

## CURRENT AFFAIRS PDF – MAY 2016

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### AWARDS AND HONORS

NAME OF THE AWARD	AWARD WINNER	KEY POINTS TO NOTE
Edgar A Poe award	Neela Banerjee	An Indian-American journalist has been felicitated by US President Barack Obama and the First Lady Michelle.. She covered global energy, the Iraq War and other issues with The New York Times.
Fellow of The Royal Society	Physicist Sriram Ramaswamy,	His name appeared on the list of 50 new fellows and 10 new Foreign Members announced by the Royal Society
Parashar Kulkarni	Commonwealth Short Story Regional Prize 2016	He is a Social Science professor from India
Indian American Elementary Teacher Revathi Balakrishnan	“State Teachers Of The Year”	He Was Honored By President Barack Obama At The White House.
Dr. Manvendra K Singh	Sgd 3 Mn Grant From Singapore’s Nrf	To Research In Congenital And Adult Cardiovascular Diseases
Indian American Syamantak Payra Wins	\$50k Intel Foundation Young Scientist Award	The Award Was Given By Intel Corporation And The Society For Science And The Public (Ssp) At The 2016‘Intel International Science And Engineering Fair’ In Arizona Last Week.
Indian Artist Anjali Chandrashekar	Un Poster Contest On N-Disarmament	A Un Poster Competition Aimed At Raising Awareness About Nuclear Disarmament

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Indian American Syamantak Payra Wins	\$50k Intel Foundation Young Scientist Award	The Award Was Given By Intel Corporation And The Society For Science And The Public (SSP).
Indian Artist Anjali Chandrashekar	Un Poster Contest On N-Disarmament	A Un Poster Competition Aimed At Raising Awareness About Nuclear Disarmament
Indian-American Rakesh K Jain	Indian-American Rakesh K Jain	He Is A Professor Of Tumor Biology At Massachusetts General Hospital In The Harvard Medical School
Former Isro Chairman Prof Ur Rao	'Hall Of Fame' Award	He Award By The International Astronautical Federation (Iaf)
South Korean Author Han Kang	Man Booker International Prize 2016	She Awarded For Her Book" The Vegetarian." "
IIT Student Nandini Bhandaru	Young Scientist Award	A Doctoral Researcher At Iit-Kharagpur Has Bagged The European Materials Research Society's (E-Mrs's) Young Scientist Award For Contribution To Materials Science.
Constable Shubhakaran Yadav, Rifleman Manish Malik, Havildar Amal Deka, Naik Rakesh Kumar & Gagan Punjabi.	Dag Hammarskjold Medal	U.N. Medal Awarded Posthumously For Their Courage And Sacrifice.
Othmer Gold Medal	Mukesh Ambani	Mukesh Amban is Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Chairman and Managing Director

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Harvard Business School alumni achievement award.	Sunil Mittal	Sunil Mittal is the Barti Enterprises chairman
Millennium Technology Prize	Frances Arnold	An American innovator has become the first woman to win a USD 1.2 million technology prize in Finland
National Geographic Bee championship	Rishi Nair	Indian-American students have secured the top three spots in this year
million Special Breakthrough Prize	LIGO Scientific Collaboration	Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO), Founded by a group of Silicon Valley entrepreneurs
World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) 2016 prize	Andhra Pradesh Harita-Priya Agriculture Project wins	For e-Agriculture category
Japan's Fukuoka prize 2016	AR Rahman	The Fukuoka Prize is an award established to honour the outstanding work of individuals or organizations in preserving or creating Asian culture
Ceat T20 Player of the Year	Virat Kohli	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
Lifetime Achievement Award	Dilip Vengsarkar	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
International Cricketer of the Year	Joe Root	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
International Batsman of the Year	Joe Root	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016

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International Bowler of the Year	Ravichandran Ashwin	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
Test Cricketer of the Year	Kane Williamson	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
ODI Cricketer of the Year	Martin Gupthill	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
T20 Player of the Year	Virat Kohli	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
Indian Cricketer of the Year	Rohit Sharma	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
Domestic Cricketer of the Year	Shreyas Iyer	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
Young Player of the Year	Rishabh Pant	CEAT Cricket Awards 2016
'India Biodiversity Award 2016	Pakke Tiger Reserve, Arunachal Pradesh	The prize under the category, "conservation of threatened species".
Harvard Business School alumni achievement award	Sunil Mittal	Sunil Bharti Mittal is an Indian telecom tycoon, entrepreneur and philanthropist

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### APPOINTMENTS

NAME OF THE PERSON	DEPARTMENT /POST
Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba	Chief of the Naval Staff
Harmeet Kaur Dhillon	A key position in the Republican party
Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba	Chief of the Naval Staff
Kumar Rajesh Chandra	Chief of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS)
Atma Ram Nadkarni	Additional Solicitor General
Mrugank Paranjape	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX)
Shashank Manohar	ICC's first independent chairman
Anil Kumble	Re-appointed ICC Cricket Committee chairman
Fatma Samba Diouf Samoura	United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative
Dr. Radha Binod Barman	Chairperson of the National Statistical Commission
Philip Abraham	Deputy Mayor in UK
Ratan P Watal	Niti Aayog's Principal Adviser
Anurag Thakur	BCCI President
Kiran Bedi	Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry
SK Sharma	CMD of Nuclear Power Corporation of India
Lt General S K Saini	Commandant of Indian Military Academy
Rakesh Kumar Mishra	Director of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology
Jose Mourinho	Manager of Manchester United

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Mary Robinson of Ireland Macharia Kamau of Kenya	Special Envoys on El Niño and Climate
Fatma Samba Diouf Samoura	First female secretary general of FIFA Council
Shashank Manohar	ICC's first independent Chairman
Atma Ram Nadkarni	Additional Solicitor General
Harmeet Kaur Dhillon	Elected to as a key position in the Republican Party

### ***BANKING AND FINANCE***

#### **Islamic banking to debut in Gujarat**

Jeddah-based **Islamic Development Bank (IDB)** is set to start its India operations from **Gujarat**. The international financial institution from Saudi Arabia has chosen Gujarat to set up its first branch in India. The state will also get 30 medical vans as part of IDB's social sector initiatives. IDB's main objective is to foster the economic development and social progress of member countries as well as the Muslim community in accordance with principles of Shariah (Islamic law). The bank has 56 Islamic countries as its members.

#### **India's growth to rise to 8 percent in FY2019: Fitch**

**India's** economic growth rate will slowly accelerate to **8%** by fiscal year ending March 2019, driven by the gradual implementation of structural reforms, higher disposable income and improvement in economic activity, global rating agency **Fitch**. Fitch expects India's GDP to grow 7.5% in fiscal year ending March 2016 and improve to 7.7% in the current fiscal year and further to 7.9% in the fiscal year ending March 2018.

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### **World Bank Group launched Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility**

The **World Bank Group** has launched the much anticipated **Pandemic Emergency Finance Facility (PEF)** — a new financing mechanism to quickly mobilise funds to tackle global disease outbreaks and create a new insurance market for pandemic risk. PEF is expected to bring the much needed coordination and speed for future global disease outbreak response efforts. The PEF facility launch announcement came few days ahead of the May 26-27 Summit of Group of Seven Leaders in Ise-Shima, Japan.

### **Sebi tightens P-note norms to keep vigil on foreign investments**

Tightening its norms to check any misuse of participatory notes (P-Notes) for laundering of black money, the **Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi)** has made it mandatory for users of these controversy-ridden overseas instruments to follow Indian anti-money laundering law and report any suspicious transactions immediately. Acting upon recommendations of the Supreme Court- appointed Special Investigation Team on black money, Sebi also tightened the due-diligence requirements for issuance and transfer of these instruments and put the onus on the original issuer for compliance to Anti-Money Laundering Regulations

### **GOI Constitute NK Singh Committee to review FRBM Act**

A new committee, led by former Member of Parliament and revenue and expenditure secretary **NK Singh**, will now review the **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act**, and suggest a future road map. The other members of the panel are Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor Urjit Patel, Chief Economic Advisor Arvind Subramanian, former finance secretary Sumit Bose, and Rathin Roy, the director of National Institute of Public Finance and Policy and a Business Standard columnist.

### **SBI seeks to take over 5 associate PSBs, Bhartiya Mahila Bank**

Top state-run lender **SBI** has proposed merger of its five associate banks and newly created Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) with itself and sought government's approval for the same — a major bid to consolidate the public sector banking space.



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SBI is seeking “in principle sanction” of the Central Government to enter into negotiation with the subsidiary banks (**State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore**) and **Bharatiya Mahila Bank Limited** to acquire their businesses, including assets and liabilities.

### **HDFC Bank launches SmartUp for start-ups**

**HDFC Bank Ltd** has launched **SmartUp**, a first-of-its-kind dedicated solution for start-ups in **Kolkata**. SmartUp is HDFC Bank's tailored solution to meet all the banking requirements of start-ups, and offers banking and payment solutions, along with advisory and forex services.

Launched in association with Nasscom, an IT and BPO industry body which is running the 10,000 Start-ups initiative, this solution is aimed at scaling up the start-up ecosystem in the country. This initiative is part of a larger effort by HDFC Bank to create an ecosystem to nurture the spirit of innovation and enterprise in the start-up space.

### **World Bank approves 625 Million USD for Rooftop Solar Program in India**

The **World Bank's Board** has approved \$625 million loan to support India's grid connected **rooftop solar programme** to generate clean energy. The Board also approved a co-financing loan of \$120 million on concessional terms and a \$5 million grant from **Climate Investment Fund's (CIF) Clean Technology Fund**. The project will finance the installation of at least 400 MW of **grid connected rooftop solar photovoltaic (GRPV)** across India. These solar PV installations will provide clean, renewable energy, and reduce GHG emissions by displacing thermal generation.

### **SBI seizes Goa villa of Vijay Mallya**

The government-owned **State Bank of India (SBI)** has seized a **villa** of debt-strapped liquor baron **Vijay Mallya** in **Panaji, Goa**. Mallya flew to **London** in March, under pressure from bankers seeking to recover about Rs 9000 cr owed by his collapsed Kingfisher Airline. The district magistrate gave an order in favour of banks to take physical possession of the **Rs 90 cr Kingfisher Villa** in Panaji town, which was venue of many famous parties hosted by him.

### India's GDP likely to expand by 7.7% in FY17: NCAER

Economic think-tank **NCAER** has projected India's economic growth rate to improve marginally to **7.7%** in 2016-17 against the backdrop of IMD's forecast of better monsoon rains this year. The agriculture sector has witnessed feeble growth on account of drought for two successive years. The average rate of growth in the agricultural and allied sectors' GDP for 2014-15 and 2015-16 has been a low 0.5%. **Two consecutive years** of sub-par monsoon have had a significant impact on the output of both food as well as non-food crops.

### ICICI Bank launches country's first contactless credit card for SMEs

**ICICI Bank** has launched the country's first **contactless business credit card** in association with **Jet Airways** for small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their employees. Christened '**Jet Airways ICICI Bank Business Advantage Card**', India's largest private sector bank said this co-branded credit card will help customers to save on their business expenses.

### Wilful defaulters' list to be made public :RBI

Reserve Bank Governor **Raghuram Rajan** said the central bank is working on a new system for making public the list of **wilful defaulters** and new mechanism for out-of-court settlement of bad loan-related disputes. The central bank was in favour of protecting privacy in cases where there is no wrongdoing, he said, adding a blanket edict that everybody's name should be made public on the website might not be desirable. He further said it might not be correct to flash the name of all and sundry, including those who forgot to pay their credit bills.

### IREDA may be converted into a Green Bank

State-run **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)** might be converted into a Green Bank to enable it to access funding from overseas banks. With IREDA conversion into **Green Bank**, it would be entitled to avail of certain benefits, which the agency is currently deprived of and the proposal is being well supported by the Union Power Ministry. A green bank provides low-cost financing support to clean and low-carbon projects.

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### India ratifies trade pact of WTO

The Government has ratified the **Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)** of the **WTO** and the pact aims to expedite the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit. India has ratified the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of the World Trade Agreement (WTO) and the instrument of Acceptance for Trade Facilitation Agreement was handed over to WTO Director-General by India on April 22. The pact will come into force once two-thirds of WTO members have completed their domestic rectification process.

### IMF retains India growth forecast at 7.5 pc

The **International Monetary Fund** has retained its growth forecast for **India** this year at **7.5 per cent**, largely driven by private consumption even as weak exports and sluggish credit growth weigh on the economy. India's growth momentum is expected to be underpinned by private consumption, which has benefited from lower energy prices and higher real incomes.

In its latest Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and the Pacific, IMF said weak exports and sluggish credit growth (stemming from weaknesses in corporate sector and public sector banks' balance sheets) will weigh on the economy. India remains on a strong recovery path, with GDP growth reaching 7.3 per cent in 2015, the Fund said adding that "India's growth is projected to strengthen to 7.5 per cent in 2016 and 2017."

### India rated 9th in FDI Confidence Index

**India** has secured **ninth position** in the 2016 **Foreign Direct Investment Confidence Index**. The ranking has been released by a global management consulting firm named AT Kearney. The firm has underlined that the country is "finally" embarking on a growth path that will see it "unlock its full potential". India jumped two places to rank number 9 in this year's **AT Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index**.

**India** has emerged as the fastest growing economy in the world, surpassing China as well as Brazil, Russia and South Africa, the other members of **BRICS**. The Index of a London-based consulting firm is a forward-looking analysis of how political, economic, and regulatory changes will likely affect FDI inflows into countries in the coming years. The Index is constructed using

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primary data from a proprietary survey administered to senior executives of the world's leading corporations.

### **YES Bank gets SEBI nod to provide custodial services**

Private sector lender **Yes Bank** has received in-principle nod from markets regulator **Sebi** to act as **custodian of securities**. The bank has been given a year's time to establish the business by developing the operational, tech and human capital capabilities. Once it receives the final nod, it can offer custodial services to financial market participants, including foreign portfolio investors, which would help its fee-based income.

### **SBI launches mobile-based payment solution mVisa**

Country's biggest lender **State Bank of India** has announced the launch of **mVisa**, a mobile-based payment solution. The service will help customers make payments through their smartphones by simply scanning the unique merchant QR (Quick Response) code at merchant outlets.

- The mVisa is a card-less solution which facilitates payment by scanning the QR code displayed at the merchant outlet or from the merchants mobile.
- SBI customers (Debit Card holders and Internet Banking customers, having transaction rights) can now make easy payments to the merchants by simply scanning QR code image.
- This eliminates the need to swipe the physical card at a point-of-sale (PoS) machine.

### **ICICI Bank signs MoU with BRICS Grouping-promoted New Development Bank**

Private sector lender **ICICI Bank** became the first financial institution in the country to tie up with the **BRICS** Grouping-promoted **New Development Bank (NDB)** for a partnership in bond issuances, co-financing, treasury management and human resources. As part of the pact, the two lenders — NDBs first president is ICICI Bank veteran **KV Kamath** — will look at each other as "preferred partners".

ICICI Bank and NDB will also leverage a mutually beneficial partnership in other areas such as treasury risk management, account and cash management services and human resource development.

### INDIAN AFFAIRS

#### **PM launches Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana**

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** at **Ballia**. The scheme aims to provide cooking gas connections to five crore below-poverty-line beneficiaries over the next three years. Noting that May 1st is observed as Labour Day, the Prime Minister said that in this century, the aim of all workers across the world should be to unite the world.

#### **Andhra Pradesh CM launched Chandranna Bima Yojana**

**Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu** has launched **Chandranna Bima Yojana** in **Vijayawada**. The Yojna launched on the occasion of May Day is an insurance scheme for the working class people. The state government scheme will cover about 1.5 crore workers of the state. Under the scheme any insured worker who meets an accidental death and permanent disability will be paid 5 lakh rupees. That worker who suffers partial disability will be paid a sum of 3 lakh rupees.

#### **India's Kalvari stealth submarine starts sea trials**

'**Kalvari**' (Tiger Shark), the first of the six **French Scorpene** class submarines being built at the **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd** for the Indian navy, went to sea for the first time. The submarine sailed out at about 10 am under her own propulsion for her first sea trial, off the Mumbai coast. During the sortie, a number of number of preliminary tests on the propulsion system, auxiliary equipment and systems, navigation aids, communication equipment and steering gear were performed, the official said, adding various standard operating procedures were also validated.

#### **Supreme Court banned all diesel cabs in NCR-Delhi from May 1**

The **Supreme Court of India** has decided against extending the deadline for phasing out diesel cabs in **National Capital Region (NCR)**. It ordered the diesel cabs to go off the roads from 1 May 2016. The earlier deadline for phasing out diesel cabs was 1 April 2016, but it was extended for a month. The earlier extension was given so that private cab aggregators could switch

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to **compressed natural gas** (CNG) vehicles by 1 May 2016. However, the Supreme Court allowed Delhi Police and Delhi Jal Board to buy and register the new diesel-run vehicles of 2000 cc engine capacity and above for transportation of undertrial prisoners, arms and ammunition and supply of water. It had stopped sale of diesel SUVs and luxury cars with more than 2000 cc engine capacity in the national capital in 2015.

### SC appointed RM Lodha-panel to reform Medical Council of India

After fixing the country's cricket board, former Chief Justice of India **RM Lodha** gets the responsibility to reform the **Medical Council of India (MCI)**, which the **Supreme Court** described as **unprofessional**. The top court appointed a three-member panel headed by Lodha to oversee how the regulator of medical profession and education in India functions. Besides Lodha, the panel has former CAG Vinod Rai and Dr SK Sareen.

### Railways ink MoU with Haryana and Punjab to plant trees

The **Union Ministry of Railways and Forest Department** of **Haryana & Punjab** have signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for plantation of trees alongside Railway Track on Railway Land Boundary. The MoU paves way for planting around 5 lakh trees alongside Railway Track on Railway Land Boundary prior to Monsoon Season.

### Mines And Minerals Bill Passed By Parliament

The **Rajya Sabha** has approved an enabling legislation to make it easier for **mergers and acquisitions** (M&A) of steel and cement companies reeling in the aftermath of the collapse in global commodity prices. Since **Lok Sabha** has already approved the proposed law, **The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) (Amendment) Bill, 2016**, is just one step away from becoming a law—it now only requires the President's signature. Once the Bill is signed into law, there will be no bar on the transfer of mining leases. As per the Amendment, the companies acquiring the cement units will now have raw material security as they can access limestone mines belonging to the acquisition targets.

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### Parliament panel set to recommend Mallya's expulsion

The **Ethics Committee of Parliament** is set to recommend the expulsion of Independent MP and liquor baron **Vijay Mallya** even after his tendering resignation from the membership of the Upper House. The panel was unanimous in its decision that Mallya, facing a case of loan default of over Rs 9,400 crore, should no longer remain a member of the Upper House and found his reply to its notice unsatisfactory. A motion has to be introduced in the House and approved by it for termination of the membership of any MP.

### India cigarettes: Court upholds tough rules on packaging

India's **Supreme Court** has upheld new federal rules which require **tobacco firms** to put bigger pictorial health warnings on cigarette packets. The court rejected the tobacco industry's arguments that the rules were impractical to implement. The government wants tobacco firms to cover **80% of a cigarette pack's surface with pictorial warnings, up from 20%**. India has about **110 million smokers** and the government says smoking kills nearly a million people every year.

### DRDO and Ayush Join Hands to Impart Yoga Training to Defence Wing Staff

**Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences (DIPAS)** a Delhi based premier laboratory of **DRDO** in collaboration with Department of *Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy* (AYUSH) organised a training program on **Yoga** for the Defence Wing Staff during 25th to 30th April 2016. The training programme was in collaboration with HQ of Integrated Defence Services, DCIDS (Medical), Ministry of Defence and Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy (CCRYN) under AYUSH.

### BHEL commissioned 600 MW thermal power plant in Madhya Pradesh

**Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL)** has successfully commissioned a 600 MW coal-based thermal power plant in the state of **Madhya Pradesh**. The unit has been commissioned at the 1 x 600 MW **Jhabua Thermal Power Project (TPP)** located in Seoni district in Madhya Pradesh. The project is being developed by **Jhabua Power Limited (JPL)**, a subsidiary of Avantha Power & Infrastructure Limited (APIL). This is the second project of APIL commissioned by BHEL, having earlier commissioned the 1 x 600 MW Avantha Bhandar TPP at Raigarh in Chhattisgarh.

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### **NASSCOM, Facebook ink MoU to engage with India's entrepreneurs**

The trade body of Indian IT firms **NASSCOM** has signed an MoU with **Facebook** to build a product design initiative to engage the country's young entrepreneurs into becoming problem solvers and solution builders. Signed in Silicon Valley, the NASSCOM-Facebook initiative is likely to propel innovative thinking and approaches to build solutions in key sectors where technology can play a transformational role. With this initiative, NASSCOM plans to scale up the focus on product design and engage the young entrepreneurs into becoming problem solvers and solution builders.

### **ITC shuts plants from May 4 to comply with new pictorial warnings rule**

India's biggest cigarette maker **ITC Ltd** shut its plants from **May 4** to comply with a new stipulated pictorial warnings rule issued by the federal government. India's top court told tobacco companies that they must adhere to a new federal rule requiring much larger health warnings on cigarette packs, in a major setback for the \$11 billion industry. The court also transferred all petitions by cigarette manufacturers pending in various courts to the **Karnataka High Court** for further hearing. The companies had objected to the new federal rules.

### **Lok Sabha passes Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2015**

The Lok Sabha has passed the **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code Bill 2016**, which is seen as a "transformational" legislation that will help improve India's ranking in the World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business' index.

- The new legislation has also provided for cross-border insolvency (which was not covered in the original Bill introduced in 2015).
- The Bill has also strengthened workmen rights as well as creditor rights. It has sought to provide a better deal for workmen in the waterfall (priority of repayment of dues post liquidation).
- The Bill ensures that there won't be any "cherry picking" on the category of persons and that everybody (workmen, secured creditors etc) will get liquidation proceeds on a *pari-passu* basis, according to Sinha.



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### **Lok Sabha passes Compensatory Afforestation Fund Bill, 2015**

**Lok Sabha** has passed the much talked about **Compensatory Afforestation Fund bill, 2015** that seeks to establish setting up of a National Compensatory Afforestation Fund and also a State Compensatory Afforestation Fund. **Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar** said it will be a historical legislation and will go a long way in ensuring countrywide afforestation programme. Members cutting across party lines supported the bill.

- The bill paves the way for unlocking of nearly Rs.41,000 crore earmarked for forest land which is lying unspent.
- The salient features of the afforestation programme will be people's participation, social audit and there will not be any displacement, the minister said while replying to specific queries from Asaduddin Owaisi of All India Majlis—e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM).

### **Offshore patrol vessel ICGS Shaurya launched**

**Goa Shipyard Limited** launched **Indian Coast Guard** ship '**Shaurya**' at **Vasco**, the fifth of a series of six off-shore patrol vessels that the Coast Guard had tasked the Vasco defence public sector undertaking to build. The vessel is capable of cruising at a speed of 23 knots and has a range of 6,000 nautical miles. It will be fitted with state-of-the-art machinery like the integrated machinery control system and integrated bridge system. Once sea trials are done, it will be delivered to the Coast Guard. The indigenously designed ship is capable of search and rescue operations, pollution control and external firefighting and will be deployed for ocean surveillance and for monitoring sea lanes of communication. **ICGS Shaurya** will be commissioned into service in early 2017.

### **Finance Ministry gives clearance to government e-marketplace**

The **Finance Ministry** gave its green light to creation of '**Government e-Marketplace**' for online purchase of commonly used goods and services by various central government ministries and departments. The Department of Expenditure has added a new provision in the **General Financial Rules** (GFR) on the request of Commerce Department for creation of a one-stop GeM by **Directorate General Supply and Disposal** (DGS&D).

- The DGS&D will host an online Government e-Marketplace (GeM) for common use goods and services.
- The GeM would be dynamic, self-sustaining and user-friendly.

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- DGS&D will ensure adequate publicity, including periodic advertisements in newspapers of the GeM and the items to be procured through GeM, for prospective suppliers.

### Govt to sell off 14 ITDC hotels

Fourteen out of 16 perennially loss making hotels owned by state-run **India Tourism Development Corp.** (ITDC) will be sold off and the process to privatise them has already started. The finance ministry is taking forward the disinvestment plan to totally offload government's stakes in all the ITDC-run hotels except the Ashoka and Samrat hotels in the national capital. The government decided to privatize the hotels to improve the financial health of ITDC, a public sector undertaking that currently runs 16 hotels in **Delhi, Patna, Jammu, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar, Puri, Bhopal, Bharatpur, Jaipur, Guwahati, Mysore, Puducherry and Itanagar.**

### I&B Ministry frames Policy guidelines for Central Government advertisements on websites

In a major policy initiative concerning **Central Government advertisements** on online platform, the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** has framed guidelines and criteria for Empanelment of suitable agencies and Rate fixation for advertisements on websites. The aim of the guidelines is to devise principles and instruments to streamline the release of Government advertisements on websites.

The policy emphasizes that only websites which are owned and operated by companies that are incorporated in India will be considered for empanelment by **Directorate of Advertising & Visual Publicity (DAVP)**. However, websites owned by foreign companies/origin can still be empanelled if such companies have branch offices which are registered and operating in India for at least one year.

### Indian Coast Guard Ship ARUSH Commissioned

The Indian Coast Guard ship 'Arush', the 17th in the series of 20 **fast patrol vessels** designed and built by **Cochin Shipyard Ltd.**, was commissioned. The ship was commissioned by the Coast Guard Commander (western seaboard) Additional Director General SPS Basra in the presence of the Commander Coast Guard Region (West) Inspector General K. Natarajan and other senior dignitaries of the central and state governments.

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### **India's first integrated web portal to promote Net Zero Energy Buildings launched**

Power Ministry and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched India's first **integrated web portal** designed to promote and mainstream **Net Zero Energy Buildings (NZEBS)**. The NZEBs combine energy efficiency and renewable energy generation to consume only that much of energy as can be generated onsite through renewable resources over a specified time period. The portal ([www.nzeb.in](http://www.nzeb.in)) was launched by Power Secretary **Pradeep Kumar Pujari** and Ambassador **Jonathan Addleton**, who is USAID Mission Director to India, a power ministry press release said.

### **Lakshadweep becomes first UT to sign 24x7 'Power for All' document**

**Lakshadweep** became first **Union Territory (UT)** to sign **24x7 Power for All** document. Representative of Government of India and the Administration of Lakshadweep signed the document in presence of P.K. Pujari, Secretary, Ministry of Power. The document chalks out a plan to increase solar capacity of the region from 2.15 MW to 8.45 MW. At present, 10 inhabited islands of Lakshadweep are being fed by diesel mostly. The plan also envisions reduction of AT & C losses from current level of 21% to 6.7% till 2019 by increasing the collection efficiency up to 99 %.

### **Spanish train Talgo runs at speed of 110-115 kmph during trial**

Spanish train **Talgo** ran at the speed of **110-115 kms per hour** as its trial was conducted on the **Bareilly-Moradabad line** in **Uttar Pradesh** as part of the Railways' strategy to induct faster trains. The lighter and faster train, with nine coaches and hauled by a 4,500 HP diesel engine, covered the 90-km distance in 70 minutes. The train left Bareilly at 9.05 AM and reached Moradabad at 10.15 AM. Talgo's lighter trains consume 30 per cent less energy. The nine-coach **Talgo** train consists of two Executive Class cars, four Chair Cars, a cafeteria, a power car and a tail-end coach for staff and equipment.

### **Indian Air Force successfully test fires Brahmos missile at Pokaran**

**Indian Air Force (IAF)** has successfully test fired **supersonic** cruise missile **BrahMos** against a land-based target from a defence base in the western sector, paving the way for its maiden air launch from a fighter aircraft. With advanced guidance system and indigenously built software algorithm, this version of BrahMos land-attack system was launched from a mobile autonomous

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launcher from **Pokhran** range at about 12 pm establishing its supremacy in the world of supersonic cruise missiles.

### **Pinarayi Vijayan sworn-in as Kerala Chief Minister**

Communist Party of India (Marxist), or CPM, leader **Pinarayi Vijayan** took oath as chief minister of **Kerala** along with 18 ministers, after a massive victory in the state assembly election in which his coalition—Left Democratic Front (LDF)—promised to “set everything alright”.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### **Jordan’s King Abdullah dissolves parliament**

Jordan’s King **Abdullah** appointed veteran politician **Hani Mulqi** as caretaker prime minister after dissolving parliament as its four-year term nears its end, and charged him with organising new elections by October. The king accepted the resignation of Prime Minister **Abdullah Ensour** before appointing Mulqi by royal decree. Mulqi has held senior government posts in successive administrations. Under the constitutional rules the election must be held within four months.

### **Turkey’s new prime minister wins vote of confidence in parliament**

**Turkish** Prime Minister **Binali Yildirim’s** government has won a vote of confidence in parliament as well as approval for his legislative program. Yildirim is a close ally of President Tayyip Erdogan and a co-founder of the ruling AK Party. He was declared prime minister after he was elected as the new leader of the AK Party at a party congress. Yildirim’s appointment marks another step in Erdogan’s plan to create a full presidential system in Turkey. Yildirim replaces Ahmet Davutoglu, who said he was stepping down after weeks of tension with Erdogan.

### **Baciro Dja named Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau**

Guinea Bissau President **Jose Mario Vaz** named **Baciro Dja** as prime minister. It leads to sparking protests from political opponents who said the appointment was unconstitutional. Dja succeeds

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Carlos Correia, who was sacked earlier this month in a move that threatened to deepen political turmoil in the tiny West African nation.

- **Bissau** is the capital city of Guinea-Bissau.
- West African CFA **franc** is its currency.

### **Barack Obama becomes first US president to visit Hiroshima bomb site**

**Barack Obama** called for a world without nuclear weapons as he became the first sitting **U.S. president** to visit the site of the **Hiroshima atomic bombing**. Some 140,000 people were killed when the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on the city on Aug. 6, 1945. A helicopter and motorcade brought Obama to the Hiroshima Peace Park Memorial, where he spent a short time in the site's museum and then solemnly placed a wreath at the arched monument. Obama reflected on the day "death fell from the sky and the world was changed," telling a gathering of survivors and officials that a "wall of fire destroyed a city and demonstrated that mankind possessed the means to destroy itself."

### **World First Humanitarian Summit held at Istanbul, Turkey**

**The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit was held in Istanbul** from 23 to 24th May since World War II. **The summit was inaugurated by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and hosted by Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan**, and attended by world leaders of UN member states, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The purpose of summit were – World leaders to be committed to improving the humanitarian responses to crises. preventing and ending conflict, respecting the rules of war, addressing forced displacement, achieving gender equality, responding to climate change, ending the need for aid, and investing in humanity.

### **China signed agreements with Sudan to build 600-megawatt atomic reactor**

**China** has signed agreements with **Sudan**, its close ally in Africa to build 600-megawatt atomic reactor, the first such project in the African country. Two framework deals have been signed by state-owned **China National Nuclear Corp (CNNC)** with Sudan on nuclear power development, including building a 600-megawatt atomic reactor. The agreements may involve a blueprint for

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nuclear power development in the next decade for Sudan and building the first nuclear power station in the country, the daily quoted a statement issued by the nuclear giant.

### **Obama lifts US embargo on lethal arms sales to Vietnam**

**President Barack Obama** has announced the **US** is fully lifting its embargo on sales of lethal weapons to **Vietnam**, its one-time enemy. The US is trying to bolster its relationship with its Pacific allies, as China asserts territorial claims. Vietnam is one of several countries in the region involved in maritime disputes with China. The US insists on the right to freedom of navigation in the South China Sea. In 2014, a row over a Chinese oil rig near the Paracel islands led to clashes between Chinese and Vietnamese vessels and anti-China riots in Vietnam.

### **US President on a visit to Vietnam, Japan**

**United States President Barack Obama** is on a visit to **Vietnam** and **Japan**. This is Obama's first visit to Vietnam as an American president. In **Hanoi** and **Ho Chi Minh City**, Obama will stress improving relations with a dynamic and rapidly emerging country.

Four decades after a war with Vietnam that deeply divided opinion in America, Obama aims to boost defense and economic ties with the country's communist rulers while also prodding them on human rights. His visit has been preceded by a debate in Washington over whether Obama should use the three-day visit starting Monday to roll back an arms embargo on Hanoi, one of the last vestiges of wartime animosity.

### **Senate approves \$1.1 billion to fight Zika virus**

The **Senate** has advanced **\$1.1 billion** in emergency funding to combat the **Zika virus**, but remained at odds with the House over how much money should be directed to tackle the public health threat. The two chambers would have to reach agreement on a spending level before they can send it to President Barack Obama, who in February requested \$1.9 billion. The White House has called the House measure "woefully inadequate" and has threatened to veto it.

The Senate will enter negotiations with the House with a strong hand: a bipartisan 68-30 vote in favor of the emergency funds to battle Zika, a virus that has been spreading rapidly through the

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Americas, with more than 100 confirmed cases in the U.S. state of Florida. However, the conservative group Heritage Action is lobbying against any Zika funding bill that is not paid for with an equal amount of spending cuts.

### **Binali Yildirim set to be Turkey's new prime minister**

Turkey's Transport Minister **Binali Yildirim** emerged as the likely new leader of the ruling AK Party and therefore the next prime minister, cementing President Tayyip Erdogan's hold on government as he seeks to extend his powers.

**Yildirim**, 60, and a close ally of **Erdogan** for two decades, will be the sole candidate for the AKP leadership at a special party congress on Sunday, AKP spokesman Omer Celik told a news conference after a meeting of the party's executive board.

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### **Tsai Ing-wen sworn-in as first women President of Taiwan**

**Tsai Ing-wen** has been sworn in as the new president of **Taiwan**, becoming its first female leader and calling for "positive dialogue" with Beijing. Ms Tsai, seen as an unassuming but determined leader, led the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) to a landslide win in elections in January. The DPP has traditionally leaned towards independence from China, which sees Taiwan as a breakaway province. In the past, it has threatened to take the island by force if necessary. It still has hundreds of missiles pointing towards the island.

### **Nokia name to return to mobile phones after licensing deal**

The **Nokia** name will return to the mobile phone market after a company backed by one of its former executives teamed up with manufacturer **Foxconn** to buy the rights to the brand for mobile devices. Nokia, once the world's biggest maker of mobile phones, was wrong footed by the rise of smartphones and eclipsed by **Apple** and **Samsung**. It sold its entire handset business to Microsoft Corp in 2014 and now focuses on telecoms network equipment. But it held on to its phone patents with a view to eventually striking a licensing deal, though it had to wait due to a non-compete deal with Microsoft.

### **First World Conference on Tourism for Development held in Beijing**

The First World Conference on Tourism for Development was held in Beijing, China from 18-21 May 2016 with a specific view to advancing the contribution of tourism to the Sustainable



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Development Goals (SDG). The event was jointly organized by the Government of the People's Republic of China and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The conference, which coincided with the China Tourism Day, was addressed by the Head of Government of China and brought together leaders in the areas of tourism and development to spur dialogue and create a better understanding of tourism's contribution to development, including poverty alleviation and peace.

### **International Buddhist conference begins in Nepal**

A two-day **international Buddhist conference** to mark the 2,560th birth anniversary of **Lord Buddha** began in **Nepal** with Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, advocating Buddhism as a means to avoid extremism in all forms. Over 1,200 delegates and observers from 28 countries around the world will attend the conference from May 19-20, themed "**Lumbini, Nepal: the birth place of Lord Buddha and the fountain of Buddhism and world peace**".

The Than manuscript of China has mentioned that Lumbini is the birth place of Lord Buddha, said Yin Shun, vice-president of Buddhist Association of China. The main objective of organising the event is to highlight Lumbini as birth place of Lord Buddha and the fountain of Buddhism, in the international arena, to establish Lumbini as the centre for interfaith and peace dialogue as well as developing Nepal as the fountain for world peace.

### **British royals launch campaign to tackle stigma of mental health**

**Prince William**, his wife **Kate** and brother **Harry** urged Britons to ditch their prejudices about mental health in what is being billed as the biggest joint project the three young royals have taken on. In the "**Heads Together**" campaign they launched in **London**, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry will work with charities "to change the national conversation on mental wellbeing", a note from the couple's Kensington Palace residence said.

Harry played block-stacking game **jenga**, which is used by some mental healthcare professionals as a therapeutic tool, while Kate and William tried some boxing moves to illustrate the role exercise is thought to play in promoting mental wellbeing.

### **Nepal completes laying optical fiber at Nepal-China border**

**Nepal Telecom (NT)**, the state-owned Nepalese telecommunication company, has completed laying optical fiber to Rasuwagadi area at the **Nepal-China border** from the capital city **Kathmandu**, with an eye to boosting Nepal-China connectivity. This has paved the way for interconnecting service of the NT with the China Telecom.

### **Italian Parliament approves same-sex civil unions**

After decades of struggle by gay rights groups, and months of contested political negotiations, the **Italian Parliament** gave final approval to a law recognizing civil unions of same-sex couples. The vote — 372 to 51, with 99 abstentions — was followed by long applause in the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Parliament. At the Trevi Fountain in Rome, people with rainbow flags gathered to celebrate.

### **Kenya to close Dadaab, world's biggest refugee camp**

The Kenyan government will close **Dadaab refugee camp**, which has hundreds of thousands of **Somali refugees** and is often referred to as the world's largest camp, the East African country's interior security minister. The decision has been condemned by domestic and international rights groups and organizations dealing with refugees. Dadaab camp, with an estimated 328,000 refugees mostly from Somalia, compromises Kenya's security because it harbors some of Somalia's al-Shabab Islamic extremists and is a conduit for smuggling weapons.

### **US activates land-based missile defence station in Romania**

The **US** has activated a land-based missile defence station in **Romania**, which will form part of a larger and controversial European shield. The US says the Aegis system is a shield to protect **Nato** countries from short and medium-range missiles, particularly from the Middle East. But Russia sees it as a security threat – a claim denied by Nato.

Relations between the West and Russia have deteriorated since Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's southern Crimea peninsula in 2014. **Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg** and other senior officials from the military alliance attended the opening ceremony at an old Romanian air base in Deveselu, 180km (110)

### **National Bison Legacy Act Signed in US**

US President Barack Obama has signed **National Bison Legacy Act** into law officially making the American bison the country's first national mammal. With this, Bison, the animal that once roamed North America, joins the ranks of the **Bald Eagle** as the official symbol of the country. Its designation as national mammal do not hampers bald eagle's position as the national animal because eagle that is birthed through eggs in not a mammal.

Millions of bison once roamed the Great Plains. About 500,000 now live in the U.S. but most of those have been cross-bred with cattle, and are semi-domesticated. About 30,000 wild bison roam the country, with the largest population in Yellowstone National Park.

### **India, China, 3 others sign pact on tax info sharing**

**India** and five other nations, including **China** and **Israel**, signed a pact for automatic exchange of information on tax issues and develop new tools and standards for tackling tax base erosion and evasion. As part of continuing efforts to boost transparency by multinational enterprises (MNEs), **Canada, Iceland, India, Israel, New Zealand** and the **People's Republic of China** signed the Multilateral Competent Authority agreement for the automatic exchange of Country-by-Country reports, bringing the total number of signatories to 39 countries. The signing ceremony took place Beijing.

### **UN launches Multi-Partner Trust Fund for Zika virus response**

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has announced the establishment of the UN **Zika Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF)** to finance critical unfunded priorities in the response to the Zika outbreak. The Fund, which aims to provide a rapid, flexible and accountable platform to support a coordinated response from the UN system and partners, will directly support the Zika Strategic Response Framework, developed by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** in consultation with UN agencies, partners and international epidemiological experts.

### Rodrigo “Digong” Duterte wins the Philippines Presidential Election

- **Maverick anti-crime candidate Rodrigo “Digong” Duterte** has won the **Philippine** presidential elections, following the withdrawal of his opponents. Although the official result has not yet been declared, main rival Mar Roxas admitted defeat after polls gave **Mr Duterte** an unassailable lead. Mr Duterte said he accepted the mandate with “extreme humility”. The 71-year-old stirred controversy during campaigning with his incendiary comments.
- He has credited his success to his tough stance on law and order. His record as the crime-crushing mayor of the southern town of Davao, once notorious for its lawlessness, earned him the moniker The Punisher and resonated with voters.

### Indian-origin Murali Pillai elected to Singapore Parliament

An Indian-origin man from Singapore’s ruling **People’s Action Party (PAP)** was elected member of the parliament following his victory in the by-election held at suburban **Bukit Batok** constituency. **Murali Pillai** garnered 61.21% of the votes, while Singapore Democratic Party’s Chee Soon Juan got 38.79% of votes. The Elections Department said a total of 24,192 votes were cast, including 622 rejected votes, which made up 94.03% of the 25,727 registered electors. Chee, a vociferous opposition leader, had challenged the ruling party in the one-on-one contest.

### Enda Kenny re-elected as Prime Minister of Ireland

- **Enda Kenny** has been re-elected as **Prime Minister of Ireland** after 10 weeks of deadlock that followed an inconclusive general election in February. Kenny is the first **Fine Gael PM** to win re-election in Irish history, though his triumph is marred by a minority administration that is propped up by independent MPs and, more crucially, by **Fianna Fáil**.
- The party, which will remain on the opposition benches, has agreed to support the Fine Gael government for a period of two years in an unprecedented political ceasefire between the rivals. Kenny received 59 votes, with 49 against, in the 158-member parliament – by far the fewest votes ever received for a winning premier in Ireland.

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### **Sadikh Khan elected as first Muslim Mayor of London**

Newly-elected London mayor **Sadiq Khan** has been formally signed in to the role at a **Southwark Cathedral** ceremony. Former Labour leader **Ed Miliband** and **Baroness Doreen Lawrence** were present. Mr Khan received a standing ovation as he walked in to the hall. Having won 1,310,143 votes, Mr Khan received the largest personal mandate of any politician in UK history.

### **Craig Wright revealed as Bitcoin creator Satoshi Nakamoto**

Australian entrepreneur **Craig Wright** has publicly identified himself as **Bitcoin** creator **Satoshi Nakamoto**. His admission follows years of speculation about who came up with the original ideas underlying the digital cash system. Mr Wright has provided technical proof to back up his claim using coins known to be owned by Bitcoin's creator. Prominent members of the **Bitcoin** community and its core development team say they have confirmed his claims.

### **Siddhartha Dhar a senior commander of ISIS: report**

A **Yazidi teenager** who was held as a sex slave by **Isis** says she was kidnapped and trafficked by the British jihadist and likely masked executioner **Siddhartha Dhar**. **Nihad Barakat** said the man who is widely suspected to be the so-called "new Jihadi John" from Isis propaganda videos is now one of the most senior commanders among foreign fighters in Mosul, the group's Iraqi stronghold. Dhar, a former British Hindu who preferred to go by the nickname **Abu Rumaysah** after his conversion to Islam, skipped police bail to travel to Syria with his wife and young children in 2014.

### **Bangladesh nods Reliance Power proposal to set up 750 MW power project**

**Reliance Power** has received in-principle approval from the **Bangladesh government** for the first phase of a **3,000 megawatt gas-based power plant**, paving the way for the largest **Foreign Direct Investment** in the neighbouring country with a potential investment of over Rs 8,700 crore (\$1.3 billion).

### **Jordan's King Abdullah dissolves parliament**

Jordan's King **Abdullah** appointed veteran politician **Hani Mulqi** as caretaker prime minister after dissolving parliament as its four-year term nears its end, and charged him with organising new

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elections by October. The king accepted the resignation of Prime Minister **Abdullah Ensour** before appointing Mulqi by royal decree. Mulqi has held senior government posts in successive administrations. Under the constitutional rules the election must be held within four months.

### **Turkey's new prime minister wins vote of confidence in parliament**

**Turkish** Prime Minister **Binali Yildirim's** government has won a vote of confidence in parliament as well as approval for his legislative program. Yildirim is a close ally of President Tayyip Erdogan and a co-founder of the ruling AK Party. He was declared prime minister after he was elected as the new leader of the AK Party at a party congress. Yildirim's appointment marks another step in Erdogan's plan to create a full presidential system in Turkey. Yildirim replaces Ahmet Davutoglu, who said he was stepping down after weeks of tension with Erdogan.

### **Baciro Dja named Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau**

Guinea Bissau President **Jose Mario Vaz** named **Baciro Dja** as prime minister. It leads to sparking protests from political opponents who said the appointment was unconstitutional. Dja succeeds Carlos Correia, who was sacked earlier this month in a move that threatened to deepen political turmoil in the tiny West African nation.

### ***Cabinet Approvals and bill passed in parliament***

- ✓ Union Cabinet gives nod for incorporation of Six new IITs; Upgrades Indian School of Mines to IIT
- ✓ Cabinet Approves India-Japan Pact On Thermal Power
- ✓ Financial restructuring of Hindustan Steel Works Construction Limited
- ✓ Union Cabinet gives ex-post facto approval to Amendments in Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950
- ✓ Union Cabinet approves India, Maldives MoU for cooperation in field of tourism
- ✓ The Cabinet granted ex-post facto approval to the cadre review of the Indian Postal Service

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

#### ISRO to test Air-breathing Propulsion System

After successfully testing a technology demonstrator of a reusable launch vehicle, **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is planning to test an **air-breathing propulsion system**, which aims to capitalise on the oxygen in the atmosphere instead of liquefied oxygen while in flight. This system, when implemented, would help in reducing the lift-off mass of the vehicle since liquefied oxygen need not be carried on board the vehicle. This would also help increasing the efficiency of the rocket and also make it cost-effective.

#### India's first reusable space shuttle RLV-TD launched

India successfully tested its first-ever indigenous space shuttle as its scale model – the Re-Usable Launch Vehicle – Technology Demonstrator or RLV-TD – was launched from **Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh**. Nearly 20 minutes after its lift-off, the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) announced, “mission accomplished”.

The 6.5 metre-long scale model of the re-usable launch vehicle weighs about 1.75 tonnes and was made at a cost of Rs. 95 crore. It was built at the **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre** in **Thiruvananthapuram** by a team of 600 scientists over five years. ISRO plans to test two more such prototypes before the final version which will be about six times larger at around 40 metres and will take off around 2030.

#### India to flight test reusable launch vehicle technology

**India** will use a mini-rocket with a booster to fly a winged **reusable launch vehicle (RLV)** into lower earth orbit on May 23 for demonstrating the technology its space agency developed. The state-run **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has designed and built the 1.7-tonne RLV-TD as a flying testbed to evaluate technologies developed to reduce the cost of launching rockets for carrying satellites into the earth's polar and geo-stationary orbits.

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The experimental launch will be from ISRO's spaceport at **Sriharikota** in Andhra Pradesh, about 80 km northeast of Chennai off the Bay of Bengal coast. Rockets for launching satellites and space exploration are made at the space agency's VSSC at **Thiruvananthapuram** in Kerala.

### Hypersonic superjet technology successfully tested in Australia

**Hypersonic travel** that could propel people from **London** to **Sydney** in just two hours is one step closer to reality, following a successful test. The project, which saw US and Australian military scientists combine resources, is on track to launch in 2018 after its latest engine trial hit the target speed of Mach 7.5 – more than seven times the speed of sound.

### NASA launches near-space monitoring super pressure balloon from New Zealand

**NASA** successfully launched a super pressure balloon from **New Zealand's** South Island Wanaka Airport to conduct near-space scientific investigations. The launch marks the fifth attempt to get the massive balloon airborne, with previous bids thwarted by bad weather. Long-duration balloon flights at constant altitudes play an important role in providing inexpensive access to the near-space environment for science and technology.

### China launches remote sensing satellite

**China** has successfully launched a **remote sensing satellite** to carry out land surveys and disaster relief. The satellite named **Yaogan-30** was launched from **Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre** in northwestern China's **Gobi Desert**. The satellite will be used for experiments, land surveys, crop yield estimates and disaster relief. Yaogan-30 was carried by a **Long March-2D rocket**, the 227th mission for the Long March rocket family. China launched the first "**Yaogan**" series satellite, Yaogan-1, in 2006.



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Yaogan-30 is probably an electro-optical observation satellite based on the military Jianbing-6 series. The Jianbing-6 electro-optical satellites carry high resolution optical sensors and reportedly have a resolution of between one to three meters and are placed in orbits that provide favorable illumination for the imaging missions.

### **ISRO's big leap, embarks on launching Indian space shuttle!**

For the very first time in its history, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is actually growing wings as it embarks this month on a never before space flight that would make history. The Indian space agency is all set to undertake the maiden launch of its very own indigenous version of a space shuttle, a fully made-in-India effort. Scientists at ISRO believe that they could reduce the cost of launching stuff into space by as much as 10 times if reusable technology succeeds, bringing it down to USD 2,000 per kg.

### **Reliance Jio Launches JioMoney Digital Wallet**

**Reliance Jio** has quietly launched its new wallet app on the **Apple** and **Android** app stores. The new app, which joins Jiochat Messenger and My Jio apps in the respective stores, is called **JioMoney Wallet**. According to Jio, the app has been launched with an aim to make payments easier. Customers can use **JioMoney's digital wallet**, a Jio Money card or any other credit/debit card directly from the wallet to pay merchant seamlessly and instantly. JioMoney digital wallet also gives consumers the option of opening a Digital Bank Account or linking their existing account.

### **Google launches Free Public Wi-Fi Service at 5 Railway Stations**

**Google** has announced the launch of its free high-speed public **Wi-Fi** service at *Ujjain, Jaipur, Patna, Guwahati and Allahabad* railway stations. This is in continuation with its project to provide high-speed public Wi-Fi service at 100 Railway stations across India by end of the year. Google said it has been deploying the service over the extensive fibre network of Indian Railway's arm **Railtel** which provides Internet services as **RailWire**.

### **Oxygen on Mars detected by flying space observatory**

For the first time in 40 years, **NASA** researchers have detected atomic oxygen in **Mars'** atmosphere, thanks to the **Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA)**, which soars on a plane 13.7 kilometres (45,000 feet) above Earth. The oxygen atoms were found in the Martian upper atmosphere – known as the **mesosphere** – and the discovery could help astronomers identify how gases escaped from the Red Planet long ago. While this is super exciting for our understanding of Mars – humanity's potential new home – the researchers found only half the amount of oxygen they expected, but this could be the result of variations in the atmosphere.

### **SpaceX successfully launches Japanese JCSAT-14 Satellite**

**SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket** on has been successfully placed **Sky Perfect JSat's JCSat-14** commercial telecommunications satellite into transfer orbit, with the rocket's first stage landing gracefully on a drone ship in the **Atlantic Ocean**. JCSat-14 manufacturer SSL of Palo Alto, California, confirmed that the satellite was healthy in geostationary transfer orbit and sending signals. SSL declined to confirm whether the final launch mass had changed from previous estimates of around 4,700 kilograms.

### **Pentagon Tests Out 'Sea Hunter,' 132-Foot Robot Ship**

The **military** is starting tests on the world's largest unmanned surface vessel — a self-driving, 132-foot ship designed to travel thousands of miles out at sea without a single crew member on board. The so-called "**Sea Hunter**" has the potential to revolutionize not only the military's maritime operations but commercial shipping. If successful, it could usher in the arrival of unmanned cargo vessels moving between countries.

### **Scientists developed World's Smallest Engine**

The **world's smallest engine** has been created in a lab at **Cambridge University**. It is fuelled by lasers and gold and is so tiny it could power the nanobots scientists hope to inject into our bodies in future to keep us healthy. The engine, which is powered by laser light, is aptly named the **ANT** (standing for actuating nano-transducer) and takes cues from its insect counterpart in the sense that it is small and mighty. The microscopic ANT engine, which cannot be seen by the

human eye, is believed to be up to a hundred times more powerful than any other engine known to man if you take its force to weight ratio into account.

### **Astronomers discovered 3 Earth like planets using TRAPPIST telescope**

Astronomers have discovered three planets orbiting the habitable zone of an ultra-cool dwarf star just 40 light-years from Earth. The discovery is the first evidence supporting the hypothesis that these very low-mass and low-temperature stars should have Earth-sized or smaller planets orbiting them. The planets, which are the size of Venus and Earth, are currently the best places to look for life outside our solar system, said the team of researchers led by astronomer Michaël Gillon, from the University of Liege in Belgium.

### **ISIS developing Google-style driverless cars for attacks**

ISIS technicians are working to develop a **Google-style driverless car** that could navigate itself into a crowded area before detonating an explosive device, a **NATO** security expert has warned. ISIS's research and development department in the terror group's de facto Syrian capital, **Raqqa**, is believed to be producing the vehicles at the same time as US Internet giant Google attempts to perfect the same technology.

### **World's largest telescope may be set up in Ladakh**

**Hawaii's** loss may turn out to be **Ladakh's** gain. After protests in Hawaii in the US against the proposed **Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) project**, the largest to be built, alternative sites are being explored which includes Hanle in Ladakh. The project, aimed at exploring the universe, was to come up at Mauna Kea in Hawaii. But protests by the locals and indigenous population has stalled the project.

### **Aurobindo Pharma gets final USFDA nod for cholesterol drug**

**Aurobindo Pharma Ltd** has got final approval from the **US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** to manufacture and market cholesterol-lowering **fenofibrat** tablets in 48 milligram (mg) and 145 mg dosage forms. The approved abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) is the generic version of AbbVie Inc.'s Tricor® tablets. Fenofibrate is used to treat high levels of cholesterol and

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triglycerides in the blood. The approved product has an estimated market size of \$412 million for the 12 months ending March 2016.

### FOREIGN RELATIONS

#### PM to visit 5 nations; to discuss black money issue with Swiss

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will embark on a five-nation visit from June 4 which will cover **Afghanistan, Qatar, Switzerland, the US and Mexico**. Modi will begin his trip with Afghanistan to inaugurate India-funded **Salma Dam** which has been constructed at a cost of about Rs 1400 crore. From Afghanistan, he will proceed to energy-rich Qatar and then to Switzerland. During the two-day visit to energy-rich Qatar, Modi will hold extensive talks with **Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani** on a range of bilateral issues including ways to further boost economic ties, particularly in the hydrocarbon sector.

#### IAF Participation in Exercise Desert Eagle II at UAE

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#### India, Australia sign MoU to enhance R&D capabilities in biotech

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#### NALCO signs MoU with Iran to set up smelter plant in Chabahar

**National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO)** has signed a MoU with Iranian Mines & Mining Industries Development & Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) to explore the possibility of setting up a smelter on joint venture in Iran. For the proposed smelter plant in **Chabahar Free Trade Zone**, Nalco would supply alumina from its refinery in India. The MoU was signed between

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chairman-cum-managing director of Nalco and vice chairman of Iran's planning board in presence of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** and President of Iran **Hassan Rouhani** in Tehran.

### India and Japan to sign MOU for Cooperation in Sports

**India** and **Japan** have decided to exchange sports persons, coaches, experts and administrators to improve the standard of the game in both nations. The two Asian countries will play some friendly matches ahead of the **Under-17 World Cup tournament**. The decisions were taken during a meeting between Sports Minister Sarbananda Sonowal and a 12-member delegation from Japan led by Hase Hiroshi, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

### India, Oman sign 4 bilateral agreements on defence cooperation

Defence minister **Manohar Parrikar**, accompanied by a high level delegation, visited Oman from May 20-22 at the invitation of minister responsible for Defence Affairs of **Oman Badr Bin Saud Bin Harib Al Busaidi**, during which four memorandums of understanding (MoUs) and a protocol were signed between the two nations. A defence industry delegation comprising SC Bajpai, additional director general, Ordnance Factory Board, and SK Sharma, CMD, Bharat Electronics Limited also accompanied the minister.

### India and Iran sign 12 Bilateral Agreements in various areas including Chabahar Port Development

**India** and **Iran** have decided to jointly combat terror, radicalism and cyber crime as the two strategic partners signed 12 agreements including a "milestone" pact on developing the key Chabahar port for which India will provide **\$500 million**. Besides developing the **Chabahar port**, the two sides also signed agreements in diverse fields like trade credit, culture, science and technology and railways.

### Prime Minister Narendra Modi leaves for Iran

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi** left for **Iran** on a two-day official visit, during which the trilateral agreement between **India , Iran and Afghanistan** to develop the **Chabahar port** in that Gulf nation will be signed. Modi will be accorded an official welcome in Tehran on Monday following

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which he will hold talks with Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei and President Hassan Rouhani. Connectivity, energy security and bilateral trade are on top of Modi's agenda during his visit which comes a little over a month and a half of his trip to Saudi Arabia. The prime minister will also inaugurate an Indian cultural festival in Iran.

### US House Approves Move to Bolster Defence Ties with India

The **US House of Representatives** has approved a bipartisan legislation to bolster **defence** ties with **India** and bring the country at par with other **NATO** allies in terms of sale of defence equipment and technology transfer. The amendment (**Enhancing Defence and Security Cooperation with India**) was sponsored by Holding and Ami Bera (House India caucus chairs) as well as the chair and ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs, Committee Ed Royce and Elliot Engel.

### India-Slovenia Double Taxation Avoidance Convention signed

**India** and **Slovenia** have signed a Protocol amending the existing **Convention and Protocol** between the two countries for avoidance of **double taxation** and prevention of **fiscal evasion** with respect to taxes on income on 17th May, 2016 in Ljubljana. The Protocol was signed by Mr. Sarvajit Chakravarti, Ambassador of India to Slovenia on behalf of India and Mr. Dusan Mramor, the Slovenian Minister of Finance on behalf of Slovenia. The Protocol will broaden the scope of the existing framework of exchange of tax related information which will help curb tax evasion and tax avoidance between the two countries and will also enable mutual assistance in collection of taxes.

### India, US hold first Maritime Security Dialogue

**India** and the **US** held the first round of discussions under the recently-constituted maritime security dialogue between officials of Defence and External Affairs ministries and their U.S. counterparts. The dialogue was one of the several new initiatives agreed between Defence Minister **Manohar Parrikar** and his U.S. counterpart **Ashton Carter** during the latter's visit to India last month as part of the maritime security objectives under the India-US Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region.

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### Everything you need to know about 2016 Red Flag Aerial combat exercise

**Red Flag Alaska 16-1**, which was an advanced aerial combat training exercise hosted at **Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska** (a successor to the previous COPE THUNDER exercise series) held in the Alaska region, concluded on 14 May 16. The main phase of the exercise had commenced on 28 Apr 16 with a mix of combat and support elements participating from **IAF, USAF and USN**. Over the last decade, IAF has been actively participating in various operational exercises hosted by various countries wherein its capabilities has been pitted against the best air forces in the world.

### PM Modi, Sri Lankan President release Simhastha Declaration

The **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** along with **Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena** have released '**Simhastha Declaration**' at Ninora village in Ujjain. Both leaders addressed the concluding session of the three day International Vichar Mahakumbh held on side-lines of the month-long Simhastha mela. PM Narendra Modi in his address appealed saints to conduct Vichar Kumbh every year with devotees and discuss social issues like the need to educate the girl child or plant trees. He also called Kumbh as the biggest example of excellent management and he advised academic institutions to adopt Kumbh as a management case study.

### US-India Defence Cooperation Act introduced in Senate

Ahead of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's** expected visit to US next month, two top American senators have introduced a legislation which if passed by **Congress** would elevate the status of the **Indo-US defence relationship** on par with that of America's closest allies like **NATO** and **Israel**. The **US-India Defence Technology and Partnership Act** was introduced in the Senate.

### India and New Zealand ink deal for direct flights to boost tourism

**India** and **New Zealand** have signed an air services agreement in a bid to boost **connectivity, tourism** and **trade** between both countries. The agreement was signed by India's Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare **Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Balyan** and **Simon Bridges**, Minister of Transport and Minister of Energy and Resources of New Zealand in Auckland. The ceremony took place in Auckland's Langham Hotel.

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### **SIDBI inks MoU with SAARC Development Fund**

The **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)** has signed an MoU with **SAARC Development Fund (SDF)** for mutual cooperation and collaboration. The MoU was signed by SIDBI Deputy Managing Director A K Kapur and SDF CEO Sunil Motiwal. The MoU envisages SDF and SIDBI to work together in co-funding of projects in Indian MSMEs on risk sharing basis in identified sectors. The MoU also focuses on the development of suitable financial products for SME financing for MSMEs of other Saarc states. The MoU further deals with technology transfer and making available software to MFIs regarding loan tracking systems in other SAARC states.

### **Reliance Defence signed agreements with 3 Ukrainian companies**

**Reliance Defence** has signed an agreement with three Ukrainian state-owned firms — **Ukroboronprom, Spetstechno Exports** and **Antonov** — to collaborate on a range of military products including transport aircraft, armoured vehicles, maritime gas turbines and unmanned aerial vehicles. This follows Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani's meeting with the President of Ukraine **Petro Poroshenko** in Ukraine this week, where they discussed issues of strategic interest between Indian and Ukrainian Defence and Aerospace industries.

### **PM to visit 5 nations; to discuss black money issue with Swiss**

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The focus of the call is to undertake horticultural research in order to develop and deploy modern tools of plant biotechnology to improve crop productivity. The funding commitment from BIRAC and Hort Innovation is up to 6 million Australian dollars over a period of three years.

## OBITUARY

PERSON	FIELD
RG Jadhav	Noted Marathi critic and litterateur
KC Mathew	communist leader
Mullah Akhtar Mansour	Taliban leader
Diwaliben Bhil	Gujarati folk singer
Andre Brahic	Discovered the rings of Neptune
Praveen Rashtrapal	Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member
Chennamaneni Rajeshwara Rao	Veteran freedom fighter and former Sircilla MLA
Nihal Bitla	India progeria campaigner
Sunil Gudge	Maharashtra leg-spinner
Romesh Sharma	Former Jammu and Kashmir Minister and senior Congress leader
D. Javare Gowda	Kannada writer
RG Jadhav	Marathi critic and litterateur
KC Mathew	Veteran Communist leader

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Mullah Akhtar Mansour	Taliban leader
Nihal Bitla	India progeria campaigner

### SPORTS

Winner	Title	Sport/ venue
Pankaj Advani	Asian 6-Red snooker title.	Abu Dhabi
Mohun Bagan	Indian Federation Cup football tournament 2016	The Indira Gandhi Stadium. Aizawl
Barcelona FC	La Liga Champions Parade 2016	Football
Novak Djokovic	29th Masters Madrid Open	Tennis
Caroline Garcia and Kristina Mladenovic	Madrid Masters Tennis tournament.	Tennis
Pakistan	Asian Kabaddi Championship 2016	Wah Cantonment in Pakistan.
Vinesh Phogat and Sakshi Malik	Olympic Games World Qualifying Tournament	Istanbul, Turkey
Leicester City	English Premier League	Football
Nico Rosberg	Russian Grand Prix	Germany
Gurpreet Singh Sandhu	first Indian to play in Tippeligaen	Goalkeeper
Sonia Lathe	A silver medal at the AIBA Women's World Championships	Alessia Mesiano of Italy

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Sunrisers Hyderabad	Indian Premier League title.	M Chinnaswamy stadium in Bangalore
Real Madrid	UEFA Champions League finals	Football
Pankaj Advani	Asian 6-Red Snooker title	Abu Dhabi
Vinesh Phogat & Sakshi Malik	Qualify for Rio Olympics 2016	Wrestling
Mickey Arthur	Waqar Younis as headcoach	Pakistan

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DATE	OBSERVED DAY
May 1	World Laughter Day Maharashtra Day Law Day - U.S.A. International Labour Day May Day Loyalty Day
May 3	World Asthma Day World Press Freedom Day International Sun Day International Energy Day
May 4	Global Road Safety Week International Firefighters' Day Coal Miners Day(Intl.)
May 5	World Athletics Day World Midwives Day
1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of May	World Laughter Day
May 7	World Athletics Day - IAAF World Naked Gardening Day
May 8	Rabindranath Tagore Jayanti World Red Cross Day or Red Crescent Day Mother's Day
May 9	World Thalassaemia Day
May 10	World Migratory Bird Day
May 11	National Technology Day - India
	<a href="http://www.DayTodayGK.com">www.DayTodayGK.com</a>

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May 12	International Nurses Day
May 13	International Criminal Court Day
May 14	World Fair Trade Day
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of may	World Mother's Day
May 15	The International Day of Families
May 17	World Telecommunication Day World Information Society Day World AIDS Vaccination day World Hypertension Day International day against Homophobia and Transphobia
May 18	World Museum Day
May 20	World Meteorology Day
May 21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development Anti-Terrorism Day World Day for Cultural Development
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity
May 24	Commonwealth Day
May 25	World Missing Children's day
May 29	International Day of Peacekeepers
May 31	World Anti-Tobacco Day

THANK YOU 😊😊😊