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# GK Digest

# March 2016

By Ramandeep Singh

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**International**

**India, Australia Ink Pact To Avoid Double Social Security Contribution**

India and Australia ink pact to avoid double social security contribution under this agreement, employees of India deputed to Australia and vice versa will not have to make double social security contribution.

- Under this agreement Australia has become the 14th country with which India has a social security agreement in force.

**Russia gets its own Rating Firm – ACRA**

Vladimir Putin’s homegrown credit-ratings firm is up and running and foreign competitors are already feeling the heat.

- Moody’s last week announced it would shutter its joint venture in Moscow of 12 years and Fitch said it will probably stop issuing local ratings on Russian companies, the same day ACRA, which stands for Analytical Credit Rating Agency, applied for a license to operate in Russia.

**Ali Mohamed Shein is a new President of Zanzibar**

The electoral authority of Tanzania’s semi-autonomous archipelago of Zanzibar, the ZEC,

announced incumbent President Ali Mohamed Shein had won his re-election bid, after polls boycotted by the main opposition party.

- International observers, including the European Union and other international bodies, made clear their stand by condemning not only the election re-run, but also the nullification of the October election results.

**International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and Transatlantic Slave Trade**

Every year on March 25 the United Nations International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade is observed.

- It honours the lives of those who died as a result of slavery; it is also an occasion to raise awareness about the dangers of racism and prejudice.
- The theme for the year 2016 is Remember Slavery: Celebrating the Heritage and Culture of the African Diaspora and its Roots.

**US Congress passes bill to allow India to join APEC**

In a move to strengthen the ties between India and US, the US congress has passed the bill in senate which will allow India to be a member of APEC.

- Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific Matt Salmon, introduced the legislation in the US Congress

**World Tuberculosis Day observed on 24 March**

World Tuberculosis Day (WTD) 2016 was globally observed with the theme Unite to End TB.

- The Goal 3 of the Agenda aspires to ensure health and well-being for all, including a bold commitment to end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases by 2030.

### **22nd March: World Water Day**

United Nations World Water Day is an international observance held every March 22 that provides an opportunity to learn more about water related issues and take action on a current or future challenge to make a difference.

- This year's theme of World Water Day is 'Water and Jobs'.
- The day first marked in 1992 at United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. It aims to raise awareness about water related issues.

### **EU strikes deal with Turkey to return migrants**

The European Union (EU) on Friday finalised a deal with Turkey, wherein all migrants arriving in Greece will be sent back to Turkey starting Sunday.

- In return, Turkey's EU membership talks will be reopened and the €3-billion migrant fund to Turkey will be disbursed quickly. The EU will also resettle up to 72,000 Syrian migrants in Turkey to the EU

### **India to set up Rabindranath Tagore Memorial in Sri Lanka**

As part of its development partnership with Sri Lanka in the field of higher education, India will set

up a Rabindranath Tagore Memorial Auditorium in the University of Ruhuna at Matara in South Sri Lanka.

- The award to build the auditorium was handed over to a local company in Colombo today in presence of High Commissioner of India Mr. Y.K. Sinha, State Secretary, Ministry of Higher Education of Sri Lanka Mr. D.G. Hapuarachchi and Vice-Chancellor, University of Ruhuna Prof. Gamini Senanayake.

### **Mauritania ratified 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention**

Mauritania on 14 March 2016 became the second African country to ratify the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention 1930.

- Prior to Mauritania, Niger (Africa), Norway (Europe) and the United Kingdom (Europe) ratified the protocol.
- The protocol requires States to take effective measures for prevention of forced labour, protection of victims and ensuring their access to justice and compensation.
- The ILO estimates that about 21 million men, women, and children are in forced labour – trafficked, held in debt bondage, or working under slave-like conditions.

### **UN suspended Maria Sharapova as goodwill ambassador after doping allegations**

The United Nations formally suspended relationship with Russian Tennis great Maria Sharapova as a goodwill ambassador after she failed a drug test at the Australian Open.

- Sharapova tested positive for meldonium at the Australian Open and has been provisionally suspended from tennis

pending an independent panel ruling on the case.

- She had started the role with the UN Development Programme in 2007, with a special focus on helping with the recovery efforts after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

#### **World Consumer Rights Day observed**

Every year World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is being observed on 15 March for celebration and solidarity within the international consumer movement.

- WCRD is observed on 15 March to commemorate the historic address given by the then US President John F Kennedy to the US congress in 1962.
- Antibiotics off the menu” is the theme of 2016, World Consumer Rights Day

#### **Bangladesh's bank governor resigns on \$81 million cyber theft**

In Bangladesh, the Reserve Bank Governor Atiur Rahman has resigned following a \$ 80 million cyber theft from the Bank's Reserve Fund Account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

- Unknown hackers breached the computer systems of Bangladesh Bank on Feb 4 and wire-transferred around \$ 80 million from the Bank's Reserve Fund with the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to accounts of several casinos in Philippines and Sri Lanka. Experts say this is the biggest known bank theft in modern times.

#### **Mother Teresa to be made a saint on Sept 4**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, a nun who dedicated her life to helping the poor, will be made a saint of the Roman Catholic Church at a ceremony on Sept. 4, Pope Francis announced today.

- Last December, he cleared the way for sainthood for the Nobel peace laureate, who died in 1997 at the age of 87 and was known as “saint of the gutters”.

#### **ExoMars 2016 spacecraft successfully launched by Europe & Russia**

An unmanned spacecraft named ExoMars 2016 was successfully launched jointly Europe and Russia to search for biosignatures on Mars (or Martian life) in past or present.

- The spacecraft was launched on a Proton-M rocket operated by Russia's Roscosmos from Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

#### **Htin Kyaw elected as first civilian President of Myanmar**

Myanmar's Parliament elected Htin Kyaw (69) as the first civilian (non-military) President of the country after 53 years of military rule.

- He will replace Thein Sein as President who will step down at the end of March 2016 i.e. after end of five years of army-backed rule.

#### **China plans to land probe on Mars in 2021**

China plans to land a probe on Mars in 2021 that coincide with the 100th anniversary of founding of the ruling communist Party of china and a decade after its first failed mission in 2011.

- China is likely to initiate a Mars probe in 2020, after many months flying the probe to land in the Mars

**South Korea, US began largest ever military exercises**

The US and South Korean troops on 7 March 2016 began their largest ever military exercises off the coast of the Korean peninsula.

- The 8-week long drill will involve about 300000 South Korean troops and 15000 US personnel.
- Meanwhile, North Korea has warned South Korea and US of indiscriminate and pre-emptive nuclear strikes if the two allies go further with the drills. The threat from Pyongyang follows its leader Kim Jong-Un's order last week asking country's nuclear arsenal to be placed on standby for use at any moment against the South.

**International Women's Day observed with campaign theme "Pledge For Parity"**

8 March: International Women's Day (IWD) , International Women's Day was observed across the world on 8 March 2016.

- This year's theme for the Day is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality". The campaign theme for the day is 'Pledge For Parity'.
- United Nations observance and the idea of this theme reflect on how to accelerate the 2030 Agenda, building momentum for the effective implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals.
- The theme will also focus on new commitments under UN Women's Step It Up initiative, and other existing commitments on gender equality, women's empowerment and women's human rights.

**Women's wages remain unchanged in 20 years: ILO Report**

Women have actively involved themselves in various works across the world yet the gender inequality in terms of income and work quality still remains unchanged in the past 20 years. This was revealed in the International Labour Organization's Report.

- On International Women's Day, a new ILO report, Women at Work: Trends 2016 was released

**Climate change could kill 500,000 adults by 2050**

With the rise in global emissions the Global Warming could be aggravated. In turn the climate changes can affect the people worldwide. A recent study shows that it is likely to cause 500,000 deaths by 2050.

- The latest computer modeling study reveals that climate change would badly affect China and India
- The study released by The Lancet predicts 1.36 lakh death in India and 2.48 lakh death in China owing to the Climate change and its effects.

**57 Countries to participate in first Maritime Summit**

The first Maritime summit to be held at India is going to witness the participation of 57 countries from the world.

- The maiden Maritime summit is going to be organized in Mumbai, Maharashtra

**UNICEF & UNFPA launch Acceleration Programme to end Child Marriage**

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) jointly launched the Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage.

- The programme is a multi country cooperative and it will help protect the rights of millions of the world's most vulnerable girls by involving families, communities, governments and young people

### **34 countries don't have enough food for their people due to conflicts: UN**

UN report says 34 countries, nearly 80 percent of them in Africa, don't have enough food for their people because of conflicts, drought and flooding.

- The Food and Agriculture Organization's Crop Prospects and Food Situation report said conflicts in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, and the Central African Republic.

### **Pak launches probe into MQM's alleged ties with RAW**

Pakistan Government has initiated probe into Karachi-based Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) party's Alleged ties with New Delhi based Research Analysis Wing (RAW) to destabilise the country.

- The Allegations levelled against India's RAW gave money to the MQM party to destabilise Pakistan, India has dismissed the allegations levelled against it.
- The Karachi based MQM party quoted that these allegations are baseless and false.

- Nisar Ali Khan a Pakistani conservative party who serves as the Interior Minister of Pakistan tasked the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to probe various allegations of funding by Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).

### **India -Indonesia joint Military exercise- Garuda Shakti IV**

India and Indonesia are set to begin their Joint Military Exercise Garuda Shakti IV from March 10-23 in Indonesia.

- The Joint Military Exercise between India and Indonesia Garuda Shakti was started in 2012 in India
- It is conducted on a reciprocal basis with first edition in India ,second edition in Indonesia and so on.

### **Union Cabinet approved MoU between India and Bahrain on Cooperation for Prevention of Human Trafficking**

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Bahrain on cooperation for prevention of human trafficking especially trafficking in women and children,,rescue, recovery, repatriation and re-integration of victims of trafficking has been approved by the Union Government.

- Decision in this regard taken by the Union Cabinet headed by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The approved MoU is expected to be signed during the Home Minister visit to Bangkok in the April.

### **India, US launch Fulbright-Kalam Climate Fellowship**

The United States-India Educational Foundation formally launched U.S.-India Fulbright-Kalam

Climate Fellowship on behalf of both the governments.

- The initiative will advance bilateral cooperation on climate change, which will enable Indian research scholars to work with American institutions in the field.

#### **EIU Ranked Mumbai and Bangalore among Cheapest cities to live**

Mumbai and Bangalore are among the cheapest cities in the world, according to a top London forecast group (EIU). Lusaka is the cheapest city to live in the world.

- London was sixth and New York seventh. Though Singapore was the most expensive, the cost of living there was 10 per cent cheaper when compared to New York than was the case in the EIU survey a year ago.

#### **Foreign Minister of Mexico on two day visit to India**

The Foreign Minister of the Government of Mexico, H.E. Ms Claudia Ruiz Massieu Salinas, visited India on two day visit to India (11-12 March) and held bilateral meeting with, External Affairs Minister of India Smt. Sushma Swaraj.

- During her visit the Mexican Foreign Minister also interacted with the private sector in a business event organized with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and delivered a lecture in the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) on the subject 'Mexico in the international context and its relations with India'.
- In the course of the official visit the yembark on a complete review of the entire

range of bilateral relations comprising political, commercial & trade, financial, technical and other areas to further increase and strengthen cooperation.

#### **Modi on TIME's most influential people on Internet for second year**

Time Magazine has named Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi among the 2016 edition list of 30 most influential people on the internet. He was placed at 15th position.

- The list includes US presidential hopeful Donald Trump, reality TV star Kim Kardashian and her husband Kayne West, author J K Rowling, former Olympic athlete Caitlyn Jenner and soccer star Cristiano Ronaldo.

#### **India became second biggest investor in London**

According to the London & Partners, the official promotional company for London, India has emerged as the second biggest investor in London after the US.

- The company revealed that there has been a 117 per cent increase in Indian companies across all business sectors investing in London since 2005.

#### **Arab League declares Lebanese movement Hezbollah a terrorist group**

The Arab League has declared Lebanese movement Hezbollah a terrorist group the decision came during an Arab League foreign ministers' meeting at the organisation's headquarters in Egypt's capital Cairo.

- Nearly all 22 Arab League members supported the decision, apart from Lebanon and Iraq which expressed reservations in the foreign ministers meeting.
- The Revolutionary Guards created Hezbollah in the 1980s. Funded by Iran, it is the only side not to have put down weapons after Lebanon's civil war from 1975 to 1990.

#### **4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves inaugurated at Lima**

4<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves was inaugurated on 14 March 2016 at Lima in Peru. The event will be held from 14 March to 17 March 2016 to address different issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

- It is a world meeting of the Committees of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB) and experts directly involved in the practical implementation of biosphere reserves including representatives of governments, biosphere reserves, local communities, UN agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and organizations and institutions from all over the world working with the MAB Programme.

#### **Hashim Thaci elected as President of Kosovo**

Foreign Minister Hashim Thaci has been elected as president of Kosovo by the Members of Parliament amid the protests. He succeeded Atifete Jahjaga as head of state after winning the required simple majority in voting held in Pristina.

#### **Peru declared emergency after oil spill Hits Rivers**

Peru government has declared state emergency after a major oil pipeline burst affecting two rivers in the country's northeast region.

#### **EU releases 252 million euros in aid for Palestinians**

To support the Palestinian Authority's health and education programmes and to offer services to their refugees in the middle east, EU has released 252 mn Euros (\$274 millions).

#### **London-the most expensive city to live**

A recent UK study reveals that London is the most expensive city to live in overtaking Hong Kong .

- The study conducted by real estate firm Savills survey revealed that the most expensive city to live and work in is London. Only Indian city in top 20 is Mumbai (17).

#### **World Wildlife Day – March 3**

World Wildlife Day celebrated every year on 3<sup>rd</sup> March is celebrated with the aim of preserve the rich flora and fauna of our World and to protect the endangered species from extinction.

- 2016 theme is "The future of wildlife is in our hands"

#### **World's Costliest Train Station Opened In New York At 9/11 Site**

The World's most expensive train station in the world opens at the World Trade Center site in New York, United States Of America. The site World Trade Center destroyed 14 years ago in the 9/11 attacks.



## National

### Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Krishi Unnati Mela in New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurate three-day 'Krishi Unnati Mela' providing information on new farm schemes and technologies that will help farmers double their incomes within the next few years.

- National fair, from March 19-21, will have separate workshops on key schemes like Pradhan Mantri Fasal Beema Yojana, e-agriculture marketing, integrated farming system, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sichai Yojan, soil health and livestock issues.

### 47 countries to participate in Defence Expo

Goa is witnessing the participation of 47 countries in the Defence expo. The ninth defence expo of Naval and Internal Homeland Security Systems Exhibition, is being held at Naqueri Quitol in Quepem taluka of South Goa from March 28-31, 2016

- 977 companies and 46 countries have registered for participating in the Expo
- Participating Countries – USA, Russia, Sweden, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates and Portugal

### Government Constitutes the Board of Trade

The government has reconstituted the Board of trade headed by the commerce minister.

- The board is reconstituted as per the provisions of Foreign Trade Policy Statement 2015-2020
- The first meeting will be held on April,6

### Haryana Becomes 1st To Launch Injectable Contraceptive

A unique Project named by Salamati has been launched by the Haryana Govt for the first time ever in order to maintain a healthy balance between the births of children by using injectable contraceptive.

- The objective is to check high mother and infant mortality rate
- It is being implemented by the State Government with the assistance of Pathfinder International.

### ISRO to create history by launching 22 satellites in single Mission

India's Space pioneer ISRO has been creating records and making achievements in all its missions. It is set to launch 22 satellites in Single mission and create new history.

- ISRO is planning to launch 22 satellites in its upcoming mission that includes micro and nano satellites from other nations
- NASA holds the record for launching 29 satellites in a single mission in 2013

### Gujarat to Set up Nation's First Organic Farming University

Gujarat is going to be the first state to set up a University exclusively focused Organic Farming to help farmers in switching to unconventional methods of farming.

- A fund of Rs 10 crore has been earmarked towards the university in the annual 2016-17 budget.

also sent 3,000 paramilitary personnel to various sensitive locations.

### **Govt notifies Aadhaar Act**

Unin government has notified the new Aadhaar Act, 2016 which gives the numbers assigned by it a statutory backing for transfer of subsidies and benefits to people eligible for them.

- Both central and state government can use Aadhaar for disbursal for benefits and subsidies. However the Aadhaar number cannot be used as a proof of citizenship or domicile.

### **Surat, Beas India's cleanest railway stations**

The Surat railway station has been named the cleanest in India in the A1 category while Beas was named the cleanest in A category by a survey conducted by the Indian Railways.

- The survey, conducted across 407 stations and based on the feedback of around 1.34 lakh passengers, classified the stations into 'A' and 'A1' categories based on their traffic.

### **SC allows pictures of CM, Governor in govt ads**

The Supreme Court allowed the use of pictures of Chief Ministers, Governors and Cabinet ministers in the government's media advertisements.

- The SC had earlier ruled that the advertisements could only have pictures of the President, Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of India. The earlier order was aimed at removing the association between government policy and politicians.

### **India to host 8th BRICS Summit, 2016**

The external affairs ministry has notified that India will host the 8th BRICS Summit from 15 October to 16 October 2016 in Goa.

- Chairmanship –India assumed chairmanship of BRICS from Russia on 15 February 2016 and it will last till 31 December 2016.

### **Internet cut in Rohtak over Jat unrest concerns**

The Haryana government has blocked internet services in Rohtak as a precautionary measure over concerns of a fresh Jat agitation in the state.

- Jat leaders had on Monday given a 72-hour ultimatum to the government, threatening to resume protests if reservation is not granted to them. The state government has

### **Cabinet approves Udaan scheme till 2019-20**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for extension of time period of the "Special Industry Initiative for J&K" (SII J&K) Udaan scheme till 2019-20.

- Initially, the time period of Udaan was up to 2015-16.
- Udaan provides exposure to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to the best of corporate India and corporate India to the rich talent pool available in the State. So far,

67 leading corporates have partnered with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under Udaan with a commitment to train youth from the state covering Organized Retail, Banking, Financial Services, IT, ITES, Infrastructure, Hospitality etc.

- More than 19,000 candidates have been selected, more than 15,000 have joined training, out of them, 8700 candidates have completed training and 6,838 have been offered jobs.
- It is expected that the target of the scheme, to train and enhance employability of 40,000 graduates, post graduates and three year engineering diploma holders, will be achieved by 2019-20.

### Central Government amends Atal Pension Yojana(APY)

Central Government has amended Atal Pension Yojana (APY) to give an option to the spouse to continue to contribute for balance period on premature death of the subscriber.

- According to the amendment, the spouse of the subscriber shall be entitled to receive the same pension amount as that of the subscriber until the death of the spouse.
- After the death of both the subscriber and the spouse, the nominee of the subscriber shall be entitled to receive the pension wealth, as accumulated till age of 60 years of the subscriber.

### DRDO develops RADAR to look through walls

The Indian Army gets its first Thermal based RADAR technology that will enable to look through the walls.

- Developed by: LRDE(Electronics & Radar Development Establishment) of DRDO
- Features- It looks through walls of 20-30cm thickness and it works based on Thermal RADAR technique

### Nadda launches CBNAAT machines for quick diagnosis of TB

Union Health Minister JP Nadda launched Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (CBNAAT) machines for the quick diagnosis of Tuberculosis within two hours.

The CBNAAT is a revolutionary rapid molecular test which detects Mycobacterium tuberculosis and rifampicin drug resistance, simultaneously.

This test is fully automated and provides results within two hours.

Nadda also launched a new anti-TB drug Bedaquiline, which is a new anti-TB drug for treatment of Multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis. This drug is indicated for use in the treatment of drug-resistant TB. The drug will be made available in six public hospitals in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Guwahati and Ahmedabad.

### Union Government notified E-Waste Management Rules, 2016

Union environment ministry has notified new plastic waste management rules, The Plastic Waste Management (PWM) Rules 2016, issued will replace the Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules 2011. The ministry also increased the minimum thickness of plastic carry bags from 40 microns to 50 microns.

- The new rules also focus on phasing out of non-recyclable multi layered plastic and

increasing reuse of plastic waste especially in applications like road construction and waste to energy.

- President Pranab Mukherjee signed the proclamation under Article 356 of the Constitution dismissing the Congress government headed by Harish Rawat and placing the Assembly under suspended animation this morning on the recommendation of the Union Cabinet.

### **Arogya Fair began in Goa**

In a move to popularize the Indian medicines with special attention to Ayurveda, Arogya fair is a four day programme is beginning in Goa. The fair is launched as a cooperative effort by AYUSH ministry and Confederation of Indian Industry

- The main objective is to popularize the Indian Medicinal system and update the industry with recent developments in the sector

### **ISRO establishes GIRI radar system in Tirupathi**

The Space pioneer of India ISRO has established the Gadanki Ionospheric Radar Interferometer (GIRI) near Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.

- Located at: National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL) which is an autonomous research institute of the Department of Space
- Construction: It consists of a rectangular antenna array of 160 two-element Yagi-antenna, arranged in a 20×8 matrix, 20 transmitter units, 6 digital receivers including data processing systems, a radar controller, and a host computer

### **President's rule in Uttarakhand**

Capping a nine-day high-voltage political drama, the Centre on Sunday brought Uttarakhand under President's rule citing a constitutional breakdown in the wake of a rebellion in the ruling Congress.

### **Mizoram, JICA sign pact for promoting sustainable agriculture**

North-eastern state Mizoram and Japanese International Cooperative Agency signed pact on Capacity Enhancement for Sustainable Agriculture and Irrigation Development.

- Training programmes would be conducted in Japan both for officials and farmers from Mizoram for three times during the period and the expenses would be borne by the Japanese government.

### **Arvind Kejriwal placed in Fortune 50 leaders**

The man who brought change in the Indian politics heading the Capital of the nation, Arvind Kejriwal has been placed in the Fortune 50 leaders listed by Fortune magazine.

- The list is headed by Amazon chief Jeff Bezos

### **J P Nadda launches Rota virus vaccine**

The Union Ministry of health and welfare has been taking consistent efforts to develop new medicines and keep the contagious diseases under control. Recently, the minister of Health and Welfare launched the Rota virus vaccine.

- Rotavirus vaccine is an initiative to provide immunity against Diarrhoea and bring infant mortality rate under control

- The three Cities are among the twenty cities which have been announced by the Urban Development Ministry.

**The Sex ratio has come down in Gujarat placing it at 22nd rank in the Nation**

The Sex ratio in Gujarat has fallen significantly from 920 in 2001 to 919 in 2011. It is a fall against the overall 10 points increase in the average of sex ratio of the Nation.

- The socio-economic review presented in the state assembly revealed that the sex ratio of Gujarat was 919 against the National sex ratio which is 943
- With 919 females for every 1000 males, Gujarat ranked 22nd among 28 states as per the 2011 Census

**Mumbai to host BRICS Friendship Cities Conclave in April**

The financial capital of India to host BRICS Friendship Cities Conclave in April involving top Urban Policy makers and Planners from BRICS Nations.

- The BRICS Friendship Conclave is a joint initiative of Ministry of External Affairs and Maharashtra Government to be held between April 14 and 16 this year.

**Germany to develop Bhubaneswar, Kochi, Coimbatore as Smart Cities**

Germany will partner with India's flagship program Smart City Mission to develop Bhubaneswar, Kochi, and Coimbatore as smart Cities.

**Telangana, Maharashtra ink MoU for five irrigation projects**

The Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Telangana and Maharashtra government on river Godavari Water Projects in Mumbai.

- The MoU will pave the way for construction of five Barrages on Godavari River and its tributaries Penganga and Pranahita projects which has kept aside due inter-state disputes.

**PM selects another village in Varanasi for development under SAGY**

Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) is a rural development programme broadly focusing upon the development in the villages which includes social development, cultural development and spread motivation among the people on social mobilization of the village community.

- Nagepur, a village dominated by backward castes has been selected under the second phase of the Yojana.
- Earlier, Prime Minister had adopted Jayapur village in the same Varanasi constituency in the first phase in 2014.

**108-foot Jain Teerthankar idol enters "Guinness book of records"**

108—feet tall idol of Lord Rishabhdeva, the first Teerthankar of Jains, carved out of a single rock, has entered the "Guinness World Records" as the world's tallest Jain statue.

- Till now, the 57 feet idol of Lord Bahubali in Shravanabelagola in Karnataka was considered the world's tallest Jain statue.

**Food and Hospitality fair, AAHAR 2016 inaugurates in New Delhi.**

Food processing industries minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal today inaugurated international food and hospitality fair, AAHAR 2016 In New Delhi.

- Over 90 countries are participating in 31st edition of AAHAR fair, organised by India trade promotion organization at Pragati Maidan.
- The minister said food processing sector can play a catalytic role in growth story of Indian economy. She expressed her faith that policy decision of 100 percent FDI permission in food processing sector will help in doubling of farmers income by 2022.

**Karnataka launches Mukhyamantri Santwana Harish Yojana for free treatment to accident victims**

Karnataka Government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched Mukhyamantri Santwana Harish Yojana for free treatment to accident victims for the first 48 hours in the nearest hospital be it Government or Private Hospital.

- The accident victims treatment scheme Mukhyamantri Scheme Harish Yojana has been named after Nanjappa who donated his eyes minutes before he passes away seeking help after severely injured in a mishap in the city.

**ISRO geared up for launch of its Sixth Satellite**

The Indian Space Research Organization is geared up towards launching its Sixth Navigation Satellite.

- The sixth navigation satellite IRNSS-1F was launched by the PSLV C-32.
- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C32, on its 34th mission, would launch the IRNSS-1F from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota

**India signs MoU to conserve Birds of Prey**

The Union Government signed an important Raptor MoU for the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia.

- This Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Convention of Migratory bird species Secretariat at Abu Dhabi
- The Raptor MoU covers 76 species of birds of prey, of which over 50 occur in India, including the critically endangered vulture

**Parliament passes Bureau of Indian Standards bill**

The Bureau of Indian Standards bills was passed in the parliament, following its approval from Rajya Sabha. The bill was earlier passed in Lok Sabha during the winter session last year.

- The bill proposes to make BIS, a national standards body, introduce mandatory hallmarks of precious metal, prevent misuse of Standard marks and provide for recall of ISI marked products not conforming to relevant standards.

**Rajya Sabha passes National Waterways Bill**

The Upper House of the Parliament passed The National Waterways Bill, 2015, which was tabled in Lok Sabha on May 5, 2015 by the Minister of Road Transport and Highways and Shipping, Mr. Nitin Gadkari.

- It would be kept before The President for his assent in the bill. The bill comes under Entry 24 of the Union List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

**National Anthem compulsory in all schools in WB**

West Bengal Board of Secondary Education has notified that in order to pursue Government direction it directed to sing the National Anthem during Assembly before the commencement of the School Hour.

- This Decision comes from West Bengal government days after Madras High Court mandated all the Private Schools to Sing National Anthem during morning Assembly.

**7th Governing Board meeting of Indo-German Science and Technology Centre held in New Delhi**

7th meeting of the Governing Board of the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre (IGSTC) was held on 15 March 2016 in New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by the Union Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan.

- During the meeting, Dr. Vardhan highlighted the achievements and progress of IGSTC in accelerating the bilateral Science & Technology collaboration.
- India is also an equity share holder with investment of 36 million euro in the construction of the international Facility for Antiproton-Ion Research (FAIR) at Darmstadt.

**Earthquake warning system installed at Haryana govt's building**

An earthquake warning system was installed at the mini Secretariat building of Haryana government here.

- The device has been installed in joint venture with German company Secty Electronics GmbH, on pilot basis at the Mini Secretariat building for the first time across India. It had been formally launched in New Delhi earlier this year.

**Centre releases Rs 609 crore for upgrading prisons in eight States**

The Centre has released 609 crore rupees for upgrading prisons in eight States as recommended by the Thirteenth Finance Commission.

- In the eight States Kerala has got 154 crore, Chhattisgarh 150 crore rupees and Odisha 100 crore rupees. Andhra Pradesh has been sanctioned 90 crore rupees and Maharashtra 60 crore rupees.
- The other States to receive Central funds for modernization of jails are Mizoram, 30 crore rupees, Tripura 15 crore rupees and Arunachal Pradesh 10 crore rupees.

**Union Government and Jammu & Kashmir Government signed MoU on UDAY Scheme**

Jammu and Kashmir Government has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Union Ministry of Power, An overall net benefit of approximately Rs.9800 crore would accrue to the State by opting to participate in UDAY.

- Under UDAY, nine states have signed MoU so far with the combined DISCOM debt around Rs.1.94 lac crore, to be restructured which is nearly 45% of the total outstanding DISCOM debt of Rs.4.3 lac crore as on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2015.

**Cabinet Approves Rs 8,000 Crore For Rural LPG Under PMUY Scheme**

The Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved Pradhan Mantri Ujwala Yojana with an outlay of Rs 8,000 crore for three years, Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan told.

- The scheme aims to provide on a war footing LPG connections to women members of BPL families. Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan said that the move is aimed at empowering women and protecting their health.

**Rajya Sabha Passed the Real Estate Bill**

The Real Estate Regulation and Development Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha.

- This bill is in the favour of protection of Home buyers and to bring in more transparency into the real estate business and avoid the flow of Black money.

**Union Cabinet Nods to the new Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy**

The Union Cabinet, presided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP).

- It will enhance domestic oil and gas production, bring substantial investment in the sector and generate sizable employment. The policy also targets the enhancement of transparency and reduction of administrative discretion

**Union Cabinet approved Sikh Gurudwara's Act**

The Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs to amend the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 through the Parliament with effect from 8 October 2013

- The proposal gave green signal to remove the exception given to Sehajdhari Sikhs in 1944 to vote in the elections for selecting members of the board and the committees constituted under the Act

**Union Cabinet Nods for BIMSTEC Convention in Criminal Matters**

The Union Cabinet headed by PM Narendra Modi gave its approval for the BIMSTEC Convention on mutual legal assistance in Criminal Matters.

- It is the Bay of Bengal Initiative on Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation

**Cabinet approves amendment to mining law, move to spur M&As**

Cabinet Approved Amendment to mining law The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill 2015 to transfer of mining lease for captive mines.

- The proposed amendment will permit transfer of captive mines granted on discretion to spur merger and acquisitions in the mining sector
- The amended bill to help in checking the stressed and non-performing assets of Indian Banking industry also push the stuck M&A deals could be moved in the right direction.

**Union Cabinet approves new price formula for Undeveloped Gas Discoveries**



The Union Cabinet approved a new price formula for their undeveloped gas discoveries in difficult areas, which will lead to a near-doubling of rates.

- Domestically produced gas costs at average of rates in US, Russia and Canada but deep sea discoveries which are unexplored will be given the cost of alternative fuels.
- The price will be the lowest of weighted average of fuel oil and imported LNG or weighted average of fuel oil, naphtha and imported coal.

#### **Railway minister Suresh Prabhu launches "clean my coach" service**

Minister for Railways Suresh Prabhu launched the 'clean my coach' service where a passenger can request for a dirty coach to be swept and cleaned by sending an SMS on mobile number 58888. Prabhu had announced the scheme in the Rail Budget last month.

- It will be started in 24 divisions in 2016 including 18 trains of Lucknow.

#### **NITI Aayog launches Women Transforming India Campaign**

The NITI Aayog as a part of International Women's Day launched the Women Transforming India initiative in partnership with the UN in India and MyGov.

- NITI Aayog seeks for entries in the form of written essays/stories. These stories should reflect new ground broken by women in empowering themselves/others, or of challenging stereotypes.

#### **Lok Sabha passes Aadhaar bill 2016**

The bill enabling Aadhaar card to be mandatory to avail the subsidies and schemes of the Government has been passed in the Lok Sabha.

- The Aadhaar(Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Bill, 2016 aims to ensure targeted services to intended beneficiaries through Aadhaar card.

#### **PM inaugurated three Railway projects at Bihar**

Bihar gained special importance with the political rivals-PM Narendra Modi and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar being present on the same stage for inauguration of three important Railway projects at Bihar .

- Estimated cost of 3 projects- 7200 crores

#### **LED based lighting programme named UJALA**

In an effort to promote measures that can save energy the Union government launches various programmes. One such important initiative is to provide LED lamps to households and promote its usage to save energy. The new scheme of LED based lighting has been named UJALA.

- 'UJALA' is the name given for the LED based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP)
- DELP is successfully implemented across 120 cities in India

#### **Govt to computerise all ration shops by 2019**

Government aims to computerise the PDS sector to help remove corruption in PDS,by installing electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices at all the 5.35 lakh fair price shops across the country by March 2017.

- The government has installed 91,000 electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices till March 2016 a total of 3.75 lakh bogus ration cards have been detected.

**Interactive Web portal Kendriya Sainik Board launched**

In an effort of modernizing various government sectors, the announcement came today from the Defence ministry in introducing an interactive web portal Kendriya Sainik Board. This web portal will be under the Department of Ex-Serviceman Welfare.

- The interactive portal Kendriya Sainik Board enables the ex-serviceman to avail various schemes by submitting online applications thereby reducing the paperwork and saves time.

**India successfully test-fired Agni-I ballistic missile**

India on 14 March 2016 successfully test-fired indigenously built nuclear-capable intermediate range Agni-I ballistic missile. It was launched from launch pad-4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Abdul Kalam Island (Wheeler Island) on the Odisha coast.

- The missile is 15-metre-long and weighed 12 tonnes and equipped with sophisticated navigation system which ensures it reaches the target with a high degree of accuracy and precision. It is designed to carry a payload of more than one tonne. Its strike range can be extended by reducing the payload.

**Allahabad High Court celebrates 150th foundation year**

Allahabad High Court established in 1866 celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

- President Pranab Mukherjee was the Chief Guest of the celebrations. Chief Justice of India (CJI) TS Thakur and Union Law Minister DV Sadananda Gowda attended the function as well.

**Punjab Government ban the sale of Army uniform in the state**

Punjab government imposed a ban on the sale of Army uniform in the state without proper identification. This announcement came following the Pathankot and Gurdaspur attacks in the state.

**Military Exercise FORCE 18 kicked off in Pune**

Indian Army kicked off a week long Multinational Field Training Exercise (FTX) "Force 18" in Pune at headquarters of the Indian Army's Southern Command.

- Participants – It involves army units from 18 countries.

**Mumbai Home To Most Number Of Billionaires In India**

India's Financial Capital, Mumbai, with 1094 billionaires (Ultra High Net Worth Individuals) has become home to the wealthiest people in the country, followed by Delhi at 545, according to the Knight Frank Wealth Report 2016.

- Rankings of Mumbai and Delhi: 21 & 33 respectively.

**WEF: India stood at 90th rank in terms of Energy Security**

In accordance with the Global Energy Architecture Performance Index Report compiled by WEF, India has been ranked at the 90<sup>th</sup> place in a list of 126 countries.

### **1st Raisina Dialogue Inaugurated By Sushma Swaraj In New Delhi**

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj has inaugurated the 1st Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi.

### **Micromax CEO Vineet Taneja resigns**

Micromax CEO Vineet Taneja resigns has formally resigned from high profiled post, and however company did not reveal whether the company was looking for a new face.

### **Chennai Gets India's First Self Cleaning Smart Toilets**

A total of 183 self-cleaning public e-Toilets have been installed in the Chennai City. Chennai is the 1st city in India to gets smart Toilets.

### **PM Narendra Modi Launches 'Setu Bharatam' Project, To Boost Infrastructure**

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched Rs 50,000-crore "Setu Bharatam" programme to build bridges for safe and seamless travel on National Highways.

- With this the government aims to make all national highways free from railway crossings by 2019.

### **Kerala Government has taken first of its kind initiative by launching the Air Ambulance**

Government of Kerala has taken first of its kind initiative by launching the Air Ambulance in Kerala launched by the Chief Minister Oommen Chandy.

### **Punjab Becomes Seventh State to Sign Up For UDAY**

Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) is the financial package and the turnaround and revival package for electricity distribution companies of India (DISCOMs) initiated by the Government of India to support them overcome the financial turmoil they are in.

- Punjab has become the seventh state to join the scheme.

## **Trade and Business**

### **Indian Overseas Bank Has Become The 1st Bank To Sell Indian Gold Coins**

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has become the first bank to commence the sale of Indian Gold Coin (IGC) in the domestic market.

- It has tied up with Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) for the sale of IGC of 24 carat purity.
- The Indian Gold Coin has the national emblem "the Ashok Chakra" engraved on one side and the face of Mahatma Gandhi on the other side.

### **China, India leading investors in Renewable energy: UN report**

The need of the hour, Renewable energy is the focus of all nations of the world owing to the rising emissions. A recent report released by UN reveals that India & China have overtaken the developed economies in terms of investment in Renewable energy.

- The report 'Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment' for 2015 has been

released by the UN. It showed an increase in investment by the developing countries compared to the developed nations

**ITC Has Acquired Technico Agri Sciences Ltd For Rs 121 Cr.**

FMCG Major ITC has acquired Technico Agri Sciences Ltd (TASL), a company owned by its direct subsidiary, Technico Pty Limited (TPL), Australia for Rs 121 crore.

- Prior to such acquisition, Technico Agri Sciences Limited was a wholly owned subsidiary of Technico Pty Limited, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of ITC Limited.

**Govt plans to infuse Rs. 5,050 crore in PSU banks**

Government is planning to infuse additional capital of about Rs. 5,050 crore in some public sector banks this week, according to reports.

- Parliament has approved Rs 5,050 crore for meeting additional expenditure on recapitalisation of public sector banks, as per a report.

**FreeCharge Partners With Payment Gateway CCAvenue**

FreeCharge a wholly -owned subsidiary of snapdeal has partnered with a payment gateway CCAvenue to strengthen its offline offerings, as it gains access to over one lakh online merchants across sectors like hospitality, retail and education.

- It also plans to allow merchants to upgrade their payment limits of Rs 1,00,000 with necessary KYC verification.

**Economy to grow at 7.2% in 2016-17: BMI Research**

The Indian economy is expected to grow at 7.2 per cent in 2016-17, a tad lower than Central Statistics Office's advance estimates of 7.6 per cent in the current fiscal due to weak investments and external headwinds, says BMI Research.

- "We forecast India's real GDP growth to come in at 7.2 per cent for FY17 from our estimate of 7.3 per cent in FY16 and 7.2 per cent in FY15," the research firm said in a statement.
- Indian economy continues to face multiple challenges, and this is being reflected in high frequency data such as industrial production and trade, it added.

**Current Account Deficit Narrows to 1.3 % of GDP In 3rd Quarter**

India's current account deficit narrowed to 1.3% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the fiscal third quarter.

- In the earlier year 1.5% traded as deficit contracted. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed in date that trade deficit during the October-December quarter narrowed to \$34 billion from \$38.6 billion during the same period in 2014-15.

**Centre releases Rs 609 cr for upgrading prisons in eight States**

The Centre has released 609 crore rupees for upgrading prisons in eight States as recommended by the Thirteenth Finance Commission.

- Kerala has got 154 crore rupees followed by Chhattisgarh, 150 crore rupees and Odisha 100 crore rupees. Andhra Pradesh has been sanctioned 90 crore rupees and Maharashtra 60 crore rupees.
- The other States to receive Central funds for modernisation of jails are Mizoram, 30 crore rupees, Tripura 15 crore rupees and Arunachal Pradesh 10 crore rupees.

**ICICI Bank launches contactless mobile pay solution 'iTap'**

ICICI Bank has launched country's first contactless mobile payment solution 'iTap' through which its customers will be able to make payments by waving their cell phones near a contactless merchant terminal.

- Using the virtual cards, an ICICI Bank customer can initiate electronic payments from Near Field Communication (NFC) enabled smartphones by just waving his/her phone near a contact-less merchant terminal, it said.

**RBI likely to pay Rs 57,000 crore in dividends to government in 2016-17**

The Reserve Bank of India is likely to pay the government Rs 57,000 crore in dividends in 2016-17, slightly less than the amount it paid in the current fiscal but much higher than that in earlier years.

- The government has budgeted Rs 69,897 crore through dividends from state-owned banks, financial entities and RBI, lower than the Rs 73,905 crore it is expected to receive this fiscal. The budget documents do not provide a break-up of the amount expected from banks and RBI.

**Post Office account holders can operate their accounts from any branch**

Communication and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has said that customers with Post Office savings can now operate their accounts from more than 20 thousand branches as they have been connected with core banking facility.

- Implementation of Core Banking Solution is part of the IT Modernization Project of the Department of Posts that aims to bring in various IT solutions with the required IT infrastructure to the post offices.

**Interest rate on PPF slashed from 8.7% to 8.1%**

The government today cut the interest rates payable on small savings including Public Provident Fund, PPF and Kisan Vikas Patra KVP to align them closer to market rates.

- The interest rate on PPF scheme will be cut from 8.7 per cent to 8.1 per cent from 1st of April.
- However, the interest rate on Post Office savings has been retained at 4 per cent.

**Third phase of Gyan Sangam to focus on consolidation of banks**

The government told that it has started the second edition of Gyan Sangam and in the third phase of Gyan sangam it has planned to focus on Consolidation of banks.

- Gyan Sangam is a retreat for banks and financial Institutions. It was held for the first time last year.

**Oil Ministry laid out the foundation stone of Octomax unit at Mathura**

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan laid out the foundation stone for Octomax unit in the oil refinery at Mathura.

- Octomax unit is the country's first high octane gasoline production unit
- It is a part of the oil refinery at Mathura

#### **Axis bank better placed than ICICI and other PSU Banks**

Nomura reports reveal that Axis bank is better placed than ICICI and other public sector bank in terms of corporate book profitability.

- Global financial services firm Nomura said that the third largest private sector bank in India-Axis bank is better placed than ICICI and other PSU's in terms of corporate book profitability

#### **Freecharge Partners With Mexico-Based Movie Theatre Chain Cinopolis**

To provide secure and easy digital payments, Freecharge has partnered with Mexico based movie theatre chain Cinopolis.

- Cinopolis claims to be world's fourth largest chain of movie theatre.
- Free Charge is the first digital wallet partner for Cinopolis

#### **Thomas Cook India inks pact with Western Union, DCB Bank**

Travel Solutions giant Thomas cook India has signed pact with Western Union Business Solutions and DCB bank to enable international trade payments by small and medium sized enterprises.

- This Pact by the Thomas cook to penetrate the high growth Indian SME sector for its international trade payment needs.

#### **27 Government Banks May Be Merged Into Just 6**

Finance Minister of India Mr. Arun Jaitley has indicated that the Government may merge 27 public sector banks into just six.

- Because PSB is working under pressure to tackle their dismal bad loan scenario and consolidation is the way forward to handle this situation. This has been said in the recently held Gyan Sangam in Gurgaon.

#### **Tata Housing ties up with SBI for Women's Day offer**

Real estate developer Tata Housing has partnered with the country's largest lender, State Bank of India, on the occasion of the International Women's Day.

- Tata Housing will allow its women customers to pay only 20 per cent of the agreement value while the balance can be paid on taking possession of the property, a company statement said here today.
- On its part, SBI will be offering home loans to its women customers at a special interest rate of 9.5 per cent per annum under the SBI Her Ghar scheme as part of the International Women's Day, which will be celebrated between March 8 and March 13, it said.
- Moreover, the SBI has waived processing fees on the home loan under the scheme, it added.

#### **Investors' summit Begins in Gurgaon**

The first two-day 'Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit 2016' has kicked off in Gurgaon, which has seen participation from 12 countries.

- Besides several Union Ministers, a number of leading entrepreneurs and MNCs have taken part.
- The summit comes close on the heels of the Jat quota agitation in Haryana, in which 30 people were killed and property worth crores of rupees was destroyed.
- The participating countries are Czech Republic, Japan, Mauritius, New Zealand, China, Korea, Malawi, Peru, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and Tunisia.
- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley is the chief guest at the inaugural session while Khattar has delivered the keynote address.

#### **E- Haat : A Online Marketing Platform Launched By Union Government**

Union Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched Mahila e-Haat portal in New Delhi to facilitate women entrepreneurs to sell their products to buyers.

- It will provide access to markets to thousands of women who make products and are spread all over the country.
- It is an initiative for women across the country as a part of 'Digital India' and 'Stand Up India' initiatives of Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi.

#### **Govt to import 8,500 tonnes of pulses**

Government has contracted import of Eight thousand Five Hundred tonnes of pulses and the shipments are on the way.

- The pulses procurement for buffer stock has also surpassed the target of 50 thousand tonnes set for this kharif season.

- During the meeting, the representative of the agriculture ministry said the area under oilseed production in 2015-16 rose by 2.1 per cent and mustard output is expected to be higher by 6 lakh tonnes. The meeting also reviewed production of tomato in the country and its price trends. Tomato output is also expected to increase by 11.6 per cent in 2015-16.

#### **Union Government announced to withdraw tax proposal on Employee Provident Fund**

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 8 March 2016 announced to withdraw proposal to tax Employee Provident Fund (EPF) withdrawals.

- He announced to withdraw the proposal while clarifying NDA government's stand on the issue in the Lok Sabha.
- However, government retained the tax proposal for National Pension Scheme (NPS) withdrawals.
- The proposal was made by the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley while presenting the Union Budget 2016-17 in the Lok Sabha on 29 February 2016. As per the proposal 60 percent of the amount deposited in the EPF account of the employee would be taxable at the time of withdrawal, and 40 percent would be tax free.

#### **Yes Bank launches all-women branch in Bengaluru**

Yes Bank launched an all-women operated bank branch 'Yes Grace' on Cunningham Road in Bengaluru aimed at offering customised banking solutions to women.

- The new branch served by eight employees currently and with plans to raise the count to 12 will also drive financial literacy, family

banking, safety and wellness amongst women

- Simultaneously, two more all-women bank branches were opened in at Kalkaji, New Delhi and Vile Parle (E), Mumbai with plans to open more branches in major cities.
- Founded in 2004 after receiving a green field bank license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) by Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapoor, the lender's branch network currently stands at 850 across India.

#### **Global rating agency Fitch has maintained the Forecast of India's growth at 7.5**

Global rating agency Fitch has maintained its growth forecast for India at 7.5 per cent this fiscal and sees higher growth over the next two financial years.

- Fitch also claims for a 8% growth in short term is not possible

#### **Banks disburse over Rs 1.15 lakh cr under PM Mudra Yojana**

Banks have so far disbursed over Rs 1.15 lakh crore under Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY), Financial Services Secretary Anjuly Chib Duggal said.

- Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) focuses on 5.75 crore self-employed who use funds totalling Rs 11 lakh crore and provide jobs to 12 crore people. Under PMMY, loans between Rs 50,000 and Rs 10 lakh are provided to small entrepreneurs.
- Three products available under the PMMY are Shishu, Kishor and Tarun, to signify the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit or entrepreneur.

#### **Indian Railways forms SPV to execute Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project**

Railways shifting the gears to introduce trains that run at speeds around 320 kmph, the railways have formed a new Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to implement the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Bullet Train project named the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited.

- 81 per cent of the funding for the project would come from the loan from Japan. It is a soft loan for 50 years at 0.1 per cent annual interest with 15 years' moratorium period.

#### **SBI disburses Rs 1,465 crore OROP arrears**

India's largest lender State Bank of India has released arrears worth Rs.1, 465 crore to about 7.75 lakh defence beneficiaries under OROP scheme ,the scheme is expected to cost the government Rs 7,500 crore per

- Under One Rank One Pension the pensioners will get their first instalment (1/4th of the total arrear amount up to February, 2016) to service pensioner.Family pensioners' and 'gallantry award' pensioners will be eligible to get full amount of arrears paid on 14th March.

#### **Pay interest on savings accounts every quarter: RBI to banks**

Reserve bank of India asked banks to credit interest on savings accounts every quarter or shorter than that of the fiscal.



- Interest rate on savings bank account is calculated on daily basis since April 1, 2010 and it is credited in savings bank account on half-yearly basis.
- The revised interest rate credit payment may put a burden of 500 crore on banks but the move by the central bank which will benefit crores of savings account holders.
- Public sector lenders offer 4 per cent interest on savings deposit, private banks offer as much as 6 per cent.

#### **Yes Bank ink pact with Indo-Brazil chamber for strategic co-operation**

In the run-up to the next BRICS Summit to be held here this year, Yes Bank today inked a pact with the India Brazil Chamber of Commerce for cooperation in knowledge sharing, consultancy, skill and technology.

- Yes Bank said the MoU signing comes in the run up to the 8th Annual BRICS Summit, to be held in New Delhi this year.
- The core sectors covered in the MoU will be sports, media and entertainment with special focus on IT, infrastructure, broadcast driven business opportunities.
- Further, Yes Bank and IBCC will jointly endeavour to explore exchange of best practices in sports goods manufacturing, CSR in sports, SM&E talent management.

#### **India Inc first to formally adopt UN's Sustainable Development Goals**

India Inc. became first in the world to formally adopt the United Nations' (UN) agenda for the

world's sustainable development and 17 goals identified for its implementation.

- It was formally adopted by the India Inc. at the 11th National Convention on Sustainable Development Goal (NCSDG) organized by the Global Compact Network in Mumbai.

#### **RBI to share FDI details with IB & RAW**

The Reserve Bank of India will now share its FDI details with the Intelligence Bureau and Research and Analysis Wing to prevent the entry of Black money into the country.

- The committee headed by Revenue Secretary decided to provide the details of FDI resting with RBI to IB & RAW
- This is done as a measure to prevent the economic crimes in the country

#### **RBI inks information exchange pact with Bank of Israel**

Mumbai based Reserve Bank of India has signed a pact with Bank of Israel for Information Exchange and Banking supervision.

- With this, the RBI has signed 32 such MoUs, one Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and one Statement of Co-operation.

#### **Tata Motors partners US Firm for Rs 50 K Crore project**

Tata Motors has signed Tri Partite Partnership with Bharat Forge and US based General Dynamics Land Systems for Rs. 50 K crore future infantry combat Vehicle project.

- The country's largest commercial Vehicle maker has inked with Pune based auto parts maker Bharat Forge will be partnered by the US firm.
- The FICV is a high-mobility reinforced battle vehicle for ferrying infantry men.

**IMF to set up data sharing centre in India**

In a first for Asia, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) will set up a knowledge sharing centre in India, to provide technical support and assistance here and to five other South Asian nations.

- An agreement is likely to be signed by IMF managing director Christine Lagarde with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

**ICICI Bank rolls out iWork@home for women employees**

India's largest private sector lender ICICI Bank has rolled out iWork@Home programme for its women employees for up to a year.

- It is based on face recognition technology that will facilitate women employee to work from home and provide access to the bank's core banking servers under.
- This platform creates seamless virtual office-like environment that allows women employees to access to their required operating systems in a safe and secure manner.

**India, Bangladesh sign \$2 billion deal to implement socio-economic projects**

India and Bangladesh today signed a new 2 billion dollar credit agreement to implement socio-

economic projects and to deepen the existing strong bilateral relations between the two neighbouring countries.

- It is the biggest and softest line of credit India has extended to any country. It carries a low 1 percent interest rate with a 20-year repayment period.

**Make in India model- Baleno introduced in Japan**

Maruti Suzuki's hatchback model Baleno which is a Make in India model is now launched in Japan.

- The MSI manufactures Baleno solely at the automaker's Manesar facility in Haryana
- Baleno has sold over 38,000 units in India since its launch on October 26, 2015. The company also plans to export the premium hatchback to more than 100 countries

**Government to Divest 5% Stake In Concor**

The government will divest 5 per cent stake in Container Corporation of India (Concor) through the offer for sale (OFS) rout.

- The center has set the base price for the stake sale at Rs 1,195, which will help the government mop up around Rs 1,165 crore.
- Retail investors are being offered a 5 percent additional discount.

**Gujarat Top State Regarding Investment Potential**

Gujarat has topped the list among the 21 cities in a race to be the best state in India having an investment potential, according to the report submit by economic think tank NCAER.

- Gujarat is followed by Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. The lowest in the rankings are the UP, Bihar, and Jharkhand.

**Hyundai Is Now the Official Partner of BCCI**

South Korean Auto major Hyundai Motors has entered into a four-year partnership with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) as an associate sponsor for all international matches played in India.

- Under this agreement Hyundai cars would be used for transporting various stakeholders of the game throughout the event.

**Crisil sees GDP growing at 7.9 % in 2016-17**

The country's GDP can grow by 7.9 per cent next fiscal if the monsoon is normal and government implements the reform measures announced so far, domestic rating agency Crisil said.

- The growth forecast, highest by any house and even above the government's own estimate of 7-7.75 per cent, has been arrived assuming a faster growth in agriculture.
- The country has faced weather shocks for three consecutive years, including two years of deficient rains in 2014 and 2015, and a normal monsoon season this year can lead to a 4 per cent growth in agriculture on lower base effect.
- Implementation of reforms should help the economy achieve higher growth and termed 2016-17 as the "year of reckoning" which has the potential to illustrate the path which the economy can take.

**Mahindra Aerospace to set up operations in UAE**

Mahindra Aerospace mulling to set up operations in Abu Dhabi in the near future, Mumbai based company that produces aircraft and sell them in 30 countries, including in the US and in parts of Africa and Asia.

- The company currently the world's largest importer of defence equipment, will become the third largest aerospace market by 2020 once the operations commenced formally.

**IMF and India to establish SAARTAC**

In a move to further strengthen the economic operations of the Nation, the Union government led by PM Modi has joined hands with IMF to establish a Regional cooperation centre in the Country's capital.

- Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley agreed to establish a capacity development center in New Delhi

**India to supply Locomotives to Myanmar**

BITES (Public Sector Enterprise under Ministry of Railways) signed a contract to supply 18 Meter Gauge 1350 HP Diesel Electric Locomotives to Myanmar Railways.

- India will supply 18 meter Gauge 1350 HP Diesel Electric Locomotives to Myanmar Railways according to the new MoU signed between India and Myanmar

**BSNL Jumps into Video-On-Demand Service**

State Owned BSNL mulling to offer video-on-demand services to their 2 crore customers across India. We will implement this MoU to cover the entire nation within next six months.

- Under this MoU Tata Sky will offer its VoD service free for the first month to download content worth up to Rs 500.

## Telecom Operators Asked To Not Exceed 2% Limit On Call Drops By Supreme Court

A Supreme Court Bench headed by Justice Kurian Joseph asked the Telecoms to not to exceed the call drops limit over 2% and no penalty will be levied on them until they don't cross this threshold.

- It has been mandated the Telecoms to pay subscribers Re 1 for every call drop they experience on their network, subject to a cap of three call drops a day, starting from January 1, 2016.

## ICICI Bank ties up with Ferrari for co-branded credit card

Country's largest private sector lender ICICI said it has tied up with marquee sports car maker Ferrari to launch co-branded credit card.

- "The 'Ferrari Credit Card' comes in two variants on the Visa platform and offers customers a host of offers including an all-expenses-paid trip for top spenders to Italy and also includes a Scuderia Ferrari watch as a joining gift," the bank said in a statement here.

## Free Wi-Fi Service launched At Srinagar International Airport

State-run telecommunication company, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has launched free Wifi services at the Srinagar international airport.

- Tourists visiting the Kashmir valley can now access hi-speed Internet services at the international airport here free of charge for the first 15 minutes as BSNL today launched its state-of-art WiFi Hot Spot services.
- The 4G-based WiFi Hot Spot services of the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) at the Srinagar International Airport was

inaugurated by Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Asgar H Samoon.

## Moody maintains SBI & IDBI ratings unchanged

Moody's Investors Service have told that the local and foreign currency deposit ratings of State Bank of India and IDBI Bank at 'Baa3/P-3'

## French major Michelin ties up with Snapdeal to sell tyres online

French based tyre maker Michelin had joined hands with E-Commerce major Snapdeal to sell its products through Snapdeal.

- The Joint initiative will enable consumers to place an order online using Snapdeal to purchase Michelin tyres from an authorised dealer and request for fitment at a time and place of their choice.
- Customers can now choose the perfect Michelin tyre for their vehicle from the comfort of their home/office with the option of same day free fitment, as well as access to exclusive offers on services like alignment and balancing.

## BRICS Bank to provide its first loan to India on Solar project

The NDB which is likely to begin its operations in 2 months has decided to fund for green projects initially, with India and China in the priority list. India is likely to receive loan for its solar project in April from the NDB.

- The National Development Bank (NDB) set up by the BRICS nations was formed in July 2015 with V.Kamath as its president

**Jaypee Sells Cement Biz to UltraTech for Rs 16,500 crore**

Debt-laden Jayaprakash Associates Cement group signed a binding agreement to sell its Cement Business to India's Largest Cement maker Ultra Tech Cement.

- The cement factories in six states for an enterprise value of Rs. 16, 500 crore

**RBI unlocks 40000 crores to capitalize banks**

RBI announced relaxation of certain norms in the balance sheet which will unlock 40,000 crores to support the capital requirement of Indian banks.

- The revised RBI norms will give public sector banks (PSB) access to additional capital of INR 35,000 crore

**India's GDP growth to hike by 7.8% in 2016-17: Nomura**

Nomura has told in a recent report that India's GDP growth will rise from 7.6% to 7.8% in the year 2016-17. GDP growth would be based on high discretionary demand driven by 7<sup>th</sup> pay commission.

**TCS Recognized As Top Global Employer**

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a leading IT services company has been recognized as a Global Top Employer by the Top Employers Institute.

**India Signs Financing Agreement with World Bank For US\$ 300 Million**

A financing agreement for International Development Association (IDA) credit of US\$ 300 (equivalent) for the Madhya Pradesh Higher Education Quality Improvement Project was signed with the World Bank.

**International Finance Corporation Launches Masala Bonds**

International Finance Corporation (IFC), an part of the World Bank group launched its first Uridashi Masala bonds ( Japanese Bonds ) to mobilize R30 crore (or \$4.3 million) directly from Japanese household investors to promote private sector development in India.

- The 3 year bond builds on IFC's Masala bond program which has raised the approx \$1.7 billion from international investors for investment in India.

**CCEA Approved Winding Up Of National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council (NMCC)**

The National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council (NMCC) will be wound up with immediate effect as it has fulfilled the mandate for which it was constituted.

**MoU between Indian Army and IndusInd Bank**

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Indian Army and Hinduja Grouped IndusInd Bank on the Defence Salary package.

**Union Government to Provide Loan to FACT**

Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore (FACT), a Central Public Sector Undertaking in Kochi signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Union Government to get a loan of Rs. `1000 crores.

**Amazon is India's most trusted online shopping brand: Survey**

World largest E-commerce player Amazon has emerged as a most trusted online Brand in Indian market followed by India based Snapdeal and Flipkart.

**SBI granted operating licence by Myanmar**

India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) has been granted preliminary approval to operate Myanmar.

- SBI was granted operating licence by Myanmar Government along with three other Asian banks. They are Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam, Sun Commercial Bank of Taiwan and Shinhan Bank of South Korea.

**GOI to digitise all rural post offices by 2017**

Government of India will digitalise all the 1.29 lakh rural post offices by 2017. Department of Post IT Modernisation project will get Rs. 4909 crore outlay for digitalisation and Networking of 155, 000 post offices including 129, 323 Gramin Dak Sewak Post Offices in the country.

**UNHCR, UNICEF launched Blue Dot hubs to protect children & families on move across Europe**

UN Refugee Agency and UNICEF are setting up special support centres to ensure protection for the growing numbers of children and others with specific needs arriving in Europe.

**Capital Area Bank first to get small finance bank licence**

Jalandhar based Capital Local Area Bank Limited has given small financial bank licence by the Reserve Bank of India, The Operation of the Bank will kick start from April 13, 2016.

**Paytm appoints ex-head of Alibaba as its President**

Mobile Payment and e-commerce site Paytm has appointed Bhusan Patil as its new President. He was the head of Alibaba wholesale groups earlier.

- Paytm has appointed its new President to help Paytm grow across the borders. It has planned to increase its sellers.

**HL Dattu appointed to International Human Rights body**

Justice HL Dattu, chairperson, National Human Rights Commission, India emerged as the unanimous choice to be appointed as a member of the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs (ICC) Bureau in Geneva.

- His presence on the ICC Bureau will help in not only strengthening the ICC but also enhance the role of NHRIs in the United Nations mechanisms. He will also be working towards the creation of new NHRIs in the countries, which have not set up such bodies.

**Ashley Judd appointed as Goodwill Ambassador by UNDP**

Ashley Judd has been appointed as its Goodwill Ambassador by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

- She is an acclaimed humanitarian, actor, writer and political activist.
- As a UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, the American actress will support the agency's efforts to stop women dying giving life and

## Appointments

to empower women to choose when and how often to become pregnant.

- Ramadorai has served since 2010 and retired on 7<sup>th</sup> March after serving six years.

## **Nepal to Have Its First Woman Chief Justice**

Nepal is on a gender equality drive as it chooses its first woman Chief Justice, in a row of selecting women to top posts. Recently, the country got its first woman President and Speaker.

- Sushila Karki, the senior most of the judges in the Nepal's Supreme Court has been nominated for the top post by the judicial council chaired by the Prime Minister, K P Oli.
- She will take charge as Nepal's first woman President Bindya Bhandari, endorses her nomination and the current chief justice, Kalyan Shreshtha retires.

## **Tapan Chand elected AAI chief**

In the aftermath of National Governing Council meeting of Aluminium Association of India Tapan Kumar Chand has been unanimously elected as the President of the metal governing body.

- Prior to his appointment he was serving chairman and Managing Director of National Aluminium Company.

## **Arab League names Egypt's Ahmed Aboul Gheit as new chief**

The Arab League chose former Egyptian foreign minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit as its new secretary-general, after diplomats said the vote was delayed for hours due to Qatari reservations.

## **M S Dhoni signed as Revital H brand ambassador**

Mumbai based Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Limited has appointed Indian Cricketer and Captain MS Dhoni as the Brand ambassador for its top selling health supplement Revital H.

The Company is also planning to establish a new ad campaign featuring MS Dhoni done by Lowe Lintas which will go live throughout the ICC T20 World Cup.

## **S Rao will take over as the new public interest director and chairman of BSE**

Ramadorai has retired from the BSE Chairman and Karnataka's former Chief Secretary Sudhakar Rao will replace the former.

- Aboul Gheit served as Egypt's foreign minister during the final seven years of Hosni Mubarak's rule, leaving his post in 2011, following the mass protests that toppled the ageing ruler. The 22-member organisation voted unanimously in favour of Aboul Gheit after much debate.

## **Kangana Ranaut named Reebok brand ambassador**

The "Queen" of Bollywood Kangana Ranaut was announced as the brand ambassador of Reebok India. The actress also launched the new campaign of the brand titled "Be More Human".

- It aims to inspire women to become better versions of themselves, not just physically but also mentally and socially. It is a tribute to the modern day Indian woman, telling her that she is fit to rise above stereotypes and carve out her own destiny.

**B.S. Chauhan appointed Law Commission chairperson**

After a delay of more than six months, the government appointed ex-judge of Supreme Court B.S. Chauhan as the chairperson of the 21st Law Commission.

- The post has been lying vacant since last September when the commission was constituted.

**Lt Gen N P S Hira appointed as Deputy chief of Army Staff**

Chief of the Army's Northern Command, Lt Gen N P S Hira has been appointed as Deputy Chief of Army Staff and would assume office on March 14.

- General N P S Hira has been the commander of Sikh Light Infantry and has wide experience in counter insurgency operations in J&K
- He commanded 10 Infantry Division in Jammu and Kashmir on the Line of Control with distinction for which he was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

**Indian scholar appointed VC of Canberra University**

Shri H Deep Saini, a noted Indian Scholar and a plant Physiologist has been appointed the next Vice Chancellor of the prestigious University of Canberra.

- He will will succeed Vice Chancellor Stephen Parker in September who steps down from the post in July after over nine years in the service.

**Altico Named Naina Lal Kidwai as Its New Non executive Director**

Altico capital, a non banking finance company has named veteran banker Naina Lal Kidwai as its new independent non executive director on its board.

- Altico, focused on real estate, is looking to invest about Rs 2,500 crore every year for five years in the Indian real estate market.

**Naveen Patnaik elected as BJD president for the 7th consecutive term**

Odisha CM, Naveen patnaik has been elected as the president of Biju Janata Dhal for the seventh consecutive time.

- The BJD party was formed in 1997 by Naveen Patnaik following the death of Biju Patnaik.

**Rozle Prezelj elected Chairman of IAAF Athletes' Commission**

Slovenian high-jumper Rozle Prezelj on 27 February 2016 was elected the Chairman of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Athletes' Commission in Monaco.

- Prezelj took over as Chairman of the commission from Frank Fredericks with immediate effect.

**Mrugank Paranjape Appointed As MCX MD**

Multi Commodity Exchange announced the appointment of Mrugank Paranjape as MD & CEO of the exchange.

- He will succeed ManojVaish.



**FIH promotes Napoleon Singh as International Umpire**

National level Hockey Umpire Napoleon Singh has been promoted to the International Outdoor Umpire by International Hockey Federation.

- His performance in the recently concluded 12th South Asian Games held at Guwahati has been the key for his appointment.

## Awards

**PM Modi confers Himachal Pradesh with 'Krishi Karman Award'**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred 'Krishi Karman Award' to the government of Himachal Pradesh for its landmark achievement in showing highest production of food grains in year 2014-15, despite adverse weather conditions and rain-fed farming in the state.

- The award was received by Agriculture Minister Sujan Singh Pathania – who led a team of senior officers including Additional Chief Secretary (Agri) Upma Chawdhry at a ceremony held at New Delhi.
- During last three years, total food grains production had increased to from 15.41 lakh in 2011-12 to 16.73 lakh tonnes in 2014-15. The department had also done commendable work in promoting poly-house cultivation, micro-irrigation, organic farming and soil health management.

**Tikka Shatruijit Singh knighted with top French award**

Tikka Shatruijit Singh, chief representative in Asia for French multinational LVMH (Moet Hennessy-Louis Vuitton) and advisor to the chairman of Louis

Vuitton, has spearheaded the development of Louis Vuitton's business in India.

- Tikka Shatruijit Singh, the royal scion of Kapurthala's Ahluwalia dynasty, has been conferred with the prestigious Knight of the Legion of Honour for his "extraordinary work in the exchanging the French lifestyle and Indian culture with each other."

**Tenth Asian Film Awards: Complete List of Winners**

The 10th edition of Asian Film Awards (AFA), which was held at the Venetian Theatre in Macau, China, honoured diverse talents across Asian cinema.

- Awards won by Assassin- Assassin wins more than half of the 15 awards presented in the Asian film awards :- Best Film: The Assassin, Best Director: Hou Hsiao-Hsien for The Assassin, Best Actress: Shu Qi for The Assassin, Best Supporting Actress: Zhou Yun for The Assassin, Best Cinematography: Mark Lee Ping-bing for The Assassin, Best Production Design: Hwang Wern-ying for The Assassin, Best Original Music: Lim Giong for The Assassin, Best Sound: Chu Shih-yi, Tu Duu-chih and Wu Shu-yao for The Assassin. Best Actor: Lee Byung-hun for The Inside Men

**Hockey India Annual Awards: Sreejesh, Deepika walk away with honours**

In the Hockey India second annual awards for the year 2015 Event various awards have been given away in the function held at Bengaluru.

- India goalkeeper PR Sreejesh and Deepika has been honoured with the Dhruv Batra Player of the Year award for men and women, respectively, at the Hockey India second annual awards at Bengaluru

**Rohit Sharma completes hatrick at ESPN Cricinfo****Awards**

Flamboyant opener Rohit Sharma won the prestigious Maruti Suzuki ESPN Cricinfo award for the third year in a row.

- The awards were given for stand out performances across three formats for the year 2015. Rohit, who has won the award for his ODI double hundreds in 2013 and 2014, has won it this time for playing the 'T20 Innings of the Year'. Rohit's innings of 106 against South Africa at Dharamsala, has been rated as the best batting effort.
- McCullum, who retired this year after breaking Viv Richards' 30-year old record for fastest Test hundred, deservingly got 'Captain of The Year' award for leading New Zealand to ICC World Cup final.
- England fast bowler Stuart Broad won the 'Best Test bowling' award by biggest margin of votes for his demolition act of 8/15 in the fourth Ashes Test in Nottingham where Australia were shot out for 60 in first innings.
- The award for 'Best Test Innings' went to current New Zealand captain Kane Williamson for his 242 against Sri Lanka at Wellington.
- The ODI's innings of the year award went to AB De Villiers for his world record hundred off 31 balls against West Indies at Johannesburg. De Villiers scored 149 in that innings.

Tim Southee's 7/33 against England in a World Cup game in Wellington was the best ODI bowling effort.

- David Wiese's 5/23 against West Indies got him award for best bowling in T20 Internationals.

- Mustafizur Rahaman was adjudged Best Debutant of the year for his stellar show against India in ODIs last year.
- The Judges in the panel were John Wright, Curteny Walce, Mahela Jayawardene, Ian Chappel, Ajit Agarkar, Sanjay Manjrekar, Russell Arnold and Mark Nicholas.

**British mathematician Sir Andrew J. Wiles has won the Abel Prize in math**

Sir Andrew has been awarded the 2016 Abel Prize, regarded as mathematics' equivalent of the Nobel Prize.

- He won the award 'for his stunning proof of Fermat's Last Theorem by way of the modularity conjecture for semistable elliptic curves, opening a new era in number theory'.
- Sir Andrew will receive the Prize from Crown Prince Haakon of Norway at a ceremony in Oslo in May.

**Priyanka Kakodkar and Raksha Kumar won Chameli Devi Jain Award**

Priyanka Kakodkar and Raksha Kumar on 15 March 2016 were named as joint winners of the 2015-16 Chameli Devi Jain Award.

- They were awarded for their work that clubs social concern and compassion with pioneering reportage and analytical skills.
- Kakodkar's reports, which targeted on the acute farming crisis in Maharashtra, were published on the front page of The Times of India in the year 2015. More than 50 of her reports were published in a year by the paper.
- The award will be presented by former Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh on 17

March 2016 at the India International Centre, Delhi.

achievements and initiatives at the helm of the Mahindra Group.

## **Dogri Poetess Padma Sachdev Awarded Krutitava Smagra Samman**

Renowned Dogri poetess and writer Padma Sachdev has been awarded Krutitava Smagra Samman for 2015. The award was given by the Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad in Kolkata, West Bengal.

- Sachdev received this award for her outstanding contribution in literature and great service to Dogri Language.

## **President Pranab Mukherjee presented 2015 Nari Shakti awards**

The President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented Stree Shakti Puraskars for the year 2015 at a function organized on the International Women's Day in Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi.

- The International Women's Day is observed this year with the theme "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality".

## **Anand Mahindra conferred with France's highest civilian award**

French Ambassador to India Francois Richier conferred the Knight of the Legion of Honour on Anand Mahindra, at his France residence to Mahindra & Mahindra Group, in recognition of his outstanding national and international achievements and initiatives.

- The honour is bestowed at the Residence of France, France's highest civilian distinction comes in recognition of Mr Mahindra's outstanding national and international

## **Tezpur and JNU won Visitors Award for 2016**

Tezpur University won the annual Visitor's Award for the Best University. Rakesh Bhatnagar and the Molecular Parasitology Group of Jawahar Lal Nehru University (JNU) have also won the Visitor's Awards for Research and Innovation respectively.

- Professor Rakesh Bhatnagar of Jawahar Lal Nehru University for development of a genetically engineered vaccine and a therapeutic antibody against anthrax

## **63rd National Film Awards**

The 63rd National Film Awards were started as an annual incentive by the Government of India to encourage meaningful films.

- Best actress: Kangana Ranaut for 'Tanu Weds Manu Returns'
- Best actor: Amitabh Bachchan for 'Piku'
- Best Film: 'Baahubali: The Beginning'
- Best Director: Sanjay Leela Bhansali for 'Bajirao Mastani'
- Best popular film providing wholesome entertainment: 'Bajrangi Bhaijaan'
- Best Film Friendly State Award: Gujarat

## **Kerala Tourism campaign wins Golden City Gate Award**

God's own Country official logoed Kerala Tourism's campaign on tourism has bagged the 'Golden City Gate Award' at the travel trade show ITB in Berlin.

- The award bagged campaign Titled ‘New Worlds’, the multimedia campaign containing three short films directed by reputed Malayalam filmmaker Anwar Rasheed won the silver prize of this year’s Golden City Gate (Das Golden Stadttor), at the International Tourismus-Borse Berlin.

## **Palestinian Hanan Al Hroub Won 2016 Global Teacher Prize**

The 2016 Global Teacher Prize worth \$1 million has been announced by Pope Francis and the reverent awardee is a Palestinian Teacher, Hanan Al Hroub, who teaches Refugee Children and was a refugee herself

- Teachers are one of the most important pillars among the building blocks of the society. And they truly deserve to be recognized and rewarded for their remarkable contribution to the world.

## **Leonardo DiCaprio wins his first-ever Best Actor award: Oscar 2016**

Leonardo DiCaprio has finally won his first Oscar for survival epic The Revenant. It took Leonardo a good 22 years to finally earn the Academy Award.

- Best Picture – ‘Spotlight’
- Best Actor in a Leading Role – Leonardo DiCaprio for ‘The Revenant’
- Best Actress in a Leading Role – Brie Larson for ‘Room’

## **Bhagwati Lal Vyas selected for Bihari Puraskar 2015**

Eminent poet Dr. Bhagwati Lal Vyas has been chosen for the 2015 Bihari Puraskar for his

anthology of Rajasthani poems ‘Katha Sun Aawe Hai Sabad’.

## **Manoj Kumar To Be Conferred Dada Saheb Phalke Award For The Year 2015**

Veteran Film Actor and Director Shri Manoj Kumar is to be conferred the 47th Dada Saheb Phalke Award for the year 2015.

- Award is conferred by the Government of India for outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian Cinema.

## **Ratan Thiyam Selected For 11th META Lifetime Achievement Award**

Veteran playwright and director Ratan Thiyam has been selected for prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for 2016 at the 11th edition of Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META).

- Currently he is the chairman of the National School of Drama.

## **Stevie Wonder Honoured With Global Green Hero Award**

Veteran singer Stevie Wonder was honoured with Global Green Hero award.

- The award has been given at the 13th Annual Global Green USA Pre Oscar party.

## **Sports**

### **First ever Paralympics Games begins in Arunachal Pradesh**

The first ever Paralympics Games in Arunachal Pradesh kicks off at Sangay Lhaden Sports Academy, Chimpu, in Itanagar today.

- The three day event was declared open by Dani Sulu, Secretary, Sports and Youth Affairs, Arunachal Pradesh.

### **Shane Watson to retires from international cricket**

Australian all-rounder Shane Watson declared that he will call time on his 14-year-old international cricket career at the end of his team's campaign in the ongoing ICC World Twenty20.

- The 34-year-old has already retired from Test cricket.

### **Maria Sharapova provisionally suspended after failing drugs test at Australian Open**

Former world number one Maria Sharapova has revealed she failed a drugs test at the Australian Open.

- The 28 year old Russian star tested positive for meldonium, a substance, she has been taking since 2006 for health issues.
- The International Tennis Federation said, Sharapova, a five time Grand Slam champion, is provisionally suspended from March 12th pending further action.

### **Rest of India complete record run chase to win Irani trophy**

Rest of India (ROI) pull off an incredible chase to beat 41 times Ranji Trophy champions Mumbai by four wickets.

- Needing 480 to win the match with a day and a half to go, ROI went about their job

without much fuss as they reached the target with just a few overs left in the match.

- ROI were bowled out for 306 in their first innings, thereby conceding a lead of 297 runs. Mumbai did not enforce the follow-on, but were bowled out for just 182, thereby setting ROI a target of 480. No other bowler barring Abdullah managed to pick up a single wicket as ROI romped home.

### **Vijender Singh clinches fourth successive professional win**

Vijender Singh retained his unbeaten run in Professional Boxing alive with yet another knockout win over Hungary's Alexander Horvath at the Echo Arena in Liverpool.

- Indian boxing star Vijender Singh has achieved up his fourth consecutive knockout professional win by thrashing Hungary's Alexander Horvath in under three rounds.

### **All England Championships: Lin Dan wins sixth title; Nozomi Okuhara first**

Lin Dan earned his sixth All England badminton title when he routed Chinese teammate Tian Houwei 21-9, 21-10 in the final.

- Meanwhile, Nozomi Okuhara of Japan marked her 21st birthday with her first All England title after beating two-time champion Wang Shixian of China 21-11, 16-21, 21-19 in their thrilling final.

### **Services wins 70th Santosh Trophy football title 2016**

In the 70th Santosh Trophy Football Championship Tournament Services beat Maharashtra 2-1 to

clinch title for fifth time. Riding on Arjun Tudu's double strike helped the side to lift the trophy.

- Services retained the Santosh Trophy National Football Championships title after beating hosts Maharashtra 2-1 in the title clash in the Final at the SEC Railway Stadium Nagpur.

### **Mumbai U-23 Team Clinched CK Nayudu Trophy 2015-16**

The Mumbai under-23 team clinched the Col CK Nayudu Trophy by defeating Madhya Pradesh at the Holkar Stadium in Indore.

- This was Mumbai's second big title of the season, After clinching their 41st Ranji Trophy title in Pune around a week back.

### **Patna Pirates beat U Mumba to win 3rd season of Pro Kabaddi League**

Patna Pirates beat the dominant U Mumba to emerge as Champions of Pro Kabaddi Season 3. The score closed at 31-28 in favour of Patna Pirates.

### **India win Asia Cup title for sixth time**

India demonstrates its dominance in Twenty20 cricket and regains continental supremacy, downing host Bangladesh by eight wickets in the final of the Asia Cup at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium. With this victory, India lifted their sixth Asia Cup title.

- Man of the Match: Shikhar Dhawan.
- Man of the series: Sabbir Rahman (Bangladesh).

## Deaths

### **Former Mossad Director Meir Dagan passes away**

Former Director of Israel's intelligence agency Mossad Meir Dagan passed away due to liver cancer. He was 71.

- He had served as Director General of the Mossad from 2002 until his retirement in 2011. He was widely credited for covertly disrupting Iran's nuclear program.

### **Nobel laureate Lloyd S. Shapley passed away**

Lloyd S. Shapley, a researcher of strategic decision-making called "game theory" who had won the 2012 Nobel Prize in economics, passed away. He was 92.

- The American mathematician had come up with formulas to match supply and demand in markets.

### **Football legend Johan Cruyff passed away**

The Holland football legend Johan Cruyff has died peacefully in Barcelona, in the presence of his family of lung cancer at the age of 68.

- The Dutchman, was named as the world player of the year on three occasions. He guided Holland to the World Cup final in 1974 and as a manager he spent eight years in charge of Barcelona.

### **Comedian Garry Shandling Dies at 66**

American actor and comedian Garry Shandling has died. He was 66. His office did not yet have any details about Shandling's death.

- He was best known for his work in Garry Shandling's Show and The Larry Sanders Show.
- He attended as host of the Grammy Awards four times and as host of the Emmy Awards three times.

#### **Former BJP MP Lal Muni Chaubey passed away**

Veteran BJP leader and Politician Lal Muni Chaubey passed away at the age of 73 owing to prolonged illness.

- He has been selected as the MP from Buxar district during 1996-2009 four times
- He had also been the MLA from Kaimur constituency thrice

#### **Booker prize-winner Anita Brookner passed away**

The Booker prize-winning British author and renowned art historian Anita Brookner has died at the age of 87.

- He won the Booker in 1984 for her novel Hotel du Lac, was a bestselling author who wrote 25 books.

#### **American Actress Nancy Reagan died at 94**

Nancy Davis Reagan, the veteran American actress and the former First lady of US died at the age of 94 following a cardiac arrest.

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- She was an American actress and the wife of the 40th President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

#### **Brazilian musician Nana Vasconcelos Dies**

Acclaimed Brazilian musician Nana Vasconcelos has died at age 71. He worked over the decades with well-known musicians such as Milton Nascimento.

- The American jazz magazine Down Beat named Vasconcelos percussionist of the year every year from 1983 to 1991.
- He started learning music with his musician father and by the time he was 12 he was playing a drum kit, performing at bars with local groups.

#### **Former Intel CEO Andrew Grove passes away**

Intel's former Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chairman Andrew Grove passed away due to Parkinson's disease. He was 79.

- He was a science pioneer in the semiconductor industry and under his leadership Intel became a household name in computers.

#### **Former Danish Prime Minister Anker Jorgensen Passed Away**

Anker Henrik Jorgensen, who was a Danish politician and served at various times as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Denmark has passed away on Sunday.

- He led five cabinets as Prime Minister between 1972 and 1981. He was 93.

**Rock legend Keith Emerson died**

British Keyboardist and progressive rock legend Keith Emerson died. He was 71.

- Emerson, the co-founder of British prog-rock band Emerson, Lake & Palmer, was widely considered one of the top keyboard players of the progressive rock era.
- Apart from ELP, founded in 1970, Keith Emerson is best remembered for his role in The Nice, formed in 1967. The British musician and composer was born in Yorkshire in 1944.
- ELP rose to become one of the most popular bands of the 1970s, and were voted in at number seven on Rolling Stone's 2011 Reader Poll of the best prog-rock acts of all time.

**Former minister of Maharashtra-Nihal Ahmed Maulavi Mohammed Usman Died**

Socialist leader Nihal Ahmed Maulavi Mohammed Usman died at the age of 90 in Nashik.

- Popularly known as Nihalbhai, he has been selected to the legislative assembly for 3 decades contesting for ten times and winning all the ten elections between 1960-1955.

**Famous Tamil Comedy Actor Kumarimuthu Passed Away**

Legendary Actor – comedian Kumarimuthu died at private hospital in Chennai. He was 77. He is known for his comic laugh.

- He was also part of the Political Party Drivida Munnetra Kazhagam.

**New Zealand Cricket Legend Martin Crowe Dead Dies Aged 53 After Losing Cancer Battle**

New Zealand Cricketer Martin Crowe passed away after a prolonged battle with cancer that eventually proved one attack the gifted cricketer couldn't see off. He was 53.

- Auckland-born Crowe is widely regarded as one of New Zealand's best ever batsman

**Veteran Left Chief Ashok Ghosh passed away**

Veteran All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) leader and senior-most leader of the Left Front in West Bengal, Ashok Ghosh passed away recently. He was 94.

**Former Lok Sabha Speaker PA Sangma Passes Away**

Purno Agitok Sangma, who was the Lok Sabha Speaker from 1996 to 1998 and one of the co-founders of Nationalist Congress Party passed away today following a heart attack. He was 68.

**Pat Conroy, Prince of Tides and Great Santini Author, Dies At 70**

Legendary Novelist Pat Conroy served as an unending source of inspiration for his fiction notably the novels The Great Santini, The Lords of Discipline and the Princes of Tides died.

**Jim Harrison Passed Away**



Veteran lyricist, Poet, Essayist and Novel writer Jim Harrison passed away at the age of 78 following cardiac arrest.

- His famous novel "Legends of the fall" in 1979 describes about a Montana family that was ravaged in worldwar-I was a huge hit

#### **Ustad Ali Ahmad Hussain Khan passed away**

Eminent Shehnai exponent Ustad Ali Ahmad Hussain Khan died on 16 March 2016 in Kolkata. He was 77.

- He was known as one of the best-known players of the instrument after the legendary Bismillah Khan (1916-2006).

#### **E-mail inventor Ray Tomlinson passes away**

Internet pioneer and e-mail inventor Raymond Tomlinson passed away in Washington, United States. He was 74 years old.

- To send electronic messages on different machines on a certain network successfully he had used @ sign to separate the user name from the name of their machine.

#### **Popular Malayalam actor Kalabhavan Mani passes away**

Renowned Malayalam actor Kalabhavan Mani passed away at Kochi, Kerala due to liver and kidney failure. He was 45.

- He had had acted in over 200 films in Malayalam and other South Indian languages including Tamil, and Telugu films.

## Books

#### **Dr. Mahesh Sharma releases the book "The Culture Heritage of Trans Himalayas-Kinnaur"**

The Minister for State (I/C) for Culture and Tourism and Minister of State for Civil Aviation Dr. Mahesh Sharma released a book entitled "The Culture Heritage of Trans Himalayas-Kinnaur" authored by Shri P.S. Nagi Loktus, IAS (retd.)

- It is a study of the cultural heritage of the trans-Himalayan area of Himachal Pradesh, especially Kinnaur that involves documentation of traditional institutions like temples, monasteries, Bon chos, artefacts, forts and old dialects of various ethnic groups.
- This book will be very useful for research scholar and students concerned with the Cultural heritage of India.

#### **Journalist Shantanu Guha Ray's new book released**

Journalist Shantanu Guha Ray's new book called "Fixed: Cash and Corruption in Cricket" released recently.

- The book examines the corruption charges against players, cricket administrators and bookies.

#### **Gandhi: An Illustrated Biography authored by Pramod Kapoor**

An Illustrated Biography: Gandhi was authored by Pramod Kapoor is a one platform for all those who

want to know about the life of the Father of the Nation.

- In the 68 years since his assassination, Gandhi has been studied and re-analysed infinitely, with respect and critically.
- He is the founder and publisher of Roli Books and has conceived and produced award-winning books that include then and now series, Made for Maharajas, New Delhi: The Making of a Capital.

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