

Important Information - IV - Compiled

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Murder Rates Most Recent Year 2012 - UNODC

Rank	Country	Rate	Count
1	Zambia	38.0	4,710
2	Uganda	36.3	11,373
3	South Africa	31.8	15,940
4	Tanzania	24.5	10,357
5	Sudan	24.2	10,028
6	Mexico	22.7	25,757
7	Ethiopia	22.5	20,239
8	Burundi	21.7	1,726
9	Brazil	21.0	40,974
10	Kenya	20.1	7,733
11	Kyrgyzstan	20.1	1,072
12	North Korea	15.2	3,658
13	Zimbabwe	14.3	1,775
14	Myanmar	10.2	4,800
15	Russia	10.2	14,574
16	Kazakhstan	8.8	1,418
17	Indonesia	8.1	18,963
18	Pakistan	7.8	13,860
19	Philippines	5.4	4,947
20	Ukraine	5.2	2,356
21	Thailand	4.8	3,307
22	United States	4.2	12,996
23	Turkmenistan	4.2	203
24	Yemen	4.2	990
25	Palestine	4.1	145
26	Sri Lanka	3.6	745
27	India	3.4	40,752
28	Turkey	3.3	2,320
29	Taiwan	3.2	743
30	Uzbekistan	3.1	831

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_intentional_homicide_rate

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Indian Cities less NO₂ Polluted than other Major Global Counterparts

Washington: NASA scientists have used satellite observations to measure air pollution's dependence on population in four of the planet's major air pollution regions: the United States, Europe, China and India.

They found that the pollution-population relationship varies by region. For example, a city of 1 million people in Europe experiences six times higher nitrogen dioxide pollution than an equally populated city of 1 million people in India, according to the research led by Lok Lamsal, of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.

Lamsal said that energy usage patterns and per capita emissions differ greatly between India and Europe and despite large populations; Indian cities seem cleaner in terms of NO₂ pollution than the study's other regions.

The variation is a reflection of regional differences such as industrial development, per capita emissions and geography.

Results across the different regions showed divergent NO₂ surface concentrations in urban areas of 1 million people: 0.98 parts per billion (U.S.), 1.33 ppb (Europe), 0.68 ppb (China) and 0.23 ppb (India). The same regions saw various degrees of pollution increases in cities with population of 10 million people: 2.55 ppb (U.S.), 3.86 ppb (Europe), 3.13 ppb (China) and 0.53 ppb (India).

http://zeenews.india.com/news/eco-news/indian-cities-less-no2-polluted-than-other-major-global-counterparts_870239.html

Google celebrates CV Raman's 125th Birthday with a Doodle

Born on November 7, 1888, in Trichinopoly, Madras Province, Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman was a renowned physicist who made significant contributions to the growth of science.

His interest in physics developed from early years of his life. Pursuing his passion, CV Raman won the gold medal in physics in 1904 and passed his BA examination securing first place. He completed his MA in 1907 with distinctions.

CV Raman had researched at Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science (IACS) after joining the Indian Financial Service as an assistant auditor general for the government of India in 1907.

CV Raman is known for his work on the scattering of light and for the discovery of the Raman Effect.

His discovery won him the Nobel Prize in 1930, thus making him the first Asian and first non-White to receive any Nobel Prize in the sciences.

To pay tribute to this unique mind, the nation observes National Science Day on February 28. The science day is observed every year to commemorate Dr CV Raman's find of Raman Effect, the inelastic scattering of a photon.

CV Raman died on November 21, 1970 in Bangalore.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tech/tech-news/internet/Google-celebrates-CV-Ramans-125th-birthday-with-a-doodle/articleshow/25358917.cms>

Diwali turns into Festival of Pollution

Unfortunately, every year, the quantum of air and noise pollution caused due to the bursting of firecrackers increases on Diwali.

Firecrackers release pollutants such as sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide etc in the air, which causes ailments like asthma and bronchitis. Not only the elderly and patients in hospitals, but animals and birds are also affected due to air and noise pollution.

Though various schools and organisations organised demonstrations prior to Diwali to educate the masses on a pollution-free festival, their efforts have been futile.

The environment and pollution departments also got notices published in various newspapers about regulations to curb noise and air pollution, but to no avail.

As per directions of the Supreme Court, bursting of sound-emitting firecrackers has been banned between 10pm to 6am. However, shockingly, the direction was openly flouted as firecrackers were burst throughout the night.

This caused excessive noise and air pollution. On the receiving end of this menace were the elderly and patients in hospitals.

Post Diwali, the roads are littered with the remnants of fireworks. The deluge of garbage, including empty bottles used to light off rockets, on every nook and corner of the city is a worrying sign.

“It’s not a new thing. This happens every year,” said Naresh Johar, a city-based writer.

Gift wrappers, dried flowers were strewn across the roads. A similar scenario was seen in posh residential areas such as Rani Ka Bagh, Ranjeet Avenue, Basant Avenue, Kennedy Avenue etc.

Meanwhile, municipal commissioner DPS Kharbanda, said, “The Supreme Court directions have been flouted though the authorities concerned tried their best to avoid violations.”

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/punjab/amritsar/diwali-turns-into-festival-of-pollution/article1-1147271.aspx>

53 per cent of Indian Households defecate in Open - World Bank

WASHINGTON: With over 600 million people in India or 53 per cent of Indian households defecating in the open, absence of toilet or latrine is one of the important contributors to malnutrition, a report has said.

The report that released yesterday on the eve of the first ever UN World Toilet Day, the World Bank said, access to improved sanitation can increase cognition among children.

Currently, more than 2.5 billion people worldwide lack access to toilets, one billion people practice open defecation and 600 million in India openly defecate.

"This is important news -- the study suggests that low-cost rural sanitation strategies such as India's Total Sanitation Campaign can support children's cognitive development," Spears said.

The results also suggest that open defecation -- going outside without using a toilet or latrine -- is an important threat to the human capital of developing countries and that a program accessible to countries where sanitation development capacity is lower could improve average cognitive skills.

A World Bank working paper released earlier this year found that children exposed to more fecal germs don't grow as tall as other children with less exposure.

"Within the triad of causes, food, care and environment, these papers provide additional evidence that inadequate sanitation is one of the important contributors to malnutrition, particularly in India," said Voetberg, Acting Sector Manager, South Asia Health, Nutrition and Population.

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/26032977.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

Mumbai Boy Prithvi Shaw scores 546 - Highest Score ever in Cricket by a Schoolboy

Shut your eyes. Now say this: 546 runs, 367 minutes, 330 deliveries, 85 fours and five sixes.

A cherubic boy of 14 — standing 5'1", weighing 46 kg and wielding a 1.5 kg willow — scored all these runs in a little over four sessions of school cricket. The Lord Harris Shield has been an annual fixture since its inception over a century ago, but it was only in 1988 that the annual inter-school fixture got the recognition it deserved thanks to Vinod Kambli, Sachin Tendulkar, and their 664-run partnership.

On Wednesday, Prithvi Shaw rewrote the history books in some style! Only Englishman Arthur Edward Jeune Collins (628 not out at the age of 13) and Charles John Eady (566 at the age of 31) have scored more runs in a single innings in competitive cricket.

Collins died young, in the First World War, and Eady in 1945. And before Wednesday, DR Havewalla (515 in 1933-34) occupied the top spot among all Indians. Armaan Jaffer (473), Shaw's senior at Rizvi Springfield School (Bandra), was the holder of the Harris Shield record. Prior to that, it was Sarfaraz Khan (439 in the 2009 season). And prior to that, it was Kambli (349) and Tendulkar (346). Shaw's 546 is, of course, the world record score by a schoolboy. Again, he broke the record of his good friend Jaffer (498 in Giles Shield).

Resuming the day on 257, Shaw scored 289 on Wednesday. "They were good, the bowlers," he said of the opposition. "They bowled some loose balls and I capitalised. I am feeling good."

For the record, Rizvi were bowled out for 991. Shaw and Satyalaksh Jain, who played a distant second fiddle with 164, added 619 for the second wicket.

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<http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-mumbai-boy-prithvi-shaw-scores-546-the-highest-score-ever-in-cricket-by-a-schoolboy-1922345>

Mumbai Boy Prithvi Shaw scores 546 - Highest Score ever in Cricket by a Schoolboy

A little about Shaw and the only child of Pankaj Shaw has been playing the game for 11 years now. Yes, he first picked up a bat at three! A year later, he lost his mother. Born and bred in Virar before a local politician gifted him a flat in Santacruz so that he could avoid starting his day at 4:30 am and ending it around 11:00 pm. Things are slightly better now. Shaw can afford to wake up at 7:00. School starts at 8:30. He then travels to the MIG Cricket Club for practice before taking tuition for all subjects except science. And then, he helps his dad out with the daily chores, including cooking, before going to bed.

So three days after Tendulkar bid goodbye, here is a teenager who has taught us that, in Mumbai, one would inevitably find the 'Next Big Thing' on the maidans. Tendulkar, and Gavaskar and Vengsarkar and Merchant prior to him, were all products of the maidan culture of this city.

Road to 546:

0-50: 30 balls (11x4)

51-100: 41 balls (7x4)

101-150: 28 balls (7x4, 1x6)

151-200: 34 balls (7x4)

201-250: 28 balls (9x4)

251-300: 32 balls (7x4, 1x6)

301-350: 33 balls (6x4, 1x6)

351-400: 29 balls (8x4, 1x6)

401-450: 19 balls (8x4, 1x6)

451-500: 31 balls (8x4)

501-546: 25 balls (7x4)

<http://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-mumbai-boy-prithvi-shaw-scores-546-the-highest-score-ever-in-cricket-by-a-schoolboy-1922345>

India 94th on Corruption Index

Afghanistan, North Korea and Somalia are seen as the world's most corrupt countries while Denmark and New Zealand are nearly squeaky-clean, graft watchdog Transparency International said in a survey Tuesday.

India ranked 94 on the index, above Pakistan at rank 127 but below China which took the 80th position. India was ranked at 95th position last year, but Transparency said it has started making evaluations through a different formula beginning this year. Last year, India's rank was 95.

This year, India has a score of 36 out of 100 on a scale from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean) which is a result of an average of 10 studies including World Bank's Country Performance and Institutional Assessment and Global Insight Country Risk Ratings.

Worldwide, almost 70% of nations are thought to have a "serious problem" with public servants on the take, and none of the 177 countries surveyed this year got a perfect score, said the Berlin-based non-profit group.

Transparency International's annual list is the most widely used indicator of sleaze in political parties, police, justice systems and civil services, a scourge which undermines development and the fight against poverty.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-94th-on-corruption-index-afghanistan-most-corrupt/article1-1158513.aspx>

Carlos Juan Finlay's 180th Birthday



Carlos Juan Finlay - Born on December 3, 1833 in Puerto Principe, Cuba, of French and Scottish descent, finally was widely popular as a scientist and physician.

He is recognized as a pioneer in yellow fever research who put forward the theory that the virus is transmitted by the bite of female mosquitoes.

Finlay attended Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and graduated in 1855. After completing his studies he started his own medical practice in Havana.

His contribution to medical science was highly admired as he propounded the etiology of yellow fever - its causes and origins. During his time, yellow fever was considered to be a serious disease in Havana.

Despite his effort, his contributions were only widely recognized in 1900. And soon after his hypothesis was recognized he was appointed as the chief health officer of Cuba from 1902 to 1909.

His discovery also helped other scientist in carrying out experiments on mosquito-borne diseases.

For his contribution, Carlos Juan Finlay was nominated seven times for the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine.

On August 20, 1915, Finlay died in his home in Havana due to a stroke.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tech/tech-news/internet/Google-marks-Carlos-Juan-Finlays-180th-birthday-with-a-doodle/articleshow/26775401.cms>

December 9 - International Anti-Corruption Day

International Anti-Corruption Day is observed across the world on 9 December 2013 to raise awareness about the menace of Corruption and what people can do to fight it. The theme for the year 2013 is: Act against Corruption Today. The day is observed on December 9 each year to raise awareness about the corruption. The UN General Assembly by resolution of 58/4 of 31 October 2003 designated 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day. This decision aimed to raise people's awareness of corruption and of the role of the United Nations Convention against Corruption in combating and preventing it. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the secretariat for the Convention's Conference of States Parties. The Convention entered into force in December 2005.

About the Corruption - Corruption is a complex social, political and economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability. Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existing is the soliciting of bribes. Economic development is stunted because foreign direct investment is discouraged and small businesses within the country often find it impossible to overcome the "start-up costs" required because of corruption.

See more at: <http://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/international-anticorruption-day-observed-on-9-december-1386580705-1#sthash.H8mtTTPD.dpuf>

<http://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/international-anticorruption-day-observed-on-9-december-1386580705-1>

December 10 - Human Rights Day

Human Rights Day: 10 December Human Rights Day was observed across the world on 10 December 2013 to bring to light the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 2013 Theme of the day is 20 Years Working for Your Rights. NHRC in India organized a programme in New Delhi on this Day. Human Rights Day - The UN General Assembly proclaimed 10 December as Human Rights Day in 1950, to bring to the attention 'of the peoples of the world' the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. The United Nations General Assembly in December 1993 created the mandate of High Commissioner for the promotion and protection of all human rights. This year, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights marks 20 years since its establishment.

The General Assembly was acting on a recommendation from delegates to the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993. The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference, marked the beginning of a renewed effort in the protection and promotion of human rights and it is regarded as one of the most significant human rights documents of the past quarter century. United Nations Human Rights Prize - The UN Human Rights Prize is given on 10 December to the individuals and organizations in recognition of outstanding achievement in human rights.

See more at:

<http://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/human-rights-day-observed-across-the-world-on-10-december-1386655879-1#sthash.5J9MB3BU.dpuf>

<http://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/human-rights-day-observed-across-the-world-on-10-december-1386655879-1>

Uruguay becomes First Country to legalize Marijuana Drug Trade

Uruguay became the first country to legalize the growing, sale and smoking of **marijuana** on Tuesday (Dec 11, 2013), a pioneering social experiment that will be closely watched by other nations debating drug liberalization. A government-sponsored bill approved by 16-13 votes in the Senate provides for regulation of the cultivation, distribution and consumption of marijuana and is aimed at wresting the business from criminals in the small South American nation.

Backers of the law, some smoking joints, gathered near Congress holding green balloons, Jamaican flags in homage to Bob Marley and a sign saying: "Cultivating freedom, Uruguay grows."

Cannabis consumers will be able to buy a maximum of 40 grams (1.4 ounces) each month from licensed pharmacies as long as they are Uruguayan residents over the age of 18 and registered on a government database that will monitor their monthly purchases.

When the law is implemented in 120 days, Uruguayans will be able to grow six marijuana plants in their homes a year, or as much as 480 grams (about 17 ounces), and form smoking clubs of 15 to 45 members that can grow up to 99 plants per year. Registered drug users should be able to start buying marijuana over the counter from licensed pharmacies in April.

Uruguay is one of the safest Latin American countries with little of the drug violence.

Critics say legalization will not only increase consumption but open the door to the use of harder drugs than marijuana, which according to government statistics is used by 8 percent of Uruguayans on a regular basis. "Competing with drug traffickers by offering marijuana at a lower price will just increase the market for a drug that has negative effects on public health," said Senator Alfredo Solari of the conservative Colorado Party.

If it works, the legislation is expected to fuel momentum for wider legalization of marijuana elsewhere, including the United States and in Europe. Decriminalization of all drug possession by Portugal in 2001 is held up as a success for reducing drug violence while not increasing drug use.

"This development in Uruguay is of historic significance," said Ethan Nadelmann, founder of the Drug Policy Alliance, a leading sponsor of drug policy reform partially funded by Soros through his Open Society Foundation. "Uruguay is presenting an innovative model for cannabis that will better protect public health and public safety than does the prohibitionist approach," Nadelmann said.

<http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-uruguay-becomes-first-country-to-legalize-marijuana-trade-1933080>

Supreme Court says Gay Sex Criminal - India

New Delhi (December 11, 2013, NDTV): The Supreme Court today said gay sex remains a criminal offence, leaving the largely-closeted homosexual community in India looking to legislation by Parliament as their last hope.

The court's order means gay sex between consenting adults stays a criminal offence under Section 377, a British colonial era law banning "carnal intercourse against the order of nature", which had been struck down by the high court. The Supreme Court said there is "no constitutional infirmity" in that law.

"It is surprising that the court which does judicial review on many issues has put the ball in the court of Parliament to decide on homosexuality," said additional Solicitor General Indira Jaising. "People expect the highest court of the land to protect their rights."

The high court ruling was challenged in the Supreme Court by religious groups who argued that all homosexual acts were "unnatural".

In recent years, the country's gay community has raised its profile, organising gay pride parades in major cities, which activists say have helped create awareness and encouraged many to come out of the closet.

The UN had said in 2008 that decriminalising homosexuality would help India to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS.

<http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/supreme-court-says-gay-sex-criminal-activists-to-see-review-457216>

Australian Court rejects Law allowing Gay Marriage

SYDNEY (AP, Dec 12, 2013): Australia's highest court struck down a landmark law on Thursday that had begun allowing the country's first gay marriages, shattering the dreams of more than two dozen same-sex newlyweds whose marriages will now be annulled less than a week after their weddings.

The federal government had challenged the validity of the Australian Capital Territory's law that had allowed gay marriages in the nation's capital and its surrounding area starting last Saturday.

"The Marriage Act does not now provide for the formation or recognition of marriage between same sex couples. The Marriage Act provides that a marriage can be solemnised in Australia only between a man and a woman," the court said in a statement issued alongside its ruling. "That Act is a comprehensive and exhaustive statement of the law of marriage."

Lyle Shelton, managing director of Australian Christian Lobby, which opposes same-sex marriage, praised the court ruling and said common sense had prevailed.

Prime Minister Tony Abbott opposes gay marriage and his coalition blocked two federal bills last year that would have allowed legal recognition of same-sex partnerships.

The ruling comes a day after India's Supreme Court struck down a 2009 lower court decision to decriminalize homosexuality.

Gay marriage has legal recognition in 18 countries as well as 16 US states plus the District of Columbia.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/rest-of-world/Australian-court-rejects-law-allowing-gay-marriage/articleshow/27233722.cms>

India's Mars Mission Trajectory Manoeuvred

The first **Trajectory Correction Manoeuvre** of India's maiden mission to Mars was on Wednesday carried out successfully by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on the spacecraft, which is presently travelling some 2.9 million Kms away from Earth.

"The first Trajectory Correction Manoeuvre (TCM) of Spacecraft was carried out successfully at 06:30 hrs (IST) by firing the 22 Newton Thrusters for duration of 40.5 seconds. The spacecraft is travelling at a distance of about 29 lakh (2.9 million) km away from Earth," ISRO said.

The TCMs fine tunes the trajectory of the spacecraft to keep it travelling in the intended track towards the red planet.

Ever since the successful Trans-Mars Injection on December 1, MOM navigators were spending days ranging and measuring the spacecraft's velocity and precisely determined its flight path to come up with the required correction in the path, ISRO said in its official Facebook page.

(Press Trust of India, December 12, 2013)

http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/mars-mission-trajectory-manoevred-113121200007_1.html

Thanks

