

29 people killed in operation to arrest drug kingpin's son in Mexico



Ten soldiers and 19 criminal suspects were killed in the operation to arrest Ovidio Guzman, son of jailed drug trafficker Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman, the Mexican government said. Ovidio Guzman, also called “El Raton” (The Mouse), allegedly helped run his father’s operations since El Chapo was extradited to the U.S. in 2017.

India to host summit of ‘Global South’ nations



In a bid to articulate the views of the developing countries regarding the effects of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, India will hold a major international summit on January 12 and 13. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said invitation letters had been sent to participants from “more than 120 countries”. This summit will be called the ‘Voice of the Global South Summit’ under the theme — ‘Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose’.

All-woman team from India to keep peace in Sudan



India is set to deploy an all-woman platoon of peacekeepers as part of a battalion to the United Nations Interim Security Force in Abyei (on the border between South Sudan and Sudan), which will be India's largest single unit of women peacekeepers in a UN mission since the deployment of the first-ever all woman contingent in Liberia in 2007. India is one of the largest troop-contributing nations to the UN peacekeeping missions.

The Indian contingent, comprising of two officers and 25 other ranks, will form part of an engagement platoon and specialise in community outreach, though they will be performing extensive security-related tasks as well.

SC to hear all petitions on same-sex marriage



The Supreme Court of India transferred to itself all petitions seeking legal recognition of same sex marriage under various matrimonial statutes and directed the Centre to file its response to them by February 15 for the matters to be heard in March. As per a chart available with the Court, the transferred petitions included eight cases from the Delhi high court, and one each in Kerala high court and Gujarat high court. The petitions, some of whom are by LGBTQ people, sought recognition of their marriage under the various matrimonial laws such as Special Marriage Act, Hindu Marriage Act and Foreign Marriage Act. Further, issues of privacy were raised by certain petitioners as registration under Special Marriage Act requires prior notice of 30 days inviting objections before a marriage is to be solemnized.

U.K. ship on permanent deployment in Indo-Pacific makes first port call in India



The Royal Navy's offshore patrol vessel, HMS Tamar, sailed to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands as part of its permanent deployment in the Indo-Pacific. India is the first port of call for the ship and underlines the United Kingdom and India's intent to collaborate in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and wider Indo-Pacific. Over the next five days, the ship and her crew will undertake capability demonstrations and maritime exercises with the Indian Navy.

Centre will adhere to timelines fixed by SC for judicial appointments: A-G



Attorney-General R. Venkataramani told the Supreme Court that the Union government will adhere to the timelines fixed by the court to process recommendations for judicial appointments. The government's statement seems to be a step down from its earlier view that it was not a "post office" to clear Collegium recommendations. The court had remarked in an earlier hearing that the government, miffed by the striking down of the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) law in 2015, was deliberately delaying appointments and remaining incommunicado on Collegium recommendations.

SC directs committee to build a framework to ensure road safety



The Supreme Court of India had directed its committee led by a former apex court judge, Justice A.M. Sapre, to meet with the Road Transport Secretary within two weeks and work out a framework to mould State-specific guidelines for the electronic monitoring and enforcement of road safety. The court acknowledged that speeding was the main cause of fatal accidents on Indian roads. A Bench led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud agreed that urgent steps need to be taken to enforce Section 136A (electronic monitoring and enforcement of road safety) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. The provision was introduced into the Act in 2019 to keep an electronic eye on errant drivers.

Prasar Bharati mulls own OTT platform



Prasar Bharati, for which the Centre had approved the Broadcast Infrastructure Network Development (BIND) scheme of ₹2,539.61 crore, for the upgrade and expansion of broadcasting infrastructure till 2025-2026, is evaluating the possibility of coming up with an over-the-top (OTT) platform. Under the BIND scheme, Prasar Bharati CEO Gaurav Dwivedi said, the 28 regional channels would become HD programme production capable.

The FM coverage is projected to increase from 58.83% to 66.29%. A 20-kW FM transmitter will also be installed atop a 300-metre tower in Rameswaram to cover an area of 30,000 sq.km

RBI to issue green bonds in two parts

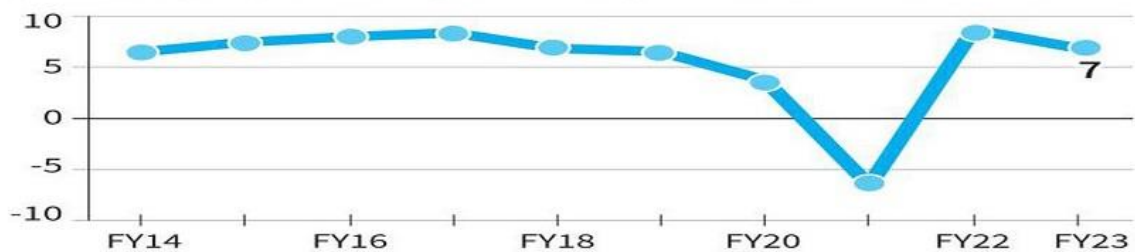


The RBI said that the maiden Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) would be issued in two tranches of ₹8,000 crore each on January 25 and February 9. The proceeds will be deployed in projects which help in reducing the carbon intensity of the economy. The Centre will be issuing the SGrBs for mobilising resources for green infrastructure.

India's GDP to grow 7% this fiscal, says NSO

First cut

GDP will likely rise 7% this fiscal year, slowing from 8.7% the previous year, according to Ministry of Statistics' estimates



SOURCE: REUTERS, CMIE

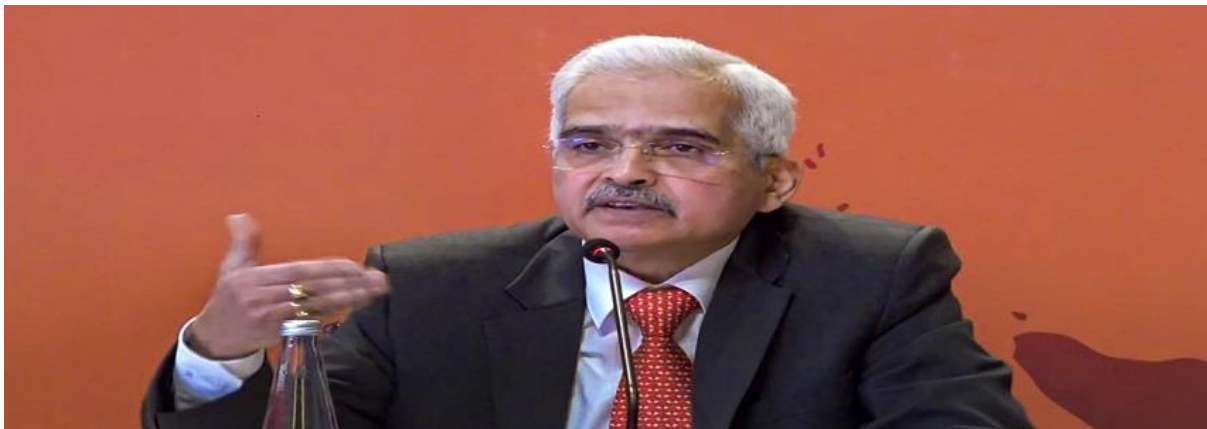
India's real GDP is expected to grow 7% in 2022-23, slowing from 8.7% in FY22, as per the First Advance Estimates of National Income for the year released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). With GDP estimated to have clocked a 9.7% uptick in the first six months, the advance estimate implies that growth will moderate to 4.5% in the second half. The NSO's estimate is based on limited data, with almost three months to go in the year, and essentially serves as an input for the Union Budget formulation exercise.

Pakistan's imports at stake as forex reserves touch an eight-year low



Pakistan's central bank forex reserves have plunged to an eight-year low of \$5.6 billion, posing a serious challenge for the country in financing imports. Coupled with another \$5.8 billion held by commercial banks, the nation has \$11.4 billion in reserves enough to pay for just three weeks of imports. Pakistan's economy has crumbled alongside a simmering political crisis, with the rupee plummeting and inflation at decades-high levels, but devastating floods and a global energy crisis have piled on further pressure.

Taming inflation is top priority for South Asian nations, says RBI's Das



Taming inflation is the top priority for South Asian countries as risks to growth and investment outlook could rise if price pressures persist at high levels, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das said. Speaking at an event organised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the RBI chief said policy challenges in the region have sharpened due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Mr. Das said the region's heavy dependence on imported fossil fuels had made it vulnerable to fuel inflation while food inflation had averaged more than 20% during the first three quarters of 2022.

U.S. job growth stayed solid in December



The U.S. economy maintained a strong pace of job growth in December, with the unemployment rate falling to 3.5%, but higher borrowing costs as the Federal Reserve fights inflation could see the labour market momentum slowing significantly by mid-year. Nonfarm payrolls increased 2,23,000 last month, the Labor Department said. The unemployment rate slid to 3.5%, from 3.6% in Nov.

Football: Former Italy striker Gianluca Vialli passes away aged 58



Gianluca Vialli, the former Italy striker who helped Sampdoria and Juventus win Serie A and European trophies before becoming a player-manager at Chelsea, has died. Vialli, who earned 59 caps for Italy, was first diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2017.

Cricket: Sarfaraz salvages fighting draw for Pakistan



Pakistan's last pair Naseem Shah and Abrar Ahmed survived 21 balls in fading light, while Sarfaraz Ahmed hit a fighting century to deprive New Zealand of a victory, bringing the second Test to a sensational draw. New Zealand was in sight of a series-clinching win after dismissing Sarfaraz for 118 with 39 balls remaining in the match. The two-match series ended 0-0 after the first Test — also in Karachi — ended in a draw, depriving New Zealand of their first series win in Pakistan for 53 years.

Chess: 16-year-old M Praneesh becomes India's 79th Grandmaster



M Praneesh clinched the title in the Rilton Cup, the first tournament of the FIDE Circuit, to become India's 79th chess Grandmaster. The 16-year-old Praneesh crossed the 2500-rating threshold and became a GM, having completed his three norms before the Rilton Cup. To become a GM, a player has to secure three GM norms and cross the live rating of 2,500 Elo points.