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AWARDS AND HONOURS

Name of the Award	Award Winner	Points To Note
Kumar Gandharva Rashtriya Samman	Shekhar Sen	He is the chairperson of the Sangeet Natak Academy
International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO)	Delhi Metro	For efficient energy management.
People's Choice Awards nomination	Priyanka Chopra	In her debut American TV thriller "Quantico"
Aditya Vikram Birla Kala Shikhar Award	Shiv Kumar Sharma	For lifetime achievement
Named "Point of Light" by British Prime Minister David Cameron	Muna Chauhan	Indian-origin community campaigner
Media Freedom Prize	Zaina Erhaim	A Syrian journalist
This year's sexiest man alive by People magazine	Soccer turned fashion icon David Beckham	The announcement was made on ABC's late-night TV show Jimmy Kimmel Live
US public service award	Indian-American Judge Ushir Pandit-Durant	In recognition of her contributions in the field of law
Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Champion for the Asia Region	Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Kiren Rijju	By the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)
2015 Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	In recognition of its "immense contributions" in assisting millions of refugees
An honorary doctorate by the University of East London	Tennis champion-turned Hollywood filmmaker Ashok Amritraj	For promoting talented moviemakers from across the world
Master Dinanath Mangeshkar Award	Prashant Damle	For outstanding contribution in the field of theatre, film and music
Lifetime Achievement Award	Kuldip Nayar	Veteran journalist, columnist and author
Kalinga Samman 2014	Trilochan Pradhan	For popularising science among the common man in Odisha

You Are Only Confined By The Walls You Build Yourself!!!

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Post	Name of the Person	Points To Note
Air Officer-in-charge Maintenance (AOM)	Air Marshal Virender Mohan Khanna	At Air Headquarters, New Delhi
Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC)	Bhushan Kumar Bansal	He is the sixth member to be appointed
Member of board in SEBI	Shaktikanta Das	Das has also been nominated to the Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank.
Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL)	Mr Anil Kumar Jha	
Federal Bank CEO	Shalini Warriar	She had a 25-year stint with the Standard Chartered Bank
Unisys Corporation MD	Ravikumar Sreedharan	Sreedharan succeeds Kumar Prabhas
India's Ambassador to Afghanistan	Manpreet Vohra	He succeeds Amar Sinha
High Commissioner to Britain	Navtej Singh Sarna	He is a Secretary (West) in External Affairs Ministry
Next Chief Justice of India	T S Thakur	He will take over as the CJI after Justice Dattu retires on December 2
Flipkart's Senior Vice President and Head of Consumer Experience and Growth	Surojit Chatterjee	He was Google's executive
Managing Director of Oxford University Press India (OUP)	V Sivaramakrishnan	He succeeds Ranjan Kaul
Foreign ministry spokeswoman to head its embassy in Malaysia	Marzieh Afkham	Iran's first woman ambassador since the 1979 Islamic revolution
Member of Board of Regents of the University of North Texas in the US	Ashok Mago	He is a Padma Shri awardee Indian-American
National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Jayant Krishna	
Vice-chairman of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS)	Raghuram Rajan	First Indian central banker to be appointed
Ethics officer (ombudsman) at Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)	AP Shah	He was a Former Chief Justice of Delhi High Court
UN refugee chief	Filippo Grandi	He is an Italian diplomat
CMD of Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd	IS Jha	

Executive director on the board of International Monetary Fund(IMF)	Subir Gokarn	Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) deputy governor
Head of Nokia India	Sandeep Girotra	Mr Girotra is currently Vice President and Head of India, Nokia Networks
Standard Chartered as its India CEO	Zarine Daruwala	She was working with ICICI Bank's head of corporate banking division
New permanent representative of India to the United Nations in New York	Syed Akbaruddin	The chief coordinator of the India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)
Philips India as its new vice-chairman and managing director	V Raja	He takes over from A Krishna Kumar
India's Ambassador to Germany	Vijay Keshav Gokhale	He would replace Mr. Kantha
United States director of the Asian Development Bank	India-born Swati Dandekar	She will replace Robert M. Orr
Assistant Chief of Naval Staff communication Space and Network Centric Operation)	Rear Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh	He takes over from Rear Admiral Kishan K Pandey
Bihar's 35th chief minister	Nitish Kumar	Grand Alliance defeated BJP
President of industry body Ficci	Harshavardhan Neotia	He replaces Jyotsna Suri
President of Association of Retired Judges of Supreme Court and High Courts	MR Calla	Is a retired judge of the Rajasthan and Gujarat high courts
Special Representative for Somalia and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM)	Michael Keating	He will succeed Nicholas Kay
Country President of Sodexo India On-site Services	Rishi Gour	
Prime minister of Portugal	Antonio Costa	Portugal President Anibal Cavaco Silva has appointed Goa-origin person
President of industry body Assocham	Sunil Kanoria	SREI Infrastructure Finance vice-chairman
Chairperson of Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS)	Anju Bobby George	Former world long jump champion
Sixth Commonwealth Secretary General	Baroness Patricia Scotland	British politician, she replaces outgoing Secretary General Kamalesh Sharma

BANKING AND FINANCE

ICICI Bank to sell 9% more in general insurance arm for Rs 1,500 cr

- * The Prem Watsa-founded Fairfax financial Holdings will increase its stake in ICICI Lombard General Insurance by nine per cent for Rs 1,550 crore.
- * The deal, expected to be closed by March, will take Fairfax's stake in the company to 35 per cent, while the remaining stake will be held by promoter ICICI Bank.
- * The deal values the general insurance company at Rs 17,225 crore.
- * Earlier this year, the government approved the increase in the foreign direct investment (FDI) ceiling in the insurance sector from 26 per cent to 49 per cent. However, ownership and management control has to remain with domestic promoters.

IDFC Ltd logs net loss of Rs 1,469 crore in July-September

- * IDFC Ltd said the company registered a net loss of Rs 1,468.83 crore on a consolidated basis.
- * The company had posted a net profit of Rs 421.4 crore in the same quarter last fiscal.
- * But total income of IDFC increased to Rs 2,512.90 crore in the quarter under review, from Rs 2,487.46 crore in the same period a year ago, the bank said in a regulatory filing.
- * On a stand-alone basis too, the company posted a net loss of Rs 1,411.38 crore in July-September of this fiscal as against a net profit Rs 470.15 crore a year ago.
- * Total income (stand-alone) rose to Rs 2,458.10 crore against Rs 2,427.27 crore a year earlier.

'Retail banking space will continue to provide opportunities for prudent growth'

- * The Singapore-based DBS India, plans to scale up its presence in India from being a large corporate bank, to being a more universal bank and it seeks license for a wholly owned subsidiary (WOS) in India, which is likely to help the bank to expand the retail banking business in India
- * Rahul Johri, Managing Director and Head of Consumer Banking Group, DBS India, in an e-mail interview with The Hindu, spoke on the bank's plans to expand in India.
- * DBS Bank has been more of corporate bank in India. It's only in the recent times that DBS is making a significant phase-wise foray in to retail banking.
- * Over the last three years, DBS India developed the retail banking franchise through a focussed play in the wealth management space in the 12 cities where we have branches.

Paytm to use customer base for payments bank

- * Paytm, which has been granted the in-principle licence for payments bank, hopes to cash-in on its existing mobile wallet customer base for its payments bank as well.
- * Apart from targeting new customers, the company would also focus on migrating the existing customers, allowing it to start with a substantial customer base on the day it commences operations.

- ★ However, the mobile wallet customers that Paytm currently has cannot be automatically shifted to the bank. Paytm has chalked out an ambitious plan of having about 500 million customers for its payments banks by 2020.
- ★ In order to ensure the target is achieved, the company will invest heavily in technology to ensure the cost of transaction remains low so that more people can be brought into the banking fold.
- ★ The company is also looking at exploring several tie-ups to enable certain functions such as lending, which payments banks are not allowed to undertake.

Govt appoints MDs of four PSU banks

The government has appointed MDs of four public lenders, including UCO Bank, Corporation Bank and Andhra Bank.

Name	Bank	HQ
Suresh N Patel	Oriental Bank of Commerce	Haryana
R K Takkar	UCO Bank	Kolkata
J K Garg	Corporation Bank	Mangalore
Mahesh Kumar Jain	Indian Bank	Chennai

RBI includes Bandhan Bank in second schedule list

- ★ Reserve Bank on November 5, included Bandhan Bank in the second schedule list. The newly launched bank now is eligible for loans from the central bank at bank rate.
- ★ Bandhan Bank Limited has been included in the Second Schedule to the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. A scheduled bank is eligible for loans from the RBI at bank rate.
- ★ They are also given membership to clearing houses. Besides, Industrial Bank of Korea and Korea Exchange Bank Co Ltd have been included in the second schedule.

RBI imposes Rs 1 crore penalty on Dhanlaxmi Bank

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed Rs 1 crore penalty on Dhanlaxmi Bank for violation of Know Your Customer (KYC) and Anti Money Laundering (AML) norms.
- ★ It had issued a Show Cause Notice to the bank for not complying with KYC and AML guidelines in respect of a current account under investigation of the Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

UDAY may provide Rs 80,000 crore relief to struggling discoms

- ★ The state-run Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojna (UDAY) is likely to provide a relief to struggling state-owned discoms to the extent of Rs 80,000 crore per year till FY19.
- ★ It would translate into a reduction in losses by around Rs 0.95 per unit on an all India basis.

RBI issued Uniform Guidelines on Internet Banking for Cooperative Banks

- ★ Reserve Bank on 5 November allowed state co-operative banks (StCBs) and district central co-operative banks (DCCBs) to offer internet banking with “view only” facility.
- ★ At present, urban cooperative banks (UCBs) that meet certain criteria are permitted to provide internet banking with transactional facility to their customers with prior approval of the RBI. Besides, internet banking with “view only” facility is allowed to be given by all UCBs complying with certain conditions, without RBI’s approval.

WEF commends India’s economic growth

- ★ According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) India, in the coming years, is positioned much more favorably than China in terms of growth.
- ★ In an article published on its website, the Head of India and South Asia for World Economic Forum, Viraj Mehta, said that there is now a consensus among analysts that there are only a few bright spots in the global economy, and India is one of them.
- ★ The World Economic Forum also noted that growth accelerated this year to around 7.5 percent, putting the country on course to overtake China by the end of 2016.

RBI issued Uniform Guidelines on Internet Banking for Cooperative Banks

- ★ Reserve Bank of India has revised and issued a uniform guidelines on Internet Banking.
- ★ The revised guidelines applicable to all the cooperative banks are as follows:
- ★ All licensed StCBs, DCCBs and UCBs which have implemented Core Banking Solution (CBS) and migrate to Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) and complying with the guidelines prescribed in Annex-I to this circular may offer Internet Banking (View only) facility to their customers, without prior approval of RBI.

Centre approves Rs 2100 crore for Karnataka, Gujarat under NDRF

- ★ The GOI has approved Rs. 2,100 crore funds under the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF) for Karnataka and Gujarat, which recently faced drought and floods respectively. The Committee examined the proposals based on the report of the central team that visited the affected states hit by severe natural disasters.
- ★ A high-level meeting for Central assistance to states affected by natural disasters was held in in the national capital under the chairmanship of Home Minister Rajnath Singh and attended by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya, Agriculture Minister Sanjeev Balyan and other senior officials.

Emirates bank, SBI join hands for easier remittances

- ★ A leading UAE-based bank has announced a partnership deal with State Bank of India.
- ★ This partnership has been handed to help NRI customers in the gulf carry out their remittances instantly and more conveniently. Emirates NBD has expanded its partner bank network in India to include State Bank of India (SBI) for the Direct Remit 60 seconds remittance platform.

Government working on plan to curb NPAs in public sector banks

- ★ The government is working on a detailed plan to tackle bad loans at public sector banks. NPAs (Non Performing Assets) curtail their ability to lend and restrain private investment. Thus posing a significant threat to the broader Indian economy.
- ★ The government wants to kick start private investment, that a more radical and focused approach is needed to address the issue besides capital infusion in the long term.
- ★ The plan is being discussed by Prime Minister's Office and the finance ministry.

SBI to launch FTSE SBI bond indices

- ★ Global index provider FTSE Russell and State Bank of India (SBI) has signed an agreement to launch India's first bond index.
- ★ The two companies have signed a letter of intent to develop the FTSE-SBI India Bond Index.
- ★ SBI Mutual fund, the asset management unit of India's largest bank, intends to use the new index as the basis for a new investment product, the release added. The index provides a tool to deepen liquidity in the sovereign and corporate bond market.

Swachh Bharat Cess: PAN Card Gets Costlier

- ★ Eating out, telephony and travel will become expensive from November 15th with the government imposing a 0.5 per cent Swachh Bharat cess on taxable services which is expected to yield about Rs. 3,800 crore to the exchequer in the remaining months of the fiscal year.
- ★ According to Revenue Secretary Hasmukh Adhia, the government expects to collect around Rs. 10,000 crore from Swachh Bharat cess for full year.

World Bank, AP ink \$75-m credit deal for rural project

- ★ The Centre, Andhra Pradesh and the World Bank have inked a \$75 million (₹500 crore) credit deal for the Andhra Pradesh Rural Inclusive Growth Project.
- ★ The project seeks to enhance agricultural incomes of small and marginal farmers and ensure increased access to services related to health, nutrition, sanitation and social entitlements.
- ★ What are the Focus areas?
 - Increasing economic opportunities for small and marginal farmers, especially from Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) households in the 150 most backward mandals.
 - Developing a network of social enterprises for food, nutrition, sanitation and other social enterprises which operate at community and district level.

RBI allows regional rural banks to launch internet banking with caveats

- ★ Reserve Bank of India has allowed strong regional rural banks to launch online transaction through internet banking, an essential product in new-age banking. Profitable RRBs with minimum Rs 100 crore net worth and better asset quality will be allowed to offer this service.

Dumping duty imposed on carbon black imports from China, Russia

- ★ The Finance Ministry has imposed definitive anti-dumping duty on certain carbon black imports from China and Russia. The anti-dumping duty would be valid for five years.
- ★ It has been specifically imposed on carbon black used in rubber applications. The latest Revenue Department move follows the recommendation of the Designated Authority in Commerce Ministry in its sunset review investigation of existing anti-dumping duty on import of 'carbon black used in rubber applications' from China, Russia and Thailand.

Kotak subsidiary gets IRDAI nod to commence operations

- ★ Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company (Kotak General Insurance) has received approval of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) to commence business as an insurance company.
- ★ With this, the company has completed all registration formalities required by the regulator.
- ★ General Insurance has received permission to underwrite all classes of general insurance business (including health insurance). According to industry estimates, general insurance market in India is currently at Rs 84,000 crore premium per annum and has been growing at a healthy rate of 15 per cent for the last five years.

ADB pledges \$120 million loan to finance India, Bangladesh electricity link

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has pledged to provide 120 million dollar loan in order to finance cross-border electricity link between Bangladesh and India under SASEC Programme.
- ★ In this regard, loan agreement was signed by ADB Country Director Kazuhiko Higuchi and Mohammad Mejbahuddin, Senior Secretary of Bangladesh Finance Ministry.
- ★ The loan FUND would be used for Second Bangladesh-India Grid Inter connectivity project under the ambitious South Asia Sub-regional Economic Co-operation (SASEC) Programme.

SBI tags Mallya, his 2 firms as wilful defaulters

- ★ State Bank of India (SBI) has declared industrialist Vijay Mallya a 'wilful defaulter' for defaults on nearly Rs 7,000 crore loans to the long-grounded Kingfisher Airlines.
- ★ After the Bombay High Court in August this year allowed Mallya to be represented by his legal counsels, SBI moved the Supreme Court challenging the HC order, saying that HC order violated the RBI rules on grievance redressal committee that allow only the borrower to be present his case in person.

Axis Bank enters B'desh, opens rep office in Dhaka

- ★ Extending its overseas footprint, Axis Bank has opened a representative office in Dhaka, capital city of Bangladesh.
- ★ The bank aims to leverage the growing economic integration between the two countries by actively facilitating trade transactions, both inbound as well as out-bound.
- ★ The bank will also contribute towards employment generation, both directly and indirectly in the country. Dhaka operations, primarily focused to promote the trade finance business, will further strengthen the bank's presence in Asia.

IDBI Bank becomes first commercial state-owned bank to raise \$350 million via selling green bonds

- ★ IDBI Bank has become the first commercial state-owned bank to raise \$350 million via selling green bonds, where proceeds are used for clean energy projects.
- ★ The company has a pipeline of more than \$1 billion clean energy projects requiring credit lines. In futures, IDBI may sell more such bonds depending on those project status.
- ★ Bonds were priced at 4.26% (fixed rate) after adding a mark-up or spread of 255 basis points on five-year US Treasury, now at 1.71%.

SEBI, Bangladesh SEC ink MoU on bilateral cooperation

- ★ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) have signed an MoU on bilateral cooperation and technical assistance.
- ★ The MoU seeks to promote further development of economic links and cooperation between the two neighbouring countries.
- ★ It also aims at enhancing investor protection and creating conditions for effective development of securities markets in both countries.
- ★ The MoU was signed by SEBI chairman U K Sinha and BSEC Chairman M Khairul Hossain in the presence of Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina Wazed.

SBI to float subsidiary to manage its properties

- ★ Country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) is finalising plans to set up a subsidiary for managing its large portfolio of real estate properties and those taken on lease or rent.
- ★ SBI is planning to set up a subsidiary for management of properties owned by it and also for those taken on lease or rent. The subsidiary would eventually take over these properties after it was formed.

Govt to announce Central KYC Records Registry entity soon

- ★ The Reserve Bank November 27 made an announcement by the government naming the entity, which will function as the Central KYC Records Registry (CKYCR). CKYCR would receive, store, safeguard and retrieve the KYC records in digital form of a client, for which necessary amendments to the related rules have been made.
- ★ The KYC (Know Your Customers) records received and stored by the CKYCR could be retrieved online by any reporting entity across the financial sector.

NDB BRICS appoints 4 new VPs, allocates roles

- ★ NDB BRICS has been launched as an alternative to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to meet funding needs of the BRICS grouping and other five BRICS countries has allocated formal responsibilities to four vice presidents.
- ★ The Shanghai-based bank following the second meeting of its Board of Directors on November 23-24, the NDB is pleased to announce the allocation of formal responsibilities to the four Vice Presidents of the Bank.

HSBC to Shut Down India Private Banking Business

- ★ HSBC Holdings Plc will shut its private banking business in India, marking the exit of another foreign bank from the cut-throat business in Asia's third-largest economy.
- ★ After a strategic review of the global private banking operations in India, we have decided to close the business. This marks further progress in the HSBC group strategy to simplify business and deliver sustainable growth.

HDFC Bank launches Rs 30-cr marketing campaign

- ★ Country's second largest private sector lender HDFC Bank, which has launched 'sonic branding' or a musical logo, today said it will spend over Rs 30 crore to promote the new brand positioning which stresses on the digital banking. We have launched a distinct tune which represents the brand.
- ★ This is a part of a national campaign that was launched before Diwali, its marketing head Kartik Jain told.

Union Bank ties up with Maharashtra for OTC tax collection

- ★ State-run Union Bank of India has tied up with Maharashtra for over-the-counter (OTC) collection of taxes and receipts.
- ★ The bank has integrated its core banking with the Maharashtra virtual treasury, GRAS (Government Receipt Accounting System), to facilitate OTC tax collection, which will provide one more mode of payment for convenience of tax payers and the state.

State Bank of Travancore (SBT) has launched a 'Housing for All (Urban): Mission 2022'

- ★ State Bank of Travancore (SBT) has launched a 'Housing for All (Urban): Mission 2022' to provide affordable housing to families belonging to the economically weaker sections/low-income groups in the urban centres.
- ★ The scheme upholds the spirit of the 'Swachh Bharath Mission' by insisting on a toilet for every house that is built, a spokesman for the bank said here.
- ★ As part of the scheme, loans will be advanced in line with the Centre's target of providing 'pucca' residential houses for all urban Indian families by the year 2022.
- ★ The loans will be available for beneficiaries in two segments, viz.
 - (i) those with a household annual income of up to Rs. 3 lakh under the economically weaker sections and
 - (ii) those with a household annual income between Rs. 3,00,001 and Rs. 6 lakh under the low-income group.

Success Is Not Final. Failure Is Not Fatal.

It Is The Courage To Continue That Counts!!!

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Railways launches 'Vikalp' for waitlisted passengers to get confirmed berth

- ★ Railway launched a new scheme under which waitlisted passengers can get confirmed accommodation in next alternative train if they opt for the option while booking their tickets online.
- ★ Known as Vikalp, the alternative train accommodation scheme will take off in trains running on Delhi-Lucknow and Delhi-Jammu sectors from November 1, on a pilot basis.
- ★ Initially, Vikalp scheme will be available only for the tickets booked through internet for six months and option will be limited to mail and express trains on the two selected routes, said a senior Railway Ministry official.

Flipkart to invest over \$2.5 billion on logistics, warehouses

- ★ Online marketplace Flipkart will invest a "couple of billion dollars" in the next few years on beefing up its logistics network as part of efforts to strengthen its position in the booming e-commerce industry.
- ★ Flipkart, which competes with Snapdeal and Amazon besides other smaller players, opened its largest warehouse in Telangana.
- ★ Flipkart's rival Snapdeal is investing \$150-200 million (about Rs 940-1,250 crore) in the ongoing fiscal to expand its delivery operations. It had also picked up a minority stake in logistics firm GoJavas.
- ★ While Snapdeal has 63 fulfilment centres in the country, US-based Amazon has also been expanding its network of warehouses and has 21 such centres

GAIL plans to build smart villages along Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline

- ★ GAIL is engaging with local communities early on and planning to build 'smart villages' along its proposed Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline to ensure the project does not suffer the same fate as its Kochi-Bengaluru-Mangaluru pipeline, which has been stuck for years as the company has been unable to obtain right of way from most landowners.
- ★ The state-run company, India's largest natural gas pipeline operator, has revived the 2,050-km pipeline project after eight years of uncertainty following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push to get cleaner fuel to eastern India even though the source of the gas, customers and the funding for the project remain shaky.

- ★ The company resurrected the project after the Modi-led NDA government decided to revive the fertiliser units in Barauni in Bihar and Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh amid attempts by the coalition leader Bharatiya Janata Party to shore up political fortunes in the two states.

Facebook to help BSNL set up 100 WiFi hotspots in rural India

- ★ Boosting the government's ambitious 'Digital India' drive, social media giant Facebook has come forward to facilitate state-run BSNL in setting up 100 WiFi sites in rural areas of western and southern India.
- ★ Facebook will spend Rs. 5 crore per annum for sponsoring these 100 WiFi hotspots in the country.
- ★ The hotspots are being set up by BSNL selected vendor Quad Zen.
- ★ The agreement between Facebook and BSNL is for three years and it can be further extended for two more years, he said.
- ★ BSNL has also received interest from Member of Parliaments for setting up WiFi hotspots in villages which they have adopted under Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) to make it a model village by 2016.

INS Vikramaditya crew Captain Rajaram Swaminathan and Captain Suraj Berry are now Commodore's

- ★ The Indian navy Captains, who were associated with the INS Vikramaditya aircraft carrier project have been elevated to Commodore rank.
- ★ 1st rank Captain Rajaram Swaminathan, who is now Commodore Rajaram Swaminathan led the Indian team to oversee the renovation and modernization of aircraft carrier "Vikramaditya" in 2010-2011. 1st Captain Captain Suraj Berry, who is now Commodore Suraj Berry, oversaw the testing of the aircraft carrier.

Google and government are working on balloon Internet project

- ★ Internet giant Google is working with the government on a pilot project for providing Internet connectivity by using large balloons.
- ★ Google, under its 'Project Loon', is using big balloons floating at a height of 20 kilometres above earth surface for transmission of Internet services. It has already tested this technology in New Zealand, California (the U.S.) and Brazil.
- ★ "Google approached government to set up the Loon project and Drone-based Internet transmission. Government has approved testing of Loon project only as of now. A committee under chairmanship of Secretary, DEITY, has been formed to work on it,".
- ★ Google may initially partner with BSNL for testing this technology by using broadband spectrum in 2.6 Ghz band.

Indian Coast Guard commissions new Fast Patrol Vessel at southern naval base

- ★ Indian Coast Guard commissioned ICGS Arinjay, 15th in the series of 20 Fast Patrol Vessels, in Kochi city, at the Southern Naval Command.
- ★ ICGS (Indian Coast Guard Ship) Arinjay, which means 'victory over evil', is 50-meter long, displaces 317 tons of water and has a maximum designed speed of 33 knots.
- ★ The ship has an endurance of 1500 nautical miles at an economical speed of 13 Knots.
- ★ ICGS Arinjay was commissioned by Flag Officer, Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command, Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba.

Samarth – Largest CG offshore patrol vessel commissioned

- ★ The Coast Guard's latest and largest offshore patrol vessel, Samarth, has been commissioned by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar.
- ★ With a displacement of 2450 tonnes, the ship is equipped with sophisticated technology, sensors, navigation, communication and weapon systems.
- ★ Samarth is first in the series of six 105m offshore patrol vessels and has been built by Goa Shipyard.
- ★ Backing the Coast Guard's efforts at modernisation, Parrikar referred to the force earlier this year intercepting a vessel off the Gujarat coast.

Jual Oram inaugurates National Tribal Crafts Mela 'Aadishilp'

- ★ Union Tribal Affairs Minister Shri Jual Oram inaugurated National Tribal Crafts Mela Aadishilp in New Delhi. Speaking on the occasion the Minister said this kind of exhibitions provide our tribal artisans an important platform to showcase their talents through their products to urban India.
- ★ Shri Oram said Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED) through its 44 sales counter all over the country is providing much needed marketing system for tribal products.
- ★ Hand crafted items, handloom products, dry flowers, cane and bamboo products, tribal jewellery, Dhokra craft, tribal weaves, embroidery, tribal paintings and lot more is being exhibited at the venue.

Global cage aquaculture symposium in Kochi

- ★ 'CAA5', the fifth edition of the International Symposium on Cage Aquaculture in Asia will be hosted by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute here between November 25 and 28.
- ★ The symposium is being organised by the Asian Fisheries Society and the Indian Council for Agricultural Research.
- ★ The symposium will be a platform for researchers, technologists, entrepreneurs and farmers to meet and share ideas on the current developments in the cage aquaculture.

Civil Aviation Minister releases Revised Draft National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2015)

- ★ Minister of Civil Aviation P Ashok Gajapathi Raju released the Revised Draft National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2015) in New Delhi.
- ★ The minister has urged all stakeholders to participate in the process of firming up the policy by giving their valuable suggestions to the Ministry.
- ★ He said that the Civil Aviation Policy should be a dynamic one which can keep pace with the ever changing demands of the sector.

19 Maha cities become free of open defecation

- ★ A total of nineteen cities in the state have achieved the status of being free of open defecation under the government's 'Swachh Maharashtra Mission' taken up in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Clean India' drive.
- ★ The state government has set a target to achieve a complete open defecation-free status by 2018.

India to emerge as largest cotton producer

- ★ With domestic trade estimating cotton production at around 400 lakh bales, India is expected to emerge as the largest cotton producer in the world in 2015-16.
- ★ Cotton output in all major producing countries in the year, barring India, has been anticipated to be lower than the previous season.
- ★ As a result, China has had to vacate its place as the largest producer of cotton to India.

Odisha Government imposes 7- month ban on fishing to protect Olive Ridley sea turtles

- ★ In order to protect the endangered Olive Ridley sea turtles that arrive during winters for nesting, the Odisha forest department on Sunday imposed a seven-month ban on fishing along the coast.
- ★ The ban will be in force from November 1 to May 31, 2016.
- ★ The endangered Olive Ridley turtles arrive every year during winters for mass nesting in Rushikulya river mouth and Gahirmatha marine sanctuary.

Environment Ministry Launches New Website on National Clean Development Mechanism Authority

- ★ Environment Ministry has launched a new website of National Clean Development Mechanism Authority (NCDMA) for streamlining the approval process of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects.
- ★ The new website of National Clean Development Mechanism Authority (NCDMA), which gives approval for CDM projects like energy efficiency and solid waste management, will help capture the entire life cycle of projects.

Jaitley to open WEF India summit on November 4 2015

- ★ Finance Minister Arun Jaitley will open the World Economic Forum's India summit on November 4, an event that will see participation of more than 250 stakeholders and leaders, including Union Ministers.
- ★ The theme of the meet is 'Delivering Growth in the New Context'.

Tata Motors nets Lionel Messi as brand ambassador

- ★ Homegrown car maker Tata Motors on November 2, has signed-up football player Lionel Messi as its brand ambassador. In a major marketing initiative the company has signed-up the four-time winner of the best football player of the world award and Argentine captain Messi to promote and endorse passenger vehicles, globally.
- ★ The idea is to engage with young people and that football and Messi had a lot of connect with the youth. As a start up, Tata Motors will first roll-out the **association campaign, #madeofgreat**, starring Lionel Messi today, on 3rd November.

AIR programme on Child Labour wins 2015 ABU Prizes

- ★ All India Radios Programme on child labour has bagged the first prize under the Community Service Announcement category at the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) Prizes 2015.
- ★ The Malayalam programme, titled "Nilkkam Ivarkkoppam" (Stand Beside Them), is part of an initiative taken up by Biju Mathew, Programme Executive at AIR Thiruvananthapuram on behalf of All India Radio, said a statement by the public broadcaster.
- ★ The award, comprising a purse worth \$2000, a certificate and a statuette, was announced at a function held on Friday at Ankara, Turkey, on the sidelines of 52nd ABU General Assembly and Associated Meetings.

Gadkari announces Rs 10,000 cr projects for Nagaland

- ★ The Union government has announced Rs 10,000-crore road and bridges development projects for Nagaland besides committing a slew of road projects for the entire North-East in five year period.
- ★ Road and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari told reporters here that Nagaland road project will be taken up till March 2017.

Maharashtra Government approves APJ Abdul Kalam Amrut Yojna

- ★ The Maharashtra state Government has approved a revised scheme, named APJ Abdul Kalam Amrut Yojna, for pregnant and lactating women in the tribal areas of the state.
- ★ The scheme aims at providing at least one full hot cooked nutritious food to every pregnant lady and lactating mother.
- ★ The scheme will be rolled out on 15 November 2015. The anganwadis workers, the tribal women and the local meal committees will implement the scheme.
- ★ The Women and Child Welfare Department will spend 10 crore rupees in stipend to anganwadi workers.

Impose AFSPA in Garo Hills: Meghalaya High Court

- ★ The Meghalaya High Court has asked the Centre to consider enforcing Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) in militancy-hit Garo Hills region in the state to help the administration restore the rule of law.
- ★ Recently the Meghalaya state is witnessing a rise in number of militancy incidents in the region especially in Garo Hills including abduction of a Meghalaya Government Officials by Garo National Liberation Army militants.
- ★ Though in past decade the insurgency was more or less contained in the state, but in last 2 years there has been a rise in the number of violence as several dormant insurgent groups in state started resurfacing.

Daughters cannot inherit ancestral property if father died before 2005: SC

- ★ In 2005, the Supreme Court had passed a landmark amendment to The Hindu Succession Act of 1956, granting daughters the right to inherit ancestral property along with their male relatives. But now, a 'small' clause has been added to it.
- ★ A daughter can only hold a right to the ancestral property if the father has died after this amendment came into force in 2005, the Supreme Court rules. In other words, the father would have to be alive till September 9, 2005, for the daughter to become a co-sharer of his property along with her male siblings.

First International Film Festival for the persons with disabilities to be held in Delhi

- ★ First international film festival for the persons with disabilities (IFFPD) will be held in Delhi from 1st to 3rd December 2015.
- ★ A total of 40 films (10 feature films, 16 short films and 14 documentaries) will be screened during the three days festival. IFFPD 2015 will felicitate the Best Director and Best Film in each of the 3 categories of Films with cash awards with the First and Second Runner Up receiving trophies and citations from the Department.

Indian Railways Signs MoU with State of Odisha to Form an SPV for Implementation of Railway Projects in Odisha

- ★ A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Ministry of Railways and Odisha Government to form a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for implementation of railway projects in the state.
- ★ In view of the growing demands for railway lines in various states and huge requirement of funds to execute them, Suresh Prabhu had announced in his budget speech about setting up of joint ventures with states for focused project development, resource mobilization, land acquisition, project implementation and monitoring of critical rail projects.

Mysuru Railway Station became the first blind-friendly Railway Station in India

- ★ Mysuru Railway Station (Karnataka, India) became the first blind-friendly Railway Station in India. The visually impaired – friendly facilities at Mysuru Railway Station has been inaugurated by Mysuru's Member of Parliament Pratap Simha.
- ★ Tactile maps of the railway station and train schedules in Braille were unveiled on the occasion of inauguration.
- ★ The authorities have also put up 400 metal signages in Braille along the railings of the staircases leading to various platforms.

NGT bans age-old agricultural practice of straw burning in Northern States

- ★ A Bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar directed the Delhi government and the four northern States of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh to check the bi-annual menace, which the farmers engage in to save time between sowing of wheat and rice.
- ★ The tribunal also announced a fine of Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 15,000 on farmers found indulging in straw burning.
- ★ The practice is followed by farmers not only to save time under the rice-wheat crop rotation to clear the land of residue of one harvest and sow the next, it is also believed that it makes the land more fertile and kill pests.
- ★ In November, farmers sow crops such as wheat and vegetables. They often set fire to their fields to clear them before planting making the atmosphere in Delhi more blinding and suffocating with the smoke moving towards the city.

Prime Minister launched Three Gold Schemes

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched three gold schemes in New Delhi, ahead of the festive season. The Schemes are

- ★ Gold sovereign bonds
- ★ The gold monetisation scheme
- ★ The Indian gold coin

Central Hikes MSP of Dal's by 250/Quintal

- ★ In order to support the farmers, the Centre on 5th November 2015 hiked the price for masoor and gram dals sharply by Rs 250 a quintal each to boost production in the ongoing rabi season.
- ★ Apart from raising the minimum support price (MSP) of pulses, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a bonus of Rs 75 per quintal for gram and masoor dals over and above the support price has been increased by Rs 75 to Rs 1,525 a quintal for the 2015-16 from 1450 a Quintal last year.

Bernie Sanders introduces legislation to end federal ban on marijuana

- ★ Bernie Sanders introduced legislation on 4th November 2015 that would end the federal prohibition on marijuana, removing the drug from the federal government's list of the "most dangerous" substances.
- ★ Under Sanders' plan, marijuana would not automatically become legal. Rather, states would have the right to decide whether or not they want to legalize the drug – without fear of federal impediment. His bill would not permit the transportation of marijuana across state lines.

BSNL launches special tariff vouchers for Diwali

BSNL has launched special tariff vouchers (STV) for its pre-paid mobile customers for the Diwali festival.

The vouchers are as follows:

- ★ The STV of Rs 35 provides 20 paise per minute calls to any network for all local and STD voice call with a validity of 2 days.
- ★ STV of Rs 48 provides 80 minutes of calls to any network (local and STD) with a validity of 3 days.
- ★ combo offers for prepaid GSM mobile customers providing talk value and data both at cheaper rates.
- ★ the state-run firm has also launched night calling STVs for its customers.

Chennai's Prithika to become India's first transgender SI

- ★ K Prithika Yashini, will soon become India's first transgender Sub Inspector of Police.
- ★ The Madras High Court has declared the 25-year-old as a fit candidate, paving the way for her appointment as Sub Inspector by the Tamil Nadu Government.
- ★ The court has also directed the recruitment board to make changes to draw transgenders to the state police force.

21st INCOFYRA to be organised in Bengaluru in 2016

- ★ The conference will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi. Shripad Yesso Naik, Union Minister for State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH and Dr HR Nagendra, President of 21st INCOFYRA, President, VYASA and Chancellor, S-VYASA University were also present on this occasion.ives nod to MoU between India and Belgium in the field of energy.

Andhra Pradesh government gives nod to bauxite mining on forest land in Vizag

- ★ In a move that could trigger protests from tribals, the Andhra Pradesh government has given an approval for bauxite mining in 1,212 hectares of forest land in Visakhapatnam district with certain conditions.
- ★ According to a Government Order (GO), the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests has been accorded permission to divert 1,212 hectares of forest land in Chintapalli and Jerrila of Narsipatnam Forest Division in Visakhapatnam for mining lease for bauxite in favour of Andhra Pradesh Mineral Development Corporation.

Notification for Implementation of OROP Issued

- ★ The government of India has notified the implementation of the one rank-one pension (OROP) scheme that will guarantee equal pension to military personnel retiring at the same rank with the same length of service, regardless of the date of retirement.
- ★ The scheme, a 40-year-old demand of military veterans, is expected to benefit three million pensioners.
- ★ The notification came a day after army veterans threatened to return war honours and observe a “black Diwali” to protest against the government’s failure to implement the scheme.

PM announces eighty thousand crore rupee package for Jammu and Kashmir

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced a package of Rs. 80,000 crore for Jammu and Kashmir and said it should be used to transform the state, devastated by floods last year, into a modern, progressive and prosperous one.
- ★ The several thousand people at the Sher-i-Kashmir cricket stadium, where he was making his address, broke into applause as PM Modi made his announcement.
- ★ Modi said India was “incomplete without Kashmiriyat,” invoking the words of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee also of the BJP, who had talked about “Kashmiriyat, Jamhooriyat aur Insaniyat’ (social consciousness and cultural values of the Kashmiri people, democracy, and humanity).”
- ★ Modi said he would follow those three mantras and saluted the people of Kashmir for strengthening Mr Vajpayee’s dream for the state.

Railways doubles ticket cancellation charges

- ★ Rail travelers having confirmed tickets will not get any refunds if they don’t cancel four hours before the departure of the train. The railways has also doubled the cancellation charges in the new rules which will come into force from November 12.
- ★ According to the new rules, there will be no refund on confirmed tickets after the departure of the train and one can get refund up to four hours before departure. Earlier from six hours before the scheduled departure of the train and up to two hours after the actual departure of the train, the cancellation fee was 50% of the fare.
- ★ The new rules specify that between 12 hours and 4 hours before the scheduled departure of the train, cancellation fee will be 50% of the fare. Also, between 48 hours and 12 hours before the scheduled departure of the train, cancellation fee will be 25% of the fare.

SBI’s Bhattacharya again tops list of most powerful biz women

- ★ Arundhati Bhattacharya, Chairperson of country’s largest bank SBI, remains the most powerful woman in the Indian business sector, according to Fortune India.
- ★ ICICI Bank’s Chanda Kochhar and Shikha Sharma of Axis Bank follow Bhattacharya at the second and third place. Besides, HPCL Chairperson and Managing Director (MD) Nishi Vasudeva has bagged the fourth position, while AZB & Partners Co-Founder Zia Mody and Aruna Jayanthi Chief Executive of Capgemini India shared the fifth rank.

- ★ Interestingly, all the top-five rank holders retained their positions from the previous year barring Jayanthi who was at seventh position last year.
- ★ Moreover, there are only two debutantes in the Fortune India list of 50 most-powerful businesswomen for 2015. Meena Ganesh MD and CEO at Portea and Jyoti Deshpande Group MD and CEO at Eros International have made their debuts at 43rd and 50th positions, respectively.

Maggi noodles back in stores, Nestle India ties up with Snapdeal

- ★ Nestle India has relaunched its popular Maggi noodles in India, five months after they were banned due to alleged presence of excessive lead content.
- ★ Besides, the Swiss food major has partnered with online marketplace Snapdeal for the rollout.
- ★ The company is presently manufacturing Maggi noodles at three locations – Nanjangud (Karnataka), Moga (Punjab) and Bicholim (Goa).

Ballistic Missile Agni-IV test-fired as part of user trial

- ★ India has successfully tested the nuclear-capable Agni-IV ballistic missile, which has a strike range of 4,000-km, from the A P J Abdul Kalam Island (formerly Wheeler Island) off Odisha coast.
- ★ The user trial by the tri-Service Strategic Forces Command (SFC), which saw the two-stage missile being fired from a mobile launcher at 9.45am, met all mission parameters.

Bengaluru is top destination for real estate investments

- ★ Bengaluru, the IT capital has surpassed both the commercial and political capitals of India as the top investment destination in the property market.
- ★ Nearly 13 per cent of over \$6.7 billion (Rs 44,450 crore) that PEs have invested in India's property market from 2013 through the first half of 2015 has gone to Bengaluru.
- ★ Global property consultancy Jones Lang LaSalle's (JLL) latest Asia-Pacific City Investment Intensity Index ranks the southern city among the top-20 destinations globally.
- ★ At the 20th position, it is well above New Delhi (34th) and Mumbai (42nd). JLL had earlier this year listed Bengaluru among the top-20 technology-rich cities globally.

India frees up foreign direct investment in 15 major sectors

- ★ India has eased foreign direct investment norms in 15 major sectors in a bid to drum up investment and speed growth.
- ★ The government also increased the financial power of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board to give single window clearance for investment projects of up to 50 billion rupees (\$753.35 million), from 30 billion.

First global conference on gender equality in Kerala

- * The Kerala government is set to host the country's first global conference on gender equality here from November 12-14.
- * This is in order to reduce gender inequality in India and increase female work participation rates.
- * With a core theme of "Gender, Governance and Inclusion" the conference is set to discuss issues ranging from citizenship, globalisation, work, governance, health, education, disability and the role of media.
- * The theme of the conference focuses on the urgent need for a transformative agenda to move towards greater inclusion and gender equality.

Now, book tickets 30 minutes prior to departure of train

- * From November 12, one can book a railway ticket online 30 minutes prior to the departure of a train.
- * In a passenger-friendly move, Railways has also made changes in its system of preparation of chart, which would now be prepared twice.
- * First reservation chart would be prepared four hours prior to departure of a train while second and final one, 30 minutes before the train departs.

JP Nadda ordered to set up panel to look into demands of doctors

- * Union Health Minister JP Nadda has ordered formation of a committee to evaluate in a time-bound manner the Indian Medical Association's five-point demands including amendments to the PCPNDT Act and the Consumer Protection Act.
- * The committee comprises the Additional Secretary (Health), Joint Secretary (Law), Joint Secretary (Home) and Joint Secretary (Consumer Affairs). Besides, the committee will have three representatives of IMA and one from Medical Council of India (MCI).

Indian Navy's air power beefed up with P8i aircraft

- * The Indian Navy's air power will be beefed up with the induction of P8i long-range maritime patrol aircraft. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar will formally dedicate the P8i aircraft to the nation at a special function to be held at INS Rajali, premier naval air station at Arakonam in Tamil Nadu.
- * The P8i aircraft is a variant of P8A Poseidon aircraft from Boeing as a replacement for the US Navy's ageing P-3 fleet. Indian Navy in 2009 became the first international customer for the aircraft signing \$2 billion worth contract to acquire eight aircraft.

India's first Gender University to come up in Kerala

- * Kerala government is getting ready to set up a first-of-its-kind university in the country, exclusively for research-oriented studies related to gender.
- * The gender varsity will be located in Kozhikode district in the campus of Gender Park, an autonomous institution under the state's Social Justice Department.
- * Kerala government is envisaging to end the societal stigma towards the sexual minority group and ensure them non-discriminatory treatment.

- ★ The successful all-women taxi cab network 'She Taxi' and 'Food on Wheels' are other major projects of the Gender Park.

Annual Hundred Drums Wangala Festival begins in Meghalaya

- ★ The annual Hundred Drums Wangala Festival has begun on a cultural fervor with the arrival of ten Wangala Dance Troupes from various parts of Garo Hills at Asanang in West Garo Hills of Meghalaya.
- ★ Wangala is the most significant post harvest festival of the Garos generally held in the second week of November every year.
- ★ It is a Thanksgiving ceremony to Misi Saljong also known as Pattigipa Rarongipa (The Great Giver) for having blessed the people with rich harvest of the season.

Environment Minister Launches New Website on Climate Change

- ★ Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar has launched a new website called www.justclimateaction.org.
- ★ The Minister said that the website has been created especially for the purpose of putting up India's stands and efforts till Paris Summit.
- ★ The website focuses on bringing transparency to the entire effort. As each stakeholder brings his activity to the fore to take a billion-strong people into confidence, the website and associated social media infrastructure ensures that each citizen in the country becomes a votary for a better future.

Northeast India's first elephant hospital established at Kaziranga National Park

- ★ Northeast India's first Elephant hospital has been established at the Kaziranga National Park in Assam.
- ★ The hospital was set up at Mark Shand Memorial Learning Centre in Kaziranga National Park. It was inaugurated by Sir Evelyn de Rothschild who is founding patron of the UK-based charity Elephant Family.

Shipwright School Commissioned as INS Vishwakarma

- ★ Shipwright School, a premier technical establishment, has been commissioned as Indian Naval Ship Vishwakarma by Admiral RK Dhowan at Visakhapatnam. Smt Payal Soni, wife of Vice Admiral Satish Soni, unveiled the Commissioning Plaque and named the training establishment as 'INS Vishwakarma'.
- ★ While addressing the gathering Admiral Dhowan emphasised that the commissioning of INS Vishwakarma would enhance the Navy's in-house design and maintenance capabilities.
- ★ This would go a long way in transforming the Indian Navy to a designer's and builder's Navy in keeping with the "Make in India" vision.

Defence Minister dedicates SMB to nation at NSTL

- ★ Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar dedicated a Seakeeping and Manoeuvring Basin (SMB) to the nation and handed over the Advanced Torpedo Defence System 'Maareech' to the Indian Navy at the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Vishakapatnam.
- ★ The SMB could be used by civilian shipbuilders and was also commercially viable. 'Maareech', developed by the Naval Physical & Oceanographic Laboratory (NPOL), Kochi, and NSTL, Vizag in coordination with the Indian Navy, is the best success story of the 'Make in India' programme, he said.

President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurates 35th IITF in New Delhi

- ★ President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the 35th India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2015 in New Delhi. This year Afghanistan has been the 'Partner Country' and Bangladesh as the 'Focus Country' in IITF 2015.
- ★ Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has also been roped-in to sell the entry tickets from Monday to Friday for business delegates and later on for the general public from 19 to 27 November.
- ★ The business days entry tickets at metro stations are priced at Rs 400 whereas, general day tickets can be purchased at Rs 50 for adult and Rs 30 for children. But, on weekends, the general day tickets will cost Rs 80 and Rs 50 for adults and children per head respectively.

International Children's Film Festival begins in Hyderabad

- ★ Union Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore inaugurated the 19th International Children's Film Festival of India (ICFFI) at Shilpa Kala Vedika in Hyderabad.
- ★ Rathore wished that the week-long festival would offer good and quality cinema to the audience, especially children. Over 1,200 entries have been received from about 80 countries.

Vulture reintroduction programme launched in Haryana

- ★ Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has launched 'Gyps Vulture Reintroduction Programme' by putting ten captive bred vultures in pre-release aviaries close to Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre at Pinjore. The exercise was part of reintroduction programme in the pre-release aviary, where birds will have an unobstructed view of the surrounding.
- ★ It will also help them in getting use to the habitat in which they would be released in future.
- ★ The ten vultures released by the CM include two Himalayan Griffons, which were brought as sick birds. They have been in captivity for last ten years.
- ★ The rest were all white-backed vultures, of which six were hatched in captivity at the centre and are of two-three years of age. The other two were adult birds rescued from the wild about ten years.

Health Minister opens AMRIT outlet at AIIMS for selling affordable drugs for cancer & heart diseases

- ★ The Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare, JP Nadda inaugurated the Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment (AMRIT) outlet at AIIMS.
- ★ The aim is to reduce the expenditure incurred by patients on treatment of cancer and heart diseases. The retail outlet will sell drugs for the two ailments at highly discounted rates at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) to begin with. AMRIT will be launched in all Central Govt hospitals soon.

Manipur to get exclusive Sports university, says Dr. Jitendra Singh

- ★ The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh has disclosed that Manipur will get an exclusive Sports University soon.
- ★ The land transfer formalities are nearly complete and shortly the foundation stone will be laid for construction of the multi-crore university campus.
- ★ Earlier Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, during his very first visit to the Northeast after the formation of government, announced the setting up of a Sports University.

Government declares NSCN (K) as terrorist organization under UAPA

- ★ The Government has declared the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang), NSCN (K), all its formations and front organizations as a terrorist organization under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.
- ★ A Gazette Notification issued on November 6, 2015 mentions that the NSCN (K), a militant outfit, came into existence in 1988 and is active along the Indo-Myanmar border.
- ★ NSCN (K) has resorted to terrorism by killing innocent civilians and security forces and engaged in other violent activities including the June 4, 2015 attack on the Army convoy in Chandel district of Manipur.
- ★ A total of 38 organisations are banned under the UAPA, which was amended in the aftermath of the November 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

7th Pay Commission to submit report on November 19

- ★ The 7th Pay Commission will submit its report to Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on November 19 recommending increase in remuneration of central government employees as well as pensioners. The recommendations of the 7th Pay Commission are scheduled to take effect from January 1, 2016.
- ★ As part of the exercise, the commission holds discussions with various stakeholders, including organisations, federations, groups representing civil employees as well as Defence services.

Govt to impart digital literacy training to 52.5 lakh by 2016

- ★ The government has advanced the deadline for making 52.5 lakh people digitally literate, under National Digital Literacy Mission, by a year to 2016 than end of 2017 fixed earlier.
- ★ Already, under NDLM has certified 10 lakh people and next 8 lakh are in process. The Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA) or National Digital Literacy Mission (NDLM) Scheme has been formulated to impart IT training to 52.5 lakh persons, including Anganwadi and ASHA workers and authorised ration dealers in all states/UTs across the country so that the non-IT literate citizens are trained to become IT literate.

Rs 242 crore AMRUT plan to address water logging in 25 cities

- ★ Taking steps under AMRUT to tackle the problem of water logging, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Odisha and Mizoram propose to invest Rs 242 crore in construction of storm water drains for discharging flood waters in 25 cities in these states.
- ★ The works would be undertaken under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) action plans for 2015-16.
- ★ The five states account for 82 Atal Mission cities. Other mission cities would be covered in subsequent years.

Food authority challenges lifting ban on Nestle's Maggi

- ★ India's food safety authority has appealed in the supreme court a regional court's order in favour of the Indian unit of Nestle SA in its battle to overturn a nationwide ban of its Maggi instant noodles. Nestle India resumed selling its popular Maggi noodles this month after getting the green light from government laboratories, as mandated by the Bombay High Court in August.
- ★ The company faced its worst public relations crisis after Indian regulators reported in May that some packets of the Maggi noodles contained unsafe levels of lead.

Javadekar Announces Formation of Indian Resource Panel

- ★ Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Prakash Javadekar has announced the formation of Indian Resource Panel (InRP) on Resource Efficiency on November 18.
- ★ To address the disproportionate and steadily increasing share of natural resources required to support changing lifestyles, as well as raw material for industrial production.
- ★ With a growing economy, India is expected to have the world's third largest consumer group by the year 2020, with a consumption share of 13%.
- ★ With rising consumption levels, India is already facing supply constraints and import dependence of key materials in certain sectors.
- ★ The demand for resources in the future will be increasingly huge and may eventually lead to worsening of impact on economy, environment, and access to resources, if not addressed in a timely manner.

Intel India launches initiative for rural digitisation

- ★ Intel India on November 18 announced the launch of 'Ek Kadam Unnati Ki Aur'. It is an initiative aimed at working with the government to create the blueprint for the digitisation of rural India.
- ★ The first such Digital India 'Unnati' Kendra has been set up at a Common Services Center (CSC) in Nadimpalle village of Mahabubnagar district of Telangana.
- ★ It will be used to create the framework for the Telangana Model Digital Village.

Latest Cabinet Approvals

- ★ CCEA approves four projects in East Coast Railways
- ★ Union Cabinet approves setting up of NARF at Genome Valley in Hyderabad
- ★ Union Cabinet approved signing of Tripartite Agreement on IBSA Fund for Poverty Alleviation
- ★ Union Cabinet approved German as additional foreign language in Kendriya Vidyalayas

Resurgent Rajasthan Partnership summit 2015

- ★ The stage is all set for the two-day global investor meet 'Resurgent Rajasthan', which will see participation of top industrialists like Adani Group chief Gautam Adani, Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani and Mahindra Group Chairman Anand Mahindra.
- ★ Aimed at attracting investments to the state, the summit will have exclusive sessions on sectors such as tourism, smart cities, highways and urban infrastructure on the first day and Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) the last day.

Govt extends IDEA scheme for five years

- ★ The government on November 18 extended its economic assistance programme IDEAS for five years.
- ★ Under this the line of credit is provided to African as well as other developing nations and will have a financial implication of about Rs 3,771.77 crore.
- ★ The decision was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Launch of Technology Acquisition and Development Fund under National Manufacturing Policy

- ★ Minister of State for Commerce & Industry (I/C), Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, launched the Technology Acquisition and Development Fund (TADF) under National Manufacturing Policy being implemented by Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion(DIPP) on November 18 to contribute to the national focus of Make in India.
- ★ TADF is a new scheme to facilitate acquisition of Clean, Green & Energy Efficient Technologies, in form of Technology / Customised Products / Specialised Services / Patents / Industrial Design available in the market available in India or globally, by Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Delhi government clears Jan Lokpal bill

- ★ The Delhi government has cleared the much-awaited Jan Lokpal Bill and it is likely to be tabled in the Assembly next week.
- ★ The Bill brings the Chief Minister's office under its purview and ensures that any investigation and trial by the Lokpal has to be completed within six months.
- ★ Even as the Winter session of the Assembly opened at the Old Secretariat, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal along with his Cabinet ministers cleared the Jan Lokpal Bill.
- ★ The Jan Lokpal Bill (Ombudsman Bill) is an anti-corruption Bill drawn up by activists seeking the appointment of an independent body that would investigate corruption cases, complete the investigation and trial in a time-bound manner.
- ★ Once passed and notified, people will be able to complain directly and imprison corrupt politicians and bureaucrats under the law.

Government to set up separate portal to support innovations

- ★ Department of Electronics and IT (Deity) will establish a separate portal to provide support to innovators in various fields.
- ★ In that portal people can put up their innovative products to get government help.

Comprehensive coastal security exercise concludes

- ★ A three-day comprehensive coastal security exercise 'Theera Veta' involving multiple security agencies conducted along the entire coast of Kerala, Lakshadweep, Minicoy islands and Mahe, concluded today.
- ★ The exercise which began on November 17 concluded today. A similar exercise was earlier conducted this year from April 28 and 29.
- ★ As part of the exercise, infiltration and landing through coast was attempted and the efficacy of the patrols by various maritime agencies was tested.

Pay Commission recommends 23.55% hike; OROP for civilians too

- ★ In a big bonanza to central employees and pensioners, the seventh Pay Commission today recommended a 23.55 per cent increase in salary, allowances and pension along with a virtual one-rank-one-pension for civilians, involving an additional outgo of Rs 1.02 lakh crore a year.
- ★ A minimum pay of Rs 18,000 per month and a maximum of Rs 2.5 lakh per month has been recommended by the Commission, headed by Justice A K Mathur, that presented its 900-page report to Finance Minister Arun Jaitley.
- ★ The recommendations, which are to be implemented from January 1, 2016, will benefit 47 lakh Central Government employees and 52 lakh pensioners.

Indigenously developed UAV of army crashes near Pokhran

- ★ An indigenously-developed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) of the Indian Army has crashed near Pokhran in Rajasthan. It is the second such incident in 15 days.
- ★ The UAV, the last of the four inducted in 2011, crashed near Pokhran in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan.

Govt launches campaign to free Haryana of TB within five years

- ★ The Haryana state government on November 20 announced the launch of a campaign to free Haryana of tuberculosis (TB).
- ★ The government will collaborate with Medanta-The Medicity for the 'TB free Haryana' campaign, which will be supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan will be the brand ambassador of the campaign. The funding for the project will come from USAID.

President inaugurates first ever World Indology Conference

- ★ President Pranab Mukherjee has inaugurated the first ever three-day World Indology Conference at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- ★ External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and President of ICCR Prof Lokesh Chandra also participated in the inaugural function.
- ★ On this occasion, A 'Distinguished Indologist' Award was also presented to Prof Heinrich Freiherr Von Stietencron from Germany.

First Meeting of the Indo-European Water Forum to be held in Delhi

- ★ The first meeting of the Indo-European Water Forum is being co-organized by National Water Mission, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation and the Environment Directorate-General of the European Commission on November 23-24, 2015 at New Delhi to discuss key issues in water resources management in India as well as the experiences of implementation of European Water Policy.
- ★ The forum will be attended by Director General of Environment Directorate-General of the European Commission Mr Daniel Calleja Crespo.

India to host the First South Asian Annual Disaster Management Exercise

- ★ The Government of India is all set to organize the first "South Asian Annual Disaster Management Exercise" (SAADMEx-2015).
- ★ The objective is to provide a platform for strengthening Regional Disaster Response Mechanism amongst the SAARC countries. The main focus of SAADMEx-2015 is to test coordination efforts, create synergy and synchronize efforts to institutionalize Regional Cooperation on Disaster Response among the member countries.
- ★ The Advance Coordination Conference (ACC) for this Exercise was successfully conducted with the participation of representatives from SAARC member countries on September 3-4, 2015 where the modalities and requirements of the common exercise were discussed.

Railway Ministry inaugurates landmark Silchar-Lumding broad gauge rail line in Assam

- ★ Union Railways Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the landmark Silchar-Lumding broad gauge rail line in Assam. Prabhu flagged off a passenger train from New Delhi via video-conference.

- ★ The rail line brings Assam's underdeveloped but strategically important Barak Valley on the broad gauge map. The rail line would accelerate development, as it is the lifeline of Barak Valley and Tripura, Manipur and Mizoram.

Telecom Ministry Puts BSNL, MTNL on Notice Over Service Quality

- ★ The Telecom Ministry has issued notices to state-owned BSNL, MTNL and India Posts after Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad personally took note of citizen complaints over service quality on social media since July.
- ★ Prasad, who has over 4.65 lakh followers on Facebook, received the complaints relating to the three departments under his ministry. The Minister has asked BSNL and other concerns to use the social media, following which it held a workshop for officers in-charge of public grievance redressal in each telecom circle.

Francois Hollande to be Chief Guest at 2016 Republic Day celebrations

- ★ France has accepted India's invitation to President Francois Hollande to be chief guest at the Republic Day parade in 2016.
- ★ The decision comes in the wake of the attacks in Paris following which world nations including India have rallied behind France.
- ★ French President Francois Hollande has appealed for a global coalition to destroy Islamic State in the wake of the attacks across Paris.
- ★ The visit may also see breakthrough in key arms deals like the purchase of Rafale jets. Hollande's predecessor Nicolas Sarkozy was Chief Guest at the Republic Day parade in 2008.

UP Government's Clean UP, Green UP initiative earns place in Guinness Book

- ★ The Uttar Pradesh government has earned a place in the Guinness World Records for planting the most number of plants in 24 hours.
- ★ Under the Clean UP, Green UP initiative, the government had urged citizens and officials to plant saplings around 10 locations.
- ★ The initiative was kicked off by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav on November 7. Within eight hours, 10.15 lakh plants were either planted among citizens and government official.
- ★ The saplings were distributed across an area of about 850 hectares.

Titan Co joins hands with HP to launch smart watches

- ★ Watch maker Titan Co and global information technology major HP have joined hands to offer a range of smart watches to be launched soon.
- ★ The new relationship between HP Inc. and Titan combine innovative materials, design and custom technology to deliver products that are responsive. Titan Co CEO (Watches and Accessories Division) S Ravi Kant said the two companies would create a unique lifestyle offering for people not only in India, but across the world.
- ★ This category of smart watches is going to change the way people view the art of timekeeping and beyond.

NITI Aayog in dialogue with China's think tank DRC

- ★ To closer economic ties with China and to deliberate on macro economic issues, a team led by NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya will engage in a dialogue with China's Development Research Centre (DRC) from November 23.
- ★ It will be the first dialogue between NITI Aayog and the DRC after the body was constituted to replace the erstwhile Planning Commission.

Vizag Declaration Call for action plan for a disaster-resilient society

- ★ Four-day World Congress on Disaster Management has concluded with the unanimous adoption of 'Vizag Declaration' calling for a comprehensive action plan for a disaster-resilient society.
- ★ The declaration drafted after deliberations by over 1,000 delegates from 40 countries and 20 States in 25 sessions.
- ★ It recommended effective funding mechanism by creating national disaster mitigation fund for resource implementation of local plans and building a platform of knowledge management/good practices/innovations at local level.

Emami ropes in Parineeti to endorse new product

- ★ FMCG firm Emami has roped in Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra to endorse its new skincare product BoroPlus Cocoa Soft Moisturising lotion.
- ★ Without divulging details of the endorsement, Emami said the product targets young women between the age of 20-30. Parineeti is the latest entrant to the Emami endorsers' club and becomes the face for brand BoroPlus which boasts an ensemble star power like Amitabh Bachchan & Kangana Ranaut.

Dharamsala to be developed as Smart City

- ★ The state government was mulling to develop Dharamsala into a 'Smart City' as it is an international tourist destination of the country.
- ★ Himachal Urban Development, Town and Country Planning Minister Sudhir Sharma said that the district will not only be developed as a Smart City, but also as a progressive and inclusive city of the country.

Hockey India announces NTPC as sponsor

- ★ Hockey India, the apex organisation governing field hockey in India, has announced NTPC Limited, the largest power utility of the country as an Official Partner for the Hero Hockey World League Final 2015.
- ★ The Hero Hockey World League Final will be played at the newly inaugurated Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel International Hockey Stadium, Raipur, India from the 27th November- 6th December 2015.

Nielsen launches India's first digital advertisement measurement system

- ★ Global marketing research firm Nielsen has launched India's first digital advertisement measurement system that will help marketers in the country find out the return on investment of their campaigns on the internet and mobile platforms.
- ★ The Nielsen Digital Ad Ratings (DAR) system can measure all kinds of display and video ads across all digital platforms.

For Indians, Bali most popular global destination in winter'

- ★ This winter, Bali, a city in Indonesia, has topped the list of most popular international destination for Indian travellers while Goa is the most preferred domestic destination, according to a survey.

- ★ The report 'Winter Vacation Value Report' revealed that destinations having colder climatic conditions during winter are finding favour with the Indian travellers – Jaipur, New Delhi, Manali, Shimla and Agra – all feature in the top 10 list.

Indo-Pak border in Jaisalmer lighted with Solar power

- ★ India-Pakistan border in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan has been successfully lighted with solar power.
- ★ The floodlights, along with fencing and border posts managed by Border Security Force (BSF) were supplied with the solar power generated from 5 MW solar power plant installed at Tata area, Jaisalmer.
- ★ The solar energy vapour plant was installed by the Union Home ministry at a cost of 6 crore and 45 lakh rupees in sarkari tala area of Jaisalmer. The pilot project was set up the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI).
- ★ Power generated from the plant would be sold by SECI at the rate of 5 rupees 45 paise per unit.


Delhi assembly passes CrPC (Delhi Amendment) Bill, 2015

- ★ Delhi Assembly has passed a Bill proposing amendments in the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), setting up another flash point with the Centre, as it seeks to broaden the scope of magisterial probes into cases of kidnapping, rape and disappearances.
- ★ The Opposition BJP accused the AAP government of "challenging" the authority of Parliament by empowering itself through the move. CrPC is a subject in the Concurrent list.

Kerala to have price regulatory authority for hotels

- ★ The cabinet on November 25 officially made the Kerala Hotel (Food Price Regulation) Bill 2015 which forecasted formation of regulatory authority for grading eateries and fixing food prices.
- ★ Accordingly, when the bill is enacted into a law, the state would have hotel food price regulatory boards at all districts, which would be headed by a district judge or a law officer of similar rank.
- ★ Except Hotels in star and heritage categories, all eateries would come under the regulatory board. As per the bill, all eateries would have to register with the regulatory authority, which would fix the prices of the food items.
- ★ Hotels would be allowed to increase the food prices only after a formal consent from the authority, which would have the power to slap fine on eateries charging for items above the notified prices.

IRCTC widens Food on Track, ties up with Food Panda

- ★ To broaden its innovative e-catering facility 'Food on Track', IRCTC has tied up with online delivery firm Food Panda.
- ★ To enable consumers to order from a variety of cuisine options. The COLLABORATION , to be launched in New Delhi railway station next month.
- ★ It will provide customers with the choice to order meals at least two hours before the travel, according to Dr. A. K. Manocha, Chairman and Managing Director of IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation), which is a 1999-founded subsidiary of the Railways.

INS Vikramaditya to host Combined Commanders'

- ★ The Combined Commanders' Conference of the three services will be held next month onboard India's latest aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya in Kochi. This will be the first venue outside the national capital to host the crucial defence meet.
- ★ The move came after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his address at the Combined Commanders' Conference here October last, suggested that the armed forces could organise such conferences on ships, or in forward area cantonments or air-bases, instead of only in New Delhi.

Marathi, Bengali films shortlisted for 2015 UNESCO Fellini Medal

- ★ Marathi film Katyar Kaljat Ghusali and Bengali film Cinemawala are among the twelve films shortlisted for prestigious 2015 UNESCO Fellini Medal.
- ★ Katyar Kaljat Ghusali has been directed by actor-turn director Subodh Bhave, while Kaushik Ganguly has directed Cinemawala.
- ★ The award will be bestowed upon film, which reflects the ideals promoted by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- ★ For the first time, the event is being organized in India at the ongoing 46th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), being held in Goa in association with the International Council for Film, Television and Audiovisual Communication, Paris.

Suzuki Motorcycle India ties up with Snapdeal to sell its vehicles online

- ★ Suzuki Motorcycle India has tied up with online marketplace Snapdeal for the sales of its vehicles, the two wheeler manufacturer said.
- ★ Customers will be able to browse Suzuki products on the Snapdeal Motors platform, select a vehicle, book it (via online payment of booking amount) and select a dealership in their vicinity from where the vehicle can be picked up.
- ★ As an initial launch offer, buyers who purchase Suzuki vehicles on Snapdeal can avail 1 year free vehicle insurance.

Air India to operate first non-stop direct flight from New Delhi-San Francisco

- ★ Air India airline is scheduled to commence a direct flight service to the Silicon Valley from the national capital from December 2.
- ★ Air India has already announced that the new flight will be operated by the wide-body Boeing 777-200LR aircraft. Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his September visit to the Silicon Valley had made an announcement in this regard.

Eiffel Tower replica to come up in Kolkata

- ★ A 55-metre replica of the Eiffel Tower is being planned at the Eco Park in the smart city New Town.
- ★ The replica of the tower would come up in the Eco Park and is expected to be a major tourist attraction.
- ★ The project planned in the satellite city would take about three years to complete after its work order is issued and nearly 300 tonne of steel would be required to build it.
- ★ West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is laying the foundation stone of the project today in presence of the Consul General of France in Kolkata. It would also be an expression of solidarity towards world peace and pay tribute to the 129 victims of the November 13 terror attack in Paris.

NHAI approves pilot project for developing greenbelts along highways

- ★ The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has approved a pilot project for developing greenbelts along the national highways (NHs).
- ★ The pilot project submitted by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur for undertaking scientific studies on designing greenbelts along national highways. The project will be implemented on a 5 km stretch on NH-7 between Jam and Hinganghat in Nagpur region at an estimated cost of Rs 11.80 crore.

President's Standard awarded to two IAF squadrons

- ★ President Pranab Mukherjee on November 28 presented President's Standard to two Indian Air Force (IAF) squadrons based here in West Bengal. Hasimara is an Indian Air Force (IAF) station, around 15 km away from India-Bhutan border.
- ★ The squadrons which have been honoured are the 18 Squadron and the 22 Squadron. The 18 Squadron is also called 'Flying Bullets' and came to be known as 'Defenders of Kashmir Valley' during the 1971 India-Pakistan war.

Centre clears infra development plan for nine cities under AMRUT

- ★ Centre has approved a working plan for Chhattisgarh where a total of nine cities would receive a major infrastructural facelift under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT).
- ★ The Urban Development Ministry sanctioned the plan during a high-level meeting of its officials in New Delhi yesterday. Under the Rs 1,998 crore plan, the Centre will provide Rs 870 crore in next three years while the rest of funding will be borne by the state government and its civic bodies.

Lt Gen Ashok Ambre takes command of Army's 9 Corps

- ★ Lt Gen Ashok Ambre today took over as the new chief of Army's 9 Corps (Rising Star Corps). He took over the position from Lt Gen Rajeev Tewari, who has been posted as GOC (General Officer Commanding) in West Bengal.
- ★ During his command of the formation, oversaw the effective handling of counter-terrorists operations, resulting in the elimination of all infiltrating terrorists and the successful conduct of rescue missions in the Corps zone.

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Mussoorie sanctuary setting of Alter's new book

- ★ India-born American author Stephen Alter combines the natural history of Jabarkhet Nature Reserve in Mussoorie with magical elements that appeal to younger readers in his new book **"The Secret Sanctuary"**.
- ★ A short novel for children aged 10+, "The Secret Sanctuary" is intended to encourage students of all ages to explore the world of nature and to use their imaginations when they encounter wild birds and animals, says Alter, who lives in Mussoorie most of the year.

Centre to invest Rs 1,700 crore for NISH

- ★ Centre will invest Rs 1,700 crore in phases to transform NISH (National Institute of Speech and Hearing) in Tiruvananthapuram as the National University for Rehabilitation Sciences and Disability Studies to benefit differently-abled people.
- ★ The Centre's aim is to have a country with people with no disabilities and if at all there are such people, government will provide necessary support and education to them and equip them with instruments, devices and other facilities to help them fully integrate themselves in mainstream life.

Patanjali to invest Rs 1,000 cr on expansion

- ★ Patanjali Ayurved, the FMCG venture promoted by yoga guru Baba Ramdev, will invest Rs 1,000 crore next year on expansion and plans to sharpen focus on e-commerce and exports.
- ★ The Haridwar-based firm will set up manufacturing plants in South India and is looking to become a partner in mega food parks being developed in southern cities.
- ★ Patanjali, which has 15,000 stores across the country, plans to add more products in segments where it already has presence such as dairy, instant foods, baby care, natural cosmetics and health supplements.
- ★ Patanjali sells its products through 15,000 franchise stores pan India of which 5,000 are big stores and rest are in shop-in-shop concept.

Norms to improve air quality issued

- ★ The Ministry of Road Transport & highways has issued a draft notification for implementation of BS-5 and BS-6 norms for the automobile sector, covering the four wheeler category.
- ★ The ministry has decided to advance the date of implementation of the higher level emission standards. As per the roadmap earlier laid down, by the Auto Fuel Policy, BS – 5 norms were to implemented from 1st April 2022 and BS-6 from 1st April 2024.

India receives just 0.68 per cent of international tourists

- ★ Tourism Minister Mahesh Sharma has announced that India receives less than one per cent international tourists annually and their average stay in the country has come down by two days.
- ★ The minister said efforts have been made to attract more and more international tourists to the country. Various initiatives have been taken by the government to attract more foreign tourists that include e-tourist visa, providing financial assistance to state governments launching 12 theme based tourist circuits.

- ★ The Minister said in 2011-12, on an average foreign tourists in India used to stay 20-22 days at a stretch which has come down to 18-20 days now.

Delhi govt launches e-District project to offer services

- ★ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has launched an ambitious 'e-District project'. By this the people of Delhi will now be able to access a host of Delhi government services online and get documents verified for the issuance of nearly a dozen certificates.
- ★ The inauguration comes days after the Cabinet approved a proposal to make 12 government services hassle-free through the doing away of the need to produce affidavits, and also introduced the concept of self-attestation.
- ★ Stressing on the need for publicising the project, Kejriwal said that "small reports" in the media would not be enough to make the public aware about its utility and touts would continue to thrive.

Nestle resumes Maggi noodles prodn at India plants

- ★ Nestle India has announced that the company has resumed production of Maggi noodles at all five facilities in India. Nestle, which relaunched Maggi noodles on November 9 after a five-months ban, has started production of Maggi noodles from its Tahliwal plant in Himachal Pradesh. Nestle manufacturers Maggi noodles at its plants in Nanjangud (Karnataka), Moga (Punjab) Bicholim (Goa) and Tahliwal and Pantnagar in Himachal Pradesh.

Government to introduce special identity cards for differently-abled people

- ★ Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot has revealed that the Centre was planning to introduce special identity cards for all persons with disabilities.
- ★ It would enable them to claim the benefits of various government welfare schemes. Gehlot also announced a financial aid of Rs 19 crores for completing the project.
- ★ The Minister said the government has extended pre-matric and post-matric scholarships to all eligible students.

Interceptor boat ICGS C-422 commissioned into Indian Coast Guard service

- ★ The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has commissioned an interceptor boat (ICGS C-422) at the Karaikal port. This will enhance the port's shallow water operational capability along the South Tamil Nadu and Puducherry coast.
- ★ Speaker of the Puducherry Assembly V. Sabapathy commissioned ICGS C-422 with full military honours in the presence of Inspector-General S.P. Sharma, Commander, Coast Guard Region (East), Deputy Inspector-General S.C. Tyagi and Karaikal Station Commandant S.N.M. Patnaik.

Bharti Airtel to shell out Rs 60,000 cr for network upgrade

- ★ The country's largest telecom service provider Bharti Airtel plans to invest Rs 60,000 crore over the next three years on network transformation.
- ★ The development comes ahead of impending launch of 4G services by Reliance Jio, owned by Mukesh Ambani, in the next year which is expected to increase the competition in the telecom sector.
- ★ The network transformation under the Project Leap will also enable the firm in improving the quality of voice services, especially at a time when mobile users have been severely impacted by ongoing call drops situation.
- ★ Telecom regulator TRAI has even asked operators to pay Rupee one as compensation for every call drop (maximum three a day) to the mobile users starting January 2016.

CHOGM: India pledges \$2.5 million aid for climate change

- ★ India has announced \$2.5 million in aid for the small states in the Commonwealth to help them combat climate change in the 24th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting or CHOGM.
- ★ Leaders from 53 Commonwealth countries, including India, are meeting in Malta for the biennial summit of the bloc amid unprecedented security to explore concerted global efforts to deal with terrorism and climate change.
- ★ CHOGM is held after every two years and the theme for this year's meeting is 'Adding Global Value'. India has announced \$ 2.5 million in aid for the small states in the Commonwealth to help them combat climate change.

Tamil Nadu has maximum number of operational SEZs

- ★ Parliament has announced that, a total of 36 special economic zones (SEZs) are operational in Tamil Nadu, followed by Telangana and Karnataka. In Telangana and Karnataka, 26 SEZs in each state are operational. As of now a total of 204 SEZs are exporting.
- ★ As on June 30, a total of 15,04,597 persons have been provided employments in SEZs.
- ★ The government has approved 19 proposals for setting up of new zones in 10 states, including Andhra Pradesh (1), Maharashtra (4) and Uttar Pradesh (2) during the last three years and current fiscal till November 30.

Anil Khanna re-elected as president of Asian Tennis Federation

- ★ Anil Khanna was on 28 November 2015 re-elected as the president of Asian Tennis Federation (ATF). He was elected for four years in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- ★ At present, he is the president of the All India Tennis Association (AITA). In September 2015, he was elected as the Vice President of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) in the elections held in Santiago, Chile.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India and Russia Agree to Strengthen Collaboration in the Area of Information and Communication Technology

- ★ India had launched National Super Computing Mission, jointly being implemented by the Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology.
- ★ India sought Russian assistance in development of high end technologies, both in software and hardware sectors (like Motherboard design; Direct Liquid Cooling Technology and Network Design technologies for supercomputers).
- ★ A new S&T Agreement was signed between DST and the Russian Science Fund, during the visit of the President of India to Russia in May 2015.

Russian airliner with 224 aboard crashes in Egypt's Sinai, all killed

- ★ A Russian passenger plane crashed early Saturday in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, killing all 224 people aboard. Russian state media reported that many of the 217 passengers on Kogalymavia Flight 9268 were Russians returning from vacation.
- ★ The passenger manifest included 17 children but Russian officials said there were 25 aboard. There were seven crew members.
- ★ Ukrainian Foreign Minister Pavlo Klimkin tweeted that four victims were Ukrainian nationals. The cause of the crash still is unknown, but it is most likely due to a technical failure, and there is no evidence of any terrorist action.

India and South Africa agree to Strengthen Collaboration in Key Areas of Science, Including in the Field of "HIV Vaccine Research"

- ★ The Union Minister for Science, Technology and Earth Science, Dr. Harsh Vardhan and the South African Minister for Science, Technology Ms. Naledi Pandor have decided to strengthen the key science areas.
- ★ It includes Health Sciences and Biotechnology; Astronomy & Astrophysics, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Green Chemistry and the Mega project in the area of "HIV Vaccine Research Collaboration" with co-funding to the tune of US \$ 1 million from both sides.
- ★ During the 3rd BRICS of Science and Technology Ministerial Meeting held in Moscow on 27th and 28th this month the two side held bilateral discussions on all the projects.

Turkey returns to single-party rule

- ★ Turkey's Islamist-rooted AK Party swept to an unexpected victory in elections on Sunday, returning the country to single-party rule in an outcome that will boost the power of President Tayyip Erdogan but may sharpen deep social divisions.
- ★ With almost all ballots counted, the AKP had taken just shy of 50 percent of the votes, comfortably enough to control a majority in the 550-seat parliament and a far higher margin of victory than even party insiders had expected.

Australia drops knights and dames from honours system

- ★ Australia will no longer appoint knights and dames under its honours system, PM Malcolm Turnbull has said.
- ★ Mr Turnbull said the titles were “not appropriate” in modern Australia, and that Queen Elizabeth had accepted the cabinet’s recommendation to drop them.
- ★ Former PM Tony Abbott reintroduced knighthoods and damehoods in 2014.

World Series: Kansas City Royals beat New York Mets to win title

- ★ The Kansas City Royals have won their first World Series title in 30 years after beating the New York Mets 7-2 in game five. The Royals’ 12-inning victory over the Mets on Sunday at Citi Field saw them take the best-of-seven series 4-1.
- ★ It is their first title since 1985 but they had to come from behind to win it, rallying from 2-0 down in the ninth.

China approves \$9.2-billion Winter Olympics high-speed rail line

- ★ China, on November 2, has approved plans for a 58.41 billion yuan (5.97 billion pounds) high-speed rail project which will be used during the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.
- ★ The 174 kilometre-long railway, which will connect Beijing with the northern city of Zhangjiakou in Hebei province, will be constructed over a four-and-a-half year period and will be able to ferry 60 million people annually.
- ★ Beijing beat Kazakhstan’s Almaty in July to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, making it the first city to be awarded both the summer and winter Games.

India, Indonesia ink pacts on energy, culture exchange

- ★ India and Indonesia have signed two agreements on new and renewable sources of energy and cultural exchange.
- ★ The agreements were signed in the presence of Vice President M. Hamid Ansari and his Indonesian counterpart Jusuf Kala after their talks in Jakarta. The discussions was on a range of issues, including expanding cooperation in defence, counter terrorism and Trade.
- ★ The MoU on New and Renewable Energy sector was signed between Indonesian Water Resources and Mineral Minister and Indian ambassador to Indonesia Gurjit Singh.
- ★ The cooperation is important as both India and Indonesia have committed themselves to reduce carbon emissions by 35 percent and 29 percent respectively by 2030. The Government of Indonesia is supporting India in organizing ‘Sahabat India – The Festival of India in Indonesia’ earlier this year.

Nepal receives first consignment of petrol from China

- ★ Nepal has received 73.5 metric tonnes of petrol from China for the first time after signing a major deal with it to ease crippling shortage of petroleum products.
- ★ The shortage was due to the month-long Madhesi-led blockade of India-Nepal border over the new Constitution. Under the Agreement, China will supply petrol, diesel, LP Gas and air gasoline to Nepal.
- ★ Twelve trucks carrying petrol from China on November 2 entered Nepal through Rasuwagadhi Trading point. These tankers were bringing 144,000 litres of petrol and diesel to Nepal following an agreement inked between Nepal Oil Corporation and Petro China in Beijing last week to ease crippling shortages after protests over a new Constitution blocked imports from its sole supplier India.

Amazon to open its first-ever physical book store in Seattle

- ★ Amazon.com Inc is set to open its first physical book store in Seattle. The brick-and-mortar store, Amazon Books, is a physical extension of Amazon.com with books being selected based on customer ratings and pre-orders on Amazon.com.
- ★ Popularity on Good reads and curators' assessments are also considered for short listing the books. The in-store and online prices of the books would be same.
- ★ The store will also have an option to test drive Amazon's devices such as Kindle, Echo, Fire TV and Fire Tablet. Amazon Books, which is located in Seattle's University Village, will be open every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

Google aims to begin drone package deliveries in 2017

- ★ Internet giant Alphabet Inc, the new holding company for Google, expects to begin delivering packages to consumers via drones sometime in 2017.
- ★ Alphabet and Amazon.com Inc are among a growing number of companies that intend to make package delivery by drone a reality. But drone deliveries are not expected to take flight until after the FAA publishes final rules for commercial drone operations, which are expected early next year.

Tropical Cyclone Chapala hits Yemen triggering heavy floods

- ★ A rare tropical cyclone has slammed into Yemen, triggering heavy flooding and causing damage in a region of the war-racked country. Packing winds of more than 100 km/h, Cyclone Chapala made landfall in the south eastern provinces of Hadramawt and Shabwa.
- ★ The World Health Organisation said that it had delivered trauma kits for 1,000 patients in Mukalla and was providing fuel for hospitals and ambulances.

Indra 2015: India, Russia to hold joint military exercise in Rajasthan's Bikaner

- ★ India and Russia will hold joint military exercise 'Indra 2015' in Mahajan field firing range in Bikaner district of Rajasthan from November 8.
- ★ The joint counter terrorism exercise will take place from November 8 to 19 in which troops from India and Russia will participate.

Emergency declared in Maldives

- ★ The Maldives president has declared a 30-day state of emergency ahead of a planned anti-government rally.
- ★ The declaration by President Abdulla Yameen gives security forces sweeping powers to arrest suspects.
- ★ It comes two days before the planned protest by the country's main opposition, the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP). MDP leader Mohamed Nasheed was jailed in March after a widely criticised conviction under anti-terror laws. Attorney-General Mohamed Anil said a cache of firearms and explosives had recently been discovered, as well as plots to use dangerous weapons.

UK signs 3bn pounds in trade deals with Kazakhstan

- ★ Britain and Kazakhstan have signed Trade deals worth 3 billion pounds as London rolled out the red carpet for the country's autocratic President Nursultan Nazarbayev.
- ★ The pro-Russian Kazakh leader is due to have lunch with Queen Elizabeth II, when he will be greeted by a guard of honour at Buckingham Palace.
- ★ Cameron pointed to deals involving four new gas plants and a steel production facility in Kazakhstan as key components of trade ties between the two countries.

Forbes World's Most Powerful People 2015 : Putin Tops the list

- ★ Vladimir Putin has been voted the most powerful person in the world for the third time in a row, in a new list published by Financial magazine Forbes.
- ★ The Russian President has topped the Most Powerful People list, with German Chancellor Angela Merkel and US President Barack Obama coming in second and third place respectively.
- ★ It is the first time a sitting US President has not made one of the top 2 spots. Pope Francis has retained his fourth place position from last year, while General Secretary of the Communist Party of China's Xi Jinping is at number five, having fallen two places. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been ranked as the world's ninth most powerful person.
- ★ Others in the top ten are Microsoft Founder Bill Gates at the sixth place, US Federal Reserve Chairperson Janet Yellen (7), UK Prime Minister David Cameron (8) and Google's Larry Page(10).

Hindi largest spoken Indian language in US: Census Bureau of US

- ★ Hindi has emerged as the largest Indian language spoken in the US, with nearly 6.5 lakh people speaking it, according to the latest Census data.
- ★ The US Census Bureau based on American Community Survey data collected from 2009 to 2013, said that more than 60 million people in the US speak a language other than English at home, 25 million of whom speak English.
- ★ Nearly 250,000 people speak Telugu while Tamil is spoken by about 190,000 people, Malayalam (about 146,000 people) and Kannada (about 48,000).

Xi arrives in Singapore for China-Taiwan summit

- ★ Chinese president Xi Jinping has arrived in Singapore with Taiwan's president Ma Ying-jeou, to attend China and Taiwan summit – the first such meeting since the end of the Chinese civil war.
- ★ The mainly ethnic Chinese city-state is celebrating 25 years of diplomatic ties with Beijing. It is the first meeting which is to be held after their split in China war.

Russia, India discuss possible pipeline project: Energy Ministry

- ★ On November 6, Russia and India discussed the possibility of building a pipeline system for hydrocarbons between the two countries, said the Russian energy ministry .

Greenpeace registration to operate in India cancelled

- ★ Greenpeace India Society has just received notice from the Tamil Nadu Registrar of Societies, summarily announcing cancellation of its registration as a society.
- ★ While several international leaders, including the United Nations Secretary General have recently upheld the importance of civil society in healthy democracies, this notice is the latest assault on free speech in India.
- ★ Over the last 18 months, Greenpeace India has endured repeated attempts at suppression through different government authorities, and prepares yet again to seek legal redress.

Chinese VP in India; signs two agreements

- ★ India and China on November 7 signed two agreements including one in the field of water resources on sharing hydrological data on the Satluj river.
- ★ Vice President Hamid Ansari and his Chinese counterpart Li Yuanhao held delegation level talks in New Delhi.
- ★ Li is the first Chinese Vice president to visit India in more than six decades.

India, China ink pacts on water resources, culture

- ★ India and China signed two agreements including one in the field of water resources on sharing hydrological data on Satluj river after talks between Vice President Hamid Ansari and his Chinese counterpart Li Yuanhao.
- ★ Li is the first Chinese Vice president who visited India.
- ★ In Aurangabad, the Chinese Vice President visited the Ajanta Caves and also met the city mayor.

UN approves its first climate aid for poor nations

- ★ The UN's Green Climate FUND (GCF) said Friday it had approved its first financing of projects to help developing countries fight global warming, three weeks before a summit opens in Paris to ink a climate rescue pact.

7 South Asian nations to share info on organised crime

- ★ India and six other South Asian countries have finalised draft structure and terms of reference of a regional platform for information sharing on transnational organised crimes.
- ★ The delegates of seven countries — India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Myanmar — in a conference here discussed the modalities for creation of a regional platform for information/intelligence sharing to enable all Member States to respond to transnational organised crimes.

Titanic getting own amusement park ride in 2018

- ★ Titanic is getting its own ride at a **Dubai amusement park** in 2018. Twentieth Century Fox is building the structure for a Dubai resort, and the studio is also developing attractions based on TV shows and films such as “Sons of Anarchy”, “Planet of the Apes” and “Aliens”.
- ★ There are strong merchandising opportunities and it will allow us to connect with our audiences on an ongoing basis. The historic tragedy was recreated in the 1997 drama “Titanic”, which starred Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet.

China, Singapore starts negotiations on upgrading Free Trade Agreement

- ★ China and Singapore 7 November began negotiations to upgrade a bilateral Free Trade Agreement.
- ★ The two nations marked 25 years of establishment of diplomatic relations with a state visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping.
- ★ Xi and Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong witnessed the launch of negotiations to upgrade the China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement (CSFTA) on the second day of Xi's state visit to the country. Both sides will endeavour to complete the review by 2016.

WHO officially declares Sierra Leone Ebola-free

- ★ Sierra Leone has been declared free of Ebola by the World Health Organisation, prompting nationwide celebrations tinged with sadness over the 4,000 lives the virus claimed. Freetown was transformed into a giant carnival on Friday night as ecstatic crowds took to the streets of the capital in an outpouring of emotion. Relief that the 17-month outbreak was all but over was reflected in candlelit prayers and spontaneous parties.

Aus, China ink deal to share info on Antarctica condition

- ★ Australia and China 9 November inked a deal to share information about sea ice conditions around Antarctica.
- ★ This deal is for better navigation and shipping in the Earth's southernmost continent.
- ★ The agreement was signed between China's National Marine Environment Forecasting Centre and Australia's Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) in Hobart city.

AK-47 maker in talks for joint venture in India to manufacture weapons

- ★ Russia's Kalashnikov Concern, makers of AK-47 assault rifles, is in advanced discussions with Indian companies to manufacture certain weapons in India and is open to sharing technology with local partners. Known as one of the best assault rifles of the 20th century, AK-47s are now being reportedly used more by non-state agents than national defence personnel.
- ★ For many years now, Russia has officially stopped supplying these fine automatic rifles to the country.

SAADMEx 2015 to be conducted from 23rd -26th November, 2015 in Delhi

- ★ India will host the South Asian Annual Disaster Management Exercise (SAADMEx), 2015 here from November 23-26. Member-countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) will participate in the joint exercise, which will be inaugurated by Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

'India in Shanghai' Cultural Week inaugurated at Shanghai

- ★ A cultural week is being held in Shanghai, China. India has been designated as the guest country, with an 'Indian Culture Week' being incorporated as a part of the SIAF annual festival which runs from 16th October – 16th November, 2015.
- ★ It has happened for the first time in 17 year history of China. India Culture Week would be jointly inaugurated by Ambassador H.E Ashok K.
- ★ Kantha along with Ms. Zhong Yanqun, Vice Chair of The Standing Committee of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress on November 5 2015 at the Shanghai Grand Theater.

WHO officially declares Sierra Leone Ebola-free

- ★ Sierra Leone has been declared free of Ebola by the World Health Organisation. The disease in the nation took almost 4000 lives.
- ★ The WHO's country director, Anders Nordström, confirmed that 42 days had passed without any new cases, thereby satisfying criteria that the virus was no longer being transmitted.
- ★ Sierra Leone's president, Ernest Bai Koroma, has ended the state of emergency declared during the outbreak, but the country will now enter a 90-day period of heightened surveillance to make sure the virus does not return.

India inks \$273 million loan pact with ADB for funding rural roads

- ★ GOI has signed a \$273 million loan agreement with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to improve rural roads in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.
- ★ The loan constitutes the third tranche, which is also the last tranche of the \$800 million financing facility under the Rural Connectivity Investment Programme.
- ★ The loan will help in constructing over 6,000 kilometers of all-weather rural roads in the aforesaid five states, benefiting over 4,200 rural habitations.

India wins re-election to UN Commission on International Trade Law

- ★ India has been re-elected to the UN Commission on International Trade Law for another six years term, maintaining its unbeaten track record of winning elections at the world body.
- ★ At an election held in the General Assembly, India was re-elected to UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) for the 2016-2022 term.
- ★ India would continue to play a constructive role in the UNCITRAL which is recognised as the core legal body of the United Nations system in the field of international trade law.

Japan's first passenger jet makes maiden test flight

- ★ Japan's first passenger jet has made its maiden test flight, a landmark in a decade-long programme to launch the plane aimed at competing with Brazilian and Canadian rivals in the global market for smaller aircraft.
- ★ About half a century after the last Japanese-made commercial plane took to the skies, the Mitsubishi Regional Jet (MRJ), painted with dark blue, red and beige stripes, took off from Nagoya airport under clear skies for a 90-minute trip.

Bangladesh signs USD 250m satellite deal with French firm

- ★ Bangladesh has signed a USD 250 million deal with French-Italian firm Thales Alenia Space in Dhaka to build the country's first communications satellite.
- ★ Thales Alenia Space will build the satellite called Bangabandhu-1 for the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to be launched into space in 2017. BTRC chairman Shahjahan Mahmud said the contract was worth 19.51 billion taka (USD 250 million).
- ★ Junior telecoms minister Tarana Halim hailed the deal which would save Bangladesh coffers USD 14 million a year from renting transponders of foreign satellites. With the launch of Bangabandhu-1, Bangladesh will become the 57th member of the exclusive club of satellite-owning countries.

China, Middle East to be new gas-guzzlers by 2035

- ★ China and the Middle East, inspired by lower prices and enough supply, will drive global natural gas demand growth in the next 25 years as consumption in Europe fails to recover to peak levels seen in 2010, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).
- ★ Both regions will become larger gas users than Europe by 2035, the Paris-based IEA said in its World Energy Outlook 2015.

India, UK strike 3.2 bn pound deal on energy, climate change

- ★ Ahead of the Paris climate summit, India and Britain have agreed on a comprehensive package of COLLABORATION on energy and climate change which includes commercial deals worth 3.2 billion pounds.
- ★ During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ongoing UK visit, the two countries reaffirmed the importance of addressing climate change and promoting secure, affordable and sustainable supplies of energy that will support economic growth, energy security and energy access.

- ★ The package encompasses 3.2 billion pounds of commercial agreements, joint research programmes and initiatives to share technical, scientific, and [FINANCIAL](#) and policy expertise. This is aimed at encouraging the research, development and eventual deployment of clean technology, renewables, gas and nuclear.

Pakistan and China kick off ambitious CPEC project

- ★ Pakistan and China have kicked off their ambitious 46 billion US Dollar CPEC Project or China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project with Beijing acquiring over 2,000 acres of land in restive Balochistan to develop the strategic Gwadar port.
- ★ The two countries have signed a deal to give the usage right of the land to a Chinese company. India has already objected to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as it passes through the Pakistan occupied Kashmir.
- ★ The 43-year lease will see the government of Baluchistan province in southwestern Pakistan provide a 923-hectare swathe of tax-exempt land as part of the CEPC which links western China to the Arabian Sea.

Suu Kyi's party wins majority in historic Myanmar vote

- ★ Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi's opposition party won a majority in parliament in the Southeast Asian nation's historic election.
- ★ With votes still being counted, the Union Election Commission said the National League for Democracy (NLD) party had crossed the 329 threshold of seats needed for an outright majority in both houses of the 664-member parliament.
- ★ The country's first free election in 25 years took place on November 8th 2015.
- ★ NLD captured 21 lower house seats, the election commission said, taking its total to 348 seats with 82.9 percent of the vote now confirmed. The ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party has won 140 seats so far.

India Signs MoUs with six countries in the International Civil Aviation Negotiations

- ★ The Indian delegation representing Ministry of Civil Aviation participated in the ICAN (International Civil Aviation Negotiations), 2015 conference has signed an agreement with six countries.

120 Killed, France Declares Emergency

- ★ France has declared a national state of emergency and tightened borders after at least 120 people were killed in a night of gun and bomb attacks in Paris. Eighty people were reported killed after gunmen burst into the Bataclan concert hall and took dozens hostage.
- ★ The siege ended when security forces stormed the building.
- ★ Four black-clad gunmen wearing suicide vests and wielding AK-47s stormed into the Bataclan venue in eastern Paris and fired calmly and methodically at hundreds of screaming concert-goers.
- ★ A half-dozen separate incidents rocked Paris, including multiple bombs that detonated outside the Stade de France, where the country's national soccer team was playing against Germany.

- ★ People were shot dead at bars and restaurants at five other sites in Paris. Eight attackers are reported to have been killed. Police believed all of the gunmen were dead but it was unclear if any accomplices were still on the run after the string of near-simultaneous attacks.
- ★ Paris residents have been asked to stay indoors and about 1,500 military personnel are being deployed across the city.

EU launches \$2 billion emergency fund for Africa to combat migration

- ★ The European Union has launched a fund for Africa with an initial \$2 billion to combat the poverty and conflict driving migration to Europe. The trust fund, unveiled at a summit with African leaders in Malta, consists largely of 1.8 billion euros (\$1.93 billion) put up by the European Commission.
- ★ The new money will finance projects ranging from training and small-business grants and combating food shortages to schemes directly aimed at cutting emigration and tackling radicalization and other violence.
- ★ Among the biggest concerns in both Europe and Africa is the extent to which climate change, turning vast areas around the Sahara into desert, may set large sections of Africa's fast-growing billion-plus population on the move, both within the continent and north across the Mediterranean.

PM inaugurates Ambedkar memorial in London

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated a memorial in London dedicated to Dr BR Ambedkar. India acquired the bungalow two months back where the Dalit icon and architect of India's Constitution lived as a student in the 1920s.
- ★ Modi visited the house where Ambedkar lived in 1921-22 during his student days at London School of Economics (LSE) and said the Dalit icon's message of equality and justice continues to resonate.
- ★ Maharashtra had acquired the three-storey 2,050 sq ft house at 10 King Henry's Road, in northwest London, in August for an estimated cost of 3.2 million to 4 million pounds which the state government had borne. Modi, who was accompanied by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, paid floral tributes to Ambedkar's bust at the house.

India and Bangladesh sign Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to operationalize agreement on coastal shipping.

- ★ India and Bangladesh signed the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) in New Delhi, to operationalize the "Agreement on Coastal Shipping" signed between the two countries in June, 2015.
- ★ The SOP will pave the way to promote coastal shipping between India and Bangladesh and would enhance bilateral trade between the two countries by bringing down the cost of transportation of EXIM cargo.
- ★ The two sides have also agreed upon the use of vessels of River Sea Vessel (RSV) category for Indo-Bangladesh coastal shipping.

India, Australia seal N-deal procedures

- ★ India and Australia have sealed Nuclear-deal procedures for supply of uranium from later to energy starved India.
- ★ N-deal procedures were formally completed between both countries following a bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart Malcolm Turnbull in Antalya, Turkey on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit.
- ★ Following the conclusion of the agreement, India has become the first country to buy Uranium from Australia without being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Philippines to host 2015 APEC summit

- ★ Philippines is going to host 2015 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit from 18–19 November 2015 in its capital city Manila for the first time in nearly two decades.
- ★ It is second time Philippines hosting the Asia-Pacific region's most high-level business event and it had previously hosted it in 1996.
- ★ For first time Philippines had hosted the APEC summit under the leadership of then-President Fidel Ramos who had vowed to help develop an action plan on facilitating free Trade in the region.

Over 13,000 delegates from 26 nations attend G20 Summit

- ★ The two-day G20 Summit at the picturesque Turkish coastal resort town is being. It has been attended by more than 13,000 delegates from as many as 26 countries and seven international organisations.
- ★ Top global leaders, including US President Barack Obama, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Chinese President Xi Jinping, Saudi Arabia's King Salman and IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde, among others, are attending the Summit.

India, Bangladesh agree to share information on militants

- ★ India and Bangladesh on November 17 agreed to share information on militants. Home secretaries of the two neighbours concluded their talks reviewing internal security and other cross-border issues.
- ★ India assured Bangladesh of providing information immediately if they get any information on militancy.
- ★ They will eliminate terrorism and insurgency through bilateral understanding and intelligence sharing.
- ★ The issue of Bangladeshi nationals being detained by Indian border forces was a major issue of the talks while both the countries have agreed to reduce such incidents to zero figure.

Australian companies can now export uranium commercially to India

- ★ Australian High Commissioner, Patrick Suckling, on November 17 had entered the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement into force.
- ★ Through this agreement it is possible for Australian companies to export uranium to India on a commercial basis. The supply of Australian uranium will help India to meet its rapidly growing electricity demand and improve the welfare of its people.

India, China agree to deepen defence ties, maintain peace at LAC

- ★ India and China have decided to deepen bilateral defence ties and maintain peace and tranquillity at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) besides strengthening cooperation against terror, including at the international level. T
- ★ he decisions came after the meeting between a visiting 26 -member delegation led by General Fan Changlong, Vice-Chairman of China's powerful Central Military Commission (CMC) and the Indian side, which was headed by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar, at South Block here.
- ★ This is the highest-level Chinese defence delegation to visit India in recent years.

MoU between India and Vietnam for cooperation in the field of Animal Health

- ★ The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its ex-post facto approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Vietnam for cooperation in the field of Animal Health.
- ★ The MoU was signed in September, 2014.
- ★ The MoU aims to promote mutual cooperation between India and Vietnam through joint activities in the areas of Animal Health and has agreed to
 1. Protect territory of each other from introduction of animal diseases and infection caused by the trade of animals, products of animal origin and materials of animal reproduction.
 2. Share special information on meat processing, meat products and slaughter houses/abattoirs.
 3. Cooperate in the training and upgrading of human resources in the field of animal health through exchange of delegations, workshops, expert visits, training and share information on veterinary research.

Government extends currency swap facility for SAARC members

- ★ The government on November 18 extended the currency swap facility for SAARC members. Under this the RBI offers the facility of varying sizes not exceeding \$2 billion in total.
- ★ The decision was taken by the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Background

- ★ The Cabinet has given approval for the proposal to provide a two year extension with amendments to the framework on 'Currency Swap Arrangement' for SAARC member countries up to November 14, 2017, and extension thereafter, if necessary, by Finance Minister.
- ★ Under the facility, RBI offers swaps of varying sizes to each SAARC member country (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) depending on their two months import requirement and not exceeding USD 2 billion in total, in US dollar, Euro or domestic currency.
- ★ After approval of the Cabinet, RBI will negotiate the operational details bilaterally with central banks of the respective SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries.

PM's visit: India to complete strategic partnership with Singapore

- ★ India expects to conclude a 'strategic partnership' with Singapore during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the South-East Asian nation.
- ★ During the visit he would also meet top CEOs and address the Indian community.

When, where and what??

- ★ Modi will be in Singapore on November 23-24 on a bilateral visit, during which he is also expected to sign an enhanced defence cooperation pact, along with other MoUs on cyber security, culture and training on urban management and the like.
- ★ Briefing the media about the visit, Secretary (East) with the Ministry of External Affairs Anil Wadhwa said Singapore has approximately 3,50,000-strong Indian diaspora out of its total population of 5.5 million.
- ★ The bilateral trade with Singapore is about USD 17 billion and Singaporean companies are very active in India since early 1990s, including in equity markets.

Brazil declares emergency after mine waste spill

- ★ Brazilian authorities has declared a state of emergency in more than 200 towns affected by a deadly mining waste spill. The government of Minas Gerais state said the measure covered the Rio Doce river basin and all towns impacted by the avalanche of mud and waste unleashed when two dams collapsed at the Samarco iron ore mine in Mariana 12 days ago.
- ★ The torrent of yellowish muck caused an environmental catastrophe, contaminated drinking water supplies and mostly destroyed the nearby village of Bento Rodrigues, with a toll of 10 dead and 15 missing. Samarco is a joint venture of Australia's BHP Billiton, the world's largest mining firm, and Brazil's Vale, the biggest iron ore miner.
- ★ Google's huge Alphabet on November 17 revamped Google+ online social network focused on people's interests, and tuned for smartphones or tablets. They are starting to introduce a fully redesigned Google+ that puts Communities and Collections front and center.

How it is built??

- * Google's social network was rebuilt for fast, consistent performance whether accessed through computer web browsers or mobile devices powered by Apple or Android software.
- * Google+ users interested in the new version will need to opt in at the social network.
- * Google's social network launched Communities in late 2012 as venues to people to connect online based on things or ideas they are passionate about.

China inks \$15 billion nuclear deal with Argentina

- * A Chinese state-owned company will finance and build two nuclear power plants in Argentina, the enterprise said, in a deal estimated to be valued at nearly \$15 billion.
- * China National Nuclear Corp will work with Argentina's state-owned company Nucleoelectrica to build the South American nation's fourth and fifth reactors, CNNC said Monday in a statement posted on its website. The agreement was reached over the weekend at the G20 summit in Turkey.

Airtel, Facebook expand free internet service across Africa

- * Telecom major Bharti Airtel and social media giant Facebook announced the launch of free internet access service platform across 17 African countries in phases by March 2016. The Free Basics service, which has been in midst of neutrality debate, offers free access to a set of basic websites and services with objective to introduce people to the internet. These websites provide free health, education and finance-related information.
- * Airtel Africa had already been working with Facebook since 2014 in enhancing accessibility to the internet in an affordable manner through the launch of Free Basics in Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Ghana, Seychelles and Rwanda.

Bangladesh Government blocked social media platform on security grounds

- * The Bangladesh Government on 18 November 2015 blocked popular social media platform Facebook and online messaging and calling services WhatsApp and Viber on security grounds.
- * Following this, Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) issued a letter to different telecom operators and all Internet Service Providers asking them to stop the services immediately.

Afghanistan to collaborate with India for Skill Development

- * An Afghanistan delegation led by their Deputy Foreign Minister Mr. Hekmat Khalil Karzai, on November 18 met the Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Rajiv Pratap Rudy to explore possible collaborations between the countries to strengthen the skill ecosystem of Afghanistan.

PM to visit Malaysia and Singapore to attend Asean and East Asia Summit

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Malaysia and Singapore from November 21. During the he will attend the 13th ASEAN-India Summit and the 10th East Asia Summit (EAS). Modi would reach Kuala Lumpur on November 21 to attend both the summits followed by a bilateral visit after which he will go to Singapore on a bilateral visit.
- ★ Mohd Najib Bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, the prime minister of Malaysia, will be chairing both the summits, which will be attended by heads of state and government of other ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and East Asia Summit participating countries respectively.

India and China to form ministerial mechanism to boost security cooperation

- ★ India and China have agreed to form a Ministerial-level mechanism headed by their Home Ministers to step up cooperation and coordination on a host of security-related issues, including cross-border terrorism, security and law enforcement, trans-border crimes, cyber crimes and drug trafficking.
- ★ The decision to form Ministerial mechanism was agreed upon after Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh held talks with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and Interior Minister Guo Shengkun in Beijing.
- ★ The mechanism would be followed by a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding on security-related issues and will become operational during Guo's visit to India next year. The decision by the two countries to deepen cooperation relating to terrorism comes in the backdrop of the Paris terrorist attacks and killing of Chinese and Norwegian hostages by Islamic State terrorists.

India and Brazil decide to boost trade ties

- ★ India and Brazil have decided to boost ties in sectors like infrastructure, trade and investment and mining besides exploring opportunities in nuclear energy sphere.
- ★ At the seventh India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM), co-chaired by External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Brazilian counterpart Mauro Vieira, both sides resolved to exploit the "full potential" of the strategic partnership, with a particular focus on ramping up trade ties.

South Australia signs historic deal with Rajasthan

- ★ South Australia has signed a historic 'sister-state agreement' with Rajasthan that would pave new ways to boost export and investment opportunities between the two states.
- ★ The sister-state relationship between South Australia and Rajasthan is based on a two-way exchange of research, policy and technical capabilities.
- ★ The agreement provides partnership and collaborative opportunities across key sectors where South Australian business can offer services and product support.
- ★ The agreement was signed by state trade and investment trade minister Martin Hamilton-Smith and Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje. Hamilton-Smith said the State Government will work with the State of Rajasthan to share knowledge, exchange ideas and to produce economic prosperity.

Indian scientist Yusuf Hamied appointed to high-level panel on health

- ★ Yusuf Hamied, an eminent Indian scientist has been named by UN chief Ban Ki-moon to a high-level panel on health technology innovation.
- ★ Hamied, the non-executive Chairman of generic pharmaceutical manufacturer Cipla will be part of the 16-member panel that will be co-chaired by former President of Switzerland Ruth Dreifuss and former President of Botswana Festus Mogae.
- ★ The UN said Hamied has led efforts to treat and eradicate AIDS and other diseases in the developing world, and to give patients life-saving medicines regardless of their ability to pay.
- ★ He offered the world's first affordable AIDS medicine at the unprecedented cost of USD 1 per day in 2001.

UNSC approves 'all necessary measures' to fight IS

- ★ World leaders have united against ISIS in a United Nations Security Council resolution calling on countries to take 'all necessary measures' to fight ISIS in Syria and Iraq.
- ★ The Security Council unanimously agreed to the resolution, which states that the barbaric group 'constitutes a global and unprecedented threat to international peace and security'.
- ★ The resolution, which was drafted by France, condemns the 'horrifying terrorist attacks' in Paris a week ago which left 130 dead, as well as atrocities committed by ISIS in Tunisia, Turkey, Lebanon and the downing of a Russian passenger plane over Egypt.

Rajnath Singh's China Visit – Points to Note

- ★ In a major boost to bilateral security cooperation, China and India have agreed to actively exchange intelligence on terror groups and their activities through a dedicated COMMUNICATION channel.
- ★ A comprehensive joint statement issued after talks between Home Minister Rajnath Singh and top Chinese leaders. China and India also agreed to "coordinate positions on anti-terrorism endeavours at regional and multilateral levels and supporting each other" and promote "exchanges by groups of counter-terrorism experts to discuss counter-terrorism cooperation".

21st century belongs to Asia: PM Modi

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a four-day visit to Malaysia and Singapore. On the first day of his tour, the PM addressed business summit of ASEAN countries in Kuala Lumpur.
- ★ Addressing the Summit Modi said that India is a land of immense opportunities and invited investors from ASEAN countries to invest in India. PM Modi assured them ease of doing business in tune with the Make in India programme of the Government.
- ★ The PM further termed India and ASEAN countries as natural partners. The PM said that the 21st Century belongs to Asia, due to track record of ASEAN countries.

Chinese Navy conducts drills in South China Sea

- ★ The Chinese navy has conducted drills that simulate war in “certain waters” in the South China Sea.
- ★ They also employed major destroyers and frigates, carrier-based helicopters and new submarines.
- ★ The exercise was based out of the Sanya training base of the People’s Liberation Army Navy, focusing on anti-submarine warfare, according to a navy statement issued on November 20, without detailing the exact time and places for the maneuvers.

Russia inks deal to build Egypt’s first nuclear plant at Dabaa

- ★ Moscow and Cairo signed an agreement for Russia to build a nuclear power plant in Egypt, with Russia extending a loan to Egypt to cover the cost of construction. The plant, Egypt’s first, would be built at Dabaa in the north of the country and was expected to be completed by 2022.
- ★ Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi gave few details but said the project would involve the building of a ‘third-generation’ plant with four reactors. It is not clear how much the deal is worth but Sisi said the loan from Russia would be paid off over 35 years.

600 terrorists killed in Russian attack

- ★ The Russian military has launched cruise missiles against Islamic State positions in Syria from both the Mediterranean and Caspian seas, one of which killed over 600 terrorists in the Deir Ex-Zor Province.
- ★ The Russian defence minister said the air force was increasing the number of aircraft involved in pounding jihadis to 69.
- ★ The strikes ordered by Vladimir Putin hit seven targets in the Syrian provinces of Raqqa, Aleppo and Idlib. Moscow is also planning a three-day naval exercise in the Mediterranean and has reportedly warned Lebanon that its airspace will be affected by the manoeuvre.

Tripura to supply power to Bangladesh from Bijoy Dibosh

- ★ Tripura will start supplying power to Bangladesh from December 16, the day when that country observes Bijoy Dibosh or Victory Day when Bangladesh was created out of East Pakistan after the end of the India-Pakistan War of 1971.
- ★ Tripura had promised to export 100 MW power to Bangladesh from its share of 196 MW power from the Palatana power plant in reciprocation of Bangladesh allowing Tripura to use its ports to transport the heavy equipment for the 726MW Palatana project.

ASEAN leaders agree to AEC

- ★ In a historic development, ASEAN leaders have declared the establishment of an European Union style regional economic bloc, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).
- ★ The declaration, signed by all ten members during the ongoing ASEAN summit in Kuala Lumpur will create a community of a single market with a free flow of goods, capital and skilled labour in the ASEAN region.

- ★ It will integrate Southeast Asia's diverse economies, a region with 620 million people and a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.4 trillion. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one among the East Asia Summit leaders who witnessed the historic moment.

India, Malaysia to deepen cooperation in security, defence: PM

- ★ India and Malaysia will deepen cooperation in security and defence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on November 23. He emphasised that the recent attacks globally and the "ceaseless" terror attempts against India and Afghanistan were a reminder of the global nature of terrorism.

India, S'pore lift ties to strategic partnership, ink 10 pacts

- ★ India and Singapore have elevated their ties to the 'strategic partnership' level and signed bilateral India and Singapore agreements for enhanced defence cooperation and in areas like cyber security, shipping and civil aviation after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met his Singaporean counterpart Lee Hsien Loong.
- ★ Modi also met Singapore President Tony Tan Keng on the second day of his visit and was accorded a ceremonial welcome here at Istana, the official residence and office of the President.

China, Thailand joint air force exercise highlights warming ties

- ★ Thailand's military held an air show with China ahead of joint manoeuvres in a sign of warming ties.
- ★ Five Thai and Chinese military planes performed aerobatic demonstrations for assembled media, flying some 3,000 feet (900 metres) above ground at the Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, around 260 km (161 miles) northeast of Bangkok.
- ★ Chinese and Thai air forces will conduct their first joint exercises that China has said are aimed at increasing "mutual trust and friendship."

690 million children at risk from climate change: UNICEF

- ★ According to UNICEF, nearly 690 million of the world's 2.3 billion children live in areas most exposed to climate change, facing higher rates of death, poverty and disease from global warming.
- ★ Almost 530 million children live in countries hardest-hit by high floods and tropical storms, mostly in Asia. An additional 160 million kids are growing up in areas suffering severe droughts, mostly in Africa.
- ★ US President Barack Obama and China's Xi Jinping are joining more than 135 world leaders in Paris for an international conference aimed at clinching the first agreement on tackling global warming in 20 years.

UNISDR released the report titled The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters

- ★ The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) on 23 November 2015 released the report titled The Human Cost of Weather Related Disasters.
- ★ The report was compiled by UNISDR and the Belgian-based Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED).
- ★ The report depicts that over the last 20 years, 90 percent of major disasters have been caused by 6457 recorded floods, storms, heatwaves, droughts and other weather-related events.

Ratan Tata invests in S'pore's startup Crayon Data

- ★ Tata Sons Chairman Emeritus Ratan Tata has invested an undisclosed amount in Singapore-based big data company Crayon Data. The investment was made in his personal capacity.
- ★ Crayon, a portfolio company of Jungle Ventures, had previously raised 10 million Singapore dollars in seed and Series A funding from angel institutional investors like Jungle Ventures and Spring Seeds.

Tunisia declares state of emergency after bus blast

- ★ Tunisia's president has declared a state of emergency throughout the country and a curfew in the capital after an attack on a bus carrying his presidential guard killed at least 12 people.
- ★ Beji Caid Essebsi, who was not on the bus when it was hit by an explosion in the centre of Tunis, said in a televised address the country was at war against terrorism and called for international cooperation against extremists who have staged attacks across the world in recent weeks.


UN launches campaign violence against women

- ★ India's iconic India Gate and the Delhi Metro will join hundreds of monuments across the world that will be illuminated as part of a UN effort to galvanize support for global action to end violence against women and girls.
- ★ India Gate will be illuminated in orange and messages of ending violence against women will be displayed on panel boards in two high-traffic lines of the Delhi Metro as part of the UN's 'Orange the World' campaign that includes parades, soccer matches, school debates and the lighting up of hundreds of iconic monuments.

China building world's largest animal cloning factory

- ★ China is building the world's biggest animal cloning factory where it will recreate sniffer dogs, pets, racehorses and beef cattle.
- ★ Chinese scientists had signed a deal to create a commercial animal cloning centre in Tianjin, northeastern China. The factory will be built in the Tianjin Economic and Technological Development Area (TEDA), a business development park sponsored by the government.
- ★ Construction of the main building has already begun and scientists will start working there in the first half of 2016.

India, US make progress on jet engine, aircraft carrier cooperation

- ★ Ahead of Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar's maiden US visit next month, the two countries have made progress on their ambitious COLLABORATION  in the fields of jet engine and aircraft carrier technology.
- ★ The terms of reference for Jet Engine Technology Joint Working Group has been finalised and is likely to be signed next month, while the second meeting of the Joint Working Group on Aircraft Carrier Technology Cooperation (JWGACTC) has been slated for next February.

China navy holds first joint anti-piracy drill with NATO

- ★ Chinese naval forces involved in anti-piracy drill in the Gulf of Aden have held their first joint drill with NATO ships carrying out the same mission, on November 27 as China seeks a greater global security role.
- ★ The exercise will help improve communications between ships on anti-piracy duties so that China and NATO can together maintain maritime security and stability in the Gulf of Aden.
- ★ It gave no other details. China, whose merchant ships and oil tankers are heavy users of the waters off Yemen and Somalia, has been an enthusiastic participant in the anti-piracy patrols.

TAPI gas pipeline project to start from December 13

- ★ The ground-breaking ceremony of the proposed multi-billion dollar 1,735-kilometre gas pipeline connecting Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India will start from December 13. Reported by Turkmenistan Ambassador to Pakistan.
- ★ The trans-national gas pipeline project known as TAPI, is intended to carry 33 billion cubic meters of gas annually through the Afghan cities of Herat and Kandahar and terminate in Fazilka, a border town in India's Punjab state.

France and Russia agree to 'coordinate' strikes against IS

- ★ France and Russia have agreed to coordinate strikes against Islamic State (IS) jihadists after bilateral talks between French president Francois Hollande and Vladimir Putin in Moscow.
- ★ Mr Hollande said Russia had agreed to target only Islamic State and similar jihadi groups. The West has accused Moscow of attacking mostly Western-backed rebel groups fighting Mr Assad. France will also increase its support to rebel groups battling Islamic State on the ground in Syria.

Amphibious aircraft could be 1st Indo-Japan defence JV

- ★ India and Japan are set to firm up an agreement Indo-Japan joint venture to jointly produce amphibious military aircraft during the upcoming visit of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.
- ★ The US 2 amphibious aircraft, that has applications for search and rescue, surveillance as well as intelligence gathering, will be produced in India not only for domestic orders but will also be pitched jointly for exports in the region and beyond. Besides the US 2 programme, the two sides are also expected to firm up a larger umbrella agreement to promote the joint development and production of military systems in support of the Make in India initiative.

Albania, India sign MoU on diplomatic passport holders

- ★ Albania and India have signed an agreement on the removal of visa requirements for diplomatic and service passport holders between the two countries, Albanian Foreign Affairs Ministry has said.
- ★ The agreement will serve the interests of both countries and strengthen friendly relations and cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, Xinhua quoted the ministry as saying on November 27.
- ★ The agreement will enable businesses from both sides to have freer movement, thus allowing more frequent communication and cooperation, it added.

Japan to provide Rs 5,536 crore loan for metro projects in Chennai and Ahmedabad

- ★ India and Japan on November 27 exchanged notes for Japan's Official Development Loan Assistance (ODA) worth Rs 5,536 crore for Chennai and Ahmedabad metro rail projects.
- ★ The notes were exchanged here between S Selvakumar, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs and Yutaka Kikuta, from the Embassy of Japan to India.

Priya Parmar's novel among NYT's 100 notable books of 2015

- ★ Indian-origin author Priya Parmar's historical novel "Vanessa and Her Sister", has been included in the New York Times' 100 Notable Books of 2015. Parmar's portrait brings noted modernist English writer Woolf's sister "Vanessa out of the shadows, into fully realised, shining visibility".
- ★ The world remembers Virginia better than her enigmatic older sister: Parmar restores the symmetry of their relationship in the familial landscape, showing how essential Vanessa's steadying force was to Virginia's precarious balance.

India joins UK, Aus to help poor nations combat climate change

- ★ Joining a select group of countries, India today said it will provide \$2.5 million for the vulnerable nations in the Commonwealth to help them introduce clean energy and reduce green-house gas emissions.
- ★ The announcement was made on the second day of the biennial summit of the Commonwealth whose membership includes powerful countries like Britain, Australia, Canada, Singapore and small island nations such the Maldives, Tonga and Nauru.
- ★ External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj represented India at the summit which was attended by heads of state and government of around 30 countries.

Russia removes India from its safe travel destinations list

- ★ It's the second blow to Goa's tourism industry which was already reeling from a reduction in arrivals due to the devaluation of the rouble.
- ★ In a second blow to Goa's tourism industry which was already reeling from a reduction in arrivals due to the devaluation of the rouble, India has been struck off the list of safe travel destinations recommended for Russian tourists, according to a report by the Russian news agency INTERFAX.
- ★ Amongst the destinations now identified as 'safe' are Cuba, south Vietnam and southern China. "Both India and Goa were not considered as good destinations for Russian travellers," said Ekaterina Belyakova, head of the Russian information centre.

Russia imposes economic sanctions against Turkey

- ★ Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a decree imposing a raft of punitive economic sanctions against Turkey. Putin has taken this decision after Turkey shot down a Russian warplane.
- ★ The decree, which entered into force immediately, said charter flights from Russia to Turkey would be banned, that tour firms would be told not to sell any holidays there,

and that unspecified Turkish imports would be outlawed, and Turkish firms and nationals have their economic activities halted or curbed.

China's yuan set for IMF reserve status

- ★ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is expected to announce that China's currency, the yuan, will join the fund's group of international basket of reserve currencies. Just the US dollar, the euro, Japan's yen and the British pound are currently part of this select band.
- ★ Earlier this month, IMF head Christine Lagarde backed the yuan's inclusion. If the decision is made, the yuan is likely to join the basket next year, experts said.
- ★ China is the world's second largest economy behind the US and asked for the yuan to become a reserve currency last year.
- ★ Reserve currencies are used by central banks and other financial organisations to help pay down international debt and steady exchange rates.
- ★ The last change made to the basket was in 2000, when the euro replaced the deutschmark and the franc.

South Korea ratifies free trade deal with China

- ★ South Korea has ratified a free trade agreement (FTA) with China that would remove most tariffs between Asia's largest and fourth-largest economies. The pact, signed in June, was passed by parliament with a 196-33 majority, although it still needs China's ratification in order to take effect.
- ★ The Seoul government has promised to provide about one trillion won (USD 865 million) in direct financial support for farmers and fishermen who argue that their livelihoods will be severely affected by the deal.
- ★ Negotiations for the agreement, which began in 2012, had often been marred by angry protests from South Korean farmers who fear an influx of cheap Chinese imports.

All You Need to Know About Paris Climate Change Summit 2015

What is the meeting is all about?

The meeting goes by several names – the United Nations Climate Summit, the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, or COP21, which stands for the 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties that are part of the United Nations Framework on Climate Change.

The first COP meeting took place in Berlin in 1995, and the most famous of these was COP3, which resulted in the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

Who will be there?

- ★ About 150 world leaders and than more than 40,000 delegates representing 195 countries will attend the conference in Paris.

What is the goal?

- ★ Nations are working toward a global, legally binding agreement that will lower greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep global warming below 2 degrees Celsius.
- ★ Once global warming climbs beyond that threshold, they say, the earth's land, food and water supply would be harmed, endangering the planet's population.

What's about COP20?

- ★ The 2014 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said the planet has already warmed by 0.85 degrees Celsius from 1880 to 2012 and could increase by another 1.5 to 4 degrees by the end of the century, compared to 1850.
- ★ At the COP20 meeting in Lima last year, governments agreed to submit their pledges to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

What our Prime Minister said?

- ★ In a blunt warning to rich nations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday told developed countries, which powered their way to prosperity on fossil fuels, that it would be "morally wrong" if they shift the burden of reducing emissions on developing countries like India.
- ★ He asked the developed nations to fulfil their duty to shoulder the greater burden of the fight against climate change.
- ★ Climate negotiators are pushing for stronger commitments in Paris as a necessary step toward building the world's economic future.

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Dead comet with skull face skims past Earth on Halloween

- ★ A large space rock that zipped past Earth on Halloween on October 31 was most likely a dead comet that fittingly bears an eerie resemblance to a skull.
- ★ Scientists observing asteroid named 2015 TB145 determined that the celestial object was more than likely a dead comet that has shed its volatiles after numerous passes around the Sun, NASA said in a statement.
- ★ The belated comet has also been observed by optical and radar observatories around the world, providing even more data, including first close-up views of its surface.
- ★ Asteroid 2015 TB145 safely flew by earth at just under 1.3 lunar distances, or about 486,000 km, on October 31.
- ★ The first radar images of the dead comet were generated by the National Science Foundation's Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.

BrahMos Missile Successfully test fired

- ★ An advanced version of BrahMos land-attack cruise missile has been successfully test-fired by India. It was launched from Indian Navy's newest stealth destroyer INS Kochi on the west coast of India.
- ★ Today's development follows an unsuccessful test on April 9, when the missile had failed to hit the target. However, today's test met all flight parameters, including high-level manoeuvres.
- ★ The supersonic cruise missile hit the designated land-based target with the desired accuracy, said the statement issued by BrahMos. This launch is the 47th test-firing of the missile.

China to launch retrievable satellite to probe dark matter

- ★ China will launch a series of scientific satellites including a retrievable one to probe 'dark matter' later this year.
- ★ The dark-matter particle explorer satellite will observe the direction, energy and electric charge of high-energy particles in space in search of dark matter, chief scientist of the project Chang Jin said.
- ★ It will have the widest observation spectrum and highest energy resolution of any dark-matter probe in the world.

China Launches the C919! Joins the Big Jet Club

- ★ China has rolled its first homegrown large passenger jet off the production line in Shanghai, vowing to challenge the dominance of Airbus and Boeing in the global commercial aviation market. At the ceremony, a shiny C919, sporting a largely white fuselage with a blue wavy stripe and a green tail, was towed beneath a banner with the phrase "a dream takes off" and past a huge Chinese national flag.

- ★ The C919 — a twin-engine, narrow-body aircraft seating up to 174 people — is similar in size to the Airbus 320 and Boeing 737 series of jets, long the workhorses for airlines around the world. With a flying range of up to 5,555 kilometers (3,451 miles), it is designed to compete head-to-head with its Airbus and Boeing rivals, and said to easily cover popular business and leisure routes from China such as Shanghai to Singapore and Beijing to Bangkok.

China successfully launches new communication satellite

- ★ China has successfully launched new communication satellite which will be used for radio, television and broadband services.
- ★ The “ChinaSat 2C” satellite was launched from the southwestern Xichang Satellite Launch Centre. It was carried by the Long March-3B carrier rocket.
- ★ The Satellite will provide radio, TV transmission and broadband services for the country’s radio stations, TV stations, radio transmitting stations and cable networks.
- ★ Today’s launch is the 216th mission of the Long March carrier rocket series developed by China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation.

Australian scientists identify way to target neuroblastoma cancer

- ★ Australian scientists have identified a critical molecular ‘feedback loop’ that helps initiate and cure neuroblastoma.
- ★ It is a cancer of the nervous system in children that is developed in embryonal nerve cells. The research team was able to identify an experimental drug, which was currently in clinical trials for adult cancer, with the potential to interrupt the loop and halt tumour progression.
- ★ This feedback loop massively accelerates cancer development.

Indian Army successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile in Rajasthan

- ★ Indian Army on 7 November successfully test fired the nearly 300-km-range Brahmos supersonic land attack cruise missile in Pokhran.
- ★ At 1000 hrs, the Indian Army fired Brahmos land-attack cruise missile successfully against a designated target at Pokhran test range in Rajasthan, demonstrating the weapon’s supreme operational capability.
- ★ The missile was test launched by a Mobile Autonomous Launcher (MAL) deployed in full configuration. The test-fire, carried out in the user-deployment configuration by trained army personnel, met all the mission objectives.

Highly encrypted Cloud system of the Indian Army launched

- ★ A highly encrypted Cloud system of the Indian Army, similar to that of Google, has been inaugurated by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar in line with the force’s plan to be a “digital army”.
- ★ The cloud system will store personnel as well operational data.
- ★ The ‘Army Cloud’ includes a central data centre, a near line data centre, both in Delhi and a disaster recovery site for a replication of its critical data along with virtualised servers and storage in an environmentally controlled complex.

GSAT-15 successfully launched from French Guiana

- ★ GSAT-15, India's latest communications satellite, was launched successfully by the European Ariane 5 VA-227 launch Vehicle on November 11, 2015.
- ★ The 3164 kg GSAT-15 carries communication transponders in Ku-band and a GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation (GAGAN) payload operating in L1 and L5 bands.
- ★ After a flight of 43 minutes and 24 seconds, GSAT-15 separated from the Ariane 5 upper stage in an elliptical Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) with a perigee (nearest point to Earth) of 250 km and an apogee (farthest point to Earth) of 35,819 km, inclined at an angle of 3.9 degree to the equator. The achieved orbit was very close to the intended one.

India to launch communication satellites GSAT-17 and GSAT-18 in 2016, 2017

- ★ India will send two telecommunication satellites – GSAT-17 and GSAT-18 – on Ariane 5 rocket of European space agency Aerospace.
- ★ Arianespace said Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has selected it to launch GSAT-17 and GSAT-18 telecommunication satellites on Ariane 5 rockets from French Guiana in 2016 and 2017.

Zoological Survey of India unravels 778 new fauna species: K Venkataraman

- ★ The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) has identified 778 new species of fauna in the last five years in protected areas in forests, wetlands, deserts and coral reefs in the country.
- ★ The ZSI have identified more than 5,000 fauna species new to scientific world till date. In 2014, the ZSI discovered 24 species of frogs, 23 species of fish and two species of reptiles, which was a major one.

University of Illinois Engineers Develop Method To Make Sea Water Drinkable

- ★ A team of mechanical engineers from University of Illinois has found a new solution for removing salt from sea-water to make it drinkable. This energy efficient material is a nano-meter thick sheet of Molybdenum Disulfide (MoS₂) a material full of tiny holes called nanopores, best suited for the process of desalination.
- ★ The Illinois research team created different models out of various thin-film membranes. Their results showed that MoS₂ has the highest efficiency in that it could filter up to 70% more water than graphene membranes.

NASA to grow flowers in space for first time

- ★ NASA to grow flowers in space for the first time. Flowers could be blooming on the International Space Station (ISS) after the New Year.
- ★ NASA astronaut Kjell Lindgren activated the Veggie plant growth system and its rooting "pillows" containing Zinnia seeds on the space station on November 16.

Tianhe-2: World's powerful Supercomputer for the sixth consecutive time

- ★ China's Tianhe-2 has maintained its rank as the world's most powerful supercomputer for the sixth consecutive time.
- ★ The biannual Top500 list of supercomputers revealed that China's Tianhe-2 supercomputer has retained its position.
- ★ Developed by China's National University of Defense Technology and deployed at the National Supercomputer Center in Guangzhou, Tianhe-2, or Milky Way 2, has a

performance of 33.86 petaflops per second (Pflop/s). It has held the title as the most powerful computer since June 2013.

Russia's newest defence satellite EKS Kosmos-2510 successfully launched

- ★ Russia launched an early warning satellite, deploying the first in a new fleet of military satellites to detect missile launches heading for Russian territory. The secretive payload blasted off aboard a Soyuz rocket from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome, a military facility in northern Russia's Arkhangelsk region.
- ★ The launcher flew in the modernized Soyuz-2.1b configuration with an upgraded third stage engine and a digital flight control system.
- ★ A Fregat upper stage was programmed to fire multiple times to guide the mission's satellite payload, believed to be the first EKS-class missile warning platform, into an elliptical Tundra-type orbit positioned over high latitudes. The defense ministry declared the flight successful in its statement after the launch.

China testing its largest new space rocket: Report

- ★ China is conducting tests on its largest and most powerful rocket, the Long March 5, in Hainan province for its space operations with plans to make the first launch before the end of next year.
- ★ The Long March 5 is the most sophisticated rocket that Chinese designers have developed. The rocket is designed to conduct various missions. Long March 5, the nation's next-generation heavy lift launch system, is nearly 57 metres high, with a diameter of 5 metres. It will be launched at the Wenchang Satellite Launch Centre.

India test-fires supersonic interceptor missile

- ★ India has successfully test-fired an indigenously developed supersonic interceptor missile. It is capable of destroying a hostile ballistic missile, from a test range off the Odisha coast. At around 12.52 hours, the interceptor hit the target missile successfully at an altitude of about 15 kilometres.
- ★ The test was conducted to validate various parameters of the interceptor in flight mode. This is the eighth trial.

Conservative Mauricio Macri wins presidential polls in Argentina

- ★ Conservative Mauricio Macri has been confirmed as the winner in Argentina's presidential elections after his ruling party opponent conceded. With almost all votes counted, Mr Macri led Daniel Scioli by 51.5% to 48.5%.
- ★ Mr Macri's victory is the first in more than a decade for Argentina's centre-right opposition and ends the 12-year rule of the Peronist Party. His victory completes a turnaround for Mr Macri, who is currently mayor of Buenos Aires, after he lost in the first round of voting to Mr Scioli.

Sri Lanka won't allow any country to set up naval base on its territory

- ★ Sri Lankan Government has announced that they would not allow any country to set up naval base on its territory. This announcement was made by Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe while he was speaking at the International Maritime Dialogue at Galle, Sri Lanka.

Nuclear-capable Dhanush missile successfully test fired

- ★ The Navy has successfully test-fired nuclear-capable surface-to surface ballistic missile 'Dhanush' in full operational configuration from a naval warship off the Odisha coast. The trial was conducted from an undisclosed location, nearly 45 km from Puri and Paradip coast.
- ★ The test was carried out by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) of the Navy. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) had conducted a developmental trial of home grown interceptor missile Aswin Air Defence (AAD) from Abdul Kalam Island in Bhadrak district.

Japan successfully launches its first commercial satellite

- ★ A Japanese rocket lifted off and successfully put the national space programme's first commercial satellite into orbit, as Tokyo tries to enter a business dominated by European and Russian companies.
- ★ The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries oversaw the launch from Tanegashima Space Center in southwest Japan. The launch of the H-IIA rocket was delayed by roughly 30 minutes because a small ship unexpectedly came near the space station.

India successfully test-fires nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile

- ★ India on November 26 successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear capable Prithvi-II missile, as part of a user trial by the army. It has a strike range of 350 km.
- ★ The missile test was carried out from a mobile launcher from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur near here at 1210 hrs. The trial data of the missile conducted by the Strategic Force Command (SFC) shows positive results.
- ★ The surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile is capable of carrying 500 kg to 1,000 kg of warheads and is thrust by liquid propulsion twine engines. It uses advanced inertial guidance system with manoeuvring trajectory to hit its target.

Anti-submarine corvette handed over to the Navy

- ★ Kadmatt, the second of the four indigenously built stealth Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) corvette, was formally handed over to the Navy here on November 26 by city based shipyards Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).
- ★ The Corvette which is named after an island in the Lakshwadeep archipelago, has advanced stealth features is likely to be commissioned with the Navy in January.

India successfully test-fires indigenously built Agni-I missile

- ★ India has successfully test-fired indigenously built nuclear-capable Agni-I missile, capable of hitting a target at a distance of 700 kms, from a test range off the Odisha coast as part of Strategic Forces Command (SFC) training exercise.
- ★ The surface-to-surface, single-stage missile, powered by solid propellants, was test-fired from a mobile launcher at 1002 hours from launch pad-4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Abdul Kalam Island (Wheeler Island).

China launches latest Yaogan Weixing satellite via Long March 4C

- ★ China launched another satellite in the military's Yaogan Weixing series via the use of a Long March-4C (Chang Zheng-4C) rocket. The "YG-29" mission began from the LC9 launch complex at the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center (TSLC).

- ★ Yaogan-29 was launched by a Long March-4C launch vehicle. It was reported as the 219th launch of the rocket family known as the Chang Zheng in Chinese.

Gen Next Barak missile defence shield built by Israel and India clears first hurdle

- ★ The next-generation Barak surface-to-air missile (SAM) system, jointly developed by Israeli Aerospace Industries, Rafael and DRDO, was successfully tested for the first time from an Israeli warship against a jet-powered drone on November 27.
- ★ The supersonic Barak-8 missile system, whose interception range has been increased from the earlier 70-km to around 100-km, will be now tested from Indian destroyer INS Kolkata “within a month”. Once the long-range SAM system is fully operational in around two years, all Indian frontline warships will be equipped with this all-weather “defence shield” against incoming enemy fighters, drones, helicopters, missiles and other munitions.

TOPPERS IN REPORTS

India world's 7th most valued 'nation brand': report

- ★ India has moved up one position to become the world's seventh most valued 'nation brand', with an increase of 32 per cent in its brand value to \$2.1 billion.
- ★ The US remains on the top with a valuation of \$19.7 billion, followed by China and Germany at the second and the third positions respectively, as per the annual report on world's most valuable nation brands compiled by Brand Finance.
- ★ The UK is ranked 4th, Japan is at fifth position and France is sixth on the list. While India and France have moved up one position each since 2014, all the top-five countries have retained their respective places.
- ★ However, the surge of 32 per cent in India's 'nation brand value' is the highest among all the top-20 countries on the list.

Singapore ranked first in World's Healthiest Countries

- ★ Singapore has been declared as the world's healthiest country in a recent reports with India securing the 103rd position. The list ranked the countries with the help of the data from the United Nations, the World Bank and the World Health Organisation.
- ★ Singapore receives an overall grade of 89.45%. Italy is in second place with 89.07%, while Australia comes third with 88.33%. The rankings are dominated by Asian and European countries.
- ★ North and South American countries did not feature in the top 20s. Israel was the only Middle Eastern country to make it in the top 10 league. The UK also failed to reach the top 20, ranking at number 21 with a score of 76.84% per cent, behind Belgium, Ireland and Norway.

India ranks 99 on Global Prosperity Index

- ★ India has been ranked 99 out of 142 countries on Global Prosperity Index. The country has climbed three places from last year, but falling behind one spot in a sub-category that measures personal freedom.
- ★ The rankings, produced by a London-based think tank, the Legatum Institute, gauge the prosperity of a nation by combining economic indicators, including gross domestic product, with dozens of other measures of well being, from access to education and health to the living environment for ethnic minorities.

India Has The Highest Population Of Generous People In The World. Still Ranks 106th Among 145 Nations

- ★ India ranks 106th, just behind Brazil, and last among eight countries included from South Asia in the survey.
- ★ The proportion of 'givers' in India fell substantially in 2014 compared to 2013. However, India has more people who help strangers (334 million in 2014), donate money (183 million) and volunteer their time for a good cause (156 million) than any other country.
- ★ This is primarily because of India's large population. The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) World Giving Index, a study based on surveys in 145 countries carried out by Gallup, considers these three criteria while drawing up the list.

India tops content takedown requests from Facebook

- ★ India made the highest number of content restriction requests (15,155) from Facebook in the first six months of this year, according to the social network's Government Requests Report, which it releases biannually.
- ★ India has been the top requestor for content removal requests from Facebook since the past two years. The number of requests in January-June 2015 more than tripled from the previous six months, when India made 5,832 requests.

Amazon debuts in Thomson Reuters 2015 top 100 innovators list

- ★ Online marketplace Amazon.com Inc has made its debut in the 2015 Thomson Reuters Top 100 global innovators list, leaving International Business Machines Corp, the world's largest technology services company, out of the list.
- ★ Amazon joins the innovators list for the first time for innovations in data centers, devices, electronic methods and systems, according to its latest report.
- ★ The Thomson Reuters Top 100 global innovators program identifies innovators annually through an in-depth analysis based on a series of patent-related metrics that analyze what it means to be truly innovative.
- ★ There are 27 companies that are dropped from the list this year, including AT&T, IBM, Siemens and Xerox.

IISc makes Indian debut in top 100 world university ranking

- ★ The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore broke India's poor ranking spell by making a debut in the world's top 100 universities for engineering and technology.
- ★ IISc made its entry at 99th spot in a list that remains dominated by US institutions with Stanford, CalTech and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the top

three positions in the 'Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking for Engineering & Technology'.

- ★ THE has singled out the year as one of Asian progress, with the US holding 31 positions – down from 34 last year – while Asia holds 25 positions in the Top 100, up from 18 last year.

Ajay Banga, Satya Nadella among world's top 50 business leaders: Fortune

- ★ MasterCard's Ajay Banga and Microsoft's Satya Nadella have been named among the top 50 global business leaders by Fortune magazine, a list that is topped by Nike's Mike Parker. Both Banga and Nadella are India-origin CEOs. While global payment solutions provider MasterCard's Banga is ranked at the fifth position, software giant Microsoft's Nadella is placed at the 47th spot.
- ★ Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg is at the second place, followed by Electronic Arts' CEO Andrew Wilson (3), Apple's Tim Cook (4), Ulta Beauty's Mary Dillon (6), Xiaomi's Lei Jun (7), Uber's Travis Kalanick (8), Chipotle's Steve Eells and Montgomery Moran (9) and Biogen's George Scangos (10). All of them are Chief Executive Officers.

GAIL tops among PSUs in Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index

- ★ GAIL emerges highest ranking PSU in Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index. Secures 98 out of maximum 100, an increase of 12 points in one year. GAIL (India) Limited has emerged the highest ranking company among the country's Public Sector Undertakings, and third overall, in the 'Carbon Disclosure Leadership Index (CDLI)' released by Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)-India.

- ★ GAIL, India's premier natural gas company, got a score of 98 out of maximum 100 in CDLI which was released at the Bombay STOCK Exchange. GAIL showed a remarkable increase of 12 points from last year's score which was a result of dedicated efforts of the company to be a responsible corporate especially in the area of climate change.

2 Indian-Americans among richest entrepreneurs under 40

- ★ Two Indian-origin businessmen have been ranked by Forbes magazine among the richest entrepreneurs in America under the age of 40. Vivek Ramaswamy, 30, a former hedge fund manager, has been ranked 33rd on the list with a net worth of USD 500 million and his source of wealth is investments. On the 40th spot is 29-year old Apoorva Mehta, the founder and CEO of Instacart, the web-based grocery delivery service. Her net worth is USD 400 million.

India ranks 4th among world's most vacation-deprived nations

- ★ India is the fourth most vacation-deprived nation globally, with 65 per cent saying they feel very or somewhat vacation-deprived nations, according to a survey. About 65 per cent of Indians feel they feel very or somewhat vacation-deprived, and 20 per cent said they are very vacation-deprived, full service online travel site Expedia's '2015 Vacation Deprivation' survey has revealed.
- ★ UAE topped the list of most vacation-deprived countries in 2015 (76 per cent), followed by Malaysia (73 per cent) and Singapore (71 per cent). If they had more vacation days, most Indians (67 per cent) would travel to new places (rather than favourite or usual ones), it revealed.

RECENT APPS

App to detect breast cancer

- ★ A mobile application is now available for breast cancer awareness and detection.
- ★ Released by Cochin Cancer Society as part of breast cancer awareness month in October, the App called Save Your Mother, 2015 can be downloaded from both android platform as well as the Apple I Store.
- ★ Developed by Thinkpalm Technologies Pvt Ltd, based in Infopark, Kakkanad, the App focuses on the disease as preventable and curable.
- ★ Registering for the App will give information about real-time happenings for people in the district about breast cancer awareness camps, early detection camps and training camps for students conducted by the Cancer Society.
- ★ The idea to train students is that they will help their mothers and others in the family who could be at risk.

CISF launches mobile app for jawans

- ★ CISF has launched a new mobile application, 'm-Power', for its soliders.
- ★ It will enable them to check their pay-related queries and register grievances. An extended technology facility of the existing computer system facility for these men and women who guard some of the most vital installations in the country's civil aviation, aerospace and nuclear power domain.

New smartphone app to help cardiac arrest victims

- ★ Japanese researchers have developed a new smartphone app that alerts rescuers with lifesaving automated external defibrillator (AEDs) when an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest occurs nearby.
- ★ The earlier bystanders can deliver shocks with an automated external defibrillator (AED) to people who have cardiac arrest outside the hospital, the better their chances are for survival.

SBI to launch mobile wallet "Batua" for feature phone users next month

- ★ Country's largest lender State Bank Of India is all set to become the first bank to offer wallet services for feature phone users.
- ★ SBI is set to launch mobile wallet "Batua" next month and the service will be available to existing as well as non-SBI customers. The application will be available on Java-enabled mobile phones.
- ★ Post-launch customers can log into sbi.co.in download "Batua" on their desktop and load the app on their phone.
- ★ The bank has been ramping up its efforts to become the banker to Digital India. It has an annual IT budget of Rs 3,000 crore, a 20%MARKET share, a customer base of 28.6 crore, of which 2.3 crore are net banking customers and 1.2 crore are mobile banking customers.

Mobile App For Tax Payers

- ★ The Income Tax Department is developing a mobile app for taxpayers to help them file their returns. Online tax-filing company, ClearTax.in is targeting the professional CAs with the first-ever mobile tax-filing app for the Chartered Accountants (CAs).
- ★ The cloud-based app will help CAs check the filing status of their clients at anytime and from anywhere. Like their retail product, this app will also come with features like automatic selection of the correct ITR form.
- ★ The software will also import the TDS, TCSBSE 1.81 %, Self paid tax entries directly from the form 26 AS, thereby eliminating any manual data entry.

Swachh Delhi Abhiyan launched in Delhi

- ★ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has launched 'Swachh Delhi' app enabling residents to apprise authorities with pics of garbage, and announced 'Swachh Delhi Abhiyan' from November 22 to 30.
- ★ Union Minister Venkaiah Naidu along with Kejriwal will inaugurate the 'Swachh Delhi Abhiyan', a cleanliness drive, a joint initiative of the central government, Delhi government and all three municipal corporations of the city, on November 22.

PANELS' AND COMMITTEES'

MHRD constituted TSR Subramanian committee to draft New Education Policy

- ★ Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) on 31 October 2015 constituted a drafting committee to frame the New Education Policy (NEP).
- ★ It will be headed by former Cabinet Secretary TSR Subramanian and will have four members-
 - Shailaja Chandra, former Chief Secretary, NCT of Delhi
 - Sewaram Sharma, former Home Secretary, NCT of Delhi
 - Sudhir Mankad, former Chief Secretary of Gujarat
 - JS Rajput, former Director, NCERT

UNGA Disarmament Committee adopts draft resolution backing abolition of nuclear arms

- ★ The United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) Disarmament Committee has adopted a draft resolution submitted by Japan calling for the abolition of nuclear arms.
- ★ The resolution was adopted by 156 member countries, while 17 abstaining and 3 voting against it including China and Russia.
- ★ But it failed to secure endorsement US, Britain, France and other key powers as they abstained from voting despite supporting it.

Don't Be The Same. Be Better.

Government extends tenure of Lahiri Panel by one year

- ★ Government has extended by one year the tenure of a high level committee set up under former Chief Economic Advisor Ashok Lahiri to suggest steps to sort out taxation problem being faced by the trade and industry.
- ★ The panel was given the task of interacting with the industry on tax related issues on regular basis and ascertain areas where clarity in tax laws is required.

Govt appoints panel to probe DDCA irregularities

- ★ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on 12 November, appointed a three-member panel to probe into the financial irregularities of the Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA). This is to follow up on the Delhi Police and CBI's registered cases against the wrongdoings of the DDCA.
- ★ The committee, headed by Principal Secretary of Vigilance Department Chetan Sanghi, has been asked to examine complaints of financial fraud and structural irregularities in DDCA among others. The probe committee comprises secretary in the sports department Punya Salila Srivastava and Delhi governments senior Standing Counsel member Rahul Mehra.

Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace' to propose solutions to conflicts

- ★ Fifteen countries, the United Nations and an Indian think-tank have come together to create a Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace.
- ★ The panel was mandated to prepare a global architecture to prevent water wars, to use water as an instrument of peace and cooperation and to engage world leaders at a time when water resources were depleting at a fast pace

RESIGNATIONS AND RETIREMENTS

IPL's Sundar Raman quits ahead of Lodha hearing

- ★ Sundar Raman, the IPL's chief operating officer, has resigned from his position. Raman had been associated with the IPL since its inception; he had been the right-hand man of Lalit Modi and, after his removal in 2010, worked closely with N Srinivasan.
- ★ Raman – whose resignation was confirmed by IPL chairman Rajiv Shukla – put in his papers during a meeting with BCCI president Shashank Manohar in Nagpur.

Pakistani Cricketer Shoaib Malik announces retirement from Test Cricket

- ★ Veteran Pakistani cricketer Shoaib Malik, who made a spectacular comeback into the Pakistani Test squad after five years, has announced retirement from the longest format of the game.
- ★ The 33-year-old said that he wanted to vacate the place for youngsters who are ready to fill in his shoes. Malik added that he wanted to focus more on ODIs and is willing to play the 2019 World Cup.

Pakistan veteran Younis Khan retires from ODI cricket

- ★ Pakistan veteran Younis Khan will retire from one-day internationals after Wednesday's (November 11th 2015) match with England.
- ★ The match against England will be the 37-year-old's 265th and final match in the format and will bring to an end a 15-year ODI career. Younus, who made his debut against Sri Lanka in February 2000, scored 7,240 runs from his 264 ODI matches, with seven centuries and 48 half-centuries.
- ★ Since March 2013, Younis has been picked for only 11 ODIs, putting a big question mark on his future in the 50-over format.

SPORTS

Name of the Winner	Name of the Title	Venue/Other Points
Nico Rosberg	Mexican Grand Prix	It is back in Mexico for the first time since 1992.
1. Michael Kueffer 2. Yuki Sato	Paragliding World Cup	1. He is a Swiss pilot 2. From Japan
Dan Carter	World Rugby player of the year	He is from New Zealand
Sania Mirza and Martina Hingis	WTA Finals women's doubles trophy.	Lifted their ninth title, beating the Spanish pair of Garbine Muguruza and Carla Suarez Navarro
New Zealand	Rugby World Cup	For a record 3 rd time
Mana Patel and Viradhawal Khade	Best swimmers' award	In 69 th senior National Aquatic Championship
Michelle Payne	Australia's 154-year-old Melbourne Cup	She is the first female to win the cup
Heena Sidhu	Won gold medal in 10 metre Air Pistol	In 13 th Asian Shooting Championships held in Kuwait
Army	25 th All India G V Mavalankar Shooting Championship	Won 10 Gold medals
32 nd Indian Oil Servo Surjit Hockey Tournament	Indian Railways	Defeated the defending champions Indian Oil Corporation of Mumbai
Novak Djokovic	World No. 1 in ATP World Tour Finals	He defeated Japan's Kei Nishikori
Swede Kristoffer Broberg	European Tour title	At the BMW Masters in Shanghai
Nico Rosberg	Brazilian Grand Prix	With this sealed his place as runner-up in this year's Formula One world championship
Saina Nehwal	Won silver medal at 2015 China Open Super series.	She lost to sixth placed Xuerui Li from China

Indian shuttler Siril Verma	Won silver medal at the BWF World Junior Championships	After a defeat against Chinese Taipei's Chia Hung Lu in Lima
Indian cyclists	Track Asia Cup at the IG Stadium Complex Velodrome	Won five medals — one gold, three silver and one bronze
Srishti Pandey	All India FIDE Rating Chess tournament	At Dr Hedgewar Smarak Samiti Hall, Reshimbagh, Nagpur
Aditi Chauhan	Woman in Football Award	At the third Asian Football Awards in London
Rory McIlroy	World Tour Championship	In Dubai
India's junior men's hockey team	Asia Cup Hockey 2015	Beat arch-rivals Pakistan to lift its 8th edition.
Novak Djokovic	Barclays ATP World Tour Finals title	Defeated Roger Federer
PV Sindhu	Macau Open Grand Prix Gold	Defeated Japan's Minatsu Mitani
Tyson Fury of Britain	World Heavyweight Champion	Defeated Wladimir Klitschko of Ukraine
Nico Rosberg	Abu Dhabi Grand Prix	Rosberg is Mercedes Driver
Andy Murray	Davis Cup for Great Britain	

SPORTS RELATED

Esteban Gutierrez named 2nd driver for Haas F1 in 2016

- ★ Mexican driver Esteban Gutierrez has been named as the second driver for Haas F1 when the American-led team join the grid in 2016.
- ★ Gutierrez is currently a reserve driver with Ferrari and will join Frenchman Romain Grosjean to give Haas an experienced lineup for its debut.
- ★ Grosjean is moving to Haas after four years with Lotus and 80 grand prix starts. Gutierrez drove for Sauber in 2013-2014 and has 38 career starts.

Lahiri finishes 21st at CIMB Classic in final round

- ★ Anirban Lahiri did not quite manage the kind of a finish he was looking for at the CIMB Classic as he closed the week with two-under 70 and ended tied 21st.
- ★ But the USD 78,400 he took home from the USD 7 Million event, ensured that he was almost home in his race to win the Asian Tour's Order of Merit.
- ★ India's other entrant in the event, SSP Chawrasia had his first under-par round at 71 and with a total of three-over 291 he was 73rd.

India goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu set for Europa tryst

- ★ Goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu has added another feather to his cap by ensuring that he would be the first from his country to be part of a team scheduled to play in the Europa League next season.

- ★ Eight months ago he created history by becoming the first Indian footballer to play for a first division European club. Sandhu, who has played 20 odd reserve team matches for Stabaek besides the maiden first team Cup game, is obviously very excited about soaking in the Europa experience.

Inzamam to be Afghanistan coach for 2 years

- ★ Inzamam ul Haq, the former Pakistan captain, has been roped in as the Afghanistan coach for a two-year period.
- ★ Inzamam had agreed to be the batting consultant for the Asian side during the recent tour of Zimbabwe. Kabir Khan, the former coach of the Afghanistan team who is a national selector in Pakistan, said Inzamam had agreed to sign a proper two-year coaching contract with Afghanistan Cricket Board.

Boxer Shiva Thapa attains Number Two spot in World Rankings

- ★ Shiva Thapa became the highest-ranked Indian boxer, zooming to second in the latest international rankings after winning a bronze medal at last month's World championships in Doha.
- ★ Shiva was placed second with 1550 points in the 56kg category, up five places from the previous list. The top spot was occupied by Irishman Michael Conlan (2150 points), who won the Gold medal at the World Championships.
- ★ The 22-year-old Shiva became only the third Indian ever to clinch a medal at the showpiece event after Vijender Singh (2009, bronze) and Vikas Krishan (2011, bronze).

Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin became fastest Indian to reach 150 test wickets

- ★ Off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin on 6 November 2015 became the fastest Indian to reach 150 wickets mark in the Indian test cricket history.
- ★ He achieved this feat when he took Imran Tahir's wicket in the first innings of the first test against South Africa in Mohali, Punjab.
- ★ In this match, Ashwin also became the first bowler in over 100 years to take 50 wickets after opening the bowling. He achieved this feat in 12 matches off 1888 balls.

Jaffer becomes first to score 10000 runs in Ranji

- ★ Vidarbha opener Wasim Jaffer became the first cricketer in Ranji Trophy history to notch up 10000 runs on day two of their Group A match against Bengal at the Jadavpur University second campus ground in Saltlake.
- ★ Having made his debut for Mumbai in 1996-97, Jaffer needed eight runs to reach the milestone, which he got with an elegant drive to long off boundary against Bengal seamer Veer Pratap in the penultimate delivery of eighth over.

Former BCCI chief N Srinivasan sacked as ICC chairman

- ★ N Srinivasan has been dethroned as the ICC Chairman after the BCCI decided to recall him and nominate its recently-elected President Shashank Manohar as the chief of the world body.
- ★ The decision to remove Srinivasan was taken at the BCCI's 86th Annual General Meeting in Mumbai, virtually signalling the end of his hold on Indian cricket.
- ★ The tenure of Srinivasan, who took over in June last year, was to end next year in the same month and the remainder of the term would be completed by Manohar as it is India's turn to hold the top position.
- ★ In case, Manohar cannot attend the ICC meetings, Sharad Pawar will be India's representative.

160.4 Kph: Starc bowls Tests' fastest

- ★ Australian paceman Mitchell Starc joined an exclusive club with a sizzling delivery on the third day of the second Test against New Zealand at the WACA Ground in Perth. The fourth ball of his 21st over was clocked at 160.4 kilometres per hour (99.7 mph).
- ★ Only four other fast bowlers have officially been recorded to have bowled at more than 160 kilometres per hour.
- ★ Pakistan's Shoaib Akhtar holds the record with a 161.3 kilometres per hour thunderbolt against England at Newlands in 2003.

Cricketer Mitchell Johnson retires from internationals

- ★ Australian fast bowler Mitchell Johnson is to retire from all forms of international cricket.
- ★ The 34-year-old will bow out at the end of the current Test against New Zealand.
- ★ He is Australia's fourth-highest Test wicket-taker, with 311 in 73 matches, and also took 239 one-day wickets.
- ★ Johnson was given a guard of honour by the New Zealand fielders and an ovation from the crowd as he emerged for his last Test innings shortly before lunch on the final day in Perth.
- ★ Johnson had a good record against England, with 87 wickets in 19 Tests at an average of 25.81.

Usain Bolt up for World Athlete of Year award

- ★ The International Association of Athletics Federations announced Usain Bolt, Ashton Eaton and Christian Taylor are the finalists for the 2015 World Athlete of the Year award.
- ★ The Jamaican sprinter Bolt retained his 100m, 200m and 4x100m titles at the world championships in Beijing in August.
- ★ The 29-year-old brushed off the challenge of American rival Justin Gatlin to win the 100 in 9.79sec and clocked a world-leading time of 19.55 to secure the 200.

Jos Buttler’s fastest ton steers England to series win

- ★ Jos Buttler hit England’s fastest one-day international century to lead them to an 84-run win over Pakistan in Sharjah and a 3-1 series victory.
- ★ Buttler reached three figures in 46 balls, beating the 61-ball hundred he made against Sri Lanka in May 2014.
- ★ The wicketkeeper hit 10 fours and eight sixes in his 116 not out from 52 balls as England posted 355-5. Pakistan briefly threatened a thrilling chase, but were bowled out for 271, with Moeen Ali taking 3-53.

Pankaj Advani the Unstoppable – Fifteen world titles and counting

- ★ India’s most successful cueist Pankaj Advani added another feather in his cap by winning the IBSF World Snooker Championship after battling past his Chinese opponent Zhua Xintong in the final to take his world title count to 15. Advani, 30,
- ★ once again mesmerised the green baize to prevail over the teenage sensation 8-6 in the best-of-15 final at Sunrise Crystal Bay resort.

Milkha Singh flags off ‘Hyderabad 10K Run’

- ★ ‘Flying Sikh’ Milkha Singh today flagged off the 13 edition of the ‘Hyderabad 10K Run’ in which around 10,000 enthusiasts participated, displaying their willingness to run for a cause.
- ★ Addressing sports enthusiasts from the city who gathered in thousands, the legendary athlete cited examples of US President Barack Obama, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and himself when it came to working hard with commitment and will power.

Andy Murray wins the Davis Cup for Great Britain

- ★ Great Britain have won the Davis Cup for the first time since 1936 after Andy Murray beat Belgium’s David Goffin to clinch the decisive point in Ghent. Murray won 6-3 7-5 6-3 to give the visitors an unassailable 3-1 lead in the best-of-five tie.
- ★ Britain have now won the team title 10 times, while Murray adds the Davis Cup to his other major titles at Wimbledon, the US Open and the Olympic Games. Captain Leon Smith guided Britain from the third tier to glory in five years.

OBITUARIES

Name of the Person	Associated Field
Brijmohan Lall Munjal	Founder of Hero MotoCorp
Fred Thompson	Former US senator and film actor
Guenter Schabowski	Berlin Wall blunderer
Hashim Abdul Halim	Former West Bengal Assembly Speaker
VN Misra	Archaeologist and pre-historian
Al Molinaro	American Actor
Gurcharan Chabbra	Former Janata Dal MLA
Colin Welland	Oscar-winning writer and actor
Rene Girard	French intellectual

Choudhry Harpal Singh	Former general secretary of Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU)
Om Prakash Mehra	Former chief of Air Staff
Allen Toussaint	American musician
Kamala Laxman	A noted writer of children's books
Saeed Jaffrey	Indian actor and Bollywood veteran
Ashok Singhal	Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader
Pithukuli Murugadas	Noted Tamil devotional singer
Jonah Lomu	Rugby great a pioneering global superstar
Dr. Satya Paul	Famous neurosurgeon and Secretary General of Indian Red Cross Society
K. Shankaran Nair	Former chief of India's external intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
P Vijay Kumar	Senior Tata Football Academy coach and former international footballer
RK Trivedi	Former Gujarat Governor
Madhav Chari	India's leading Jazz pianists
Dr. TS Papola	Labour economist
Surendra Upadhyay	Noted litterateur and former chairman of Rajasthan Brijbhasha Academy
David Canary	Veteran soap actor
Khekiho Zhimomi	Rajya Sabha MP
Noboru Karashima	Scholar and historian of South Asia
Joe Marston	Australian Football Icon

OBSERVED DAYS IN NOVEMBER 2015

Date	Day Observed	Theme of the Day
November 1	World Vegan Day	
November 2	International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists	
November 6	World Science Day for Peace and Development	Science for a Sustainable Future
November 13	World Kindness Day	
November 14	World Diabetes Day	Healthy Living and Diabetes
November 16	International Day of Tolerance	
November 19	World Toilet Day (WTD)	Nutrition and Sanitation
November 19 (Third Thursday in November)	World Philosophy Day	Plurality of Languages and Places of Philosophy
November 20	Africa Industrialization Day	Small and Medium Enterprises for Poverty Eradication and Job Creation for Women and Youth
November 20	Universal Children's Day	
November 21	World Television Day	

November 25	International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women	
November 26	National Milk Day	
November 26	Constitution Day	
November 29	International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People	

WHO launched World Antibiotic Awareness Week with the theme Antibiotics: handle with care

- ★ The World Health Organisation (WHO) has launched the World Antibiotic Awareness Week with the theme Antibiotics: handle with care. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness and encourage best practices among the public, policymakers, health and agriculture professionals to avoid the further emergence and spread of antibiotic resistance.

THANK YOU 😊 😊 😊

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