

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

15TH DEC. 2023

DESCRIPTIVE

❖ **Shah Rukh Khan Tops UK's 2023 South Asian Celebrity List**

➤ Bollywood superstar **Shah Rukh Khan**, referred to as the King Khan of the Indian film industry, has topped a UK list of the '**Top 50 Asian Celebrities in the World**'.

➤ The 58-year-old actor, who had double box-office success this year with action thrillers "**Pathaan**" and "**Jawan**", is currently preparing for the Christmas release of comedy-drama "**Dunki**".

➤ Khan beat off tough competition to make it to the annual list published by UK weekly Eastern Eye.

➤ King Khan will become the first leading man from the modern era to have three huge Bollywood blockbuster hits in a calendar year.

➤ Popular actor **Alia Bhatt** came in **second** for her impact in Bollywood and Hollywood and also for being a strong role model for working mothers.

➤ Third - Priyanka Chopra Jonas

➤ Fourth - Diljit Dosanjh

➤ Fifth - Charli XCX (UK)

➤ Sixth - Ranbir Kapoor

❖ **SBI to sign Rs 630 crore LoC with Germany's KfW for solar projects**

➤ State Bank of India (SBI) will sign 70 million euro (about Rs 630 crore) Line of Credit (LoC) with German Development Bank KfW for promoting solar project in the country.

- The agreement will be signed on December 14 at the bank's IFSC Gift City Branch in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The LoC is aimed at supporting Solar Photovoltaics (PV) projects in India.
- The country's largest lender SBI reported a 9.13 per cent growth in consolidated net profit for the September quarter to Rs 16,099.58 crore as against Rs 14,752 crore in the year-ago period.
- On a standalone basis, it posted a net profit of Rs 14,330.02 crore as against Rs 13,264.52 crore in the year-ago period.
- The bank reported a total income of over Rs 1.12 lakh crore for the quarter under review, up from Rs 88,733 crore in the year-ago period.
- **About State Bank of India (SBI):**
- **Chairperson:** Dinesh Kumar Khara
- **Managing directors:** Challa Setty
- **Founded:** 1 July 1955
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra

❖ **National Energy Conservation Day 2023: 14th December**

- 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.
- The President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu will grace the National Energy Conservation Day 2023 function being held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) under the Ministry of Power organizes the National Energy Conservation Awards annually on December 14.

➤ These awards commend the efforts of industrial units, institutions, and establishments in reducing energy consumption.

❖ **ADB's USD 200 million boost for clean India**

➤ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 200 million loan to support 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

➤ ADB's financing will contribute to the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0- Comprehensive Municipal Waste Management in Indian Cities Program, emphasizing the improvement of sanitation practices.

➤ This initiative seeks to engage the private sector, strengthen women's participation in sanitation and service delivery, and enhance waste management facilities in 100 cities across eight states.

➤ **About Asian Development Bank (ADB):**

➤ **Headquarters:** Mandaluyong, Philippines

➤ **Founded:** 19 December 1966

➤ **President:** Masatsugu Asakawa

❖ **Leander Paes, Vijay Amritraj become first Asian men elected to Tennis Hall of Fame**

➤ Former doubles world No.1 Leander Paes and broadcaster Vijay Amritraj became the first Asian men to be elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame.

➤ Renowned journalist and writer Richard Evans also was elected to receive the ultimate honor in tennis.

- Paes, 50, who won 18 Grand Slam titles in men's doubles and mixed doubles, along with former player Amritraj helped India become the 28th nation to represent in the Hall of Fame.
- The Class of 2024 will be officially inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame on Saturday, July 20, 2024 in Newport, Rhode Island.
- Amritraj, also chosen in the Contributor Category, and Paes, who enters in the Player Category, are both from India and that country's first members of the shrine.
- Chinese player 'Li Na', who has won two Grand Slam titles, is the first Asian player to join the women's category.
- She was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame (ITHF) in the year 2019.

➤ **International Tennis Hall of Fame:**

➤ **Established:** 1880

➤ **Founder:** James J. Van Alen

❖ **India's wholesale inflation increased to 0.26 per cent in November**

- India's wholesale inflation increased to 0.26 per cent in November on an annual basis as against a contraction of 0.52 per cent in October.
- The inflation for primary articles increased to 4.76 per cent as against 1.82 per cent in the previous month.
- Meanwhile, the fuel and power and manufacturing sector contracted to (-) 4.61 and (-) 0.64 per cent respectively.
- The inflation rate stood at 0.53 per cent as against a contraction of (-) 0.46 per cent.
- Wholesale price index (WPI) had remained in deflation for seven consecutive months, however, experts had indicated that a rise in domestic food prices may lead to a reversal in WPI towards inflation in November.

➤ The number has remained within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) tolerance band of 2-6 per cent.

❖ **Asian Development Bank raises India's growth forecast to 6.7% for FY24**

➤ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has revised India's growth forecast for the current financial year to 6.7%, citing stronger-than-expected second-quarter performance.

➤ This adjustment marks an increase from the previous projection of 6.3%, as revealed in the Asian Development Outlook December 2023 report.

➤ The second quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24 witnessed a remarkable GDP growth of 7.6%, propelling the cumulative growth in the first half (April-September) to an impressive 7.7%.

➤ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) also revised its growth estimate last week, raising it to 7% from the earlier projection of 6.5% for FY24.

➤ This alignment in growth projections by two influential financial institutions underscores a positive outlook for India's economic trajectory.

❖ **Ministry of Health authorises Pharmacy Council of India to perform Aadhaar authentication**

➤ The Union Health Ministry has authorised the Pharmacy Council of India (PCI) to perform Aadhaar authentication on voluntary basis for the purpose of authenticating the officials, faculty and students on the portal for capturing the attendance of the faculty through biometrics using Yes, No or / and eKYC authentication.

➤ A Gazette notification in regard to this was also published on November 23, 2023.

➤ The Pharmacy Council of India shall adhere to the provisions of Act, Rules, Regulations or Guidelines made there under and directions with respect to use of

Aadhaar authentication as laid down by the UIDAI/Central Government from time to time.

➤ This measure aims to enhance security and ensure accurate identification within the system to modernise attendance tracking and streamline administrative processes.

❖ **Zepto founders top Hurun India's list of 'Top 100 under 30'**

➤ The young entrepreneurs Kaivalya Vohra (21) and Aadit Palicha (22), founders of the Quick Commerce app Zepto, have claimed the top spots in the Hurun India Top 100 Under 30 List 2023.

➤ The list showcases 100 entrepreneurs aged 30 and below who have demonstrated exceptional prowess in their respective fields.

➤ Zepto, the brainchild of Vohra and Palicha, stands out for its commitment to delivering a diverse array of products within minutes.

➤ The app caters to a wide spectrum of consumer needs, ranging from online groceries and fresh produce to personal care items and electronics.

➤ Earlier this year, the company secured \$200 million in funding which propelled Zepto's valuation to \$1.4 billion, marking it as the first Indian unicorn of 2023.

➤ The fourth and fifth positions on the list were secured by Rahul Rawat (24) of Space Technology Digantara and Anirudh Singla (24) of Content Marketing Pepper, further exemplifying the diverse talents emerging from India's youth.

❖ **Britain, Japan and Italy sign advanced fighter jet programme treaty**

➤ Britain, Japan and Italy have signed an international treaty to establish a combat air programme aimed at developing an advanced fighter jet.

➤ The three countries established their first major defence industry collaboration by merging the separate next-generation fighter efforts of London and Tokyo.

- The parliaments of each country must ratify the agreement, which aims to see the combat aircraft in flight by 2035.
- The joint development phase of the programme is due to launch in 2025.
- Both the joint government headquarters of the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) and its industry counterpart will be based in Britain.
- The supersonic stealth jet will feature a radar that can provide 10,000 times more data than current systems.
- Britain's BAE Systems, Italy's Leonardo, European missile maker MBDA and engine maker Rolls-Royce are involved in the project.

❖ **India's inaugural Formula 4 night race in Chennai postponed to next season**

- India's inaugural Formula 4 (F4) Championship race in Chennai has been postponed to the next racing season due to Cyclone Michaung and subsequent floods.
- The organiser, Racing Promotions (RPPL), has announced that the night race, initially planned for December 9–10 on the newly designed Chennai street circuit, has been rescheduled to the next racing season.
- This racing circuit, spanning a 3.7-km route, is the longest street circuit in India and South Asia, stretching across Island Grounds, Victory War Memorial, Napier Bridge, Sivananda Salai, and Mount Road in the heart of the city.
- Chennai witnessed an unprecedented amount of cyclonic rainfall due to Cyclone Michaung in the first week of December.

❖ **ADB to extend \$200-mn loan to boost power supply in Dehradun**

- India signed an agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for a \$200-million loan to improve power supply in Uttarakhand.
- The project will modernise Dehradun city's power network infrastructure by introducing an advanced and climate-resilient underground cable system

comprising 537 km subterranean cables, 354 ring main units, and 99 compact substations.

- The Uttarakhand Climate Resilient Power System Development Project will install upstream substations and their associated power lines that will help meet increasing electricity demand, reduce network congestion and improve power distribution.
- The funding will help Uttarakhand achieve its goal of providing 24x7 power to its residents.
- The project will also empower women self-help groups in rural hilly districts, providing them with access to renewable energy sources and energy - efficient equipment to enhance their livelihoods.

❖ **India gets elected to the Governing Council of UNIDROIT with big support**

- India's first woman candidate, Uma Sekhar was elected to the Governing Council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) with an impressive 45 votes out of 59 votes in the first round at the elections held in Rome, Italy.
- To be elected to the Governing Council, 21 votes were required. India will be a member of the Governing Council for the period 2024-28.
- The Governing Council consists of 25 positions which are held by distinguished legal experts.
- In election there were 32 contestants in the fray including from USA, China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and France among others.

➤ **About UNIDROIT:**

➤ **Formation:** 1926

➤ **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy

➤ **Membership:** 65 States

➤ **Secretary General:** Ignacio Tirado

➤ **President:** Maria Chiara Malaguti

❖ **Music conductor Daniel Barenboim, peace activist Ali Abu Awwad awarded Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace 2023**

➤ Classical Pianist Daniel Barenboim and peace activist Ali Abu Awwad have been named the winners of the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2023 for their efforts in bringing together the youth and people of Israel and the Arab world for a non-violent resolution of the Israel- Palestine conflict.

➤ The International jury, headed by former Chief Justice of India T.S. Thakur, named these two as winners for their contribution.

➤ Mr. Barenboim is an Argentina-born classical pianist and conductor, renowned for performing with directing some of the leading orchestras in the world.

➤ Mr. Ali Abu Awwad is Palestinian peace activist who has been working tirelessly with the people of Palestine and Israel for a peace full resolution of the ongoing conflict.

➤ The Indira Gandhi Prize, is also known as Indira Gandhi Peace Prize for peace, Disarmament and Development, is a prestigious award established in 1986 by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust (IGMT) to honour individuals or organizations for their outstanding contributions to international peace, development, and a new international economic order.

➤ The Indira Gandhi Prize consist of a cash award of 25 Lakh (2.5 million) Indian Rupees, a citation, and a trophy.

➤ The recipient is honoured at a ceremony held annually on November 19, the birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi.

❖ **AMRIT Technology For Removal of Arsenic And Metal Ions From Water**

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Madras has developed a technology called 'AMRIT' (Arsenic and Metal Removal by Indian Technology) for the removal of Arsenic and Metal ions from water.
- The technology uses nano-scale iron oxy-hydroxide, which selectively removes arsenic when water is passed through it.
- This technology is suitable for both domestic and community- level water purification, aligning with the objectives of the Jal Jeevan Mission.
- Arsenic is a chemical element that occurs naturally in the Earth's crust.
- Arsenic can be found in various forms, including inorganic and organic compounds.
- Long term intake of Arsenic contaminated water leads to arsenic poisoning or arsenicosis, with cancer of skin, bladder, kidney or lung diseases of skin.

❖ **World's first liquid Oxygen-Methane powered launch Vehicle "Zhuque-2 Y-3" Launched by China**

- China-based private space technology firm, Land Space Technology Corporation, successfully launched the Zhuque-2 Y- 3, the world's first liquid oxygen-methane powered launch vehicle, carrying 3 satellites, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center, Inner Mongolia region, China.
- With this, LandSpace became the world's first company to launch satellites using a rocket fueled by Methane and liquid oxygen.
- The 3 satellites: Honghu satellite, Tianyi 33 satellite and Honghu-2 satellite, were launched into the predetermined orbit.

❖ International Gender Equality Prize 2023 went to an Afghanistan NGO

- Finland awarded the International Gender Equality Prize for 2023 to an NGO in Afghanistan that works to promote and protect the rights of women in Afghanistan.
- The organization Afghan Women's Skills Development Center does important humanitarian work to promote the safety of Afghan women.
- Prime Minister Petteri Orpo attended the ceremony and presented the EUR 300,000 Prize to the organization's representative, Mahbouba Seraj, in Tampere.
- The task of the Afghan Women Skills Development Center is to provide Afghan women with training and to support their skills development and economic empowerment.
- The organisation operates in eight provinces around the country.
- Finland was one of the first countries in the world to extend the right to vote and stand for elections to all women and men in 1906.
- Finland was also the first country to elect women to Parliament; 19 women were elected to the 200-seat Parliament in 1907.