

Jacinda Ardern announces resignation as PM of New Zealand



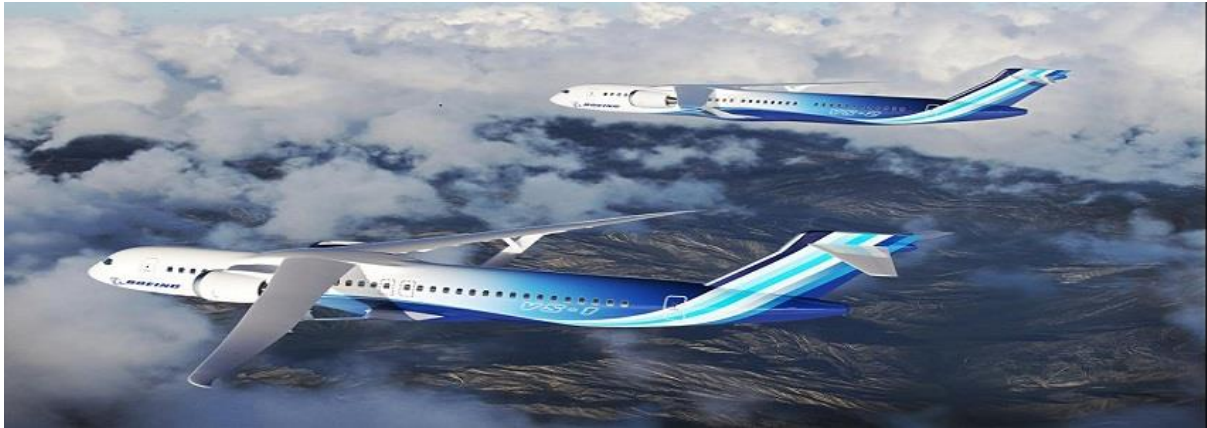
New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has shocked the country by announcing she would resign from office in a matter of weeks. The 42-year-old, who steered the country through natural disasters, the Covid pandemic, and its worst-ever terror attack -- said she no longer had enough in the tank. Ardern said she would step down no later than February 7, less than three years after winning a landslide election to secure her second term in office.

Pacific island nations urge Japan to postpone release of water from Fukushima nuclear power plant



Pacific island nations are urging Japan to postpone the release of water from the stricken Fukushima nuclear power plant due to concerns that fisheries will be contaminated, according to the Pacific Island Forum (PIF). The Japanese government announced last week that water from the destroyed Fukushima nuclear power plant could be released into the sea this spring or summer. The PIF, a regional bloc of 17 island nations, claims that releasing the water will have a significant impact on fishing grounds that are vital to island economies and supply up to half of the world's tuna fish.

NASA awards 425 million to Boeing Company for agency's sustainable flight demonstrator project



National Aeronautics and Space Administration, NASA, has awarded 425 million dollars to Boeing Company for the agency's sustainable flight demonstrator project. Under the project, Boeing will work with NASA to build, test, and fly a full-scale demonstrator aircraft and validate technologies aimed at lowering emissions. Over the next seven years, NASA will invest 425 million dollars, while Boeing and its partners will contribute the remainder of the agreement funding estimated at about 725 million dollars.

The Transonic Truss-Braced Wing demonstrator single-aisle airplane aims to reduce fuel consumption and emissions by up to 30 percent. The concept involves an aircraft with extra-long, ultrathin wings stabilized by diagonal struts and higher-aspect ratios that could eventually accommodate advanced propulsion systems.

At least 70 people killed in cold weather across Afghanistan



At least 70 people died in a wave of freezing temperatures sweeping Afghanistan. Since January 10, the temperature has dropped to as low as -33 degrees Celsius in many parts of the country. The Ministry of Disaster Management said 70 people and 70,000 cattle died over the past eight days.

Assembly Elections in Tripura to be held on Feb 16 in single phase; Meghalaya, Nagaland to go to polls on Feb 27



Elections to the 60-member assembly in Tripura will be held in a single phase on February 16, the Election Commission announced. The results will be declared on March 2, along with that of Meghalaya and Nagaland assembly polls. The term of Tripura's legislative assembly is due to expire end on March 22 this year. Meghalaya and Nagaland will go to polls in a single phase, together, on February 27. There are more than 62.8 lakh electors combined in Nagaland, Meghalaya and Tripura including - 31.47 lakh female electors, 97,000 voters aged above 80, and 31,700 PwD voters. Over 1.76 lakh first-time voters to participate in the elections in three states,

Tourism Ministry to organize 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023



The Ministry of Tourism is organizing the 1st Global Tourism Investors Summit from 10th to 12th April 2023 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. The aim of the summit is to bring together global business leaders, and policymakers to understand and explore Tourism Business opportunities in India. The event focused on promoting India as an investment destination for travel, tourism, and hospitality by identifying State-Specific investment possibilities and discuss avenues to promote sustainable tourism.

Central panel asks Arunachal to review hydropower project



The Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Union Environment Ministry has asked the Arunachal Pradesh government to submit a revised request for permission to divert 1,165 hectares of forest land in the State's Dibang valley for the Etalin hydropower project. The FAC's rationale was that there was widespread local opposition to the project and this ought to be addressed more comprehensively by the State government.

The Etalin hydropower project is a joint-venture between Jindal Power and Hydro Power Development Corporation of Arunachal Pradesh Limited. The Arunachal Pradesh government has been promoting a slew of hydropower projects with several involving private companies.

SBI raises ₹9,718 cr. via second infra bond issue



State Bank of India had raised ₹9,718 crore through a second infrastructure bond issue at a coupon rate of 7.7%. The issue attracted an overwhelming response from investors with bids of ₹14,805 crore," it added. This issuance is very significant considering this is the first time an Indian bank is issuing a 15-year, long-term infrastructure bond helping the bank in long-term lending to the infrastructure segment," SBI said.

ALL to supply 500 buses to Sri Lanka Transport



Ashok Leyland Ltd. (ALL) will supply 500 buses to the Sri Lanka Transport Board (SLTB). As a part of the order, ALL recently delivered 75 buses to the island nation on its Independence Day. The order is a part of a Line of Credit extended by the Export Import Bank of India, under the Economic Assistance Scheme of the Government of India.

Corporate funding in solar slid 13% in 2022



Corporate funding in the global solar sector declined 13% year-on-year to \$24.1 billion in 2022, according to a Mercom Capital report. Corporate funding includes venture capital and private equity (VC and PE), debt financing, and public market financing. During 2022, VC funding activity rose 56% to \$7 billion compared with \$4.5 billion in 2021. In 2022, debt financing stood at \$12 billion, a 24% decline compared with \$15.8 billion raised during 2021.

SC to hear Google's plea for stay on CCI's ₹1,337-cr.



The Supreme Court of India has agreed to hear Google's plea for a stay against a Competition Commission of India (CCI) order imposing a ₹1,337-crore fine for alleged anti-competitive practices in relation to mobile devices running on its Android system.

Adani to use \$2.5 bn share-sale funds for capex, repaying debt



India's Adani Enterprises will use the proceeds of the ₹200 billion (\$2.46 billion) follow-on public offering (FPO), beginning on January 27, for capital expenditure requirements and pay off some debt of its units. The company will use ₹108.69 billion from India's biggest FPO to fund green hydrogen projects, airport facilities and greenfield expressways. It will also use ₹41.65 billion to repay the borrowings of three of its units, Adani Airport Holdings Ltd., Adani Road Transport Ltd., and Mundra Solar Ltd.

The proposed fund raise comes as the ports-to-energy conglomerate aggressively expands into sectors such as cement and healthcare, amid some concerns about its elevated debt levels and large promoter shareholding.

Gill smashes a classy double ton; India survives Bracewell's assault



Shubman Gill smashed a superb double century (208, 149b, 19x4, 9x6) and Mohammed Siraj returned the best figures (four for 46) to help India pull off a 12-run win over New Zealand for which Michael Bracewell cracked a magnificent century (140, 78b, 12x4, 10x6) in the first of the three-match Mastercard ODI series at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium. Batting first India scored 349 in 50 overs.

Injured Nadal crashes out in the second round



Defending champion and top seed Rafael Nadal hobbled out of the second round, losing to 65th-ranked Mackenzie McDonald, at the Australian Open. Nadal was clearly hindered by a hip issue that required a medical timeout, as he went down 6-4, 6-4, 7-5 to the American. It was the reigning champion's earliest exit from a Slam in seven years.

Top wrestlers stage protest, seek removal of WFI president



Leading wrestlers of the country, Bajrang Punia, Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik — along with scores of others, staged a dharna at Jantar Mantar, seeking the removal of Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh as the president of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). The wrestlers not only complained about the arbitrary system of the federation, but also alleged sexual harassment. Taking note of the allegations, the Union Sports Ministry cancelled the training camp of women wrestlers scheduled to start in Lucknow and asked the WFI for explanation to all the charges within 72 hours.

Dutee fails dope test, provisionally suspended



Dutee Chand, the country's fastest woman ever, a World University Games 100m gold medallist has failed an out-of-competition dope test and has been provisionally suspended. Dutee Chand's 'A' sample (urine) showed traces of andarine, ostarine — which are among the most popular selective androgen receptor modulators (SARMs) used as performance-enhancing drugs by athletes — and ligandrol. They come under other anabolic agents in the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) list and are prohibited at all times.