

UN-Habitat Released World Cities Report 2016

The UN-Habitat on 18 May 2016 released the new global flagship report on sustainable urban development titled World Cities Report 2016, Urbanization and Development: Emerging Futures. The report states that a New Urban Agenda is needed to unlock the transformative power of cities. The top 600 cities, with 1/5th of the world's population, produce 60 percent of global GDP. Since the last UN conference on cities Habitat II in Istanbul in 1996, the center of gravity for megacities has shifted to developing regions. India is projected to add 300 million new urban residents by 2050 and it will need to build climate-friendly cities to address the challenge of accommodating the needs of the growing population. India should plan to build 100 smart cities in response to the country's growing population and pressure on urban infrastructure.

Duterte Won the Philippines Presidential Election

Rodrigo "Digong" Duterte, the outspoken mayor and a Presidential candidate of the PDP-Laban combine claimed victory in the Presidential Elections of the Philippines. In the Presidential election held on 9 May 2016, Rodrigo Duterte secured 39% (15.36 million) of the votes. He was followed by Mar Roxas 23% (9.27 million) votes and his closest rival Grace Poe with 22% (8.6 million) votes. He will become the 16th President-elect of Philippines. Duterte was born in 1945 into a political family with a modest background. A lawyer by profession he became vice-mayor of Davao in 1986 and mayor in 1988."

Bison Declared U.S. National Mammal

US President Barack Obama on 9 May 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.

China Begins Construction of Tibet's Biggest Dam

China has started construction of its biggest hydropower project in Tibet costing over \$3 billion which will supply electricity to the economically well-off regions in the country's eastern region. The Suwalong hydropower project at the junction of Mangkam county in Tibet and Batang county in Sichuan province has a design capacity of 1.2 gigawatts and will be able to generate about 5,400 gigawatt hours of electricity a year when completed in 2021. The design capacity is more than double of Zangmu hydropower plant on Brahmaputra river which is Tibet's largest existing hydro project. It was completed in October last year. It is hoped that the 18 billion yuan (\$3 billion) Suwalong dam, could pave the way for other projects in the headwaters of the adjacent Nu (Salween) and Lancang (Mekong) rivers to fuel development of hydro power in Tibet.

Pakistan, China Signed agreement To Launch Satellite To Monitor CPEC projects

Pakistan and China have signed an agreement for the launch of a special satellite to monitor the development of the USD 46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects. Pakistan Minister for Planning, Development and Reform, Ahsan Iqbal on behalf of Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) and China Great Wall Industry Cooperation (CGWIC) President Yin Limping signed the agreement in Islamabad, Pakistan.

INDIA & WORLD

PM Narendra Modi, Sri Lankan President Released Simhashta Declaration

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The Prime Minister along with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on 14 May released 'Simhastha Declaration' at Ninora village in Ujjain. Both leaders addressed the concluding session of the three day International Vihar Mahakumbh held on side-lines of the month-long Simhastha mela. 51 sacred points have been included in this declaration for betterment of mankind and these elixir points for India and the world.

India, WHO Signed Pact To Promote Yoga, Ayurveda

The Union Ministry of AYUSH and the World Health Organization (WHO) on 13 May 2016 signed the Project Collaboration Agreement (PCA) for cooperation on Global promotion of Traditional Systems of Medicine. The agreement was signed by Ajit M Sharan, Secretary of Union Ministry of AYUSH and, Dr Marie Kieny, Assistant Director General of Health Systems and Innovations at WHO in Geneva.

India Third In Attractiveness Index of Renewable Energy

India's renewable energy sector has been ranked third in the Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index (RECAI) with China at second and the US on top. Global organization EY on 10 May 2016 released the Renewable energy country attractiveness index 2016. The report reveals 40 countries on the attractiveness of their renewable energy investment and deployment opportunities based on a number of indicators.

India and Mauritius Signed Protocol To Amend Taxation Methods

India and Mauritius on 10 May signed a protocol on taxation at Port Louis, Mauritius. The protocol provides for amending the convention for the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income and capital gains. With this Protocol, India gets taxation rights on capital gains. They arise from alienation of shares acquired on or after 1 April 2017 in a company resident in India with effect from financial year 2017-18. Taxation in India at full domestic tax rate will take place from financial year 2019-20 onwards. The benefit of 50% reduction in tax rate during the transition period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2019 shall be subject to LOB Article. Interest arising in India to Mauritian resident banks will be subject to withholding tax in India at the rate of 7.5 percent in respect of debt claims or loans made after 31 March 2017.

175 Nations Signed Historic Paris Climate Agreement

World leaders from 175 countries signed the historic Paris climate Agreement at United Nations Headquarters in New York along marking a significant step to combat global warming. On behalf of India, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar signed the agreement at a high-level ceremony hosted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the occasion of Earth Day (22 April). The ceremony was attended by heads of governments, foreign ministers, corporate leaders and artists from across the world. The agreement will come into force 30 days after at least 55 Parties to the UNFCCC, accounting for at least 55 percent of global emissions ratify the agreement.

NATIONAL

Draft National Policy for Women 2016 unveiled

Union Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi on 17 May 2016 unveiled 2016 Draft National Policy for Women for comments and consultation. It will replace National Policy for Empowerment of Women, 2001. It will also guide Government action on Women's issues over the next 15-20 years. The drafted policy shifts the focus from entitlements to rights and from empowerment to creating an enabling environment.

India's Single Emergency Number '112' To Be Active From January 1

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The single emergency number '112' will be operational throughout India from January 1, 2017 to help people reach immediate services of police, ambulance and fire department. Telecom minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has approved the provision of a single number for various emergency services that would be similar to the '911' all-in-one emergency service in the US. The 211 emergency services will also be accessible even through those SIMs and landlines whose outgoing call facility has been stopped or temporarily suspended. A person in distress will need to call only 112, which will direct the call to concerned departments immediately for help. All existing emergency numbers will be phased out within a year of rolling out 112, depending upon the awareness about this new facility.

Indian Railways Launches Bharat Darshan Tourist Train For Pilgrims

Indian Railways has launched the Bharat Darshan Tourist train for pilgrims to visit Shirdi, Tirupati, Jagannath Puri, Gangasagar, Baidyanath Dham and Jyotirlingams among others. The tourist train comprises 10 coaches and bookings are being done by IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation). The service offers budget-friendly package for pilgrims. The package includes train journey, road transportation, accommodation, sightseeing at tourist locations and onboard and off-board meals. Bharat Darshan will cover pilgrimages destinations like Jagannath Puri, Gangasagar, Baidyanath Dham, Gaya, Banaras and Ayodhya. It will also cover 7 Jyotirlinga package and also offers "Dakshin Darshan with Shirdi" tour package that will cover Shirdi, Tirupati, Kanchipuram, Rameshwaram, Madurai, Kanyakumari, Mysore and Bangalore.

Prime Minister Launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1 May launched the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) at Ballia, Uttar Pradesh. It will benefit the poor, especially the women. The scheme aims to provide cooking gas connections to five crore below-poverty-line beneficiaries over the next three years. Under PMUY, each of the beneficiaries will receive monetary support of about 1,600 rupees to get a connection of cooking gas. It includes administrative cost, pressure regulator booklet and safety hose. The scheme seeks to empower women and protect their health by shifting them from traditional cooking based on unclean cooking fuels or on fossil fuels to clean cooking gas. It is being implemented by Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. It is for the first time this ministry is implementing a welfare scheme. The identification of eligible BPL families will be made in consultation with the State Governments and the Union Territories.

SC Approves Holding of MBBS, BDS Entrance Through NEET

Supreme Court has approved holding a single common entrance test National Eligibility Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to MBBS and BDS courses for the academic year 2016-17. The SC bench comprising Justices A R Dave, Shiva Kirti Singh and A K Goel gave nod to the NEET proposal put before it by the Union Government, CBSE and the Medical Council of India (MCI). The proposal had requested for treating All India Pre-Medical Test (AIPMT) fixed for May 1, 2016 as NEET-1. The SC order would imply that all government medical colleges, deemed universities and private medical colleges will be covered under the NEET. Those examinations which have already taken place or slated to be conducted separately stands scrapped.

STATES

World's Largest Rooftop Solar Power Plant Inaugurated in Amritsar

World's largest Single Rooftop Solar Power Plant with capacity of 11.5 MegaWatt (MW) at Dera Baba Jaimal Singh at Beas, in Amritsar, Punjab. It was inaugurated by Punjab Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal on 18 May 2016. This is the largest Solar Power Plant spread over 82 acres of rooftop in single campus on multiple roofs with installed capacity of 19.5 MW. The plant has been set up with the cost of 139 crore rupees. This state-

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of-the-art project was installed by the Radha Soami Satsang Beas Educational and Environmental Society with technical collaboration of Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA).

DMRC Conducts Trial Run of India's First Driver-less Metro

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) conducted the trial run of the country's first ever Metro train equipped to run in the driverless mode. The train was ceremonially flagged off by Union Minister for Urban Development M. Venkaiah Naidu and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The driverless trains will run on the over 58 km-long Majlish Park-Shiv Vihar (Line 7) and the over 38 km-long Janakpuri (West)- Botanical Garden (Line 8) corridors of the Phase-III.

BHEL Commissions 600 MW Thermal Power Plant In MP

State-run Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) on 3 May announced the commissioning of a 600 MW coal-based thermal power plant in Madhya Pradesh. The unit has been commissioned at the 1×600 MW Jhabua Thermal Power Project (TPP) located in Seoni district in Madhya Pradesh. The project has been developed by Jhabua Power Ltd (JPL), a subsidiary of Avantha Power & Infrastructure Limited (APIL). This is the second project of APIL commissioned by BHEL after the 1×600 MW Avantha Bhandar TPP at Raigarh in Chhattisgarh.

Gujarat Government Accords Minority Status To Jain Community

Gujarat Government on 7 May accorded minority status to the Jain community by issuing a government resolution (GR) to this effect. The decision has nothing to do with reservations and the new status will benefit the poor among the Jain community as they can avail of various scholarships, government welfare schemes. Jain institutions will get special status like the one given to Christian and Muslim institutions in the state.

Karnataka Govt Decides To Set Up Asia's First Rice Technology Park

Karnataka State government has decided to go ahead with the establishment of Asia's first Rice Technology Park at Gangavati in Koppal district and a Maize Technology Park at Ranebennur in Haveri district on the public-private participation model as a one-stop solution to all problems of rice and maize growers. Both parks will be established on the public-private participation model as a one-stop solution to all problems of rice and maize growers. As a value addition, the rice technology park would have facilities for rice flour, rice bran oil, rice rava, rice-based alcohol, noodles, animal and poultry e the state. The Act provides 10 per cent reservation in feed and paddy husk used for power generation and brick-making. These parks would pave the way for opening new avenues for rice and maize growers. It will help growers to add value to their produce and get better returns and also enhance quality of the produce.

CONFERENCES

Heart of Asia Conference Held In New Delhi

The Heart of Asia (HoA) conference was held in New Delhi on 26 April 2016. The conference was attended by officials of a number of countries including Pakistan Foreign Secretary Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry. Earlier, Pakistan hosted the fifth Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference in Islamabad on 9 December 2015. The Heart of Asia conference is a part of Istanbul Process. The Istanbul Process was established on 2 November 2011 to provide a platform to discuss regional issues, particularly encouraging security, political and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbours. The 14 participating countries in HoA process are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and UAE. The supporting countries include Australia, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Iraq, Japan, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, U.K., U.S. and the E.U.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Rakesh K Jain To Receive US National Medal of Science Award

Indian American professor Dr. Rakesh K. Jain will be presented 2015 National Medal of Science of the United States. He will be presented with this top award by US President Barack Obama for his individual achievement and leadership in advancing the field of science and technology. DR Rakesh K. Jain is regarded as a pioneer in the area of tumour micro-environment. He is widely recognized for his seminal discoveries in tumor biology, in vivo imaging, bio-engineering, drug delivery and bench-to-bedside translation. Currently, he is working as professor at Harvard Medical School and also is the director of tumour biology laboratory at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Syamantak Payra Won Intel Young Scientist Award

An Indian American teenager from Texas, Syamantak Payra has won the Intel Foundation Young e Scientist Award for his work in making a low-cost electronically-aided knee brace. Payra won \$50,000 award for his effort. The device will allow people with weakened legs to be able to walk better. Payra won the award along with Kathy Lu. The Young Scientist Award is given out by Intel Corporation and the Society for Science and the Public (SSP) at the 2016 'Intel International Science and Engineering Fair' in Arizona. Payra won the award after beating out 1,700 young scientists from 419 fairs held in 77 countries around the world.

Han Kang Won 2016 Man Booker Prize

South Korean author, Han Kang, on 16 May won the 2016 Man Booker International Prize for her novel 'The Vegetarian'. The prize ceremony was held at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London Han is the first South Korean to win the prize. The writer and her British translator will share the 72000 Dollar prize money.

National Florence Nightingale Awards – 2016

Pranab Mukherjee, the President of India on 12 May 2016 conferred National Florence Nighangle Awards 2015 on 35 nursing personnel from across the country for their meritorious services. The awards were conferred at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi. The award is conferred every year on 12 May as the world on this day e Scientist Award for his work in making a low-cost electro-observes International Nurses' Day. Theme chosen by the International Council of Nurses for this year is Nurses: A force for change – A vital resource for health.

MP Tourism Won Best Indian Destination For Wildlife Award

Madhya Pradesh Tourism (MPT) on 9 May received the Best Indian Destination for Wildlife Award. The award was presented by the Lonely Planet Group. Actress Amy Jackson presented the award to MPT at a function held in Mumbai. On behalf of MPT Chairman, his Officer on Special received the award.

SPORTS & GAMES

Women's 4x100m Relay Team Breaks Indian National Record

The Indian 4x100m women's relay team on 18 May 2016 broke the 18-year-old national record to finish in 4th position at the IAAF World Challenge held in Beijing, China. The 4x100m women relay team, which included Dutee Chand, Srabani Nanda, HM Jyoti and Merlin Joseph, clocked 44.03 seconds to finish the race. The clocked time broke the 18-year-old record of 44.43s crea-ted by the quartet of Saraswati Dey, Rachita Mistry, EB Shyla and PT Usha on 22 July 1998 in Fukuoka, Japan.

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Verstappen Becomes Youngest F1 Winner In History at Spanish Grand Prix

Dutch teenager, Max Verstappen, on 15 May became Formula One's youngest race winner after winning the Spanish Grand Prix. Red Bull's Verstappen defeated Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen by 0.616 seconds. His teammate Sebastian Vettel stood at the third position. At 18 years and 228 days, Max Verstappen is the youngest race winner in F1 history. The Dutchman was two years and 210 days younger than the previous youngest winner, Sebastian Vettel.

Pakistan Won 2016 Asia Kabaddi Championship Cup

Pakistan won the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2016 (Circle Style) that held on 6 May at Wah Cantonment in Pakistan. It defeated India by 19 points. Pakistan achieved 50 points against 31 by India in the final of the tournament. This is Pakistan's second successive win in the Asian Kabaddi title as they had won it in 2012.

Mark Selby Won 2016 World Snooker Championship Title

Ace snooker player Mark Selby from England has won the 2016 World Snooker Championship after beating Ding Junhui 18-14 in the final at the Crucible on 3 May. This was Selby's second World Snooker title after he had won it in 2014 for the first against Ronnie O'Sullivan. This was Selby's second title of the year 2016 after he had won minor Gdynia Open event held in Poland.

India 3rd On WADA Doping List

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has revealed their list of top doping offenders in 2014. India, with 96 violations recorded, are third on the list behind leaders Russia (148) and Italy (123). WADA's 2013 report had seen 91 violations from India, who were still placed 3rd on the blacklist. However, despite the relatively higher count of instances, there has been a 13% drop in the total number of failed tests.

ECONOMY

Uday Kotak Only Indian In Forbes List 'Most Powerful In Financial World'

Kotak Mahindra Bank Chief Uday Kotak, who has a net worth of about \$7.1 billion (nearly Rs 47,234.5 crore), is the sole Indian in Forbes' list of 40 of the most powerful people in the financial world who control the flow of trillions of dollars around the global economy. Uday Kotak is ranked 33rd in the Forbes list of 'Money Masters: The Most Powerful People In The Financial World' topped by Blackstone Group's CEO Stephen Schwarzman, who has a net worth of \$10.2 billion (nearly Rs 67,858.05 crore) and oversees assets worth \$344 billion (nearly Rs 22.8 lakh crore).

India Ranks Ninth In Crony-Capitalism Index

India is ranked at ninth position in crony-capitalism index that was released by the Economist in the first week of May 2016. India has a crony sector wealth counting for 3.4 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP). As per the latest crony-capitalism index the non-crony sector wealth in India amounts to 8.3 per cent of the GDP. India stood at the same ninth place in the previous 2014 rankings. Russia topped the list and followed by Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore.

India Is 5th Largest In Fake Goods Exports

According to the new study by the Organisation Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Union's Intellectual Property Office, India is the 5th biggest exporter of fake goods in the world. The list is topped by China, followed by Turkey, Singapore and Thailand.

Nabard Partners Germany For Food Security Initiative

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The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has entered into collaboration with German Government for a special programme on 'Soil Protection and Rehabilitation for Food Security'. The programme is part of the German government's recently introduced special initiative 'One World, No Hunger' initiative. India is the only country in Asia chosen for this initiative. As part of the collaboration, NABARD is anchoring two major programmes – soil conservation and rehabilitation of degraded land programme in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. It is also conducting innovation of watershed development and climate change adaptation programmes in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Mahindra Becomes First Indian Company To Join EP100 Campaign

Automobile giant Mahindra & Mahindra has become the first Indian company to join a global energy campaign led by an international non-profit group that will work with the world's most influential businesses in setting commitments to double their energy productivity. Mahindra Group chairman Anand Mahindra represented the corporate world at the high-level signing ceremony of the historic Paris climate change agreement at the United Nations. By signing to this campaign, the company committed to double its energy productivity by 2030 which is a core requirement for any business signing on to the campaign.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

World's First Robot Lawyer ROSS

US-based law firm BakerHostetler in May 2016 hired the world's first robot lawyer ROSS to assist the company and its various teams in legal research. The law firm will licence artificial lawyer ROSS for use in its Bankruptcy, Restructuring and Creditors' Rights team. ROSS has been built by ROSS Intelligence and is built upon IBM cognitive computer Watson. With the support of Watson's, lawyers can ask ROSS their research question. The ROSS reads through the law, gathers evidence, draws inferences and returns highly relevant, evidence-based answers. ROSS also monitors the law around the clock to notify users of new court decisions that can affect a case.

India Successfully Test-Fires Advanced Interceptor Missile

India on 15 May successfully test fired an indigenously developed Advanced Air Defence interceptor missile, Ashwin. It was launched from the complex of Abdul Kalam Island (formerly known as Wheeler Island) off Odisha coast. The advanced version of low altitude supersonic ballistic interceptor missile was fired at a ballistic missile, a modified version of Prithvi weapon system. It was test fired to validate various parameters of the interceptor in flight mode. Ashwin is capable of destroying any incoming hostile ballistic missile. Indigenously developed by DRDO, the ADD interceptor missile is a 7.5-meter long single-stage solid rocket propelled guided missile equipped with a navigation system, a hi-tech computer and an electro-mechanical activator. It weighs around 1.2 tonnes and has a diameter of less than 0.5 meter.

China Launches Yaogan-30 Remote Sensing Satellite

China has successfully launched Yaogan-30 remote sensing satellite into sun-synchronous orbit (SSO) using the Long March-2D rocket. The rocket was launched on 15 May from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center located in Gobi desert in northwest China's Gansu Province. It was the 227th flight of the Long March rocket series and was also the second orbital launch from the Jiuquan Satellite launch Center in 2016. The Yaogan-30 satellite was built by the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST). It is part of second generation of the Yaogan series inaugurated in 2008. The first Yaogan satellite was launched in 2006.

China Bug Declared World's Longest Insect

A bug over half a metre long discovered in southern China has been declared the world's longest insect. A stick insect measuring 62.4 centimetres found two years ago in the southern province of Guangxi has broken the record for length amongst the world's 807,625 known insects. The previous record-holder was a Malaysian 56.7-centimetre-long stick insect discovered in 2008 and now on display in London's Natural History Museum. Tipped off by locals about a huge beast half a metre long but as thick as a human index finger, scientist Zhao Li had been on the hunt for the bug for six years before he finally glimpsed and captured one.

Scientists Create World's Smallest Thermometer From DNA

Scientists have developed world's Smallest (Nano) Thermometer using DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) structures that can fold and unfold at specifically defined temperature functions. It was developed by the scientists at the University of Montreal and the study report in this regard was published in the journal Nano Letters. The world's smallest thermometer is 20,000 times smaller than a human hair and is fully programmable. It was developed using basic idea of the DNA molecules which unfold when heated to certain temperatures. RNA, proteins and other bio-molecules in the DNA fold and unfold. With this idea researchers engineered DNA structures that are capable of folding and unfolding at specific temperatures making it nano-scale temperature signalling device.

PERSONS IN NEWS

A). APPOINTMENTS

Justice Sinha Sworn In new CJ of Rajasthan HC

Justice Navin Sinha was on 14 May sworn in as the new Chief Justice of the Rajasthan High Court. Governor Kalyan Singh administered the oath to the new Chief Justice. Sinha was earlier the Chief Justice of the Chhattisgarh high court.

Anil Kumble Re-appointed ICC Cricket Committee Chairman

Former India captain Anil Kumble was on 13 May re-appointed ICC (International Cricket Council) Cricket Committee chairman for a second term of three years. Earlier he was appointed as the chairman for his first term in 2012 and now he will continue to head the panel until 2018.

Sunil Lanba Appointed as Chief of the Naval Staff

Vice Admiral Sunil Lanba, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief (FOC-in-C) of Western Naval Command, has been appointed as the new Chief of Naval Staff on 5 May 2016. He will be 23rd chief of Indian Navy and 21st as an Indian. He will assume the charge on 31 May 2016 and shall have full three-year-term in office till 31 May 2019. He will succeed present Navy Chief Admiral Robin K. Dhowan, who will superannuate from the post on 31 May 2016.

President Approves Name of Four Judges For Supreme Court

President Pranab Mukherjee on 11 May signed the warrant for the appointment of four judges to the Supreme Court. These include three chief justices of high court and one senior advocate. These names were recommended by the Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice of India TS Thakur on 4 May 2016. These four will be sworn in as Supreme Court judges on 13 May 2016, the last working day before the summer vacation. With this sworn-in event, the judicial strength of the Supreme Court will move up to 28. They are the first appointments to the Supreme Court since the collegium system of judicial appointments was restored after the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act was struck down by a Supreme Court bench on 16 October 2015.

Surender Kumar Bhagat Appointed as DG of RPF

Senior IPS officer Surender Kumar Bhagat was appointed as the Director General (DG) of Railways Protection Force (RPF).

B). RESIGNS

Shashank Manohar Resigns as BCCI president

Shashank Vyankatesh Manohar on 10 May resigned as the President of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). He also has resigned as the representative of BCCI on the International Cricket Council (ICC) and also from the Asian Cricket Council. He had succeeded Jagmohan Dalmiya as the cricket body's president after the former's demise in October 2015. This was Shashank Manohar's second stint as the head of the Indian cricketing body. Earlier he had served as President from 2008 to 2011. Now he will contest for the post of ICC Chairman. The ICC rules mentions that Chairman should be of independent nature and can't act in dual role keeping his position as his country's cricketing chief.

C). DEATHS

India's Oldest Test Cricketer Shodhan Died

Former Test cricketer Deepak Shodhan, the first Indian to score a memorable ton in his debut innings, died on 16 May 2016. He was 87. India's oldest living Test cricketer died due to cardiac arrest after a brief battle with lung cancer at his residence in Ahmedabad. He was left-handed batsman and could bowl medium pace. He played just three Tests in all averaging 60-plus. He rescued India from dire straits by scoring 110 not out in his debut innings against Pakistan in the fifth and final drawn Test at Eden Gardens, Kolkata in 1952-53.

Kerala Cartoonist V T Thomas Died

Kerala cartoonist V T Thomas, popularly known as Toms, passed away on 27 April at in Kottayam, Kerala. He was 86. Toms created the legendary cartoon characters Boban and Molly (Bobanum Moliyum). He was born on June 6, 1929 in Kuttanad in Alappuzha district. During the World War II he had served in the British Army for a brief period. Initially Boban and Molly characters appeared in a cartoon column Sathya-deepam weekly in 1950. Later on these characters became part of Malayala Manorama weekly in 1957. He resigned from Malayala Manorama in 1987 and began his own publication.

Music Legend Prince Rogers Nelson Died

Pop music superstar Prince Rogers Nelson, popularly known as Prince, died on 21 April in Paisley Park in Chanhassen, Minneapolis. He was 57. Prince was widely known for his flamboyant stage presence and wide vocal range. He was the pioneer of famous song the Minneapolis sound and was renowned as an innovator for his eclectic work. In a career that lasted from the late 1970s until his solo Piano & a Microphone tour in 2016, he was acclaimed as a musical prodigy and an artist who shaped his career his way. Through his career, Prince recorded more than 30 albums and was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 2004. He won seven Grammy Awards and earned 30 nominations.

D). VISITORS

Sri Lankan President Visited India

Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena visited India on 13-14 May 2016. During the visit Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena released 'Simhastha Declaration' at Ninora village in Ujjain. Both leaders addressed the concluding session of the 3 day International Vichar Mahakumbi for the month-long Simhastha Mela.

President Pranab Mukherjee Visited New Zealand

President Pranab Mukherjee visited New Zealand from April 30 to May 2, 2016. During the visit, India and New Zealand signed an Air Services Agreement paving the way for introduction of direct flights between the two countries. The agreement was signed in the presence of the President Pranab Mukherjee and the New Zealand Prime Minister John Key. The agreement will lead to easier connectivity that has inhibited both business travel and people-to-people contact in the past.

E). MISCELLANEOUS

Indian Scientist Bags SGD 3 million Grant From Singapore's NRF

Dr Manvendra K Singh, a scientist from Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur city, was awarded a grant of SGD 3 million (about 14.7 crore rupees) by Singapore's National Research Foundation (NRF). Dr. Singh in the first week of May 2016 announced that he is among the seven young scientists from across the world to be endowed with the Singapore NRF fellowship. The scientist has been awarded the fellowship to pursue research in the field of congenital and adult cardiovascular diseases.

IISc Professor Ramaswamy Among Royal Society Fellows

Physicist Sriram Ramaswamy, Director of TIFR Centre for Interdisciplinary Sciences, Hyderabad, was elected as the Fellow of The Royal Society, as announced on 29 April 2016. His name appeared on the list of 50 new fellows and 10 new Foreign Members announced by the Royal Society. Besides, biochemist Ramanujan Hegde, MRC Laboratory of Microbiology, U.K. and applied mathematician Lakshminarayanan Mahadevan, Harvard University, are the other two Indian names who were also elected as the fellows of the premier scientific academy of the U.K. and the Commonwealth.

PLACES IN NEWS

World's Oldest Ground-Edge Stone Axe Found In Australia

Australian archaeologists on 11 May 2016 announced that they have discovered a piece of the world's oldest axe. The axe was discovered in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia. The analysis of the fragment was published in the journal Australian Archaeology on 9 May 2016. The axe fragment is about the size of a thumbnail and dates back to a Stone Age period of 45000 to 49000 years ago. It is an axe with a handle attached.

Switzerland Government Honours Yash Chopra with Special Statue

Switzerland Government has honoured late veteran filmmaker Yash Chopra by unveiling bronze statue at Interlaken. The bronze statue weighing about 250 kilos was inaugurated by his wife Pamela Chopra and daughter-in-law Rani Mukerjee. Chopra was known for opening a legacy of South Asian tourists flocking to Switzerland and spend much time in the country besides shooting his movies.

ABBREVIATIONS

AGOC – Asian Games Organization Committee

CBSE – Central. Board of Secondary Education

CISF – Central Industrial Security Force

EAS – Employment Assurance Scheme

NSSO – National Sample Survey Organization

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SEBI – Security Exchange Board of India

UNHCR - United Nations High Commission for Refugees

ABCI – Association of Business Communicators of India

AIFI – All India Financial Institution

AMFI – Association of Mutual Funds in India

BCSBI – Banking Codes and Standards Board of India

BFSI – Banking Financial Services and Insurance

CFSA – Committee on Financial Sector Assessment

Books in News

Biography of Shashi Kapoor Released

Veteran actor Shashi Kapoor's autobio-graphy titled 'Shashi Kapoor–the House-holder, the Star' was released on 6 May. The biography has been authored by film journalist Aseem Chhabra & with foreword by Karan Johar. It unveils the chapters of actor's personal and professional life.

COMMITTEES

SC Appointed RM Lodha-panel To Reform MCI

The Supreme Court of India on 2 May appointed a three-member panel headed by former Chief Justice of India (CJI) RM Lodha to oversee the functions of the Medical Council of India. It is the regulator of medical profession and education in India. Besides Lodha, the panel consists of former Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Vinod Rai and Dr SK Sareen. The court appointed the panel as the MCI is often been accused of indulging in corrupt practices. The court referred to reports of a government panel and a parliamentary standing committee that indicted the MCI for various malpractices.

IMPORTANT DAYS & DATES

May 1 – International Labour Day

May 3 – International Energy Day

May 5 – World Athletics Day

May 8 – International Red Cross Day

May 11 – National Technology Day

May 12 – International Nurses day

May 15 – International Family Day

May 17 – World Telecom Day

May 18 – World Museum Day

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May 21 – Anti-terrorism day

May 22 – International Biological Diversity Day

May 24 – Commonwealth Day

May 29 – International Day of Peacekeepers

May 31 – World No Tobacco Day