

The Lukmaan Newslines

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Polity and Governance

Simultaneous Elections Likely Only After 2034

The high-level committee chaired by Ram Nath Kovind proposed constitutional amendments, including Article 82A, to align Lok Sabha and State Assembly terms. If the Bills are passed, the "appointed date" for simultaneous polls will likely be set after the 2029 Lok Sabha elections, targeting 2034. The Election Commission faces logistical challenges, needing up to three years to double EVM production and scale operations. Proposals for simultaneous local body elections were not considered due to complexities in state ratifications and electoral roll integration.

Source: The Indian Express

Government Focuses on Tuna Export from Andaman and Nicobar Islands



Economy

The Department of Fisheries notified a Tuna Cluster in Andaman & Nicobar Islands under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to boost tuna fishery exports. An Investors' Meet showcased investment opportunities, while MPEDA set up a Desk Office and initiated training to enhance tuna handling. With a potential yield of 64,500 metric tonnes, current production remains underutilized. ₹58.91 crore has been allocated for fisheries development, including fishing vessels, cold storage, and ice plants.

Source: PIB - The Press Information Bureau



Governance & Disaster Management JCB

Disaster Management Bill Passed in Lok Sabha

The Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024, seeks to enhance coordination in disaster response. While the BJP hailed the Bill, the Opposition criticized its centralizing tendencies and omission of climate-related aspects.

Source: The Hindu Newspaper

D. Gukesh Becomes Youngest World Chess Champion



Sports Achievements & Indian Excellence

D. Gukesh, 18, from Chennai, made history as the youngest World Chess Champion by defeating Ding Liren. The match, the first between two Asian players, witnessed Gukesh overcoming an initial loss and capitalizing on Ding's crucial mistake. Gukesh is only the 18th world champion, breaking Garry Kasparov's long-standing record.

Source: The Hindu Newspaper

Government Supports SHGs in Food Processing with Grants and Subsidies

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries aids SHGs via the PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) Scheme, offering seed capital grants of up to ₹40,000 per member and 35% credit-linked grants capped at ₹10 lakh. By October 2024, ₹1032.31 crore was sanctioned for 3,10,121 SHG members, including rural and urban participants. Assistance is also available under PMKSY. Credit-linked subsidies have benefited 692 SHG members in food processing.

Source: PIB - The Press Information Bureau

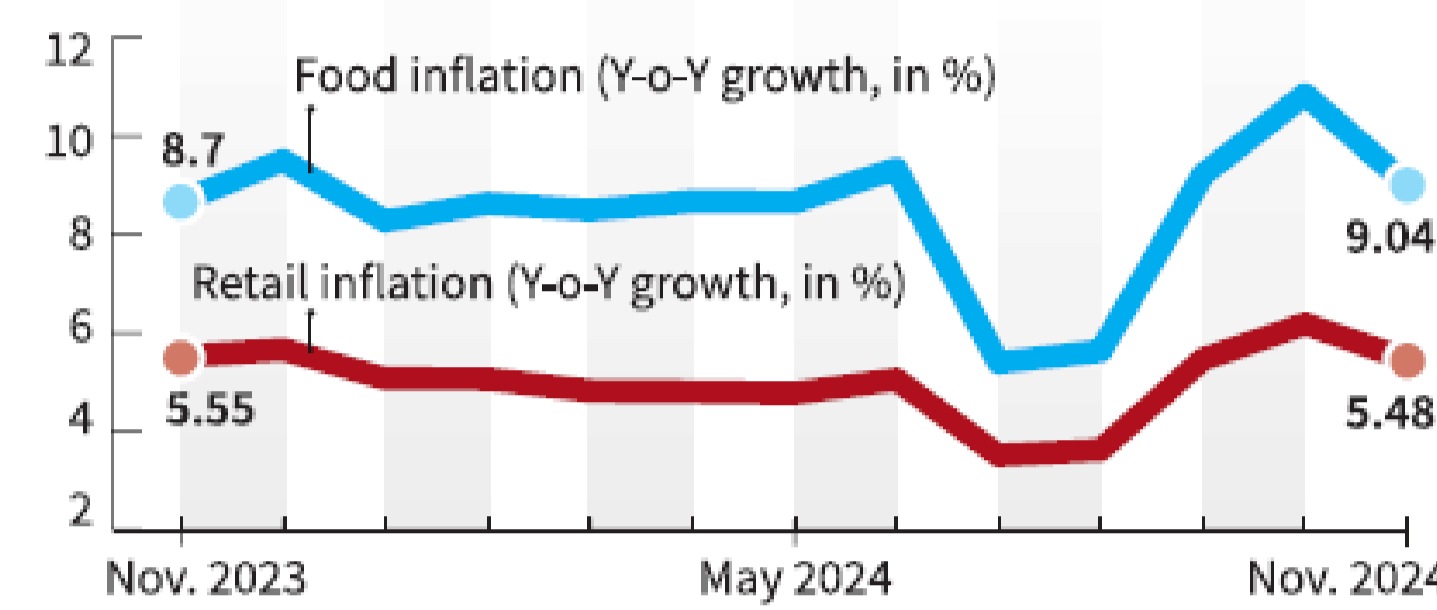
Economy & Women Empowerment

Inflation Eases to 5.5% in November, Food Prices Still High

Economy

A mild respite

For the third straight month, food prices surged by over 9%, and consumer inflation stayed closer to 5.5%

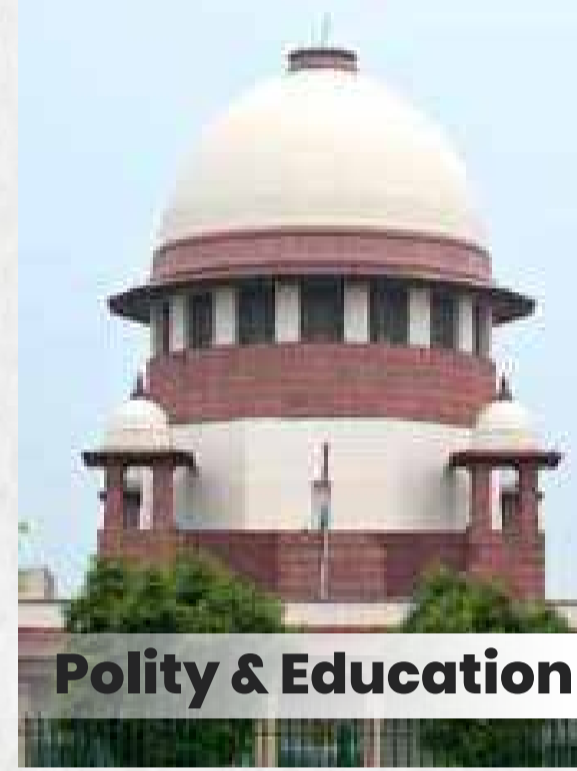


Retail inflation dropped to 5.5% in November from 6.2% in October, with rural areas facing higher rates. Food inflation stayed at 9.04%, although vegetable prices fell. Several states recorded inflation beyond RBI's target, reflecting uneven economic challenges.

Source: The Hindu Newspaper

SC Criticizes U.P. Over Lack of Secular Education

The Supreme Court censured Uttar Pradesh for neglecting constitutional principles of equality and secularism in schools. It emphasized implementing Section 17 of the RTE Act and providing accessible grievance redressal mechanisms.



Polity & Education

Source: The Hindu Newspaper



Environment & Public Health

No Indian City Meets WHO Air Quality Standards: Lancet Study

A Lancet study reveals that no region in India has air quality below WHO's recommended PM2.5 levels of 5 µg/m³, with 81.9% of Indians living in areas exceeding even the country's relaxed standard of 40 µg/m³. High PM2.5 exposure causes 1.5 million deaths annually, affecting respiratory and cardiovascular health. Pollution levels ranged from 11.2 µg/m³ in Arunachal Pradesh to 119 µg/m³ in Delhi. Reducing pollution to NAAQS or WHO levels could save hundreds of thousands of lives.

Source: The Indian Express



Polity, Governance & Justice

Former Coal Secretary, Others Acquitted in Coal Scam Case

A Delhi court acquitted former Coal Secretary H.C. Gupta and five others, including senior Coal Ministry officials and NPPL executives, in a case related to coal block allocations in Odisha. The CBI alleged fraudulent claims and conspiracy to secure allocations. The court ruled that NPPL met eligibility criteria without misrepresentation and dismissed the charges, citing a lack of evidence to prove conspiracy.

Source: The Indian Express

CAG Highlights Coastal Regulation Violations in Tamil Nadu

Environment

A CAG report revealed widespread lapses in enforcing Tamil Nadu's Coastal Regulation Zone rules, including unauthorized constructions and approval irregularities. It urged stricter monitoring and adherence to environmental laws.



Source: The Hindu Newspaper

YouTube Teams with NCERT to Enhance Online Education in India



Why in News?

YouTube partnered with NCERT to launch channels catering to students from grades 1 to 12, delivering curriculum-based content in 29 languages. The initiative aligns with India's growing demand for online educational material.

Key Features:

- AI-Driven Learning Tools:** Features like "Key Concepts" and AI-generated quizzes aim to enhance user engagement by pulling definitions and visual aids for topics covered in videos.
- Collaborations:** YouTube has partnered with NPTEL to offer credentialed courses in varied subjects like rocket propulsion and sports psychology, enabling learners outside IIT systems to earn certifications via the SWAYAM portal.
- Global Perspectives:** Amid digital safety debates, YouTube remains a "classroom staple," emphasizing its role in democratizing access to education.

Beyond the Nugget:

SWAYAM and SWAYAM Plus Platforms

- SWAYAM:** Provides interactive, free online courses from Class 9 to postgraduate levels, bridging gaps in physical educational infrastructure. Enrolments surged from 31 lakh in 2017 to 72 lakh by 2023.
- SWAYAM Plus:** Launched in 2024, this platform offers industry-aligned programs to improve employability, covering IT, healthcare, tourism, and Indian knowledge systems. Features include AI chatbots and credit recognition.

Source: The Indian Express

Study Finds Ultra-Processed Foods Dominate US Diets

Health & Lifestyle

A Johns Hopkins study revealed that ultra-processed foods (UPFs) accounted for over 50% of US adults' diets between 2003 and 2018. The share of UPFs consumed at home increased, while minimally processed foods declined. Data from over 34,000 participants highlighted UPFs' prevalence regardless of location. Foods like cookies and fries, linked to health risks, dominated calories consumed. Researchers suggest strong nutritional labeling to reduce reliance on UPFs and promote healthier eating habits.



Source: The Indian Express

Jharkhand High Court Stays 75% Quota for Locals in Private Jobs

Polity & Governance

The Jharkhand High Court halted the 75% job reservation for locals in private sector jobs, citing constitutional concerns over equality and business rights. The Act targeted jobs with salaries up to ₹40,000 but faced opposition from industry groups. The state has been directed to respond by March 2025, with parallels drawn to a similar Haryana law struck down earlier.

Source: The Hindu Newspaper

Understanding Disease X and the Need for Global Preparedness

Health & Science

Disease X is a placeholder for unknown pathogens capable of causing a global pandemic, as defined by WHO in 2018. It symbolizes the risks posed by zoonotic spillovers, antimicrobial resistance, and bioterrorism. The recent unclassified outbreak in the DRC highlights the urgency of robust health systems, genomic research, and global cooperation. Organizations like CEPI are pioneering rapid-response technologies to tackle such threats within 100 days of emergence.

Source: The Hindu Newspaper