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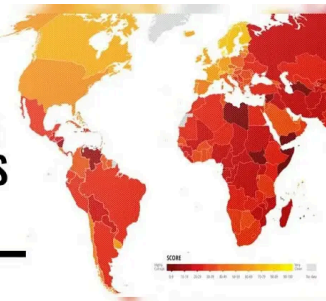
National & International News

Corruption Perception Index (CPI), 2023

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CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023



Context:

- India's ranking on the **Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for 2023 is 93 out of 180 countries.**
- India's overall score in 2023 was **39, a minor decrease from 40 in 2022.**
- **The country's rank in 2022 was 85.**

Corruption Perception Index (CPI):

- The CPI is an annual assessment that evaluates countries based on their perceived levels of public sector corruption.
- Published by Transparency International, a global non-governmental organization combating corruption.

Key Points:

- **Scale:** Countries are scored on a scale of 0 to 100, where a higher score indicates lower perceived corruption and a cleaner public sector.
- **Ranking:** Based on their scores, countries are then ranked, with the least corrupt being positioned higher.
- **Data Sources:** The CPI aggregates data from various sources, including surveys and assessments by organizations and institutions that evaluate corruption levels.
- **Expert Opinions:** It includes the opinions of experts and business leaders regarding the level of corruption in the public sector.

Core sector output growth slowed to a 14-month low in December

Context:

- Output growth of India's eight core sectors dropped to a **14-month low of 3.8% in December.**
- This is a significant decline compared to the 8.3% pace observed a year earlier and the revised growth of **7.9% in November 2023.**

Key Points:

- **Electricity generation**, with a 20% weightage in the Index of Core Industries (ICI), reached an eight-month low of 0.6% in December.
- **Crude oil** output contracted for the second consecutive month, shrinking by 1%, marking the sharpest decline since June 2023.
- **Coal production** grew by 10.6%, the slowest year-on-year uptick in six months, but output was at its highest level since April 2023.
- **Cement** output rebounded from a 4% contraction in November, expanding by 1.3% in December



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	<p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Office of Economic Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade releases Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI).• ICI measures combined and individual performance of production in selected eight core industries viz. Coal, Crude Oil, Natural Gas, Refinery Products, Fertilizers, Steel, Cement and Electricity.• The Eight Core Industries comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).
<p>Maldives Seeks Sri Lanka's Medical Evacuation Support</p>	<p>India-Maldives Strain: The Maldives has turned to Sri Lanka for medical evacuation assistance, seeking alternatives amid strained relations with India.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maldivian Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation Mohamed Ameen met with Sri Lankan counterpart Nimal Siripala de Silva in Colombo.• Minister Ameen shared on 'X' platform that Sri Lanka has agreed to assist in medical evacuation, emphasizing the creation of a framework for immediate approval on urgent requirements.• President Muizzu's initiative to establish an air ambulance service by March 2024 aims to enhance prompt medical evacuation capabilities, allowing patients to travel even to distant locations like Thailand. <p>Way forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Maldives' collaboration with Sri Lanka for medical evacuation signals a strategic move to diversify partnerships, particularly amid strained relations with India.• The initiative aligns with President Muizzu's broader efforts to enhance emergency medical services, addressing recent challenges and aiming for international collaborations.
<p>Indian Stamp Bill, 2023</p>	<p>Context: The Centre has proposed to replace the existing India Stamp Act, 1899 with the new Indian Stamp Bill, 2023.</p> <p>Key changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provisions allow states and the Centre to introduce new instruments for stamp duty.• The bill suggests withdrawing duty exemption for ships and vessels.• Increase in the monetary threshold for revenue receipt issuance from Rs 20 to Rs 1,000.• Inclusion of provisions for digital signatures.



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- Redefinition of terms like "executed" and "execution" to mean "signed" and "signature," including electronic records and signatures as defined by the **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000**.

Eravikulam National Park

Context:

- The park undergoes closure from February 1 for the calving season of the **Nilgiri Tahr**.
- This annual closure is essential for the protection and conservation of the endangered Nilgiri Tahr during their breeding period.

Eravikulam National Park Overview:

- Established in **1978**, Eravikulam National Park is the first national park in Kerala.
- Originally created to protect the endangered **Nilgiri Tahr**, it has evolved into a diverse ecosystem supporting various flora and fauna.
- The park is named after the **Neelakurinji flower**, known for its enchanting blue bloom occurring every 12 years.

Geography:

- Located in the **Kannan Devan Hills**, part of the Western Ghats mountain range.
- No major rivers flow within the park, but numerous perennial streams intersect, eventually becoming tributaries of the Periyar and Cauvery rivers.
- **Lakkom Waterfalls**, an attractive natural feature, is situated within the park's boundaries.
- **Anamudi, South India's highest peak** at 2,695 meters, is a prominent feature of the park.

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