unprecedented connectivity but also raised concerns about the potential harm children may face on social media platforms. The **UK government**, led by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, is contemplating additional measures to **protect teenagers below the age of 16 from online dangers**, despite the recent implementation of the Online Safety Act. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- REC Limited**, a prominent Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the **Ministry of Power**, achieved a significant milestone by signing a **200 million Euro loan agreement with the German bank KfW**. This agreement, marking **REC's sixth line of credit** under the Indo-German Development Cooperation, emphasizes the corporation's commitment to strengthening the distribution infrastructure of DISCOMs in alignment with the **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)** of the Government of India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant move towards bolstering the electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure in India, **Tata Power EV Charging Solutions Ltd (TPEVCSL)** has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)**. The collaboration aims to **set up more than 500 EV charging points** across the country, with a focus on creating a robust intercity charging network. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- A team of officials from India's Department of Commerce is currently in Muscat, engaged in negotiations for a **comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA)** with Oman. The department has set an internal deadline to finalize the deal by the end of the month. Oman currently stands as **India's 29th largest trading partner**, with bilateral trade showing robust growth. From \$3.15 billion in FY22, trade has surged to \$4.48 billion during FY23, marking a substantial 42% YoY increase. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Books and Authors

- Former President Shri **Ramnath Kovind** graced the launch of **'Naye Bharat ka Samaveda,'** a seminal collection spotlighting **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's** impactful speeches, delving deep into the core essence and values embedded in our nation's Constitution. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- In a significant move towards women's financial empowerment, **Bank of India** has recently introduced the **Nari Shakti Savings Account**. This exclusive savings bank product is **designed to cater specifically to women aged 18 and above** who possess an independent source of income, marking a progressive step in fostering economic independence for women. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- India witnessed contrasting trends in its economic indicators in October and November, with the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP) surging** to a 16-month high while **retail inflation** experienced an uptick, reaching a three-month high. These developments have significant implications for GDP projections and monetary policy. The IIP recorded an impressive 11.7% year-on-year growth in October, marking a substantial increase from the 6.8% reported in September. Retail inflation, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), increased to 5.55% year-on-year in November, up from 4.87% in October. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In November, nine states in India experienced a **higher rate of inflation** compared to the national average, according to recent data. The average cost of living for Indian consumers rose by 5.55% compared to the same period last year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a recent development, the Lok Sabha has given its approval for a net **additional spending of ₹58,378 crore** in the ongoing fiscal year, set to conclude in March 2024. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted the government's commitment to fiscal prudence while maintaining a focus on social welfare programs. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a strategic move following its acquisition by TPG Capital Asia, Poonawalla Housing Finance has undergone a significant rebranding, emerging with a new identity — **Grihum Housing Finance**. This transformation comes as TPG Capital Asia acquired a substantial 99.02% equity stake in the company from Poonawalla Fincorp earlier this year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant move towards sustainable energy, the **State Bank of India (SBI)** is set to sign a **€70 million Line of Credit (LoC)** with the **German Development Bank KfW** to support solar projects in India. The agreement is scheduled to be inked on December 14 at SBI's IFSC Gift City Branch in Ahmedabad, marking a pivotal step in fostering solar photovoltaics (PV) initiatives across the country. As SBI gears up to sign Line of Credit with KfW, it not only reinforces the commitment to sustainable energy solutions but also positions India on a brighter path towards increased solar power capacity. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- In the fiscal landscape of India, a concerning trend has emerged as twelve states are projected to witness their debt surpassing **35% of their Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** by the end of the financial year 2023-24. This revelation, detailed in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest annual publication, points to potential fiscal mismanagement and raises alarms about the fragile fiscal situation of these states. The states drawing attention from the RBI for fiscal mismanagement include **Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, and West Bengal.** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant move, **Foxconn**, the Taiwan-based giant responsible for assembling around **70% of iPhones globally**, is set to invest an additional **139.11 billion rupees (\$1.67 billion) in the state of Karnataka.** This decision underscores Foxconn's ongoing efforts to diversify production away from China, driven by disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant move to ensure fair and affordable access to Aadhar Services, the **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** has implemented strict measures against operators found guilty of overcharging and also **imposed penalty of Rs.50,000 against them.** The move aims to ensure fair and accessible services for all citizens, **Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Rajevee Chandrasekhar**, revealed the details of these measures in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Indian banks significantly increased their overseas presence, reaching **417 subsidiaries** in the fiscal year 2022-23, up from **399 in the previous year**, according to a recent Reserve Bank of India (RBI) survey. The survey encompasses **14 Indian banks** with foreign branches or subsidiaries and 44 foreign banks with a presence in India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant move towards promoting sustainable and greener energy solutions, **Reliance Industries** has forged a strategic partnership with **DBS Bank India** to establish a financing program targeting farmers and aggregators. The primary objective of this collaboration is to **manage crop residue effectively, utilizing it in the production of compressed biogas (CBG).** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Tata Steel**, a global steel leader, as embarked on a groundbreaking collaboration with **Imperial College London** to establish the **Centre for Innovation in Sustainable Design and Manufacturing in London.** This Memorandum of Understanding signifies a strategic partnership aimed at accelerating technology development and deployment in critical areas, attracting talent and fostering a robust industry-academia collaborative ecosystem. To realize this vision, Tata Steel has committed a substantial **investment of Rs.104 crore over the next four years.** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Union Civil Aviation Minister **Jyotiraditya Scindia** recently unveiled ambitious plans for Uttar Pradesh's aviation infrastructure. The Modi government, displaying a strong commitment to the civil aviation sector, is set to construct **nine new airports** in the state within the next two years. This initiative will propel the total number of airports in Uttar Pradesh to an impressive 18. Scindia highlighted the government's remarkable achievements in the aviation domain, citing the development of **75 airports over the past nine years.** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Bandhan Bank recently announced its official authorization by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to facilitate pension disbursement through **e-Pension Payment Orders (e-PPOs)** on behalf of the **Ministry of Railways.** The bank is in the process of integrating with the Ministry of Railways to streamline and operationalize the pension disbursement process. This mandate extends the bank's reach to approximately **50,000 average Indian Railways retirees annually**, covering all offices, including 17 zonal railways and 8 production units of Indian Railways. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Global rating agency **Moody's Investors Service** has recently reaffirmed the **Baa2 rating for Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)**, maintaining a stable outlook. This affirmation reflects RIL's substantial market presence and strong performance across its diverse business sectors. Moody's projects a significant growth in RIL's consolidated EBITDA, estimating a **14% increase to ₹1.7 trillion (around \$21 billion)** for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. This growth is expected to be driven by robust performances in digital services, retail, and the upstream oil and gas segment. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has approved the release of the second tranche, amounting to approximately **\$337 million**, under the **Extended Fund Facility (EFF)** to **Sri Lanka.** This financial support is a crucial component of Sri Lanka's recovery plan, aimed at overcoming the economic challenges resulting from a historic financial crash in the previous year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Air India, the national carrier**, recently revealed its revamped uniforms for **cabin crew and pilots**, designed by renowned **fashion designer Manish Malhotra.** The grand unveiling took place on **December 12**, adding a touch of glamour and sophistication to the airline's image. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- After seven consecutive months of deflation, **India's wholesale prices rebounded**, recording a growth of 0.26% in November, compared to the -0.52% rate observed in October. The **Commerce and Industry Ministry** attributes this upturn primarily to increased prices in various sectors, including food articles, minerals, machinery & equipment, computer, electronics & optical products, motor vehicles, other transport equipment, and other manufactured goods. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- India's logistics cost for the fiscal year 2021-22 has been revealed to be in the range of **7.8-8.9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**, according to a government survey. This figure is notably lower than previous private survey estimates, which suggested a cost exceeding 10%. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has adjusted India's growth projection for the current financial year, FY24, from 6.3% to a more optimistic 6.7%, citing a robust second-quarter performance that exceeded expectations. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In the first eight months of the current fiscal year, **net direct tax collection** has witnessed a substantial surge, reaching Rs 10.64 trillion. This marks a remarkable 23.4% increase compared to the corresponding period last year. The Ministry of Finance reported that this collection represents 58.34% of the Budget Estimates (BE) for the fiscal year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB)** has inked a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Government of Gujarat**, indicating a massive investment of **Rs.3000 crore**. This strategic move showcases HCCB's dedication to establishing a cutting-edge manufacturing facility for juices and aerated beverages in Rajkot by 2026. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **e-retail market in India** is poised for substantial growth, with a report by **Bain & Company in collaboration with Flipkart** projecting a surge past the **USD 160 billion mark by 2028**. The report highlights key factors contributing to this growth, including affordable data, improved logistics, fintech infrastructure and a robust digital consumer ecosystem. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Tamil Nadu has witnessed a cumulative **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow of nearly \$10 billion** in the past four years (October 2019 to September 2023). However, the state's FDI for the fiscal year 2022-23 stood at \$2.17 billion, a decrease from the previous year's \$3 billion. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Stellantis N.V. CEO Carlos Tavares** highlighted the strategic importance of India in the company's global operations and outlined his vision for the country as part of the **Dare Forward 2030 global strategic plan**. The merged companies that formed **Stellantis** have invested **over \$1 billion since 2015** to establish a sustainable footprint in India, aligning with the Government of India's "**Make in India**" initiative led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In the automotive sector, **India** has stood out as a significant example of progress, surpassing its counterparts in the world's largest markets. According to **S&P Global Mobility forecasts**, India is set to witness a **remarkable 36% growth** in its light vehicle market in 2023, reaching 4.8 million units—a testament to the country's resilience and quick recovery in the post-pandemic era. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has taken a significant stride in fostering sustainable urban development by approving a **USD 200 million loan** to bolster the **Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission-Urban 2.0**. This initiative, committed to making **all cities garbage-free by 2026**, aims to introduce international best practices, integrate new technologies, and adopt climate- and disaster-resilient approaches in municipal solid waste management. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Deposits and advances of all scheduled banks witnessed a remarkable surge, each exceeding **₹2-lakh crore** in the reporting fortnight concluding on December 1, 2023, as per the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Scheduled Banks' Statement of Position in India. Deposits experienced an impressive growth of ₹2,30,727 crore during this period. Advances also recorded a substantial increase, reaching ₹2,15,584 crore. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- India's economic landscape in November 2023 witnessed a decline in merchandise exports by 2.83%, totaling \$33.90 billion, compared to \$34.89 billion in the corresponding month the previous year. This downturn, however, contributed to a positive trend in the **trade deficit**, which narrowed to \$20.58 billion, as revealed by government data released by the Commerce Ministry. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has recently taken strict action against **five cooperative banks**, issuing monetary penalties for deficiencies in regulatory compliance. These cooperative banks include **Indapur Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd**, **Janakalyan Sahakari Bank Ltd**, **The Patan Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd**, **Pune Merchants Co-operative Bank Ltd**, and **Pune Municipal Corporation Servant's Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd**. The penalties were imposed under the powers granted to the RBI by certain provisions of the **Banking Regulation Act, 1949**. ([Click here to read the article](#))



Appointments/Resignations

- **Kothakota Srinivas Reddy**, a distinguished officer with a track record of effective leadership, is set to assume the role of **Hyderabad Police Commissioner**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a recent development, **Parama Sen**, Additional Secretary in the Department of Expenditure at the Finance Ministry, has been appointed as a part-time member of the **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)**. This appointment completes the trio of part-time members on the PFRDA board. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Defence News

- In a significant step towards **fostering gender inclusivity** and strengthening the capabilities of women military personnel in peacekeeping operations, the **Indian Army** recently conducted a **table-top exercise (TTX)** for women officers from the **Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)**. This exercise, held at the **Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi** from December 4 to 8, is part of the ongoing joint military training initiatives between India and ASEAN member states. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- As part of its ongoing long-range deployment to Africa, the **Indian Naval Ship Sumedha** made a historic arrival at **Port Lamu, Kenya** on 09 December 2023. This visit is significant as it marks the **first port call by any Indian Naval Ship** at the recently developed port in Kenya, showcasing the growing maritime collaboration between India and Kenya. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Indian Navy**, in collaboration with various defense, state, and civil agencies, recently concluded a comprehensive two-phased exercise named '**Prasthan**' in the Offshore Development Area off the Mumbai coast. This exercise, conducted every six months, is pivotal in validating and refining measures and procedures aimed at addressing various contingencies that may arise in oil production platforms. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a tribute to the historic military triumph during the **Kargil War**, the Indian Army orchestrated the '**Honour Run – Indian Army Veteran's Half Marathon**' in Delhi on December 10, 2023. The event, conducted under the theme 'Honour Run,' aimed to foster a stronger connection between the Indian Army, veterans, and the public, especially the youth. Participants from diverse backgrounds paid homage to the bravehearts, showcasing the nation's caliber, potential, and energy. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Indian and Vietnamese Armies** have initiated an **11-day military exercise** in Vietnam, commencing on December 11. This collaborative endeavor, named "**VINBAX-23**," reflects the deepening strategic partnership between the two nations and is a response to shared concerns over China's assertive actions in the South China Sea. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Raksha Rajya Mantri **Shri Ajay Bhatt** ceremoniously flagged in a team from the **Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling**, which successfully completed '**Mission Antarctica**.' The expedition, initiated in 2021, was led by Group Captain Jai Kishan and comprised three trekkers. The apex of their achievement was the hoisting of the National Flag, an impressive 7,500 sq ft and weighing 75 kilograms, atop **Mt Rhenock in Sikkim Himalayas** at an astounding altitude of 16,500 feet. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Indian Navy** is set to re-induct a refurbished 22-year-old fast attack craft, **INS Tarmugli**, in a ceremonial commissioning ceremony at the naval dockyard in Visakhapatnam. This event marks a significant milestone, as INS Tarmugli returns to active service more than seventeen years **after being gifted to the Maldives** and subsequently returned to India in May of the current year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)** recently achieved a significant milestone by successfully conducting a flight trial of the Autonomous Flying Wing Technology Demonstrator, an indigenous high-speed flying-wing **Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)**. This successful demonstration places India in an elite group of countries that have mastered the controls for flying wing technology. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)**, a **Navratna Defence Public Sector Undertaking**, has recently clinched a significant order worth **Rs.4,522 crore from the Indian Army**. The order, pertaining to the supply of fuses for various calibres, is a testament to BEL's continued commitment to contributing to the '**Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India) initiative**'. The project is set to involve the collaboration of Indian Electronics and associated Industries, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) serving as sub-vendors for BEL. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Ministry of Defence**, in a significant development on December 15, 2023, sealed a landmark contract with **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Pune**. This groundbreaking agreement entails the procurement of **Electronic Fuzes** for the Indian Army over a 10-year period, amounting to a total cost of Rs 5,336.25 crore. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- Indian social activist **Nikhil Dey** has been honored as an **International Anti-Corruption Champion by the US government for 2023**. This recognition highlights his decades-long commitment to empowering peasants and workers while exposing corruption in the delivery of government services. Dey is the **co-founder of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS)**, a Rajasthan-based organization at the forefront of transparency and anti-corruption movements in India. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Kabir Bedi** was awarded the **“Order of Merit of the Italian Republic” (Merito della Repubblica Italiana)**, the country’s highest honour awarded to civilians, at a private ceremony held in Mumbai. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a momentous ceremony on Nov 27, 2023, in New Delhi, **Dr. Hemachandran Ravikumar** was honored with the **Karmaveer Chakra Medal and Rex Karmaveer Global Fellowship** by ICONGO in collaboration with the United Nations, in recognition of his exceptional contributions to R&D in Physical & Bio-Science and Microbiological Studies. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The literary world is set to celebrate as the **33rd Vyasa Samman, 2023**, is announced to honor the accomplished **Hindi writer Pushpa Bharati** for her 2016 memoir, **“Yaadein, Yaadein aur Yaadein.”** This prestigious award is bestowed by the **KK Birla Foundation**, recognizing outstanding contributions to Hindi literature. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Former UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon**, along with three distinguished diplomats, was honored at the annual **‘Diwali Power of One Awards.’** This prestigious ceremony, often hailed as the ‘Oscars of Diplomacy,’ celebrated their selfless contributions to shaping a more perfect, peaceful, and secure world. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The veteran lyricist-screenwriter **Javed Akhtar** is set to be honored with the **Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award** at the upcoming **Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Dr. Atul Shah**, a plastic surgeon, has been honored with the **2023 REACH Game Changing Innovator award** for his groundbreaking contribution to leprosy care. Three decades ago, Dr. Shah devised a simple surgery technique, ‘One in Four Lasso,’ to address deformities in leprosy patients. His journey took a transformative turn when he observed the challenges of managing unhealed foot wounds. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023** has been jointly conferred upon renowned classical pianist and conductor **Daniel Barenboim** and Palestinian peace activist **Ali Abu Awwad**. The award recognizes their exceptional contributions in bringing together the youth and peoples of Israel and the Arab World for a non-violent resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- legends **Vijay Amritraj and Leander Paes** have etched their names into the annals of the sport as the first Asian men to be inducted into the esteemed International Tennis Hall of Fame. This achievement not only crowns their remarkable careers but also elevates India to the 28th nation represented in this prestigious institution. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant recognition of her outstanding contributions to chemistry education, **Professor Savita Ladage** from Mumbai’s Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, has been awarded the prestigious **Royal Society of Chemistry’s Nyholm Prize** for Education. Her unwavering dedication to advancing chemistry education in India and mentoring fellow educators has placed her among the esteemed winners of this accolade. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has taken a significant stride in fostering sustainable urban development by approving a **USD 200 million loan** to bolster the **Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission-Urban 2.0**. This initiative, committed to making **all cities garbage-free by 2026**, aims to introduce international best practices, integrate new technologies, and adopt climate- and disaster-resilient approaches in municipal solid waste management. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a remarkable event that celebrated beauty, talent, and cultural pride, the annual **Miss India USA 2023 pageant** held in New Jersey showcased the triumph of **Rijul Maini**, a 24-year-old medical student from Michigan. The pageant, now in its 41st year, witnessed contestants from over 25 states participating in three categories: **Miss India USA, Mrs India USA, and Miss Teen India USA**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Real Vision Homes Pvt Ltd** proudly announces the remarkable achievement of its esteemed Chairman, **Dr. Srinivas Naik Dharavath**, who has been honored with the **Visionary Leader Icon Award of the Year 2023** by the Advocates Association For Social Responsibility And Awareness (AASRAA). The prestigious award was presented at the 5th National Summit held at the Constitution Club of India in New Delhi on 24th Nov 2023. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- The Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated the **first Indian Art, Architecture & Design Biennale (IAADB) 2023** at the iconic Red Fort. The event also marked the launch of the ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design’ and the student Biennale, Samunnati. During the inaugural ceremony, Shri Modi unveiled the ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design’ and explored the exhibition, emphasizing the Red Fort’s historical importance. The establishment of cultural spaces in **five major cities namely** Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi was highlighted as a historic step to enrich these cities culturally. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Invest India**, the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of the Government of India, is set to host the **27th World Investment Conference (WIC)** from December 11-14, 2023. The event, under the aegis of the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, promises to be a groundbreaking platform for global investment promotion and innovation stakeholders. This year’s conference will delve into the theme of **“Empowering Investors: IPAs Pioneering Future Growth.”** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- India has decided to defer the **Quad summit meeting**, originally scheduled for January 2024, citing scheduling conflicts for certain Quad partners. The summit involves the participation of India, Australia, the US, and Japan. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The annual **Global Partnership for Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit** commenced at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on December 12, emphasizing crucial discussions on **AI safety** and development challenges. With participation from 29 countries across North and South America, Europe, and Asia, India stands as the **lead chair for GPAI in 2024**, excluding China from the member list. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change concluded with a groundbreaking decision – the **“UAE Consensus”** – marking a historic step towards addressing the climate crisis. However, the agreement has stirred debates due to perceived discrepancies between words and actions and a lack of financial commitments. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **two-week-long COP28 in Dubai**, United Arab Emirates (UAE), concluded on December 13 with member nations engaging in extended talks on the final text. In the closing plenary, **COP28 President Sultan Al Jaber** highlighted the summit’s achievements, emphasizing a robust action plan aimed at limiting global warming to the **targeted 1.5 degrees Celsius over pre-industrial times set in the 2015 Paris deal.** ([Click here to read the article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- In a major leap towards sustainable practices, India has clinched the **7th position** in the latest edition of the **Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI)**. The announcement, made during the COP-28 in Dubai, solidifies India’s status as a top performer for the fifth consecutive year. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **India**, once a powerhouse in the global startup ecosystem, has experienced a significant downturn in its funding trajectory, slipping to the **fourth position** in the **global ranking** among the highest-funded geographies in **2023**. This decline comes after securing the third spot in both 2021 and 2022. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a significant market shift, **ITC Ltd** has emerged as the **third most valuable tobacco company globally**, overtaking **British American Tobacco (BAT)**. The transition follows a sell-off in BAT shares, underscoring ITC’s dynamic business diversification. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a recent survey conducted by US-based consultancy firm **‘Morning Consult,’** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has secured the top position as the world’s most popular leader, boasting an impressive **approval rating of 76%**. This notable achievement places him more than 10 percentage points ahead of the next leader in the rankings. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Quality of Living Index 2023** by Mercer, a renowned global consultant for businesses, **Pune has secured the second-best position** in terms of ‘quality of life’ in India. The city trails just behind Hyderabad, marking a significant improvement from the previous rankings. The Quality of Living City Index by Mercer positions Pune at **154th**, with **Hyderabad slightly ahead at 153rd**, and **Bengaluru following closely at 156th.** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **58-years-old iconic actor, Shah Rukh Khan**, has etched his name in the annals of box office history with two action-packed thrillers, **“Pathaan”** and **“Jawaan,”** and is now gearing up for the release of the **comedy-drama film, “Dunki.”** While Shah Rukh Khan claimed the top position, the talented and popular actress **Alia Bhatt secured the second spot on the list.** **Priyanka Chopra Jonas**, a global icon, clinched the third position on the **‘Eastern Eye’** annual list. Securing the fourth place on the prestigious list is **Diljit Dosanjh**, celebrated as the **biggest Punjabi star.** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The recently unveiled **Hurun India Top 100 Under 30 List 2023** has showcased inspiring success stories of young entrepreneurs making waves in various industries. **Kaivalya Vohra (21)** and **Aadit Palicha (22)**, the founders of the Quick Commerce app **Zepto**, have claimed the top spots. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Sports News

- The cricket world witnessed outstanding performances in **November 2023**, with Australian batter **Travis Head** and spin maestro **Nahida Akter** earning the prestigious **ICC Men’s and Women’s Player of the Month awards**, respectively. Let’s delve into their remarkable achievements that secured them these honors. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Pakistan’s cricket fraternity bids farewell to one of its stalwarts as **Asad Shafiq**, the middle-order batter, announces his retirement from all forms of the game at the age of 37. Shafiq, who made his international debut in 2010, leaves behind a legacy of resilience and reliability, particularly in Test cricket. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a major milestone, the **Indian Premier League (IPL)** has achieved decacorn status, with its combined brand value seeing a remarkable **28% surge** to reach an impressive **\$10.7 billion**. This significant growth is reported by Brand Finance, marking a phenomenal **433% increase** in the IPL system’s brand value since its launch in 2008. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **12th edition** of the eagerly awaited **Admiral’s Cup Sailing Regatta** concluded at Ettikulam Beach, INA, Ezhimala. The event concluded with a glittering closing ceremony, celebrating the triumphs and sportsmanship displayed by sailors from around the world. The top honor of the Admiral’s Cup 23 went to **Team Italy**, represented by **Midshipman Avallone Antonio** and **Midshipman Creati Carlo Leonardo**. Their exceptional sailing skills and strategic prowess secured the coveted Admiral’s Cup for Italy. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Indian wrestler **Antim Panghal** has been named the **Rising Star of the Year among women** by the **United World Wrestling (UWW)**, the sport’s global governing body. The 19-year-old dynamo, competing in the 53 kg category, has had a remarkable season that has not only garnered accolades but has also overshadowed senior stalwart Vinesh Phogat in the same weight class. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a move echoing the tribute to cricket legends, the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** has decided to retire the iconic **No.7 jersey** worn by former captain **MS Dhoni**. This decision follows the precedent set by **Sachin Tendulkar’s No.10, retired in 2017**. Going forward, no other Indian cricketer will sport the No.7 jersey. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** is reportedly considering the **introduction of a T10 format cricket league**, aiming for a launch window between **September and October 2024**. This move aligns with the flourishing popularity and valuation of cricket leagues, particularly the Indian Premier League (IPL), which recently attained a decacorn status with a valuation of **approximately \$10.7 billion**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Schemes and Committees News

- Women’s empowerment is crucial for building a strong and developed nation, especially when women thrive economically, contributing to rural prosperity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s initiative, **NAMO Drone Didi**, announced on November 30, aims to **empower 15,000 women Self Help Groups (SHGs) by providing drones for agricultural purposes**. This innovative approach harnesses technology to empower rural women, positioning them at the forefront of the agricultural revolution. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **PM Street Vendor’s AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme**, launched during the **COVID-19 outbreak**, has emerged as a crucial initiative in supporting urban street vendors. The scheme, designed as a micro-credit program, has disbursed an impressive total of **Rs 9,790 crore** in loans to beneficiaries, as disclosed by the government in the Rajya Sabha. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **YUVAi-Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI**, a collaborative initiative of the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, and **Intel India**, is poised to take center stage at the upcoming Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit. This groundbreaking program, designed to impart essential AI skills to the youth, is gaining recognition for its innovative approach and commitment to building a future-ready workforce. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change** has introduced the **Indian Forest & Wood Certification Scheme**. This voluntary national certification initiative aims to encourage sustainable forest management and agroforestry practices in India. The scheme encompasses forest management certification, tree outside forest management certification, and chain of custody certification. ([Click here to read the article](#))

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- The Ministry of Food Processing reveals substantial growth in the sector, with beneficiaries of the **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** investing a staggering ₹7,126 crore. Notably, cumulative sales reached ₹49,825 crore during the April-September period. The PLI Scheme, spearheaded by the Ministry, aims to address critical aspects of the food processing industry. With a focus on generating employment for **approximately 250,000 individuals**, the scheme incentivizes manufacturing in four key categories: ready-to-cook and ready-to-eat products, processed fruits and vegetables, marine products, and mozzarella cheese. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The Government of India, unwavering in its commitment to providing safe and potable tap water to every rural household in the country launched the **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** in August 2019. This mission, implemented in collaboration with states, aims to ensure the provision of water in adequate quantity and of prescribed quality on a regular and long-term basis. Consequently, out of the 19.24 Crore rural households in the country, approximately 71.51% (13.76 Crore) now have tap water supply in their homes. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- EPFO recorded a substantial rise to 28.69 lakh women subscribers in FY23, a significant increase from 15.94 lakh in 2019-20, signaling positive job creation trends. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Science and Technology News

- In a landmark collaboration, scientists from the **Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)** and **Bengaluru-based IDRS Labs** have united their expertise to develop **Aktocyte tablets for the treatment of pelvic cancer**. The tablets, designed as an adjuvant to cancer radiotherapy, regenerative nutraceutical, immunomodulator, and antioxidant, mark a significant advancement in cancer care, according to a statement from the DAE. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Important Days News

- Every year on **December 11**, we celebrate **International Mountain Day** to remind ourselves of the incredible importance of mountains in our lives. This special day, designated by the United Nations, encourages us to think about how we can protect these natural wonders and ensure a better future for our planet. This year, the theme is **"Restoring Mountain Ecosystems."** ([Click here to read the article](#))
- The **International Day of Neutrality**, observed annually on **December 12**, holds paramount significance in promoting global peace, sovereignty, and the resolution of conflicts through diplomatic means. ([Click here to read the article](#))

- **Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day**, observed annually on **December 12**, serves as a global reminder of the essential need for a healthcare system that provides equitable and comprehensive health care with financial protection for all. The theme for UHC Day 2023, **"Health For All: Time for Action,"** underscores the urgency for leaders to implement policies ensuring equitable access to essential health services without financial hardship. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **National Energy Conservation Day** is observed in India on **December 14** every year to celebrate the country's strides in energy efficiency and conservation. It is an opportunity for individuals, communities, businesses, institutions, and governments to reflect on their roles in contributing to energy conservation through embracing various energy-efficient practices. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Vijay Diwas**, observed on **December 16** every year, stands as a testament to the valor and sacrifice of the Indian armed forces during the 1971 war against Pakistan. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Obituaries News

- **Joe Solomon**, the former **West Indies and Guyana cricket player**, has passed away at the age of 93. Solomon was a big part of West Indies cricket in the late 1950s and 1960s, and he's remembered for his amazing performances on the field. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- In a poignant moment for fans and the film fraternity, the revered Kannada actor **Leelavathi** has passed away at the age of 86. The seasoned artist, known for her versatile performances, left an indelible mark on the **Kannada, Malayalam, Tamil, and Telugu film industries**. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Dr. Gao Yaojie**, a trailblazing **Chinese doctor and activist**, passed away at the age of 95 in her home in the United States. She was **known for her fearless exposure of the AIDS virus epidemic in rural China** during the 1990s. Columbia University professor Andrew J. Nathan, who had legal power of attorney for Gao, confirmed her passing. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- Emmy-winning actor **Andre Braugher**, renowned for his notable roles in series such as **"Homicide: Life on The Street"** and **"Brooklyn Nine-Nine,"** has sadly passed away at the age of 61. His publicist, Jennifer Allen, confirmed the news, citing a brief illness as the cause. Born in Chicago, Braugher gained widespread recognition with his breakthrough role in the 1989 film "Glory," alongside Morgan Freeman and Denzel Washington. ([Click here to read the article](#))

Miscellaneous News

- In a momentous occasion for India, **Pune** has etched its name in the prestigious '**Guinness World Record**' books by hosting the **largest reading activity** in collaboration, surpassing China's previous record. On December 14th, 2023, from 8-10 am at SP College, a remarkable total of **3,066 parents gathered to read aloud to their children**, creating a magical atmosphere and leaving an indelible mark in history. ([Click here to read the article](#))
- **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has granted an aerodrome license for the **Ayodhya Airport**, paving the way for its inaugural flight on December 30. Developed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) at a cost of **₹350 crore**, the airport is strategically timed for inauguration ahead of

the upcoming **Ram Mandir inauguration in Ayodhya**. ([Click here to read the article](#))

