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1. Tamil Nadu government announces Rs 1000, rice and sugar to ration holders on the occasion of Pongal (Dec. 23, 2022)

Tamil Nadu government announces Rs 1000, rice and sugar to ration holders on the occasion of Pongal

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister **M K Stalin** has announced that the ration card holders in the state will get **Rs 1000**, one **kg of rice and sugar each** on the occasion of pongal harvest festival to be held in January 2023.

According to the state government all 'Rice' ration card holders will be eligible for including the families residing in Sri Lankan Rehabilitation Camps.

It is expected to benefit 2.19 crore ration card holders and the government will entail an additional expenditure of Rs 2,356.67 crore.

The chief minister will launch the Pongal Gift scheme on January 2. The festival will be celebrated on 15 January 2023.

Pongal festival

Pongal is a harvest festival celebrated by the Tamil community. It is a celebration to thank the Sun, Mother Nature and the various farm animals that help to contribute to a bountiful harvest. Celebrated over four days, Pongal also marks the beginning of the Tamil month called *Thai*, which is considered an auspicious month. It usually falls on the 14th or 15th of January each year.

Pongal is also the name of the dish made and eaten during this festival. It is a mixture of boiled sweet rice. It is derived from the Tamil word *pongu*, which means "to boil over".

First day of pongal is called **Bhogi Pongal**. The second day is called **Surya Pongal where Sun god is worshiped**. The third day is called **Maatu pongal** where the cattles (Maatu) are worshiped **and** the 4th day is observed as **Kaanum Pongal**.

2. CJI D Y Chandrachud constitutes a committee to conduct accessibility audit of Supreme Court premises for disabled (Dec. 23, 2022)

The committee which was set up on 22 December 2022 will be headed by the Supreme Court Judge S Ravindra Bhat.

The Chief Justice of India (CJI) **D Y Chandrachud** has set up a committee to conduct an audit of "physical and functional access" of the top court premises to make them disabled friendly.

The committee which was set up on 22 December 2022 will be headed by the **Supreme Court Judge S Ravindra Bhat**.

The committee will prepare a report on the accessibility audit, result of the survey of persons with disability and recommendations/proposals geared towards removing the barriers to access.

The other members of the committee include **Dr Sanjay Jain**, professor of National Law School of India University, Bengaluru, **Shakti Mishra**, librarian nominated from the apex court, **V Sridhar Reddy**, advocate nominated by the Supreme Court Bar Association and **Nilesh Singit**, independent accessibility expert nominated by the Centre for Disability Studies (NALSAR University of Law).

3. England's Sam Curran breaks Indian Premier League auction record (Dec. 23, 2022)

England all-rounder Sam Curran became the Indian Premier League's (IPL) most expensive ever buy in the players' auction held on 23 December 2022.

England all-rounder **Sam Curran** became the Indian Premier League's (IPL) most expensive ever buy in the players' auction held on 23 December 2022.

The **Punjab Kings** bought Sam Curran for Rs 18.5 crore (\$2.23 million) following a bidding war involving the Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians.

Curran, who was player-of-the-series in England's T20 World Cup triumph in Australia this year, previously featured for the Punjab Kings in 2019.

The earliest highest bid for a player in the IPL was that of South African all-rounder **Chris Morris**. He was bought by Rajasthan Royals last year for Rs 16.25 crore.

The previous record fee paid for Morris was broken once more with Mumbai Indians paying Rs 17.5 crore for Australian all-rounder Cameron Green.

The highest paid Indian player at the IPL has been **Yuvraj Singh**. He was bought for Rs 16 crore by the **Delhi Daredevil** in 2015.

Gujarat Titans are the current IPL champion team. The first IPL was held in 2008 which was won by the Rajasthan Royals team.

There are currently 8 teams in the IPL. They are **Chennai Super Kings, Delhi Capitals, Gujarat Titans, Kolkata Knight Riders, Lucknow SuperGiants, Mumbai Indians, Punjab Kings, Rajasthan Royals, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad.**

IPL Chairman: Arun Dhumal

4. Harmanpreet Singh to captain Indian team at the FIH men's world cup 2023 (Dec. 23, 2022)

Harmanpreet Singh to captain Indian team at the FIH men's world cup 2023

Hockey India has announced Dragflicker **Harmanpreet Singh** as the captain of the Indian men's Hockey team for the FIH Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup 2023. **Amit Rohidas** has been named as the vice-captain of the squad. The team coach is **Graham Reid**.

The FIH Men's Hockey World Cup is held **every four years** and the 2022 event was postponed to 2023 due to the corona pandemic .The last 14th FIH Men's World Cup Hockey was also played in Odisha in 2018.

The 15th FIH men's world cup will be held at the **Kalinga Stadium Bhubaneswar** and at the newly built **Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium, Rourkela** from 13-20 January 2023. The newly built Birsa Munda stadium is the **largest hockey stadium in India** with a seating capacity of 20,000 people

The final match will be played at the Kalinga Stadium on 29 January 2023.

This is the **fourth time** India is hosting the FIH men's world cup. It has hosted it in **1982, Bombay, 2010 New Delhi, 2018 Bhubaneswar** and 2023 in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela.

15th FIH Men's' World Cup

A total of 16 teams are participating in the World cup and they have been divided into 4 pools.

Pool A: Australia, South Africa, France, Argentina

Pool B: Belgium, Japan, Korea, Germany

Pool C: Netherlands, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand

Pool D: **India**, Wales, Spain, England

Belgium are the defending team having won the 1028 edition.

India has won the world cup only **once in 1975** at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. They defeated Pakistan in the final and the Indian team was led by **Ajit Pal Singh**.

Pakistan is the most successful team having won it **4 times**. However the Pakistani team has failed to qualify for the 2023 edition.

FIH

FIH (Fédération Internationale de Hockey) is the governing body of men's and women's International hockey.

Headquarters: **Lausanne, Switzerland**

President: Mohammad Tayyab Ikram

Members: 137 countries

5. Noted Telugu actor, producer, director Kaikala Satyanarayana no more (Dec. 23, 2022)

director Kaikala Satyanarayana no more

Veteran Telugu actor, producer and director **Kaikala Satyanarayana** died on 23 December 2022 in Hyderabad due to age related ailments. He was 87 years old.

Kaikala Satyanarayana, also known as Navarasa Natana Sarvabhouma, was born on July 25, 1935, in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh

He acted in around 750 movies and was known for 'Kurukshestramu' (1977), 'Daana Veera Soora Karna' (1977) and 'Sri Krishnarjuna Yudham' (1963).

He also had a brief political career and was a Member of Parliament for the Telugu Desam Party (TDP).

Mr Satyanarayana received several awards including the Raghupati Venkaiah Award (2011), Filmfare Lifetime Achievement award for Telugu cinema (2017) and the Andhra Pradesh government's Nandi film awards.

6. Suhel Ajaz Khan appointed India's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia (Dec. 22, 2022)

The Government of India has appointed senior diplomat **Suhel Ajaz Khan** as India's new ambassador to [Saudi Arabia](#). Suhel Ajaz Khan is a 1997-batch Indian Foreign Service officer and is presently serving as Indian ambassador to Lebanon.

Khan worked at the Indian Embassy in Riyadh between September 2017 and June 2019 as Deputy Chief of Mission.

India Saudi Arabia Relations

Saudi Arabia which is the largest exporter of crude oil in the world and is the custodian of two of holiest mosques of Islam, **Al Haram in Mecca** and **Al-Haram or forbidden mosques** in Medina.

During the visit of Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh to Saudi Arabia in 2010 elevated the India-Saudi Arabia tie to **'Strategic Partnership'**.

During PM Modi visit to Saudi Arabia in 2019 Strategic Partnership Council Agreement was signed, which established a high-level council to steer the Indo-Saudi relationship.

Saudi Arabia is India's **fourth largest trading partner** after the United States of America, China and the United Arab Emirates.

More than 18% of India's crude oil imports are sourced from Saudi Arabia. During April - December 2022, bilateral trade was valued at US\$29.28 billion. During this period, India's imports from Saudi Arabia were valued at US\$22.65 billion and exports to Saudi Arabia were worth US\$6.63 billion.

There are about **22 lakhs Indians** living in Saudi Arabia and they constitute the largest expatriate community in Saudi Arabia.

Capital of Saudi Arabia: **Riyadh**

Currency: **Saudi Riyal**

King of Saudi Arabia: **King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**

7. Alope Singh appointed head of Air India's low cost airline business (Dec. 22, 2022)

Tata Group has appointed **Alope Singh** as the chief of its low cost airline business from 1 January 2023. The Low Cost Carrier business will comprise **AirAsia India** and **Air India Express**.

Currently the Tata group operates four air lines. They are **Air India, Air India Express, AirAsia India** and **Vistara**. Vistara is a joint venture of Tata with Singapore Airlines.

On 29 November 2022, Tata group announced the merger of [Vistara with Air India](#) under a deal wherein Singapore Airlines will also acquire a 25.1 per cent stake in Air India. The deal, which will make Air India the **country's largest international carrier** and second-largest **domestic airline**, is expected to be completed by March 2024, subject to regulatory approvals.

The Tata group intends to merge budget carrier AirAsia India with Air India Express and the merger is likely to be completed by the end of 2023.

After Merger the company will be called **Air India Express**.

AirAsia India was launched in 2014 while Air India Express started operations back in 2005.

Low cost airlines or budget airlines or no-frill airlines do not provide traditional services like food, drinks or other premium services and their fares are also usually low. Some of the major low cost airlines operating in India are Go Air, Indigo, Air India Express, and Spice Jet.

Air India Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer: **Campbell Wilson**

8. Antim Panghal nominated for the United World Wrestling 2022 Rising Star of the Year award (Dec. 22, 2022)

Indian women's wrestler **Antim Panghal** has been nominated for United World Wrestling 2022 **Rising Star of the Year award**. Japan's **Nonoka Ozaki**, USA's **Amit Elor**, Sweden's **Emma Malmgren** and **Andreea Ana** of Romania are the other in the five-woman nominees list for the United World Wrestling 2022 Rising Star of the Year award.

Antim Panghal created history this year by winning India's first-ever gold medal at the [World U20 Wrestling Championships 2022](#) in August. The 18-year-old freestyle wrestler from Haryana is also the reigning Asian champion in the same age category. She also won the senior category event, Zouhaier Sghaier Ranking Series.

19 year old **Nonoka Ozaki** of Japan has won gold medals in the senior world championships and the Asian championship this year in the 62 kg category.

18 year old American wrestler **Amit Elor**, is the reigning U23 and the senior world champion in 72kg.

21 year old **Emma Malmgren** of Sweden is world No. 4 in 53kg and is the European champion in seniors. **Andreea Ana** of Romania is the senior European champion in the 55kg.

United World Wrestling

It is the international governing body of amateur wrestling in the world. It was earlier known as the FILA (*Fédération Internationale des Luttes Associées*) or International Federation of Amateur Wrestling.

Headquarters: Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland

President: Nenad Lalović

9. CM Naveen Patnaik launches 24×7 'Drink from Tap' project in 19 cities of Odisha (Dec. 22, 2022)

The Odisha Chief Minister **Naveen Patnaik** launched a 24×7 piped drinking water project — '**Drink from Tap**' — in 19 cities of the state on 21 December 2022. About 5.5 lakh people in these cities will be benefited from the project.

Addressing the event, the chief minister said providing safe drinking water to every family has been his dream for a long time and it has always been the priority of his government.

He said that households in these cities will get drinking water directly from the tap adhering to the quality parameters of the Bureau of Indian Standards.

The state government scheme is different from the central government scheme of **Jal Jeevan Mission** which was launched on 15 August 2019. Under the Jal

Within the Jal Jeevan Mission, Har Ghar Nal se Jal scheme, aims to provide potable, quality drinking water to every rural household by **2024**.

Goa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu became the first 'Har Ghar Jal' certified State and Union Territory in the country respectively,

Burhanpur district of Madhya Pradesh is the first certified 'Har Ghar Jal' district in India.

10. Shah Rukh Khan only Indian to feature on British magazine's list of 50 greatest actors of all time (Dec. 22, 2022)

Shah Rukh Khan is the only Indian actor who has been included in an international list of 50 greatest actors of all time by a prominent British Magazine **Empire**.

The 57-year-old Bollywood superstar has been included in the Empire magazine's list which also includes Hollywood giants like Denzel Washington, Tom Hanks, Anthony Marlon Brando, Meryl Streep, Jack Nicholson, and others.

The magazine said Khan has a career that has now spanned four decades of "near unbroken hits, and a fanbase of pretty much billions".

The magazine highlighted Khan's notable characters from four movies — Sanjay Leela Bhansali-directed "Devdas", Karan Johar's "My Name Is Khan" and "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai", and "Swades", directed by Ashutosh Gowariker.

His dialogue from the 2012 movie "Jab Tak Hai Jaan" — "Zindagi toh har roz jaan leti hai... Bomb toh sirf ek baar lega" (Everyday life kills us a little. A bomb will kill you only once) — has been recognised as the "iconic line" of his career.

"Jab Tak Hai Jaan" was made by filmmaker Yash Chopra's and featured Khan as an Indian Army Major named Samar Anand. The film also starred Katrina Kaif and Anushka Sharma.