



## General Studies Prelim 2011: Current Affairs

October: November: December

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Defence Technology

##### AIP(Air Independent propulsion)

- Air-independent propulsion (AIP) is a term that encompasses technologies which allow a submarine to operate without the need to surface or use a snorkel to access atmospheric oxygen.
- DRDO is building this technology for Indian navy.

##### NBC reconnaissance vehicle

- BMP-2 "Sarath" based NBC(nuclear-biological-chemical) reconnaissance vehicle. Externally very similar to the basic vehicle but fitted with all kinds of sampling, testing and marking systems. The NBCRV was developed by DRDO and VRDE.
- Developed for the Indian army.
- **Status:** Recently handed over.

##### Background:

- BMP-2 "Sarath" ("Chariot of Victory"):
  - Indian license-produced variant of BMP-2, built by the Ordnance Factory Medak.
- BMP-2
  - The BMP-2 (Boyevaya Mashina Pekhoty, infantry combat vehicle) is a second-generation, amphibious infantry fighting vehicle introduced in the 1980s in the Soviet Union, following the BMP-1 of the 1960s

##### FGFA

- To be developed by HAL and Russia's Rosoboronexport and Sukhoi.
- would be called Perspective Multi-role Fighter (PMF)
- advanced features such as stealth, super-cruise, ultra-manoeuvrability, highly integrated avionics suite, enhanced situational awareness, internal carriage of weapons and network centric warfare capabilities.
- production and joint marketing of the aircraft to third countries.

##### India joins the race to develop unmanned combat aerial vehicle(UCAV) independently

UCAV was basically a fighter bomber without pilot and would have the ability to launch bombs, missiles and rockets on ground-based commands. The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) mostly carries surveillance payload, travels at subsonic speed and remains airborne for a long time, while the UCAV will fly for a few hours, undertake manoeuvres at high speed and perform a combat aircraft's role.

##### Rustom 1

Rustom 1, is a medium-altitude and long-endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), developed by DRDO for the three services, Indian Army, Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force of the Indian Armed Forces. Unlike the other UAVs, which used to have a free fall with parachutes after executing their tasks, Rustom will carry out copybook style landing.

**Current status:** successfully test-flown recently.

**Background:**

Rustom 1 followed the two other UAVs developed by the ADE — Lakshya and Nishant. While Lakshya — a drone that is remotely piloted by a ground control station — provides aerial sub-targets for live-fire training, Nishant is a surveillance aircraft primarily tasked with intelligence gathering over enemy territory.

**Agni-II Prime**

Agni-II Prime, earlier called **Agni-II+**, is a **modified version** of the **nuclear capable** Agni-II strategic missile to fill the gap in the range between Agni-II and Agni-III. it would have a **higher range(about 2,500 km)**, higher performance, with respect to the thrust and weight ratio than Agni-II, which has a range of 2,000 km. The **two-stage**, surface-to-surface missile is capable of carrying nuclear warheads of one tonne.

**Status: Maiden launch failed.**

**Samudra Prahari**

Indian Coast Guard Ship Samudra Prahari , the 1st **pollution Control Vessel (PCV)** of its kind in the entire South East Asia was built indigenously by private company M/s ABG Shipyard Limited, Surat. The Ship was commissioned at Mumbai in Oct 2010. The Ship is equipped with the most advanced and sophisticated Pollution response and control equipment for mitigating oil spills in the Indian EEZ.

**Multi Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) aircrafts being bought in India**

Following the fresh request for proposals, Boeing has also joined the fray with Airbus Military and Russia's United Aircraft that manufactures the Il-78.

**AMCA**

The **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)**, formerly known as the Medium Combat Aircraft (MCA), is a twin-engined 5th generation stealth multirole fighter being developed by DRDO's lab ADA.

**LCA to have ILSS**

The **integrated life support system (ILSS)** ensures **uninterrupted oxygen supply** to the pilot even as it protects him from adverse effects of high altitude flying and extreme gravitational forces acting on his body during high-speed combat maneuvers.

ILSS which has an **on board oxygen generation** system, or **OBOGS**, which continuously supplies oxygen to the pilot without fears of being exhausted

**OPV Vijit**

Indian Coast Guard Ship (ICGS) Vijit, the second in the series of 90-metre Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) was commissioned recently.

Orion is UAV of Aurora Flight Sciences, USA.

**Hataf-V ,Ghauri**

- is a nuclear capable medium-range(1500km) ballistic missile (MRBM) developed of Pakistan

**Robotics**

**Robot Suit HAL**

The suit, called HAL – or Hybrid Assistive Limb – is the work of Cyberdyne Corporation in Japan, and has been created to "upgrade the existing physical capabilities of the human body

It operates by sensing weak bioelectrical signals via electrodes on the operator's skin and sending them to the onboard computer which in turn analyzes them and activates corresponding motors(servos) of the suit, mimicking

the wearer's motions.

Technology can have a variety of applications, including in physical training and rehabilitation, adding extra "muscle" to heavy labour jobs, and even in rescue and recovery operations apart from helping physically disable persons.

## Space Technology

### GSAT-5P

- communication satellite launched by GSLV-F06 on Dec 25, exploded mid air;
- Reason: communication failure between computer on board and other parts.
- was to provide continuity to INSAT system
- 36 transponders in C (24) and extended C(12) Bands

### 10 years of International Space Station completed

#### **Gliese 581g**

Astronomers at the University of California have discovered a planet, orbiting a star some 20 light years away, which they claim is the most Earth-like yet found and very much likely to be habitable.

#### **Chang'e 2**

Chang'e 2 is a Chinese un-manned lunar probe that was launched on 1 October 2010 aboard a Long March 3C rocket from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in Xichang, Sichuan province. It is a follow-on to the Chang'e 1 lunar probe launched in 2007 and is part of the first phase of the Chinese Lunar Exploration Program. The probe will conduct research at a 100-kilometer-high lunar orbit as a preparation for a soft landing by Chang'e 3. Chang'e 2 is similar to Chang'e 1 with some improvements, including a better camera with a resolution of one meter. It is named after a legendary Chinese goddess of the moon.

#### Super-Earth

astronomers have for the first time analysed the atmosphere of a "super-Earth", the name given to a distant, earth-like planet outside our solar system. Although most "super-Earths" found so far are giants more similar to Jupiter, some may not be too different from Earth.

**space telescope Kepler** -- launched last year to search for Earth-like planets outside our solar system. More than 700 candidates have been discovered so far.

#### Life on Mars

**CO 2** finding by NASA on Mars hints at ancient life.

**Methane** and **Gypsum**, the indicators of life, were previously found.

#### GLONASS

- GLONASS ("GLObal NAVigation Satellite System" ) is a radio-based satellite navigation system of Russia. It is an alternative and complementary to the United States' Global Positioning System (GPS), the Chinese Compass navigation system, and the planned Galileo positioning system of the European Union (EU).
- India is also cooperating in its modernization.
- India will get access to high precision data of GLONASS for both military and civilian use.

#### Spacecraft Dragon

The **SpaceX Dragon** is a spacecraft developed by SpaceX, a space transportation company in Hawthorne, California. In December 2010, it became the **first spacecraft ever placed in orbit and recovered by a private company**.

## ICT(Information Communication Technology)

### **CERT-in (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team)**

- CERT-In is the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents as and when they occur.

[Note: Recently various government websites were hacked by Pakistan based hackers called "Pakistan cyber army" ]

### **LTE/4G/BWA**

Telecommunications equipment major Nokia Siemens Networks (NSN) demonstrated for the first time its Time Division Duplex version of LTE (TD-LTE) technology in India in Bangalore. The technology, running on broadband wireless access (BWA) spectrum, for which licences were issued recently, will herald the fourth generation (4G) of technology in the wireless communications space.

### **Next generation network (NGN)**

A Next generation network (NGN) is a broad term to describe key architectural evolutions in telecommunication standards. The general idea behind the NGN is that one network transports all information and services (voice, data, and all sorts of media such as video) by encapsulating these into **packets**, like it is on the Internet.

NGNs are commonly built around the Internet Protocol, and therefore the term "**all-IP**" is also sometimes used to describe the transformation toward NGN.

### **IPV6**

Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) is a version of the Internet Protocol that is designed to succeed Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) that is currently used since 1981.

The main driving force for the redesign of Internet Protocol was the foreseeable IPv4 address exhaustion. IPv6 was developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).

### **3D TV**

Japanese electronics giant Toshiba recently said it would launch the first liquid crystal display 3D television that does not require users to wear special glasses.

Current 3D-capable televisions require viewers to wear glasses that act as filters to separate images to each eye to create the illusion of depth.

Rival Sharp earlier this year unveiled a small glasses-free LCD touchscreen that shows 3D images for use in mobile phones, digital cameras and games consoles such as Nintendo's 3DS, to be released in Japan in February 2011.

#### **Background:**

There are several techniques to produce and display 3D moving pictures. The basic requirement is to display offset images that are filtered separately to the left and right eye. Two strategies have been used to accomplish this: have the viewer wear eyeglasses to filter the separate offset images to each eye, or have the lightsource split the images directionally into the viewer's eyes (no glasses required)

### **Stuxnet**

Stuxnet is a computer worm targeted at industrial equipment that recently targeted Iran's nuclear facilities (especially uranium enrichment facility at Natanz) to hinder Iran's nuclear program. Iran alleged the role of western powers.

Russian digital security company Kaspersky Labs described it as "a working and fearsome prototype of a cyber-weapon that will lead to the creation of a new arms race in the world".

### **Touch screen: How does a touch screen function?**

A basic touch screen has three main components: a touch sensor, a controller, and a software driver. The touch screen is an input device, so it needs to be combined with a display and a PC or other device to make a complete touch input system.

1. Touch sensor: A touch screen sensor is a clear glass panel with a touch responsive surface. The sensor generally has an electrical current or signal going through it and touching the screen causes a voltage or signal change. This voltage change is used to determine the location of the touch to the screen.
2. Controller: It takes information from the touch sensor and translates it into information that microprocessor can understand.
3. Software driver: It tells the device's operating system how to interpret the touch event information that is sent from the controller. Most touch screen drivers today are a mouse-emulation type driver.

### **Microwave Radiation**

Department of Telecommunications will begin a nationwide testing of mobile towers to check harmful effects of electromagnetic frequency radiation they emit.

### **'National Broadband Network'**

the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recommended setting up a 'National Broadband Network' at a cost of to achieve **16-crore broadband connections by 2014**.

Stating that a '**National Optical Fibre Agency (NOFA)** will be set up to establish this broadband network, TRAI said the National Broadband Network will be an open access optical fibre network connecting all habitation with **population of 500 and above**. It will be established in **two phases**.

### **Liberoffice, openoffice**

Open source software for office functions such as document editing, making slides, spreadsheets and databases. It is similar to Microsoft office suit that is proprietary.

## **Energy and Nuclear Technology**

### **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)**

After denying permission to the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) to locate the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) at Singara in Nilgiris district in Tamil Nadu, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) accorded both environmental and forest clearance for locating the project in the Bodi West Hills (BWH) in **Theni district, also in Tamil Nadu**.

- The INO will be a major underground experimental facility to study the elusive and nearly mass-less fundamental particles of nature called neutrinos.
- The proposed massive neutrino detector will be built in a cavern set in massive charnockite rock (group of igneous rocks found in South India with those in Tamil Nadu known to be the hardest). The cavern will be excavated by drilling a tunnel of 1.9-2 km in length under the peak designated as 1589 so that there is vertical overburden of about 1,300 m. For a good neutrino detection facility, a vertical cover of at least 1,000 m is required so that the observed neutrino events are not contaminated by unwanted particles that will be absorbed by the overburden.
- The INO includes nearly 90 scientists from 25 institutions, with the TIFR as the nodal institution.

### **Background:**

A neutrino is an elementary particle, that usually travels close to the speed of light, is **electrically neutral**, and is able to **pass through ordinary matter almost undisturbed**. This makes neutrinos **extremely difficult to detect**. Neutrinos have a very small, but **nonzero rest mass**.

Neutrinos are similar to the more familiar electron, with one crucial difference: neutrinos do not carry electric charge. Because neutrinos are electrically neutral, they are not affected by the electromagnetic forces which act on electrons. Neutrinos are affected only by a "weak" sub-atomic force of much shorter range than electromagnetism, and are therefore able to pass through great distances in matter without being affected by it. As neutrinos have mass, they also interact gravitationally with other massive particles. Gravity, however, is by far the weakest of the four known forces.

## Fast Breeder Test Reactor to turn 25

### Background:

#### FAST REACTOR PROGRAMME

The second stage of nuclear power generation envisages setting up of fast breeder reactors (FBRs) backed by reprocessing plants and plutonium-based fuel fabrication plants. **These fast breeder systems produce more fuel than what they consume.** FBRs can increase fuel utilisation by about sixty times of what is possible with PHWRs. **IGCAR** started the breeder programme with the setting up of a Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) at **Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu** in **October 1985**. This reactor, operating with indigenously developed **mixed uranium-plutonium carbide fuel** has achieved its technology objectives.

## CIRUS / DHRUVA

On December 18, the scientists and engineers in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) celebrated the **Golden Jubilee** of research reactor CIRUS and the **Silver jubilee** of DHRUVA.

### Background:

#### Research Reactors

- The research reactor programme of DAE provided research and development support to the nuclear power programme, produces radioisotopes for use in health care, agriculture, industry and research, and provides manpower training.
- The research reactors set up by DAE so far, have been Apsara (1mW, Fuel: Enriched Uranium-Aluminium alloy), CIRUS (40MW, Fuel: Natural uranium), Zerlina (zero energy, Natural Uranium), Purnima I-III (Fuel: Plutonium/Uranium-233), Dhruva (100 MW, Fuel: Natural Uranium) at Trombay (Maharashtra), and Kamini (30kW, Fuel: Uranium-233-A1 alloy) and Fast Breeder Test Reactor (40MW, Fuel: Uranium-Plutonium carbide) at Kalpakkam (Tamil Nadu). Of the research reactors, Zerlina was decommissioned in 1984, and Purnima series made way for Kamini.

## LWR

The light water reactor or LWR is a type of thermal reactor that uses normal water as its coolant and neutron moderator

## Shale Gas

### Fuel cell

A fuel cell is an electrochemical cell that converts a source fuel into an electric current. It generates electricity inside a cell through reactions between a fuel and an oxidant, triggered in the presence of an electrolyte. The reactants flow into the cell, and the reaction products flow out of it, while the electrolyte remains within it. Fuel cells can operate continuously as long as the necessary reactant and oxidant flows are maintained.

Fuel cells are different from conventional electrochemical cell batteries in that they consume reactant from an external source, which must be replenished— a thermodynamically open system.

### Background:

BHEL developed a 3 kW (3 x 1 kW) automated Proton Exchange

Membrane fuel Cell Power Pack and demonstrated the same for the Stationary Applications.

The Bloom Energy Server (commonly referred to as the Bloom Box) is a solid oxide fuel cell (SOFC) made by Bloom Energy, of Sunnyvale, California

## Health Technology

### Endosulfan

- Endosulfan is a chemical pesticide.
- Due to its acute **toxicity**, it is **banned** in many countries.
- India is the **world's largest user** of endosulfan and major producer of it.
- In **2001, Kerala's Kasaragod**, endosulfan spraying became suspect when linked to a series of **abnormalities noted in local children**.
- Currently it is **banned in Kerala**.
- **All India ban is demanded** by various organizations and parties but government has some reservations.
- Slamming the Central government's stand on the use of toxic pesticide endosulfan as leading to "a grave violation of human rights", the National Human Rights Commission in its recent report has called for a nation-wide ban. India should also agree to a global ban, said the Commission, which also recommended higher compensation for victims.
- At the international level, India was the only nation that voted against a worldwide ban on endosulfan at the last review meeting of the Stockholm Convention in October 2010.

### Asbestos

- Asbestos is a set of six naturally occurring silicate minerals
- Asbestos became increasingly popular among manufacturers and builders in the late 19th century because of its sound absorption, average tensile strength, and its resistance to heat, electrical and chemical damage.
- Due to carcinogenic effects it is banned in many countries including the UK, US and Australia.
- Monikers: **Killer Dust/ "the silent time-bomb"**
- **Chrysolite**: chemical name of white asbestos.
- Top Producers
  - Russia (40.2%), China (19.9%), Kazakhstan (13.0%), Canada (10.3%), and Brazil (9.9%)
- Top exporters
  - Russia>Kazakhstan>Brazil>Canada
- Top Consumers
  - India>China>Russia
- In news: Kolkata-headquartered Balmukund Cement & Roofing Ltd. (BCRL) proposed to set up an asbestos cement roofing sheet factory in the Bishnupur-Chainpur, Marwan block in Bihar. EIA report has inconsistencies.

### calcium carbide (CaC<sub>2</sub>)

- A deadly chemical, calcium carbide, is used widely across the country to artificially ripen fruit, risking the health of consumers.
- Although banned, the chemical, known commonly as "masala," is used freely in the country.
- The Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act, 1954, and the Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955, both ban artificial ripening, including the use of CaC<sub>2</sub>.

### GM mosquitoes

Malaysia's Health Minister said the country would carry out a landmark field trial by releasing genetically modified mosquitoes designed to combat dengue fever by the end of the year.

#### **Background:**

When a female Anopheles mosquito is laying eggs, she needs extra protein, which she gets by sucking blood from vertebrate animals like birds, reptiles or mammals. If the animal she feeds on is carrying a malaria parasite, the mosquito picks it up. The next time she feeds on an animal, she transfers the parasite to that animal's blood stream.

The idea of using genetically modified (GM) mosquitoes to help wipe out malaria has been around for a while. Theoretically, if you could create a "better," stronger mosquito that happens to be unable to spread malaria

parasites, and you were to release tens of thousands of those better mosquitoes into the wild, they would eventually win the survival game and replace the mosquitoes that are able to spread malaria. In this theoretical solution, once malaria were eradicated from a particular area, it wouldn't come back because the mosquitoes couldn't carry it back. But there has always been a glitch.

scientists turned on a gene in the mosquito's gut that controls SM1 peptide. SM1 peptide, a type of protein, appears to stop the development of the malaria parasite while it's living in the mosquito, rendering it harmless

#### **GRNOPC1**

a human embryonic stem cell (hESC)-based therapy by Geron corp. to treat spinal cord injury. First trial with human embryonic stem cells began in USA recently as the Obama administration has lifted the ban on embryonic stem cell research.

#### **Adulterations**

- Pulses/Besan-KhesariDal
- Ghee-Mashed potato, sweet potato;
- Wheat flour- sand and dirt

#### **AQUAMAT - African Quinine v. Artesunate Malaria Trial**

- This landmark study conducted in 11 study sites in nine African countries, enrolled 5,425 children with severe malaria. The results demonstrate that compared with quinine, artesunate reduced the mortality rate
- **Artesunate** is derived from a **Chinese herb** called **qinghao** (*Artemisia annua*).

### **Transport Technology**

#### **17th independent zonal railway**

- Kolkata Metro given Zone Status
- The Kolkata Metro or Calcutta Metro is the Underground Mass Rapid Transit Urban Railway network in Kolkata
- It was the first underground railway to be built in India, with the first operations commencing in October, 1984 (foundation stone-29 Dec 1972)

#### **Skybus Metro**

- is a rapid transit system indigenously developed by the Konkan Railway in India.
- Cheaper than normal metro.
- Konkan Railway trying to find partners.

#### **India to get world's first AC double-decker train**

The world's first air-conditioned double-decker train was launched on the Howrah-Dhanbad sector.

#### **World's longest Railway tunnel**

The **Gotthard Base Tunnel** (GBT), due to open in late 2017, is a railway tunnel beneath the Alps in Switzerland. With a route length of 57 km (35.4 mi) and a total of 151.84 km (94.3 mi) of tunnels, shafts and passages, it is the world's longest rail tunnel, surpassing the undersea Seikan Tunnel in Japan.

#### **CRH380/world's fastest train**

China's home-built CRH380 bullet train has been recorded travelling at 420 km per hour, a world record. It will, however, travel between the two cities at less than full tilt, at an average speed of 350 km per hour.

**Background:**

- India has the world's fourth largest railway network after that of the United States, Russia and China.
- China has world's largest high-speed rail network and overall third.
- World's only commercial Maglev Line in Shanghai reaches speeds of 431 km/h.
- The world record for conventional high-speed rail is held by the V150, a specially configured version of Alstom's TGV which clocked 574.8 km/h on a test run. The world speed record for Maglev is held by the Japanese experimental MLX01: 581 km/h (361 mph).

**China's supercomputer world's fastest**

Rank (as on November 2010)	Name, Place and year	Speed (peta-FLOPS )	comment
1	<b>Tianhe-1A</b> National Supercomputing Center in Tianjin China, 2010	2.566	
2	Jaguar Oak Ridge National Laboratory United States, 2009	1.759	Last years fastest
3	Nebulae National Supercomputing Center in Shenzhen (NSCS) China, 2010	1.271	
47	EKA Computational Research Laboratories, TATA SONS Pune, India, 2007	.132	India's fastest. When it was installed in November 2007, it was the <b>4th fastest</b> in the world and fastest in Asia.

**Background:**

- A supercomputer is a computer that is at the frontline of current processing capacity, particularly speed of calculation. The term supercomputer itself is rather fluid, and **today's supercomputers tend to become tomorrow's ordinary computers**. In general, the speed of a supercomputer is measured in "FLOPS" (Floating Point Operations Per Second).
- India also has indigenously developed **C-DAC's PARAM** series and **BARC's Anupam** series of supercomputers.

**DIMTS**

Delhi Integrated Multi Modal Transit System Ltd. (DIMTS) is a Joint Venture Company set up with equal equity of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) and Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC).

It is aiming to develop and deliver world class urban infrastructure to the citizens of Delhi, primarily in the area of urban transport.

**India's largest private port**

Mundra Port and SEZ owned by Adani Group

**Miscellaneous**

**XM-25**

The U.S. army is deploying a new rifle in Afghanistan. The XM-25, described as a "game changer", uses a laser guidance system and specially developed microchipped ammunition which can be programmed to detonate over a target, even when the target is hidden behind walls or in ditches.

**Phoenix capsule**

Named after the mythic bird that rose from its ashes, a custom-built rescue capsule, designed through a joint collaboration by NASA engineers and the Chilean navy to ferry 33 miners to the surface -- 69 days after the men were trapped in a dark, humid, copper-gold mine in Chile's northern Atacama Desert.

**World's first methanol factory using carbon dioxide**

The world's first methanol factory using carbon dioxide extracted from steam is expected to be completed next March in Iceland, according to a report from Stockholm on December 8.

**Why flowers are not black but bright colored?**

- The brightly colored flower is an essential part for most plants, since they have to attract the pollinators and it help in durability by keeping temperature low(most of the light reflected).

VISION IAS

## PRIZES / AWARDS

### World Famous

#### Nobel Prizes

<p><b>Peace Prize</b></p>	<p>Liu Xiaobo(China)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chinese literary critic, writer, professor, and human rights activist.</li> <li>• He was sentenced to <b>eleven years'</b> imprisonment on suspicion of "<b>inciting subversion of state power</b>" in <b>2009</b>.</li> <li>• He is the <b>first Chinese citizen to be awarded a Nobel Prize of any kind while residing in China</b>.</li> <li>• He is the <b>fourth person</b> to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize while in prison or detention, after Germany's Carl von Ossietzky (1935), the Soviet Union's Andrei Sakharov (1975), and Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi (1991).</li> <li>• Liu is also the <b>second person</b> first being Ossietzky to be denied the right to have a representative collect the Nobel prize for him.</li> <li>• The peace prize was placed on an <b>empty chair</b> in Oslo's city hall in a symbolic act to mark its award to Liu Xiaobo.</li> <li>• "<b>I have no enemies: My final Statement</b>" was an essay written by Liu Xiaobo <b>intended to be read at his trial</b> in December 2009 but never heard. <b>It became the laureate's speech</b> delivered by Norwegian actor Liv Ullmann at the award ceremony.</li> <li>• China termed it a western <b>interference in its sovereignty</b> and requested many countries not to attend the ceremony.</li> <li>• He is one of the authors of <b>Charter '08</b>, a manifesto initially signed by over 350 Chinese intellectuals and human rights activists.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physics</b></p>	<p>Andre Geim and Konstantin Novoselov (University of Manchester, UK)</p>	<p><b>"for groundbreaking experiments regarding the two-dimensional material graphene"</b> Geim and Novoselov extracted the graphene from a piece of graphite such as is found in ordinary pencils. Using <b>regular adhesive tape</b> they managed to obtain a flake of carbon with a thickness of just one atom. This at a time when many believed it was impossible for such thin crystalline materials to be stable.</p>
<p><b>Chemistry</b></p>	<p>Richard F. Heck University of Delaware, Newark, DE, USA,  Ei-ichi Negishi Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA  and</p>	<p><b>"for palladium-catalyzed cross couplings in organic synthesis"</b>. This chemical tool has vastly improved the possibilities for chemists to create sophisticated chemicals, for example carbon-based molecules as complex as those created by nature itself. Carbon-based (organic) chemistry is the basis of life and is responsible for numerous fascinating natural phenomena: colour in flowers, snake poison and bacteria killing substances such as penicillin. Organic chemistry has allowed man to build on nature's chemistry; making use of carbon's ability to provide a stable skeleton for functional molecules. This has given mankind new medicines and revolutionary materials such as plastics.</p>

	Akira Suzuki Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan	<p>In order to create these complex chemicals, chemists need to be able to join carbon atoms together. However, carbon is stable and carbon atoms do not easily react with one another. The first methods used by chemists to bind carbon atoms together were therefore based upon various techniques for rendering carbon more reactive. Such methods worked when creating simple molecules, but when synthesizing more complex molecules chemists ended up with too many unwanted by-products in their test tubes.</p> <p>Palladium-catalyzed cross coupling solved that problem and provided chemists with a more precise and efficient tool to work with. In the Heck reaction, Negishi reaction and Suzuki reaction, carbon atoms meet on a palladium atom, whereupon their proximity to one another kick-starts the chemical reaction.</p> <p>Palladium-catalyzed cross coupling is used in research worldwide, as well as in the commercial production of for example pharmaceuticals and molecules used in the electronics industry.</p>
<b>Physiology or Medicine</b>	Robert G. Edwards(UK)	<p><b><u>"for the development of in vitro fertilization "</u></b></p> <p>His achievements have made it possible to treat infertility, a medical condition afflicting a large proportion of humanity including more than 10% of all couples worldwide.</p> <p>In 1977, Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards successfully carried out a pioneering conception which resulted in the birth of the world's first baby to be conceived by IVF, Louise Brown on 25 July 1978.</p> <p>Indian Physician Dr. Subhash Mukhopadhyay created history when he became the first physician in India (and second in the world after British physicians Patrick Steptoe and Robert Edwards) to perform the In vitro fertilization differently resulting in a test tube baby "Durga" (alias Kanupriya Agarwal) on October 3, 1978.</p>
<b>Literature</b>	Mario Vargas Llosa (Peru)	"for his cartography of structures of power and histrenchant images of the individual's resistance, revolt, and defeat".
<b>Economy</b>	Peter A. Diamond(USA) Dale T. Mortensen(USA) and Christopher A. Pissarides(UK)	<p>"for their analysis of markets with search frictions"</p> <p>The laureates have applied their theory to a wide range of markets. However the most important application of the theory has been on the labor markets. The theory explains why matching jobs and workers can be insufficient to reducing unemployment.</p>

## Literary

### 2010 Booker Prize

British writer and journalist Howard Jacobson's novel **The Finkler Question**, a semi-autobiographical comic take on Jewish identity, is the winner of this year's **Man Booker Prize**.

#### **Background:**

- The Man Booker Prize for Fiction is a literary prize awarded each year for the best original full-length novel, written in the **English** language, by a **citizen of the Commonwealth of Nations, Ireland, or Zimbabwe**.
- Prize money-**£50,000**.
- In 1971, the nature of the Prize was changed so that it was awarded to novels published in that year instead of in the previous year; therefore, no novel published in 1970 could win the Booker Prize. This was rectified in 2010 by the awarding of the "**Lost Man Booker Prize**" to J. G. Farrell's *Troubles*.
- In 1993, the **Booker of Bookers** Prize was awarded to **Salman Rushdie** for **Midnight's Children** (the 1981 winner), as the best novel to win the award in the first 25 years of its existence. A similar prize known as **The Best of the Booker** was awarded in 2008 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the prize – this was also won by *Midnight's Children*

### DSC Prize for South Asian Literature

DSC Prize for South Asian Literature is a new literary prize to be awarded annually to writers of **any ethnicity** or nationality writing about South Asia. It is for an original full-length novel written in **English**, or translated into English. The prize is sponsored by DSC Limited, an **Indian infrastructure and construction company**.

#### **Winner**

2011- **H. M. Naqvi**, Karachi-based novelist for his debut novel **Home Boy**.

[note: Writer and academic **Amit Chaudhuri's** novel **The Immortals** was among the six books shortlisted.]

## Nationally Acclaimed

**Social activist Aruna Roy gets Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Academia and Management** for her "arduous journey and dedication towards the issue of the common man."

#### **Background:**

##### The Award:

Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, Delhi instituted the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Academics and Management in 1998, with a view to upholding the vision of the late Prime Minister, each year the award honours an Indian, residing either in the country or abroad.

The honour carries a cash award of Rs. Five lakh, a Citation and a Plaque. The awardees are designated as Lal Bahadur Shastri Fellows and their names are inscribed on the roll of honours of the Institute.

#### Previous awardees:

2009- Dr. E. Sreedharan, the Metro Man of India,

2008- Shri Sunil Mittal, Chairman and Group CEO, Bharti Enterprises.

#### Aruna Roy :

Aruna Roy, a former IAS officer is a political and social activist who founded and heads the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan ("Workers and Peasants Strength Union"). She is best known as a prominent leader of the Right to Information movement, which led to the enactment of the Right to Information Act in 2005 and, more recently, the right to work campaign. Ms. Roy is a member of the second National Advisory Council, set up by the Central government to advise it on social policies, and the Central Employment Guarantee Council, an advisory body to oversee the implementation of the MGNREGA.

In 2000, she received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership.

### **Sahitya Akademi Fellow**

The Sahitya Akademi has elected **Khushwant Singh**(novelist ), Kedarnath Singh( **Hindi writer**) and Chandra Nath Mishra 'Amar' ( **Maithili writer** )its Fellows.

#### **Background:**

The highest honour conferred by the Akademi on a writer is by electing him its Fellow. This honour is reserved for the 'Immortals of Literature' and limited to **21 at any given time**.

### **Sahitya Akademi Award**

- M. P. Veerendra Kumar, former Union Minister, won 2010 Sahitya Akademi awards for his travelogue 'Haimavathabhuvil' in Malayalam.
- 22 persons won this years award

#### **Background:**

- The award is given to recognize and promote excellence in Indian writing and also acknowledge new trends
- second-highest literary honor next to a Sahitya Akademi Fellowship.
- Established in 1954, the award comprises a plaque and a cash prize of Rs. 100,000

#### **Sahitya Akademi**

- meant to promote the cause of Indian literature
- founded in March 1954 as an autonomous body
- registered as a Society in 1956
- recognizes 24 languages
- Head Office in New Delhi
- Highest honour conferred "Fellow"( limited to 21 at any given time.)

### **Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration**

Oscar-winning composer A.R. Rahman and the Ramakrishna Mission Ashram, located in Chhattisgarh's Narainpur, have jointly won the 25th Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration for the year 2009 for their services in promoting and preserving national integration.

#### **Background:**

The award, which consists of a **citation** and Rs. **2.5 lakh** is presented on **October 31, the death anniversary of the former Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi**. It was instituted by the **Congress** in **1985** to recognise distinguished persons for outstanding contributions to the cause of national integration.

#### **Previous awardees:**

2006: Dr. J.S. Bandukwala and Ram Puniyani (jointly)

2009: Balraj Puri

*(note: It is different from The Indira Gandhi Prize or the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development)*

### **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development to Lula Da Silva**

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was selected for the prestigious Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2010.

Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development is the prestigious award accorded annually by India to individuals or organizations in recognition of creative efforts toward promoting international peace, development and a new international economic order; ensuring that scientific discoveries are used for the larger good of humanity, and enlarging the scope of freedom. The prize carries a cash award of 25 lakh Indian rupees and a citation.

Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and M S Swaminathan, an Indian Agricultural Scientist in 1999 are only indian who have been awarded this prize

### Jamnalal Bajaj Awards

The Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation has instituted **four awards** which are given annually. The objective of these awards is to recognise and suitably reward the efforts of the men and women who have dedicated their life to **Gandhian Constructive Work and the ideals which Jamnalal Bajaj had cherished all his life**. The award carries five lakhs in cash, a trophy and citation.

	2010 winner
Award for Outstanding Contribution in the field of Constructive Work	Chunibhai Vaidya, aoldest living Gandhian, nonagenarian from Ahmedabad, was given the award for outstanding contribution in the field of constructive work.
<b>Award for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development</b>	<b>Chewang Norphel, a 74-year-old civil engineer from Ladakh. His 'artificial glacier' has helped farmers in the dry and difficult region of Ladakh get water supply in April and May — the most crucial period of sowing.</b>
Award for Outstanding Contribution to Uplift and Welfare of Women and Children	Shakuntala Choudhary, a nonagenarian from Assam. She has trained thousands of gram sevikas through Kasturba Centres throughout the State, and also worked for maintaining peaceful and harmonious relations among various social groups.
International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India	Lia Diskin from Brazil. Ms. Diskin has formed a non-governmental organisation for community-oriented programmes in education, healthcare, human rights, environmental preservation, social welfare and cultural peace.

### Jamnalal Bajaj Birth Centenary - Special Award

On the occasion of the Jamnalal Bajaj Birth Centenary, the foundation conferred on **Dr. Nelson Mandela**, a Special Award of Rs. 500,000, a citation and a specially sculptured trophy. It was presented on 18 October 1990.

### **Scientific, Academic and related.**

The coveted Bhatnagar prize was given to 20 scientists — 11 for 2009 and nine for 2010.

#### Background:

#### The Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Prize for Science and Technology

Named after the founder Director of **CSIR**, the prize is awarded annually notable and outstanding research, applied or fundamental to recognize outstanding Indian work in **science and technology**. First awarded in 1958, it is the **highest award for science in India**.

Any citizen of India engaged in research in any field of science and technology up to the age of 45 years is eligible for the Prize. The Prize is awarded on the basis of contributions made through work done primarily in India during the five years preceding the year of the Prize. The Prize comprises a citation, a plaque, and a cash award of Rs. 500,000. In addition recipients also get Rs 15,000 per month up to the age of 65 years.

#### CSIR's award for S&T Innovations for Rural Development

for 2009 to the Indian Oil Corporation's Research and Development Centre at Faridabad for its '**Servo AgroSpray Oil**' for pest control in crops. "Servo AgroSpray Oil" is environment friendly, non-toxic, bio-degradable and highly beneficial in diverse agricultural crops such as cotton, pulses, grains, mustard, groundnut, sugarcane, potato, tea, grapes, mango, apple, citrus fruits, etc.

#### Background:

This CSIR Award for S&T Innovations for Rural Development (CAIRD) was instituted by Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in the year 2006 to recognise and honour outstanding Science & Technology innovations that have helped transform the lives of rural people.

The prestigious award carries a shield, citation and cash prize of Rs. 10 lakh

### SASTRA-Ramanuja award

Wei Zhang, Maths Professor of Harvard University.

### SCOPE Awards

**Individual** Excellence Award: SAIL chairman S.K. Roongta

**Institutional** Excellence Award: Coal India

**'Special Award of the Jury'**: Coal India Limited (CIL) Chairman P. S. Bhattacharyya

Other Winners: HEC (Turnaround); ECIL (Medium PSE)

& WAPCOS (Smaller PSE)

#### **Background:**

Standing Conference of Public Sector Enterprises (SCOPE) excellence awards have been conceptualised and instituted to recognise the contribution of public enterprises and to encourage outstanding persons for their hard work and leadership qualities.

Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) is an apex professional organization representing the Central Government Public Enterprises. It has also some State Enterprises, Banks, and other Institutions as its Members. Starting as a Society "New Horizon" in 1970 SCOPE came into existence in April 1973. It was formally recognized by the Government of India in November 1976.

SCOPE's objective is to promote excellence in organizations where public investment is involved, in order to enable them to be globally competitive.

### The Indian Science Award

Declared in connection with the 97th Indian Science Congress has gone to **C.R. Rao, statistician**.

The award, instituted by the Department of Science and Technology of the Union government, carries Rs.25 lakh in cash. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh gave away the award during the inaugural ceremony of the congress here on Sunday.

#### India Science Prize

to eminent statistician Prof. C.R. Rao.

India Science Prize, which carries a reward of Rs.25 lakh and a 200-gram gold medal, was presented on behalf of the Indian National Science Academy.

### The Lasker Awards

The Lasker Awards, given in **four categories**, have been awarded annually since 1946 to living persons who have made major contributions to **medical** science or who have performed public service on behalf of medicine. They are administered by the **Lasker Foundation**, founded by advertising pioneer **Albert Lasker and his wife Mary Woodard Lasker** (later an influential medical research activist). The awards are sometimes referred to as "**America's Nobels**". It is generally believed that if one gets the Lasker, the Nobel usually follows. (Seventy-six Lasker laureates have received the Nobel Prize, including 28 in the last two decades).

### Finance Minister of Asia Award to Shri Pranab Mukherjee

India's Finance Minister Shri Pranab Mukherjee has won this year's award for Finance Minister of the Year for Asia. This year's award is based on **nominations from public and private sector** economists, analysts, bankers, investors and other experts.

This award is from daily newspaper "**Emerging Markets**", part of Euromoney Institutional investor plc. one of the largest and most respected providers of financial information worldwide.

It may be recalled that Shri Pranab Mukherjee was rated one of the best Finance Minister in the World in 1984 as well.

### Aga Khan Award for 2008-2010

The 5 projects were awarded 11th The Aga Khan Award for Architecture; the recipients were:

Wadi Hanifa Wetlands, Riyadh, **Saudi Arabia**

Revitalisation of the Hypercentre of Tunis, **Tunisia**

Madinat Al-Zahra Museum, Cordoba, **Spain**

Ipekyol Textile Factory, Edirne, **Turkey**

Bridge School, Xiashi, Fujian, **China**

### Background:

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture (AKAA) is an **architectural prize** established by Aga Khan IV in 1977. It aims to identify and reward architectural concepts that successfully address the needs and aspirations of Islamic societies in the fields of contemporary design, social housing, community development and improvement, restoration, reuse and area conservation, as well as landscape design and improvement of the environment. It is presented in three-year cycles to multiple projects and has a monetary award, with prizes totalling up to US\$ 500,000. Uniquely among architectural awards, it recognizes projects, teams, and stakeholders in addition to buildings and people.

### Ernesto Illy Trieste Science Prize

to renowned **energy expert Jose Goldemberg of Brazil**. The award was presented in the 21st general meeting of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World (TWAS) held at Hyderabad.

**Ernesto Illy Trieste Science Prize**, co-sponsored by **illycaffè, TWAS** and the **Ernesto Illy Foundation**, is an annual prize given to a renowned researcher in a developing country or country with an emerging economy who has made significant contributions to science and scientific innovation. The prize, now in its sixth year, **includes a cash award of USD100,000**.

### The academy of sciences for the developing world(TWAS)

TWAS, headquartered in Trieste, Italy, until 2004 named Third World Academy of Sciences is a merit-based science academy uniting 1,000 scientists in some 70 countries. Its principal aim is to promote scientific capacity and excellence for sustainable development in the South.

TWAS was founded in 1983 under the leadership of the late **Nobel Laureate Abdus Salam of Pakistan** by a group of distinguished scientists who were determined to do something about the dismal state of scientific research in developing countries.

### Infosys Prize 2010

Category(5)	Winner	Comment
<b>Mathematical Sciences</b>	Professor Chandrashekhar Khare, Mathematics Department, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Los Angeles	for his "fundamental contribution" to number theory
<b>Physical Sciences</b>	Professor Sandip Trivedi, Theoretical Physics Department, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai	what is the origin of dark energy and why there is no mass-less scalar particle (superstring theory )
<b>Engineering and Computer Science</b>	Professor Ashutosh Sharma, Chemical Engineering Department, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur	for his "fundamental contributions" in materials science.

<b>Life Sciences</b>	Dr. Chetan E. Chitnis, Principal Leader, Malaria Group, International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), Delhi	his work had provided the basis for development of a viable malarial vaccine.
<b>Social Sciences</b>	Sociology Professor Amita Baviskar, Sociology Unit, Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi  Social Anthropology Professor Nandini Sundar, Sociology Department, Delhi School of Economics (DSE), Delhi	While Professor Baviskar won the prize for her work on social movements in contemporary India, Professor Sundar was awarded the prize for her contribution to the understanding of social identities

**Award:** Cash prize of 50 lakh (non taxed to recipient), a citation certificate and a gold medallion.

**Background:**

The Infosys Prize endeavors to **elevate the prestige of scientific research in India and inspire young Indians** to choose a vocation in scientific research.

**The Infosys Science Foundation**, a not-for-profit trust, was set up in February 2009 by the management of Infosys. The Foundation instituted the Infosys Prize, an **annual award**, to honor outstanding achievements of researchers and scientists across **five categories** : **Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, Engineering and Computer Sciences, Mathematical Sciences and Life Sciences**, each carrying a prize of rupees 50 Lakh.

**Environment**

**The Vasudha Award**

Short films on environmental issues '**Niyamgiri You Are Still Alive**,' directed by Suma Josson, and '**Kaippad**,' directed by Babu Kambrath, were declared joint winners of 'The Vasudha Award,' **the country's only government award for an environmental film.**

**The award instituted by the Short Film Centre (SFC) at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) carried a cash prize of Rs. 3 lakh.**

Other Winners of Short Film Center awards- 2010

<b>INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION AWARDS</b>			
<b>Name of Award</b>	<b>Name of the Film</b>	<b>Award Money</b>	<b>Award Winner</b>
"Golden Lamp Tree Award"	Extinction II	5 Lakhs	<b>Mr. Fernando Uson Fornies, Spain</b>
"Silver Lamp Tree Award"	The Flower Bud	3 Lakhs	Ms. Shumona Bannerjee
"Special Jury Mention Award"	Charulata...A Sequel of the Life Untold	2 Lakhs	Ms. Sangeeta Padhanabhan
"Certificate of Appreciation by the Jury"	Incurable India	No Money Award	<b>Mr. Umesh Aggarwal</b>

**NDTV environment awards, "The Eco Greenies"**

**The Best Green Ambassador award - John Abraham.**

**The Lifetime Achievement Award -Veer Bhadra Mishra** for creating awareness of the threats posed to the Ganga.  
Special jury award-RTI activist **Amit Jethwa (posthumously )** for exposing illegal mining in the Gir forest in Gujarat.

There were winners from different fields in other categories.

**Urban Mobility Award-2010**

The **Jaipur City Transport Service** Limited, established in the Rajasthan Capital recently under the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) scheme, has bagged the prestigious **Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM)** Urban Mobility Award-2010 for new technological applications and innovations.

**Film and Television, Beauty contest etc**

**57th National Film Awards for the Year 2009**

(The Directorate of Film Festivals today announced )

S. No.	Name of Award	Name of Film & Awardee	Comment	Medal & Cash Prize
1	BEST FEATURE FILM	<b>Kutty Srank</b> (Malayalam) Director : Shaji N. Karun	For its vision and cinematic craft that express the different perspectives of three women about the truth of the man in their lives.	Swarna Kamal Rs 2,50,000/- Each
2	INDIRA GANDHI AWARD FOR BEST DEBUT FILM OF A DIRECTOR	Lahore (Hindi) Director : Sanjay Puran Singh Chauhan	For excellent control over the medium and using sports as the metaphor to tell a compelling story.	Swarna Kamal Rs 1,25,000/- Each
3	AWARD FOR BEST POPULAR FILM PROVIDING WHOLESOME ENTERTAINMENT	3 Idiots (Hindi) Producer: Vidhu Vinod Chopra Director : Raj Kumar Hirani	For an intelligent entertainer that touches upon the contemporary concerns of society with great humour and engaging performances.	Swarna Kamal Rs 2,00,000/- Each
4	NARGIS DUTT AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE FILM ON NATIONAL INTEGRATION	<b>Delhi 6</b> (Hindi) Director & Producer : Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra	For its uncompromising stance towards communal divide and offering a humanistic solution of taking individual responsibility	Rajat Kamal Rs 1,50,000/- Each
5	BEST FILM ON SOCIAL ISSUES	<b>Well Done Abba</b> (Hindi) Director : Shyam Benegal	A socio-political satire about a common man's fight for justice against an all-pervasive corrupt system.	Rajat Kamal Rs 1,50,000/- Each
6	BEST CHILDREN'S FILM	Putानी Party	For the novel idea of empowering	Swarna Kamal

		(Kannada) Director : Ramchandra P.N. (Putani Party) & Keshu (Malayalam) Director :Sivan (Keshu) Producer: Children's Film Society, India (for both films)	children to work as a Panchayat to combat alcoholism that destroys their future. For the sensitivity that explores the lonely world of a differently-abled child and the inability of the adults to recognise the genius in him.	Rs 1,50,000/-
7	BEST DIRECTION	Abohoman (Bengali) <b>Rituparno Ghosh</b>		Swarna Kamal Rs 2,50,000/-
8	BEST ACTOR	Paa (Hindi) <b>Amitabh Bachchan</b>	<b>his third award for best actor.</b>	Rajat Kamal Rs 50,000/-
9	BEST ACTRESS	Abohoman (Bengali) Ananya Chatterjee		Rajat Kamal Rs 50,000/-
10	BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR	Lahore (Hindi) <b>Farooque Sheikh</b>		Rajat Kamal Rs 50,000/-
11	BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS	Paa (Hindi) Arundhati Naag		Rajat Kamal Rs 50,000/-

- The best film award in the **non-feature category** was shared by **The Postman** and **Bilal**.
- Oscar winner **Resul Pookutty** won an award for **best audiography in Kerala**
- The Awards returned to a two-tier format this year, regional juries making a shortlist considered by a central team with "recall" clause(reconsider the left out).

**Background:**

**DIRECTORATE OF FILM FESTIVALS**

The Directorate of Film Festivals was set up under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in 1973 with the prime objective of promoting good cinema. This is undertaken by organising a range of activities under these broad categories.

Throughout the years, it organises various film festivals, retrospectives, and film related events that help in introducing the general public to the idea of good cinema.

**Asian Television award**

- The Asian Television award for the **Best Current Affairs** Presenter was presented to **Karan Thapar** of the **CNN-IBN**.
- This is the **fifth time** that Mr. Thapar is winning the Best Current Affairs Presenter Award in the 15-year history of the Asian Television awards. He won the award in 1999, 2003, 2005 and 2007.
- This year Mr. Thapar won the award for his "**Devil's Advocate**" interview programme.

### 41st International Film Festival of India 2010 Awards

<b>Golden Peacock award for Best Film</b>	<b>Gautam Ghosh</b>	<b>Moner Manush(THE QUEST) (Indo-Bangladesh joint production)</b>
<b>The Silver Peacock Award for the Best Director</b>	<b>Susanne Bier of Denmark</b>	<b>'In a Better World.'</b>
<b>Special Jury Award</b>		'Just Another Love Story' from India and 'The Boy' from New Zealand

**Gulzar, Oscar winning lyricist, poet and filmmaker** received the **South Asian Cinema Foundation's life-time achievement award** .  
The **London based** Foundation, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, has previously honoured Adoor Gopalakrishnan, M.S. Sathyu, Saeed Akhtar Mirza and Girish Kasaravalli.

#### Miss World 2010

**Alexandria Mills** from the **United States**.

India's Manasvi Mamgai failed to make it to top 20.

#### India's Nicole Faria is Miss Earth 2010

### Sports

#### ICC awards 2010

- \* **Cricketer of the Year: Sachin Tendulkar (India)**
- \* **Test player of the year: Virender Sehwag (India)**
- \* **Test team of the year: India**
- \* **ODI player of the year: AB de Villiers (South Africa)**
- \* **ODI team of the year: Australia**
- \* **ICC Emerging player of the year: Steven Finn (England)**
- \* **Best T20 performance of the year: Brendon McCullum (New Zealand)**
- \* **Spirit of Cricket award: New Zealand**
- \* **ICC Associate player of the year: Ryan ten Doeschate**
- \* **Umpire of the year: Aleem Dar (Pakistan)**
- \* **Women's Cricketer of the Year: Shelley Nitschke (Australia)**
- \* **LG people's choice award: Sachin Tendulkar (India)**

### Miscellaneous

#### Legion d' Honneur

HDFC Chairman Deepak Parekh was conferred the **Knight** in the order of **Legion d' Honneur**, the **France's highest honour**, for his work in **"bringing the businesses of the two countries together."**

[note: M. Devendra Sharma, executive vice-president of Hotel Oberoi-Trident and M. Karambir Kang, former director-general of Hotel Taj Mahal were honoured with 'd'Officier de l'Ordre national du Merite' by France for being "efficient, attentive, courageous and taking decisions by risking their lives to save hundreds of lives" during 26/11 terror attack.]

### Background

- The Legion of Honour, or in full the National Order of the Legion of Honour (French: Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur) is a French order established by Napoleon Bonaparte, First Consul of the First Republic, on 19 May 1802. The Order is the highest decoration in France and is divided into **five various degrees**: Chevalier (**Knight**), Officier (**Officer**), Commandeur (**Commander**), Grand Officier (**Grand Officer**) and Grand Croix (**Grand Cross**).
- Amitabh Bachchan, Lata Mangeshkar, IndiaSatyajit Ray, Ravi Shankar and some other Indians have received this honor previously.

### CNN-IBN INDIAN OF THE YEAR 2010

Life Time Achievement: **M.S. Swaminathan**

Category	winner	for
Politics	NITISH KUMAR	For pulling off the most stunning electoral result in India by focusing on development in an underdeveloped state, triggering hope amongst millions.
Sports	SUSHIL KUMAR	For becoming the first Indian wrestler to win a world championship and following it with a gold at the Commonwealth Games.
Business	KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA	For being an outstanding, no nonsense entrepreneur who has made a success out of most businesses he has entered into, including sunrise sectors.
Entertainment	SHANKAR	For being a filmmaker with an unbeatable track record of 100% hits in Tamil....the latest being the costliest Indian film ever produced 'Robot'.
Public Service	LADAKH ECOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP & SEEDS INDIA	For building environment friendly, flood and quake resistant housing involving community participation and local materials in Leh.

### Special Achievement awards

Special Achievement awards went to the Shillong Chamber Choir and the Indian Women's Relay Team of Manjeet Kaur, Sini Jose, Ashwini Akkunji, Mandeep Kaur.

J. Gopikrishnan, journalist, who was instrumental in exposing the 2G spectrum scam, was honoured with the CNN-IBN Indian of the Year 2010 – Special Achievement Award.

### Officer of the Order of St. Charles

DLF Chairman K.P. Singh being conferred with the decoration of Officer of the Order of St. Charles by Prince Albert II of Monaco. The award was presented in recognition of his contributions as Honorary Consul General of Monaco for the last 20 years.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Name of Book	Author/Editor	comment
A Rainbow in the Night – Nelson Mandela and the Tumultuous Birth of South Africa	Dominique Lapierre	Padma awardee French writer of famous book "Freedom at Midnight"
The congress and The making of Indian Nation	edited by Pranab Mukherjee (FM)	
Convenient Action: Gujarat's Response to Climate Change	Narendra Modi(Gujarat's Chief minister)	Second politician to write a book on climate change.
An Inconvenient Truth	Al Gore(former U.S. Vice-President)	
GLOBAL CRISIS RECESSION AND UNEVEN RECOVERY	Y.V. Reddy	
ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES — Unconstitutional and Tamperable:	Subramanian Swamy (Janata Party president )	
SHREE RAMAYANA MAHANVESHANAM	M. Veerappa Moily;	Union Minister of Law and Justice Veerappa Moily got the prestigious <b>Moortidevi Award</b> for this book
TIMELESS INSPIRATOR — Reliving Gandhi	Raghunath Mashelkar	How relevant is Mahatma Gandhi in the 21st century? As many as 46 eminent Indians from various fields were asked this question by Raghunath Mashelkar, the internationally acclaimed scientist, former CSIR director, and their responses are presented in this book.
The Sunset Club	Khushwant Singh	
"India – China Boundary Problems, 1846 to 1947"	A.G. Noorani, an eminent lawyer, historian and political commentator	
Wolf Hall	Hilarey Mantel	She won the 2009 Man Booker Prize for her novel Wolf Hall
In the line of Fire	Parvez Musharraf	
"My Life With the Taliban"	Taliban's former ambassador to Islamabad, Abdul Salam Zaeef.	The book provides a description of the movement from the inside, which differs on many points from the western view.
THE WTO AND INDIA -	Edited by Alokesh	

Issues and Negotiating Strategies	Barua and Robert M. Stern	
THE BRIDGE — The Life and Rise of Barack Obama	David Remnick;	
Such a Long Journey	Rohinton Mistry	The book "Such a Long Journey" was withdrawn by the Vice-Chancellor of Mumbai University from II B.A. syllabus after the Shiv Sena's student wing alleged that the book contained <b>derogatory remarks about Maharashtrians.</b>
Destination Moon — India's quest for the Moon, Mars and Beyond	Pallava Bagla (correspondent for SCIENCE magazine)	
The Immortals	Amit Chaudhuri	was among the six books shortlisted for a new major \$50,000 literary prize - the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.
Home Boy.	H. M. Naqvi, Karachi-based novelist	Winner of the DSC Prize for South Asian Literature.
India after Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy	Ramachandra Guha,	historian
Makers of modern India	Ramachandra Guha,	historian

## COMMITTEES

### Madhav Gadgil committee

on the Western Ghat ecology

### Bimal Jalan Committee

- Working and ownership norms of market infrastructure institutions (MIIs), including stock exchanges.
- Appointed by SEBI, had last month recommended not allowing listing by stock exchanges, putting a cap on their profits and fixing their executive remunerations etc.
- Favored allowing anchor investors up to a total of 49 per cent shares in bourses.

### Panel recommends for lower interest on farm loans

#### **Background:**

Prime Minister, in April 2010 during the meeting of CMs, constituted three working groups to tackle the rising food inflation.

Group	Head	Recommendation
working group on agriculture	Bhupinder Singh Hudda	suggested that the government provide <b>farm loans to farmers at four per cent</b> interest rate, <b>raise the minimum support price (MSP)</b> for farm produce to 50 per cent higher than the actual cost of cultivation and expand diesel subsidy scheme across the country.
working group on consumer affairs	Narendra Modi	recommends setting up of <b>Special Courts under the Essential Commodities Act</b> to try offences and to constitute a “ <b>price stabilisation fund</b> ” for government intervention when prices become unreasonably high.
working group on food and public distribution	Montek Singh Ahluwalia	

### Pranab Sen Committee for Slums

The committee was established by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) to examine the **definition of slums** and provide a more accurate statistical model for enumerating India’s slum populations. The committee was also tasked with suggesting a uniform definition of slum which can be adopted by the government for its Rajiv Awas Yojana (RAY) that seeks removal of slums.

#### **Findings:**

A Government of India expert committee has suggested that India’s slum population is significantly higher than originally estimated and recommended new guidelines for enumerating slums in the 2011 Census. In a report issued 3 September 2010, the Committee on Slum Statistics/Census projected that India’s slum population in 2011 would be 93.06 million – more than 23 per cent higher than the 75.06 million originally estimated by the 2001 Census using new definition. The 2001 census had put the slum population at 52.4 million.

#### **Important Recommendations:**

- New definition of slums.
- An urban information management system on slums should be created and each state that gets funds from the ministry should indicate time-bound plans for addressing issues concerning slum clusters.
- It has recommended checklists for the purpose of identification of slums and said that households having roof material other than concrete, not having facility of drinking water, drainage and latrine should be treated as having slum characteristics.

### Pranab Sen

Pranab Sen, principal adviser to the Planning Commission and the country's former chief statistician.

### New definition for slums by Pranab Sen Committee for Slums

The Pranab Sen Committee has given a new definition for slums. It has defined a slum as "a compact settlement of at least 20 households with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions".

The new definition of slum is different from the definition adopted by the 2001 Census of India. Accordingly to 2001 Census, slum areas broadly constitute of:

1. All specified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act including a 'Slum Act';
2. All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration which may have been formally notified as slum under any act;
3. A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.

As reported by the Office of Registrar General of India (ORGI), **Census 2011 will use the same definition as used by Census 2001** for delineating the slum blocks in the notified, recognized and identified slum areas of each statutory town. In addition, the Houselisting and Housing Census data will be used for earmarking the "slum like" clusters uniformly through the country. **The ORGI will also identify all the House-listing Blocks (HLBs) where at least 20 households satisfying the set criterion, as recommended by the Pranab Sen Committee exist.**

### Shunglu Committee

Government has approved the constitution of a **High Level Committee (HLC)** headed by **Shri V.K. Shunglu, the former Comptroller & Auditor General of India**, to look into the organization and conduct of the Commonwealth Games – Delhi 2010 and also to draw lessons from it.

Shunglu has been given the **status of a Supreme Court judge**.

### one-member Patil committee

Government appointed retired Supreme Court Judge Shivaraj V. Patil to examine the appropriateness of the procedures adopted by the DoT in the issuance of licences and spectrum allocation during 2001-2009.

### Expert committee on mullaperiyar Dam

The **Supreme Court** had appointed the committee headed by the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, **A.S. Anand**, (in February, 2010) to **go into all issues, including the safety aspects of the dam, raising the water level beyond 136 ft as also Kerala's demand for a new dam**.

The five-member committee includes K.T. Thomas and A.R. Lakshmanan, former judges of the Supreme Court; C.D. Thatte, former secretary to the Ministry of Water Resources; and D.K. Mehta, former Chief Engineer, Central Water Commission. While Mr. **Thomas represents Kerala, Lakshmanan is the representative of Tamil Nadu**.

#### **Background:**

#### **The Kerala Periyar Dam**

- New proposed dam by Kerala Govt near old dam(Mullaperiyar Dam).
- Issue: environment clearance
- Empowered committee on the Mullaperiyar reservoir headed by A. S. Anand visited the site.

#### **Mullaperiyar Dam**

- is constructed over the Periyar River in Kerala. It is operated by the Government of Tamil Nadu according to a 999-year lease agreement made during erstwhile British colonial rule.
- Issue: The government of Tamil Nadu has proposed an increase in the storage level of the dam from the currently maintained 136 feet (41 m) to 142 feet (43 m). The Kerala government has opposed this move, citing safety concerns for the more than hundred year old bridge and especially for the thickly populated districts downstream.

### **Meena Gupta Panel**

The panel was set up by the Environment Ministry in July to probe all environmental approvals granted to the Posco project, the implementation of the Forest Rights Act and the resettlement and rehabilitation provisions. Ms. Gupta, who was chosen to head the committee, was Environment Secretary when the Posco clearances were granted in the first place, prompting concerns about “conflict of interest” in some quarters.

**Issue:** In a letter sent to Union Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh, the other three members, tribal affairs expert Urmila Pingle, former director-general of forests Devendra Pandey and Madras High Court advocate V. Suresh – have pointed out that Ms. Gupta's recommendations “are not only untenable but legally impermissible”

### **Sub-committee on MFI**

The Reserve Bank of India has appointed a sub-committee under the chairmanship of Y. H. Malegam to look at the governance issues.

At present, only MFIs registered as non-banking finance companies with the RBI come under the central bank's regulatory control.

### **National Council on India's Nutritional Challenges**

Though the PM-headed Council was formed in October 2008, it will hold its first meeting held in Nov 2010. Panel has directed Planning Commission and the ministry of women and child development (WCD) to prepare a roadmap for 200 of the poorest districts with special focus on children under 2 years and pregnant women.

VISION IAS

## SCHEMES /PROGRAMMES / POLICIES

### **Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls [RGSEAG](SABLA)**

- Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls [RGSEAG] –SABLA is a scheme proposed **by the Ministry for women and child development** for Adolescent Girls of 11 – 18 Years, whereby the **Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG)** and **Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)** would be merged with content enrichment. The scheme is proposed to be **implemented using the platform of Integrated Child Development Services Scheme.**
- It's a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** to be implemented through the State Governments/UTs with 100% financial assistance from the Central Government for all inputs, except supplementary nutrition for which Government of India and States would share on 50: 50 basis.
- The scheme aims at empowering adolescent girls (AGs) of 11-18 years with focus on out-of-school girls by improvement in their nutritional and health status and upgrading various skills like home skills, life skills and vocational skills. The scheme also aims at equipping the girls on family welfare, health hygiene etc.

### **Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY)**

**Objective:** The objectives of the scheme are to improve the health and nutrition status of pregnant, lactating women and infants.

**Eligibility:** all pregnant and lactating women except Govt and PSU employees. The beneficiaries would be pregnant women of **19 years of age and above** for **first two live births** (benefit for still births will be as per the norms of scheme).

**Benefits:** (conditional cash transfer mode). Each pregnant and lactating woman will receive a **total cash incentive of ` 4000/- in three installments** between the period from the second trimester of pregnancy to the child attaining the age of 6 months.

**Fund Sharing:** The Scheme will be **centrally sponsored with 100% assistance from the Centre.**

**Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development

#### **Implementation:**

- On **pilot basis** in selected **52 districts** during the **remaining period of XI Five Year Plan** at a total cost of ` 1000 crore.
- There will be Steering and Monitoring Committees at all levels to oversee implementation and monitor the progress.
- An IGMSY Cell within the Ministry of Women and Child Development will also be set up

**Inception:** approved by CECA in Oct 2010.

### **NAC formula on Food Security Bill**

#### **Different entitlements to two categories**

1- **“priority households”** — to get 35 kg at a subsidised price of Re. 1 a kg for millets, Rs. 2 a kg for wheat and Rs. 3 a kg for rice.

2- **“general households”** - to get 20 kg “at a price not exceeding 50 per cent of the current MSP for the three grains.

**Population covered-** **75% of total India** [ 90% of rural(46%-priority + 44% general) + 50 % of urban(28%-priority + 22% general)]

The criteria for categorising households as 'priority' or 'general' should be specified by the government of India.

{What this means is that those entitled to 35 kg of grain in the price range of Rs 1-3 will form approximately 40 per cent of the total population, while those entitled to 20 kg will form approximately 35 per cent of the population.}

**Update:** An experts group, chaired by chief of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council C. Rangarajan, has been set up by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to examine the recommendations of the National Advisory Council (NAC) on the proposed National Food Security Bill.

#### **National Initiative on Climate resilient agriculture**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the implementation of a new plan scheme 'National Initiative on Climate Resilient Agriculture' **to address climate change impact on agriculture and allied sectors.**

**Objective:** The main objective of the Scheme is to assess the impact of climate change on agriculture and allied sectors in the country and evolve cost effective adaptation and mitigation strategies.

The components of the scheme are:

1. Detailed **vulnerability assessment** of agro-climate regions and production systems, and the relative vulnerability of different crops, livestock and fishery sectors.
2. Initiate **strategic research on adaptation and mitigation** at seven major research institutes of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on natural resources, major food crops, livestock, marine and freshwater fisheries.
3. **Demonstrate** available climate resilient practices on farmers' fields in **100 most vulnerable districts** of the country.
4. **Strengthen research infrastructure** to state of the art and capacity building of scientists for undertaking long term research on climate change adaptation.

## REPORTS

### International

#### 2010 Global Hunger Index

Topic: The Challenge of Hunger: Focus on the Crisis of Child Under-Nutrition

Country	2010 (with data from 2003-08)	Rank	comment
Syrian Arab Republic	5.2	1	
China	6.0	9	
Sri Lanka	14.5	39	
Myanmar	18.8	50	
Pakistan	19.1	52	
Nepal	20.0	56	
<b>India</b>	<b>24.1</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>alarming</b>
Bangladesh	24.2	69	
Congo, Dem. Rep.	41.0	84	
Afghanistan	-	-	
Bhutan	-	-	
Brazil	<5	not ranked	
Russian Federation	<5	not ranked	

- The reason given for India's low ranking was that it was not investing as much as its neighbours in basic indicators such as health, water, sanitation, education and women's social status. Because of the country's large population, India is home to 42 per cent of the world's under-weight children.
- Whereas China has gone all out for a "bottoms-up, multi-targeted" and agriculture reforms approach, Pakistan has lesser underweight children because of the large meat-eating population. Sri Lanka was way ahead of India in women's literacy and its programmes on the ground were comparable with those in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- one per cent farm growth is two to three times more effective in tackling hunger. But India's growth story starts from top-down — the IT and telecom sector. Agriculture is still waiting for reforms, that is coming piecemeal.

#### Key findings

- The 2010 Global Hunger Index (GHI) is calculated for 122 developing countries and countries in transition for which data on the three components of hunger are available. 84 countries ranked.
- 2010 Index highlights early childhood undernutrition among children younger than the age of two.
- Since 1990, the world's GHI score has decreased by nearly 25 percent. However, global hunger remains at a "serious" level.
- South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa continue to suffer from the highest levels of hunger, with regional scores of 22.9 and 21.7, respectively.
- In South Asia, the low nutritional, educational and social status of women is among the major factors that contribute to a high prevalence of malnutrition in children under five

#### Background:

- The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is a multidimensional statistical tool used to describe the state of countries' hunger situation published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), USA.
- The Index scores countries based on three equally weighted indicators: 1- the proportion of people who are

undernourished, 2- the proportion of children under five who are underweight, and 3- the child mortality rate.

- The Index ranks countries on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the best score (no hunger) and 100 being the worst.
- Values less than 4.9 reflect "low hunger", values between 5 and 9.9 reflect "moderate hunger", values between 10 and 19.9 indicate a "serious", values between 20 and 29.9 are "alarming", and values exceeding 30 are "extremely alarming" hunger problem.

**Fact:**

- Food and Agriculture Organization suggest that the number hungry people to 925 million in 2010.

**Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2010**

Rank	Country	Integrity score	comment
<b>1</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>9.3</b>	
1	New Zealand	9.3	
1	Singapore	9.3	
<b>22</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>7.1</b>	
<b>36</b>	<b>Bhutan</b>	<b>5.7</b>	
54	South Africa	4.5	
69	Brazil	3.7	
<b>78</b>	<b>China</b>	<b>3.5</b>	
<b>87</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>3.3</b>	India has fallen three places from 85th last year Last in IBSA countries
91	Sri Lanka	3.2	
134	Bangladesh	2.4	
143	Maldives	2.3	
143	Pakistan	2.3	
146	Nepal	2.2	
154	Russia	2.1	
176	Afghanistan	1.4	
176	Myanmar	1.4	
<b>178</b>	<b>Somalia</b>	<b>1.1</b>	

**Background:**

Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ordering the countries of the world according to "the degree to which corruption is **perceived (based on surveys)** to exist among public officials and politicians" is published by **Transparency International**. Integrity scores are awarded between **0 (most corrupt) to 10 (least corrupt)**.

There are some **criticism** about methodology. **Global Integrity**, a NGO, uses local researchers rather than survey for tracking governance and corruption trends around the world.

**World Economic Outlook 2010 By IMF**

A Survey by the IMF staff usually published twice a year. It presents IMF staff economists' analyses of global economic developments during the near and medium term.

**Global Financial Stability Report (GFSR) by IMF**

The Global Financial Stability Report provides an assessment of the global financial system and markets, and addresses emerging market financing in a global context

**"The Drivers and Dynamics of Illicit Financial Flows from India: 1948-2008,"**

Released by **Global Financial Integrity (GFI)**, estimates that tax evasion, crime, and corruption have removed gross illicit assets from India worth US \$462 billion.

**'Migration and Remittances Factbook 2011' by The World Bank**

**Remittances in 2010**

1. India - \$51 billion
2. China
3. Mexico \$22.6 billion

**UNCTAD Information Economy Report 2010 titled 'ICTs, Enterprises and Poverty Alleviation'**

Mobile phones and other forms of communication technology can be used to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods in developing countries

**Growth and Productivity in Agriculture and Agribusiness: Evaluative Lessons from World Bank Group Experience**

Agricultural growth remains central to poverty reduction, as one billion people worldwide continue living in extreme poverty, many of them in rural areas, a World Bank Group on agriculture, the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG), said in the report released.

**2010 Global Manufacturing Competitiveness Index**

by Deloitte and the U.S. Council on Competitiveness and quoted by UNIDO

in five years' time (2015), it has said the world's top ten countries in manufacturing competitiveness will be ranked as follows: China, India, Republic of Korea, Brazil, the U.S., Mexico, Japan, Germany, Poland and Thailand.

**World Migration Report**

By International Organization of Migration (IOM)

**National**

**Employment & Unemployment Survey (2009-10)**

(Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour & Employment)

**Key point:**

- It is the first such household survey conducted by the Labour Bureau.
- The survey has been conducted in 28 States/UTs spread across the country in which about 99 per cent of the country's population reside.
- 40 Million Unemployed with an Unemployment Rate of 9.4%
- The overall unemployment rate is 9.4%, and it is split out as 10.1% in rural areas, and 7.3% in urban areas.

## SUMMITS / CONFERENCE

Name	Place	Date	Outcome/Background
11th EU-India Summit,	Brussels,	Dec 10, 2010	
Cancun Conference/UNFCC COP-16	Cancun , Mexico	Dec. 2010	16th Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
GCC Summit	ABU DHABI	Dec 6, 2010	The Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], headquartered in <b>Riyadh</b> , was established by an agreement concluded on 25 May <b>1981</b> in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia among Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE ( <del>six</del> ) in view of their special relations, geographic proximity, similar political systems based on Islamic beliefs, joint destiny and common objectives. (Yemen is negotiating for GCC membership and hopes to join it by 2016).
world's first tiger summit	St. Petersburg, Russia	November 21, 2010	The leaders endorsed the Global Tiger Recovery Programme, an action plan to strengthen reserves, crack down on poachers and provide financial incentives to maintain a thriving tiger population.
22nd APEC Summit	Yokohama, Japan	November 13-14, 2010	
International Renewable Energy Conference (DIREC)	Delhi	October 27-29, 2010	
8th ASEAN-India Summit	HANOI	Oct 2010	
17th ASEAN Summit	HANOI	Oct, 28-31, 201	
Fifth EAS summit	HANOI	Oct 30, 201	The EAS is a grouping of 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean) and its six dialogue partner countries — China, Japan, South Korea, India, New Zealand and Australia — to which the U.S. and Russia have been added at this meet.
8th The Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM):	Brussels, Belgium	October 4–5, 2010,	The Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM) was officially established in 1996 at the first summit in Bangkok. ASEM is an interregional forum which consists of the European Commission, the twenty-seven members of the European Union (EU), the thirteen members of the ASEAN Plus Three regional grouping, and, as of

			2008, India, Mongolia, and Pakistan.
1st ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)	Hanoi	October 12, 2010	-
<b><u>Indipex 2011*</u></b>	New Delhi	February 12 - 18, 2011	World Philatelic Exhibition 'Indipex 2011
G-20 Summit	Seoul	Nov 11-12, 2010	IMF Quota change
2010 Lisbon Summit (NATO summit)	Lisbon	Nov 19-20, 2010	Adopted <b>new " Strategic Concept"</b> that addressed the alliances modern challenges such as terrorism and cyber attacks and the members agreed to develop a <b>mutual missile defense system</b>
COP-10 of CBD	Nagoya, Japan	Oct 18-29, 2010	Nagoya protocol adopted.
16 th National Youth Festival *	Udaipur	January 12 to 16, 2011	<p><b>Background</b> Every year, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been celebrating 12th January the birthday of Swami Vivekananda, the great philosopher, thinker and the greatest patron of the youth in India as <b>National Youth Day</b> and the week, commencing from that day, as the National Youth Week. As part of the celebration, holding of <b>National Youth Festival began in 1995</b> as a major activity under the programme of National Integration Camp (NIC).</p> <p><b><u>International Youth Day (IYD)</u></b> Is an awareness day designated by the United Nations. The first IYD was on 12 August 2000</p> <p><b><u>International Year of Youth</u></b> This year's International Youth Day is a particularly important day for youth around the world. In December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution proclaiming the Year commencing this International Youth Day (12 August 2010) as the International Year of Youth.</p>
"WWW 2011 meet" *	Hyderabad	28- April 1, 2011.	

\*to be held

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Polity and Governance

Public Accounts committee(procedure)

- According to procedure a minister cannot appear before it.
- Secretary or HOD of PSU appears on behalf of department/ministry.
- [PM Dr. Singh offered to appear before it]

#### **January 25 to be National Voters' Day**

January 25 will hereafter be celebrated as National Voters' Day. The date marks the foundation day of the Election Commission of India. On that day, young voters, who attain the age of 18 years on January 1, will be given Electors' Photo Identity Cards (EPIC).

Participation of the youth in the political process was rather low. The youth's involvement has to be increased.

#### **New ECI division to tackle 'paid news,' money power**

The Election Commission of India now has a very senior Income Tax Department official heading its poll expenditure monitoring wing to check the practice of 'paid news' and other abuses of money power in elections.

#### **Now only six 'national parties' in India**

The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), which was earlier considered a national party, will henceforth be only a recognised State level party in Bihar, Jharkhand and Manipur. Its recognition in Nagaland has been withdrawn in view of its poor performance in the 2008 Assembly election there.

**Now, the six recognised national parties are the Congress, the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Communist Party of India (CPI), the CPI (M), the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Nationalist Congress Party.**

**Background:**

**National party:**

For getting national party status, a political party should have recognition in at least four States.

**State Party:**

If and only if Condition (A) **OR** (B) is fulfilled

(A)

\* has been engaged in **political activity** for a continuous period of **five years**; and

\* has won in last general election (i) 1/25 seats in the House of the People **OR** (ii) 1/30 seats in the Legislative Assembly of that State.

(B) **total number of valid votes polled** by party in last general election not less than **six per cent** of the total number of valid votes.

**Benefits:** A "State party" is entitled to **exclusive allotment** of its reserved **symbol** to its candidates in the States where it is recognised, and a candidate of a "national Party" can use the reserved symbol throughout India.

[see. [http://eci.nic.in/eci\\_main/faq/RegistrationPoliticalParties.asp](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/faq/RegistrationPoliticalParties.asp)]

#### **Leader of Opposition**

A political party is officially accorded the status of an opposition party in Lok Sabha, only if it secures at least 10 percent of the seats.

**Why in News:**

**RJD Legislature Party leader Abdul Bari Siddiqui will be the Leader of Opposition though the RJD fell short of two seats in its strength in the House for obtaining the post(total= 243, 10%=24.3 RJD=22).**

**Bihar scraps MLA fund:** first state in India to do away with MLALAD scheme.

**Background:**

- The Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLAD) was launched by the Government of India on 23rd December, 1993, to enable Members of Parliament to recommend works of developmental nature with emphasis on the creation of durable community assets based on the locally felt needs to be taken up in their Constituencies/States. Initially the MPLADS was under the control of the Ministry of Rural Development. The subject relating to the MPLADS was transferred to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation in October, 1994.
- Current fund allocation since from 1998-99 is Rs 2crore.
- The government is planning to increase it to Rs. 5 crore per annum.
- **Various committees and commissions have recommended to abolish it.**
- The latest NABCONS report says it is the best scheme. NABARD Consultancy Services (Nabcons) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
- States also started MLALAD fund on the lines of MPLAD.
- **Bihar is the first state in India to do away with MLALAD scheme.**

**Interlocutors for Kashmir talks**

Journalist Dilip Padgaonkar, Information Commissioner M.M. Ansari and academic Radha Kumar are the other interlocutors appointed by the Union Home Ministry.

Prasar Bharati CEO BS Lalli has been suspended by President for corruption charges. Removal proceedings on.

**Removal:** According to the Prasar Bharati Act, the chairman or a member can only be removed by an order of the President on grounds of misbehaviour, after which the Supreme Court holds an inquiry.

**Appointment:** President on recommendation of a committee headed by vice-president.

**Background:**

- Prasar Bharati **Corporation**, is the public service broadcaster in the country, with All India Radio and Doordarshan as its two constituents.
- It came into existence on 23 November **1997**, with a mandate to organise and conduct public broadcasting services to inform, educate and entertain people and to ensure balanced development of broadcasting on radio and television.
- Board is currently headed by Mrinal Pande.

**Removal of High Court judge**

A Parliamentary Inquiry Committee has held Justice **Soumitra Sen** of the Calcutta High Court guilty of 'misconduct' tantamount to 'misbehaviour,' warranting his removal as a judge.

The Committee was headed by Justice **B. Sudershan Reddy** of the Supreme Court.

**Orissa is now Odisha and Oriya is now Odia.**

The proposed change will require an amendment to the first and eighth schedule of the Constitution. Lok Sabha has passed the Orissa (Alteration of Name) bill.

**Vigeye**

Project Vigeye (Vigilance Eye) is a citizen-centric initiative, wherein citizens join hands with the Central Vigilance Commission in fighting corruption in India.

It is the platform through which vigilance information flows freely through common public, the government agencies and the vigilance commission, making it possible to achieve a step jump in improving the corruption index

of the nation.

The important features of Project Vigeye are:

- \* Citizens have multiple channels(website/mobile application) to air their grievances and complaints to CVC
- \* The entire complaint processing is done online, in digital form, enabling fast and accurate processing of complaints.
- \* The concerned CVO will interact with the complainant directly to take it forward
- \* Status of the complaint is communicated back to the complainant - the communication loop becomes complete

77 Passport Seva Kendras next year

## Indian Diaspora

### **4th mini PBD held in Durban, South Africa**

The theme of the Conference was on 'India-Africa: Building Bridges.' This was the 4th regional PBD Convention organized by Government of India outside India. The first such event was held in 2007 in New York, the second in 2008 in Singapore and the third in 2009 at The Hague. PBD Africa marked the 150th anniversary of the arrivals of Indians in South Africa and coincided with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

### **First floating disaster response base**

The country's **first floating disaster response base** of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), anchored on the **banks of the Brahmaputra in Guwahati**, was inaugurated by the NDRF Director-General Rajeev.

#### **Background: National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)**

The DM Act, 2005 has made the statutory provisions for the constitution of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) for the purpose of specialized response to natural and man-made disasters. The Force has to function under the general superintendence, direction and control of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and under command and supervision of Director General, NDRF. At present, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is constituted of eight battalions, two each from the BSF, CRPF, CISF and ITBP.

## Economic and Social Development

### **Population stabilisation target date pushed back to 2070**

Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry has pushed back the target date for achieving population stabilisation to 2070 (with a population of 170 crore) from 2045, stipulated in the National Population Policy (NPP) 2000.

Reason:

1. Total Fertility Rate (TFR) continuing at 2.8 per cent
2. While there was a declining trend in fertility rates in 14 States, northern and central parts of the country continued to have persistently high TFRs ranging from 3 to 3.9 per cent

### **October 3 to be observed as 'National Cerebral Palsy Day'**

With cerebral palsy, a brain disorder which affects mostly children, becoming the commonest cause of childhood disability in India, October 3 will be observed as the first "National Cerebral Palsy Day" by doctors, rehabilitation professionals, parents and people engaged in prevention and management of this impairment. The theme will be "demystifying cerebral palsy by action through awareness and advocacy".

Indian Academy of Cerebral Palsy, an academic body formed by doctors and rehabilitation professionals from across the country, took this decision recently.

Cerebral Palsy, which mainly occurs due to interference in brain development, causes difficulty in movement, speech and sometimes learning of children

### **India Signs Convention of Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage**

- In Vienna on 27<sup>th</sup> Oct 2010, India signed the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC), which seeks to establish a uniform global legal regime for the compensation of victims in the event of a nuclear accident.
- At the moment **four** States have signed and **ratified** the Convention - Argentina, Morocco, Romania and the United States. India's signing brings a total of **14 States** as current **signatories** to the Convention.
- The Convention is set to enter into force on the ninetieth day after date of ratification by at least **five States who have a minimum of 400,000 units** of installed nuclear capacity.

#### **Background**

Adopted on 12 September 1997, the Convention on Compensation for Nuclear Damage was opened for signature at the IAEA's 41st General Conference at Vienna that same month. The CSC is consistent with principles set forth in previous international agreements governing nuclear liability, including the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage and the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy. It provides a bridge between these two regimes, is open to States that are party to neither of these two regimes, and establishes an international fund to increase the amount available to compensate victims. The CSC also allows for compensating civil damage occurring within a State's exclusive economic zone, including loss of tourism or fisheries related income. It also sets parameters on a nuclear operator's financial liability, time limits governing possible legal action, requires that nuclear operators maintain insurance or other financial security measures and provides for a single competent court to hear claims.

### **\$1-bn innovation fund mooted for inclusive growth**

The proposal, **yet to be approved** by the Centre, was agreed to at a recent meeting of the **National Innovation Council (NIC)**.

It was said that 20 industry clusters and 20 university clusters would be identified to help "seed innovations" for promoting inclusive economic growth under this new initiative.

### **NIMHANS**

The Union Cabinet today approved the proposal of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to declare **National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bangalore** as an Institute of National Importance on the lines of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh and Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education & Research, Puducherry. This will facilitate NIMHANS to develop patterns of teaching, with the flexibility to devise new courses, constantly evolving syllabi. The Institute will be able to take up **new courses that are required and are not currently part of the MCI approved courses**.

### **NCDC to become apex institute**

The National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), Delhi—formerly known as the National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD) – is all set to become the apex institute for communicable diseases on a par with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Atlanta, U.S.

#### **Background:**

Established in 1909 as Central Bureau of Malaria at Kasauli in Himachal Pradesh, the institute was renamed Malaria Survey of India in 1927. It was shifted to Delhi in 1938 and renamed as the NICD in 1963 and in July 2009 as NCDC. The institute has not undergone any upgrade for decades and as such sometimes falls short of fulfilling its growing mandate to address to address emerging and re-emerging diseases.

### **Bachelor of Rural Health Care course**

The latest edition of The Lancet Infectious Diseases journal carries an article on the proposed initiative which says that whether or not the government succeeds, it should be praised for the innovative solution.

## Indian Geographical/Cultural/other Issues

### Jal Hansa

- First sea plane service in country
- To boost coastal tourism
- Joint venture between PHHL and Andaman and Nicobar administration

### Cessna 208A

- Canada made eight seater Sea plane
- Used in Jal Hansa service

### Global Centre for Nuclear Energy partnership

**Haryana** would host the **world's first** Global Centre for Nuclear Energy partnership at village Kheri Jassaur near Bahadurgarh in district Jhajjar.

The centre would be set up with the assistance of France, Russia and United States for research and **development of secure and proliferation resistant reactor systems.**

The Centre would facilitate deliberation and discussions of international experts on various issues including innovation in nuclear reactors and the nuclear fuel cycle, **development of proliferation-resistant reactors**, security technologies and the effects of radiation exposure, he further added.

### Background:

[note: India announced the same in Washington Nuclear security summit 2010]

### Indira Sagar Polavaram project

It is a mega project envisaging the construction of a dam across Godavari river, link Krishna and Godavari rivers, develop a vast irrigation system that would cover 15 out of 23 districts in Andhra Pradesh, and generate 960 mw power. It is a part of National River-Linking Project.

Human rights activists came out against the project because of large scale displacement mainly of tribals and environmental issues. Orissa also expressed its concern on the submerging of its land and filed a suit in supreme court.

### Background:

National River-Linking Project, which works under the aegis of the Indian Ministry of Water Resources, was designed to overcome the deficit in water in the country. As a part of this plan, surplus water from the Himalayan rivers is to be transferred to the peninsular rivers of India.

Experts: **Lower Subansiri dam height to prevent disaster.**

Gogoi: **technical team must study Subansiri dam safety**

### Background:

#### Subansiri Dam

The Lower Subansiri Dam is a **116 meter high** concrete dam , **2,000 Mega-Watt** under construction hydroelectric power project of NHPC limited, over Subansiri river, a tributary of Brahmaputra located near North **Lakhimpur on the border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh** . When constructed it will be the **largest hydroelectric project** in India.

**There are various security/environmental concerns has been raised including in a highly seismic zone issue.**

Narmada Bachao Andolan completes 25 years

### Renuka Dam project

Also called Parshuram Sagar project is proposed multipurpose hydropower( including water to Delhi) project on **Giri river** in **Himachal Pradesh**.

The Union Environment and Forests Ministry has decided not to give its approval on the ground that it would involve cutting down of a large number of trees.

### Lavasa

Lavasa is planned, India's first hill city since Independence. The project is being developed primarily by HCC India near Pune and Mumbai and is spread over 25,000 acres (100 km<sup>2</sup>) of controversially procured land. Construction of the city came to a halt on January 2011 as Indian government ruled it illegal over environmental grounds.

## Cultural

### UNESCO's intangible heritage list

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) inscribes **three Indian performing-art forms**, the **Mudiyettu**, a ritual theatre of Kerala; the **Chhau dance**, a tradition from eastern India; and the **Kalbelia** folk songs and dances of Rajasthan in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This annual list, unlike the World Heritage list that focuses on monuments and natural sites, spotlights performing art forms of outstanding value and are vulnerable due to lack of support.

#### **Background:**

The **Mudiyettu**, the ritual dance drama annually **performed after the harvest of summer crops in Kerala**, is more than 250 years old. This art form involves elaborate drawings on floors, masks made of areca nut fronds and playing of drums. What was once well patronised, now has only three traditional families of regular performers.

The **Chhau dance**, known for its crafted masks and mock combat movements, is **prevalent in the tribal parts of Orissa, Jharkhand and West Bengal**. The economic backwardness of the area, an extensive survey by the Sangeet Natak Akademi reveals, has had a negative impact on the artists of the Chhau and their art.

Similarly, the **Kalbeli community of snake charmers from Rajasthan** are also impacted. As a result, their songs and dances, which are characterised by movements and music that evoke serpents, are affected and are in need of support.

So far, about eight Indian heritage elements, including these three, have been inscribed in the **representative list**. Others are-

- Kutiyattam, Sanskrit Theatre;
- The Tradition of Vedic Chanting
- Ramlila - the Traditional Performance of the Ramayana
- Ramman: religious festival and ritual theatre of the Garhwal Himalayas
- Nowruz

It is obligatory on the various governments (132 of them) who have ratified the **UNESCO's Convention for Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage** and who nominate heritage elements, to ensure that necessary measures, including legal and financial, are undertaken to safeguard them.

### Koro

A hidden language, discovered in a remote region of Arunachal Pradesh

### Urulu Seve

- ritual of rolling on used leaves plates to cure skin diseases practiced in some parts of Kerala.
- It is termed derogatory and unscientific.

### "Project Prahari"

The project aimed at fighting the evil '**witch-hunting**' by uplifting the socio-economic status of the people launched in a village of Assam is now a state-wide project.

### Vigyan Jyoti

- a nationwide inspirational drive with an aim to encourage scientific temper among the youth and to spread the message of "science for a billion people".
- Started on 22 Dec 2010
- will travel to 10 cities and end its journey in Chennai where the 98th Indian Science Congress will be held at SRM University from January 3 to 7

The 18 Mahar, part of the Mahar Regiment, has become the first infantry battalion to conduct a Convocation ceremony awarding IGNOU associate degrees.

**Background:**

**Akashdeep:** An IAF IGNOU Program to Enable One Lakh Airmen Achieve Graduate Status in Service

**GYANDEEP :** INDIAN ARMY - IGNOU PARTNERSHIP(SOLDIERS TO GET DEGREE FROM IGNOU)

## Agriculture and Rural Development

### Spice park

The Union Government has approved a proposal for establishment of a spice park at Ramganj Mandi in Kota district of Rajasthan to promote production and marketing of spices.

**Background:**

- India's **first** Spices Park was opened at **Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh** .
- Spices Board has planned to set up Seven such parks .

### Farmer Suicides(facts)

- Top five states(2009)
  - MH(2872, 4th time),KA(2,282),AP,MP(1395),CH(1802)
- 1997-2009
  - 2,16,500
- 2009
  - 17368(highest)

### Kisan gyan kendras

The Lupin Human Welfare and Research Foundation has established "Kisan Gyan Kendras" (farmers' knowledge centres) in 21 villages of Bharatpur district to provide agriculturists with the latest information on farm technologies, bio-farming and animal husbandry.

- Rabi sowing up(fact to know)
- Rabi Showing = 509.42 lakh hectares (+4.69)

### **Novel Initiative (Internal Administrative reform)**

- Senior bureaucrats (additional secretary and joint secretary) of union agriculture ministry to tour the country (institutes such as ICAR, KVK, State Agriculture Universities and villages) to identify the institutes and the technology available for dissemination in the field.
- To submit a report of observations and suggestions.
- There is a lag in technologies developed in labs and reaching to Indian farmers.

### **GMP(Grow More Pulses) Campaign**

- The campaign is an initiative supported by Tata Chemicals and Rallis India to promote the cultivation and availability of pulses in India.
- Launched as PPP in Punjab and Tamilnadu.

**Background:**

Why is pulses cultivation important for India? What initiatives have been taken by GOI?

- Most of the Indian are vegetarian.
- Pulses, the most important source of protein in the diet of almost every Indian, have long been marginalised.
- Statistics reveal that in 2007–2008, India was the world's largest producer of pulses; it was also the largest consumer. In 2007–2008, India produced 15.11 million tonnes of pulses and consumed 18 million tonnes. The balance was imported from countries such as Canada, Myanmar and China.
- In an estimate by the World Health Organization, every Indian needs 80 grams of pulses every day to meet

his or her protein needs. This implies that by the year 2018, India will require 38 million tonnes of pulses to meet its population's nutritional requirements. The current demand-supply gap entails the country paying huge import bills to meet its pulses needs, a burden which is passed on to the consumer.

- **Govt programs**
  - Technology Mission on Oilseeds and Pulses
  - Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oilpalm & Maize
  - National Food Security Mission – Pulses

## Miscellaneous

### Thar Express

The rail link between India and Pakistan via Munabao-Khokhrapar route was restored in February 2006, after a gap of 41 years, to reduce the distance and journey time. The train has gained popularity among the travellers from both the countries.

### IIMA

The Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, on Saturday Dec 11, 2010 completed 50 years of its existence.

VISION IAS

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Russia and Norway sign maritime border agreement

Norway and Russia have agreed on where their Arctic border should be drawn, which could boost offshore exploration.

The two nations have been locked in a dispute over a 175,000 square kilometres area in the **Barents Sea** for 40 years.

### WikiLeaks

- WikiLeaks is a whistle-blower website that publishes submissions of private, secret, and classified media from anonymous news sources and news leaks.
- Julian Assange, an Australian Internet activist, is generally described as its director.
- WikiLeaks is not affiliated with Wikipedia or the Wikimedia Foundation

### “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” (DADT) law

The United States Senate took a historic step forward as Congress passed a bill to repeal the controversial “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” (DADT) law, a ban on openly gay persons serving in the U.S. military.

### World Oral Literature Project

The World Oral Literature Project is an urgent global initiative to **document and make accessible endangered oral literatures (including Indian languages) before they disappear** without record. It was started by researchers at **University of Cambridge** January 2009.

**The need:** Globalisation and rapid socio-economic change exert complex pressures on smaller communities, often eroding expressive diversity and transforming culture through assimilation to more dominant ways of life

### U.N. norms on disappearances

- **The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance** enters into force on December 23, 2010 marking the end of a long struggle to get enough number of countries to ratify the convention to make it a legal instrument.
- **Iraq** was the **20th country** that ratified this international treaty.
- As many as **88 countries** have signed the convention but **only 21** have ratified it.
- **India and Maldives** signed the convention on February 6, 2007.

### New START

- New START (for Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is a bilateral nuclear arms reduction treaty between the United States and the Russian.
- It was signed on 8 April 2010 in Prague by Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev. It is a follow-up to the 1991 **START I** treaty, which **expired in December 2009**, and to **START II** and the 2002 Treaty of Moscow (**SORT**), which was due to expire in December 2012.
- **Status:** recently ratified by both.

#### **Background**

- **START III** (for Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) was a proposed bi-lateral nuclear disarmament treaty between the United States and Russia. However, negotiations broke down and the treaty was never signed.
- The **International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament(ICNND)** is a joint initiative of the Australian and Japanese Governments. It aims to reinvigorate international efforts on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, in the context of both the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and beyond.

### ESPO pipeline

- The Eastern Siberia Pacific Ocean oil pipeline (ESPO) is a pipeline system to export Russian crude oil to the Asia-Pacific markets (Japan, China, and Korea).
- Once completed it will be world's longest oil pipeline.

### Giving Pledge

The Giving Pledge is an effort to invite the wealthiest individuals and families in America to commit to giving the majority of their wealth to the philanthropic causes and charitable organizations of their choice either during their lifetime or after their death.

The campaign specifically targets billionaires and was made public in 2010 by the two wealthiest men in the United States, billionaires Warren Buffett and Bill Gates.

### After 19 years, India elected to U.N. Security Council

India secured the backing of 187 of the 191 member states in the General Assembly. One member abstained from the vote. The position will help the country push more aggressively for the Security Council reforms.

#### **Background:**

- There are **15 members** of the Security Council, consisting of **five veto-wielding permanent** members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and **10 elected non-permanent** members with **two-year terms**.
- Non-permanent members are **elected by the General Assembly** (by **two-third majority** after being **chosen by regional groups**) for two-year terms **starting on 1 January**, with **five replaced each year**.
- Blockwise:
  - African-3
  - Latin America and the Caribbean-2
  - Asian-2,
  - Western European and Others -2
  - Eastern European-1
- (Note: one of these members is an "Arab country," alternately from the Asian or African bloc.)
- No. of elected (non-permanent) members, **raised in 1966 from six** but permanent members are fixed since inception, 1944.
- Starting from 1950, India so far has been elected to the Security Council for **seven times** including the current 2010-2012 term.

### IMF Quota change

- India will improve its rank by three notches to the **8th position** in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as the group of 20 nations (G-20) decided to increase the quota of emerging markets in the multi-lateral lending agency by over 6 per cent.
- The quota share (of India in IMF) will improve to about 2.75 per cent (from the present level of 2.44 per cent).
- China may leapfrog Germany, France and Britain in the fund's power rankings, with its quota share rising to 6.19 percent from previous 3.65 percent.

### Asian People's Solidarity for Palestine (APSP)

AsiatoGaza is a movement that intends to break the illegal siege of Gaza in a peaceful manner. AsiatoGaza consists of non governmental organizations as well as people from various Asian countries like India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Kuwait, UAE and various religions like Muslims, Christian, Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists. In coordination with other activists all over the world, AsiatoGaza has arranged a caravan from India to Gaza with the participation of several Asian countries. This caravan will start in first week of December 2010 from India through Pakistan, Iran to Turkey and from Turkey toward Gaza.

### Bushehr plant

It is a Russian-built nuclear power plant in **Iran**, **south-east** of the city of Bushehr, along the **Persian Gulf**. It is the first nuclear power plant built in the Middle East. Contractors from Germany's **Siemens** began work on the Bushehr plant in the 1970s.

**Current status:** Iran began fuelling the reactor core despite USA's uneasiness.

### IAEA "nuclear fuel bank" plan

- The plan was adopted by IAEA governing body, of which India is a member, by 28-0 with six abstentions. **India voted for the resolution**, which is intended to provide fuel to **countries accepting full scope safeguards** — international inspections — on all their nuclear activities.
- This means **India, along with the five "official" nuclear weapons states as defined by the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, will be ineligible to draw on the bank**. So will Pakistan and Israel and, presumably, North Korea, until it reverses its withdrawal from the NPT.
- India would like to **participate as a supplier** state in such initiatives.
- Unlike the 2009 Russian proposal on a fuel bank — India abstained from voting on it — the latest IAEA resolution does **not require recipient countries to abjure enrichment activities of their own**.
- **the right of any member state to carry out research and development on nuclear fuel cycles for peaceful purposes should not be affected by these arrangements**.
- **Nonaligned countries such as Brazil, Egypt and South Africa have tended to view Western-sponsored proposals for a nuclear fuel bank as an instrument to deny them the right to pursue their own enrichment programmes**.

#### **Background:**

- A nuclear fuel bank is a proposed approach to provide countries access to enriched nuclear fuel, without the need for them to possess enrichment technology.
- The concept of providing an assured supply of nuclear fuel and thus avoiding the need for countries to build indigenous nuclear fuel production capability has long been proposed as a **way to curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons** and, eventually, eliminate them altogether.
- Many non-nuclear-weapon states have been reluctant to embrace any of these proposals for varying reasons.

### First World Statistics Day

On Wednesday, 20th October 2010 (20-10-2010) the first World Statistics Day was organised to celebrate the many achievements of statistics worldwide. The United Nations had declared October 20 as the 'World Statistics Day' to highlight the achievements of statistics and to inculcate core values of service, integrity and professionalism in the field.

Background: The Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Kolkata has been observing 29th June, the birth anniversary of its founder, P. C. Mahalanobis, which was declared as the National Statistics Day by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2006.

### Attack on Chechnya's Parliament

A daring terrorist attack on Chechnya's Parliament left at least seven people dead and 17 wounded.

#### **Background:**

The Chechen Republic, or, informally, Chechnya is a federal subject of Russia. It is located in the southeastern part of Europe, in the Northern Caucasus mountains.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Chechen-Ingush ASSR was split into two: the Republic of Ingushetia and Republic of Chechnya. The latter proclaimed the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, which sought independence. Following the First Chechen War with Russia, Chechnya gained de facto independence as the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Russian federal control was restored during the Second Chechen War. **Since then there has been a systematic reconstruction and rebuilding process, though sporadic fighting continues in the mountains and southern regions of the republic.**

### U.S., Russia to join EAS: ASEAN Decision

Washington and Moscow will be invited to attend the annual meetings of the East Asia Summit (EAS) from 2011.

China's dam-building spree in its far-west Xinjiang region has triggered concerns in the neighbouring Kazakhstan, where officials say two main rivers have begun to see water-levels recede at an alarming rate.

### 1,000th anniversary of Hanoi

Vietnam recently celebrated 1,000th anniversary of the establishment of the country's capital city of Hanoi. King Ly Thai To moved the capital of Vietnam to Hanoi in 1010 and called it **Thang Long**, or "soaring dragon", symbolising the desire for independence after a millennium of Chinese domination.

### All-Pakistan Muslim League (APML)

new political party launched by The former Pakistani President, Parvez Musharraf in London.

### Germany celebrates 20 years of unity

After World War II, the victorious powers, the United States, Britain, France and the Soviet Union carved defeated Germany into four sections.

The western sectors were merged on 23 May 1949, to form the Federal Republic of Germany; on 7 October 1949, the Soviet Zone became the German Democratic Republic (DDR). They were, mainly outside Germany, informally known as "West Germany" and "East Germany", and the two parts of Berlin as "West Berlin" and "East Berlin". With the advent of the Cold War, Moscow erected a border between its eastern section and the three western Allied sections, including the Wall that split Berlin in two.

On October 3, 1990, just under a year after the Wall was yanked down in a bloodless revolution, the reunification treaty bringing the two halves of the country together came into effect amid joyful scenes.

**Capital : East Berlin**

**Capital of west Germany: Bohn**

### Hungary man-made disaster puts Danube countries on alert

At the MAL Zrt **aluminium plant** near the Hungarian village of Ajka, 165 km south-west of Budapest, a dam restraining **highly toxic red sludge** ruptured on October 5 after prolonged rain. The sludge is highly alkaline and contains lead; it may also contain the radioactive elements cadmium and cobalt.

### Al-Shabaab

al-Shabaab is an islamist insurgent group fighting to overthrow the government of Somalia. As of summer 2010 the group is said to control most of the southern and central parts of Somalia.

### Karen people

The Karen or Kayin are a group of ethnic peoples who reside primarily in southern and southeastern Burma (Myanmar).

Since 2006, an offensive of the Burmese army against the Karen National Union has been going on in Karen State, resulting in the displacement of tens of thousands mostly living in refugee camps on the **Thai side of the border**.

### Super Typhoon Megi

smashed into the northern Philippines recently. It was among the most intense tropical cyclones ever recorded.

### Huge U.S.-Saudi arms deal

The United States has announced one of the largest weapons sales in its history, worth nearly \$60 billion, to Saudi Arabia.

The most significant components of the package include 84 F-15 aircraft, 70 upgrades of existing Saudi F-15s to a more advanced configuration, 70 AH-64D **Apache Longbow helicopters**, 72 UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, 36 AH-6i light attack helicopters, and 12 MD-530F light training helicopters.

## TAPI

### Updates:

- India recently signed Gas Pipeline Framework Agreement (GPFA)
- Russia has offered to join the ambitious **Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline**, even as it opted out of a project to build a gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan and India.

### Background:

- The Trans-Afghanistan Pipeline (TAP or TAPI) is a proposed natural gas pipeline being developed by the Asian Development Bank. The pipeline will transport Caspian Sea natural gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan into Pakistan and then to India.
- India had in April 2008 joined the TAPI project.

Unprecedented anger in France

### "Estamos bien en el refugio los 33"

(English: "We are ok in the refuge, the 33 miners")

The red-ink note that confirmed the 33 miners trapped in the San Jose mine beneath Chile's Atacama desert were alive has been made the copyright of the miner Jose Ojeda, who wrote it.

### 'Think Tank Initiative'

The Think Tank Initiative is a multi-donor program dedicated to strengthening independent policy research institutions in the developing world. Managed by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). It was e launched in New Delhi on October 30.

### Ivory Coast crisis

The West African country is bracing for a political violence after a disputed presidential election resulted in both incumbent **Laurent Gbagbo** and challenger **Alassane Ouattara** claiming victory. Ouattara is backed by the **United Nations and almost all countries around the world as a winner** of the Nov. 28 2010 election. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the main regional grouping, has already threatened to use force to lever Gbagbo out of power. USA also warned for stringent actions.

### Background:

**Ivory Coast is the world's largest producer and exporter of cocoa**, the basis of chocolate.

Nuclear submarine HMS Astute runs aground off Skye.

## INDIA AND WORLD

### 60 years of its cultural diplomacy, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations

To mark 60 years of its cultural diplomacy, the Indian Council for Cultural Relations hosted an international seminar on "Indian Culture in a Globalised World" . It also marked the 122nd birth anniversary of ICCR's founder **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**"

### Gold Struck

Film, Gold Struck, will be the first joint production of India and China, opening new avenues of cooperation between the two Asian giants.

### ACU(Asian Clearing Union)

- In a move that is being seen worldwide as an example of India succumbing to American pressure, the Reserve Bank of India has barred companies from using the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) to process current account transactions for oil and gas imports — a decision that directly hits at Indian energy imports from Iran.
- ACU headquarters in Tehran, Iran, was established on December 9, 1974
- To secure regional co-operation as regards the settlement of monetary transactions among the members of the Union and to provide a system for clearing payments among the member countries on a multilateral basis.
- Members:9[ as of 2009 members of ACU are the central banks of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar]. (SAARC-1+2)

### Recent Indian CECAs/FTA at a glance

- Under implantation(recent)
  - ASIAN
  - Singapore
  - South Korea
- Under Discussion
  - Japan
  - EU
  - Malaysia
  - Thailand
  - And others

### Visa-on-arrival

Visa-on-arrival (VoA) facility will be extended to Cambodia, Philippines, Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar. The scheme will be operational from the New Year, 2011.

The **single-entry** visa, to be issued at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata airports, will have a validity of 30 days.

**India launched the VoA in January 2010** on a pilot basis for Singapore, New Zealand, Japan, Finland and Luxembourg

### Social Security Agreement in OCT 2010

1. Norway
2. Korea Sign

### Indian enclaves( residents) demand corridors

Known as "chhitmahals," there are officially 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 55 Bangladeshi enclaves on the Indian soil currently — the largest group of enclaves in the world.

**New Indo-Israeli centre of agricultural excellence** launched near Bassi in Jaipur district of **Rajasthan**.

## VISITS TO INDIA

Dignitary	Dates
H E Mrs. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh	January 10-14
H E Dr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, President of Iceland	January 11-17
H E Dato Sri Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia	January 19-23
H E Mr. Lee Myung-bak, President of Republic of Korea	January 24-27
H.E. Mr. Horst Kohler, President of Germany	February 1-7
H.E. Mr. Abdullah Gul, President of Turkey	February 7-12
H.E. Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, President of Nepal	February 15-18
H.E. Mr. Vladimir Putin, Prime Minister of Russian Federation	March 12
HE Mr. Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan	April 26-30
H.E. Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan	May 24-26
H.E. Mr. James Alix Michel, President of Republic of Seychelles	June 1-3
H.E. Dr. Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa	June 2-4
H.E. Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka	June 8-11
H.E. Senior General Than Shwe, Chairman State Peace & Development Council, Union of Myanmar (State)	25-29 July
Rt. Hon. David Cameron MP, Prime Minister of United Kingdom (State)	27-29 July
H.E Mr Donald Tusk, Prime Minister of Poland (State)	September 6-8, 2010
H. E. Mr. Armando Emilio Guebuza, President of the Republic of Mozambique (State visit)	29 September – 4 October, 2010
His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	5 – 7 October, 2010

His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan	20 – 29 October, 2010
H.E. Lyonchhen Jigmi Y Thinley, Prime Minister of Bhutan	30 Oct – 3 Nov, 2010
H E Ngwazi Prof. Bingu Wa Mutharika, President of Malawi (State)	November 2-8
The Honorable Barack Obama, President of United States of America (State)	November 6-9
H E Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy, President of France	December 4-7
H E Mr. Wen Jiabao, Premier of China (State)	December 15-17
H E Mr. Dmitry A Medvedev, President of Russian Federation	December 21-22

### VISITS TO WORLD

Visiting Dignitary/ Countries	Dates
Vice President to Zambia, Malawi and Botswana	5-11 January
Prime Minister to Saudi Arabia	Feb 27 to March 1
Prime Minister to US and Brazil	April 10-16
Prime Minister to Bhutan for SAARC	April 28-30
President to the People's Republic of China	May 26-31
Vice President to Czech Republic and Croatia	June 6- 11
Prime Minister to Canada for G-20 Summit	June 25-29
President of India to Laos and Cambodia	September 9-18
Vice President to Belgium for 8th ASEM Summit	October 3-6
Prime Minister of India to Japan, Malaysia and Vietnam	October 24 - 30
Prime Minister to the Republic of Korea for G-20 Summit	November 10-12
President to United Arab Emirates and Syria	November 21-29
Prime Minister to Belgium and Germany	December 9-12

## PERSONS IN NEWS

### International

#### Obituary

##### Richard Holbrooke

President Barack Obama's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. He was an American diplomat, magazine editor, author, professor, Peace Corps official, and investment banker.

##### Samuel Theodore Cohen

an American physicist who invented the W70 warhead, more popularly known as the **neutron bomb**.

Balaji Sadasivan (11 July 1955 – 27 September 2010) was an Indian Singaporean politician and neurosurgeon.

Tony Curtis (June 3, 1925 – September 29, 2010) was an American film actor whose career spanned six decades, but had his greatest popularity during the 1950s and early 1960s.

##### Nestor Kirchner

The former Argentine President died. He was the country's most powerful politician along with his wife, current President Cristina Fernandez (first elected women president of Argentina).

##### Chhewang Nima Sherpa

one ascent away from equalling the world record of summiting Mount Everest 20 times, which is held by Apa Sherpa, is missing and feared dead in the Himalayas.

Benoit Mandelbrot, a French-American mathematician, father of a new class of mathematical shapes known as "fractals," has died.

#### Appointments

##### Dilma Rousseff

First women president of Brazil.

##### Nouri al-Maliki

Approved by Iraq's parliament as **Prime minister of for second term**.

##### **Background:**

Jalal Talabani is current president of Iraq.

##### Subra Suresh

The Obama administration has made one of its most senior appointments yet from the Indian-American community. Subra Suresh, School of Dean of Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, has been confirmed as the **Director of the high-level National Science Foundation**.

#### Other

##### Prof. Bingu wa Mutharika

The President of **Malawi**, visited India in Nov on **1st state visit as president**

Studied in Delhi in 60s

Awarded honorary doctorate

### Aung san suu kyj

She was released on 13 November 2010 from house arrest.

### Sarath Fonseka

The former commander and General of the Sri Lanka Army and a former candidate for President of Sri Lanka who was instrumental in ending the 26 year old Sri Lankan Civil War in 2009.

He was found guilty of corrupt military supply deals and **sentenced to three years in prison**( court-martialed).

### Rowan Williams

Rowan Williams , poet and theologian, **Archbishop of Canterbury** recently **visited India**.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is the senior bishop and principal leader of the Church of England, the symbolic **head of the worldwide Anglican Communion**.

## National

### Obituary

#### L.C. Jain

Well-known Gandhian and Magsaysay Award winner economist.

#### K. Karunakaran,

The former Chief Minister of Kerala and veteran Congress leader. Karunakaran will be remembered for his strong stand against Naxalism in Kerala and for completely removing its roots from the society.

#### B. S. Ranga

Bindinganavile Srinivasa Iyengar Ranga, who was born in Nagamangala taluk, TN, worked as a cinematographer, laboratory technician, exhibitor and scriptwriter for more than 100 films in the Kannada, Hindi, Telugu and Tamil film industries. (Died recently)

#### Prabhakar Bhalji Pendharkar

Director-writer

His films Bal Shivaji (Marathi) and Bidai (Hindi) won national awards.

#### Soundara Kailasam

Eminent Tamil poet, writer, and the mother-in-law of Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram expired.

#### Jayaben Desai

- Famous her role in leading the two-year-long strike (1976-78) at the Grunwick Film Processing Laboratories, north London, demanding union recognition for its largely Asian and female workforce
- The striking workers, mostly Indian women, were fondly dubbed as "strikers in saris".

#### Ramaprasad Banik

- Theatre personality: Actor, Director and Playwright.

#### Guru Gangadhar Pradhan

- Padma awardee Odissi exponent.

### Appointments

#### Satyanand Mishra

Satyanand Mishra, one of six Information Commissioners, has been selected to be the next **Chief Information Commissioner**. Mr. Mishra will **replace A.N. Tiwari**, who has held the post since October 1, 2010.

#### **Background:**

CIC is appointed by **President** on recommendation of a **committee of 3** comprising of **Prime minister**, 'Leader of

**Opposition'** and a **cabinet minister** nominated by Prime minister.

**Amitabh Mattoo**

- **Appointed first Vice Chancellor of the Central University at Jammu**
- A Padma Shri winner, Prof. Mattoo's teaching and research interests include issues of international security, India's foreign policy, and arms control and disarmament.
- He has been a member of National Knowledge Commission and India's National Security Council's Advisory Board.

**Rahul Mehrotra**

America's prestigious Harvard University has appointed noted Indian urban designer (**architect**) and educator Rahul Mehrotra professor of Urban Design and Planning and chair of the department of Urban Planning and Design.

**R. Seetharaman**

The New York Tamil Sangam, said to be the oldest of its kind in the United States, conferred an award for business excellence on R. Seetharaman, **Group CEO of Doha Bank**.

**Priti Kumari**

become the first woman to drive a train for Western Railway in its 143 years history.

**Other**

**Ela Bhatt**

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presented the **first Global Fairness Initiative Award** to Ela Bhatt, founder of the **Self-Employed Women's Association** that has helped over a million women in India gain access to opportunities for themselves and their families.

**Maneka Gandhi**

**Animal rights** crusader Maneka Gandhi was presented the **Shining World Compassion Award** from Supreme Master Ching Hai International Association .

**V. R. Mehta**

**The Philippine Parliament has honoured** V. R. Mehta, executive president of the Jaipur-based **Bhagwan Mahavir Vikalang Sahayata Samiti**, for helping out physically challenged people in the Philippines through the legendary **Jaipur Foot**.

Mr. Mehta had established the **Mahavir Philippines Foundation** at the Philippine Orthopaedic Centre in Manila 25 years ago.

## PLACES IN NEWS

Place	Comment
<b>Yeonpyeong Island</b>	Yeonpyeong Island is a group of South Korean islands in the Yellow Sea. In November 2010, North Korean artillery shelled Yeonpyeong with dozens of rounds .
<b>Mount Merapi</b>	Mount Merapi, Gunung Merapi (literally Fire Mountain in Indonesian/Javanese), is an active stratovolcano located on the border between Central Java and Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It recently erupted.
<b>Kuril archipelago</b>	The Kuril Islands in Russia's Sakhalin Oblast region, is a volcanic archipelago (group of many islands). All of the islands are under Russian jurisdiction, but Japan claims the four southernmost as part of its territory, which has led to the ongoing Kuril Islands dispute. Russian president recently visited the island.
<b>Haiti</b>	Earthquake and Cyclone Tomas
<b>Hambantota Port</b>	Sri Lanka
<b>Brahmaputra Dam in Tibet</b>	The dam is being constructed in Shannan Prefecture, Tibet, about 300 kilometers southeast of Lhasa.
<b>Cam Ranh Bay</b>	<b>Vietnam</b> recently said that the strategic Cam Ranh Bay <b>naval base</b> would not be leased out to any foreign power for military purposes.
<b>Kyaukphyu</b>	Myanmar has started work on a railway line from its planned deep-sea port at Kyaukphyu to south-western China's Yunnan province. The line, which will be completed in 2015, will transport Chinese goods for export, and also be used by China to expand its access to Myanmar's natural resources.

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## General Studies Prelim 2011: Current Affairs

January – February

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Defence Technology

##### Ultra Light Howitzer (ULH) guns

- The M777 howitzer is a towed artillery piece manufactured by BAE Systems USA(HQ-UK).
- The Indian Army will soon acquire 145 ultra-light howitzers(M777 155mm 39 calibre towed gun) from the US.
- The Indian Defence Acquisitions Committee (DAC) has taken a decision to pursue the foreign military sales (FMS) route and the deal is expected to be to the tune of \$647 million.
- The ultra-light howitzers are for the mountain artillery divisions of the Indian Army to be used in high-altitude frontiers. They can be transported slung from some helicopters.
- Trials were held by the Army in the hilly terrains of Sikkim and Jammu and Kashmir. The guns, each weighing some 4,200 kg, can be transported over the mountains slung under helicopters. The government had paid for bringing the gun for trials.
- **In news:** Trial report leaked. Probe ordered.

##### C-130J Super Hercules

- The Indian Air Force inducted the tactical airlift transport C-130J Super Hercules aircraft at the Hindon Air Force Station Ghaziabad.
- After phasing out the Super Constellation in the mid 1970s, the IAF had inducted an American military aircraft.
- The C-130J is a four-engine turboprop aircraft manufactured by Lockheed Martin. It can be used for troop deployment, special operations, air-to-air refuelling, disaster relief and humanitarian aid operations.
- Its technology and configuration enables the aircraft to perform precision low-level flying, airdrops, and landing in blackout conditions.
- Equipped with night vision imaging, the C-130J is capable of airdropping personnel and material even in complete darkness. It can also land on unprepared or semi-prepared landing strips and has self-protection to operate in hostile environments.
- The aircraft is capable of undertaking low-level air-to-air refuelling that enhances its range and rapid forward-basing of personnel and equipment in emergent situations.
- The contract for the six aircrafts was signed in 2008 at an estimated cost of under \$1.2 billion under the Foreign Military Sales programme.

##### Nishant

- The DRDO Nishant is an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) developed by ADE (Aeronautical Development Establishment) a branch of DRDO for the Indian Armed Forces.
- Nishant can be used in roles such as battle field reconnaissance (day and night), surveillance, target tracking and localisation and correction of artillery fire.
- the system consisted of the air vehicle supported by 'ground control station' equipment mounted on Tatra vehicles and has up to four-and-a-half hours' endurance.
- It requires rail-launching from a hydro-pneumatic launcher and recovered by a Parachute System.
- Nishant is one of the few UAVs in the world in its weight-class capable of being catapult-launched and recovered

by using parachute, thus eliminating the need for a runway as in case of conventional take-off and landing with wheels.

- Status: The Army successfully conducted the flight trials recently ahead of taking delivery of a set of four Nishant-UAVs, together with ground systems

#### **DRDO's NETRA**

- NETRA is a completely autonomous hovering Unmanned Aerial Vehicle ideal for short range missions.
- Designed specifically for anti-terrorist and counter insurgency operations.
- UAV has been designed to carry out surveillance in an area of 1.5 KM Line of Sight (LOS) and has an endurance capacity of 30 minutes of battery charge.
- 'netra', is a collaborative development project between one of Defence Research and Development Organisation's Pune-based labs, Research and Development Establishment (Engineers) (R&DE) Pune and ideaForge, a company by Mumbai IITians.

#### **Nayan**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is in the process of developing an integrated coastal defence system under its Project Nayan.

#### **GTRE GTX-35VS Kaveri Engine**

- Being developed by DRDO's Gas Turbine research Establishment (GTRE), the Kaveri was initially being developed for the LCA Tejas programme but now it will be used on the fifth generation Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), which is expected to be ready by 2016-17.

#### **AUV-150**

AUV (Autonomous Underwater Vehicle) -150 is an **unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV)** being developed by Central Mechanical Research Institute (CSIR-CMERI) scientists, Durgapur, West Bengal. The project is sponsored by the Ministry of Earth Sciences and has technical assistance from IIT-Kharagpur.

The vehicle was built with the intent of **coastal security** like mine counter-measures, coastal monitoring and reconnaissance. AUV 150 can be used to study aquatic life, for mapping of sea-floor and minerals along with monitoring of environmental parameters, such as current, temperature, depth and salinity. It can also be useful in cable and pipeline surveys. It is built to operate 150 metres under the sea and have cruising speed of up to **four knots**.

The AUV has hybrid communication channels. It uses radio frequency while on surface, but switches to acoustic communication when submerged. The AUV has its own power, propulsion, navigation and control systems.

#### **Background:**

The National Institute of Ocean Technology [NIOT], Chennai, earlier developed a Remotely Operated Vehicle [ROV] with the capability to dive much deeper. AUV-150, however, is different in that it is not remotely operated from a control station ashore. It has an onboard computer that can be pre-programmed to carry out specific tasks, which makes it a smart vehicle endowed with the ability to devise its own stratagems to execute a mission.

#### **AUV**

An autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) is a robot which travels underwater without requiring input from an operator. AUVs constitute part of a larger group of undersea systems known as unmanned underwater vehicles, a classification that includes non-autonomous remotely operated underwater vehicles (ROVs) – controlled and powered from the surface by an operator/pilot via an umbilical or using remote control. In military applications AUVs more often referred to simply as unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs).

## Space Technology

### Russia launches Glonass satellite, a boost for India

- Russia has successfully launched a next-generation navigation satellite for its Glonass global communication system.
- The **Glonass-K satellite** was hauled into orbit from the northern **Plesetsk space centre in Russia** by the upgraded Soyuz 2-1b launcher, featuring advanced digital avionics and a more powerful Fregat upper stage.
- The new satellite has a longer design life, more navigation channels and is smaller than previous Glonass-M spacecraft.
- This launch will increase the deployed Glonass grouping to **23 satellites, one short of the minimum needed (24) to provide 100-per cent global coverage.**

### **Background:**

- In December the **launch of three Glonass-M satellites failed** when the carrier rocket crashed into the ocean after it was filled with excessive fuel and deviated from course.
- Russia plans to launch five Glonass satellites this year to replace the ones that crashed and deploy back-up satellites.
- Glonass will be integrated with the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS), as well as with the European Union's Galileo system and China's Compass network when they are deployed.
- Experts said the use of a two-signal receiver that supports both GPS and Glonass increases reliability by 15 per cent.
- Under a 2007/2010 accord, Russia agreed to share the Glonass signal with India. **India will be the only country to have access to the military segment of the Glonass system**, which will enable the Indian military to greatly improve the accuracy of its land-, sea-, air and space-launched weapon systems.
- In September the two countries signed a deal to jointly manufacture Glonass/GPS twin system receivers and other navigational equipment.

### **Discovery space shuttle's final launch**

February 24, 2011

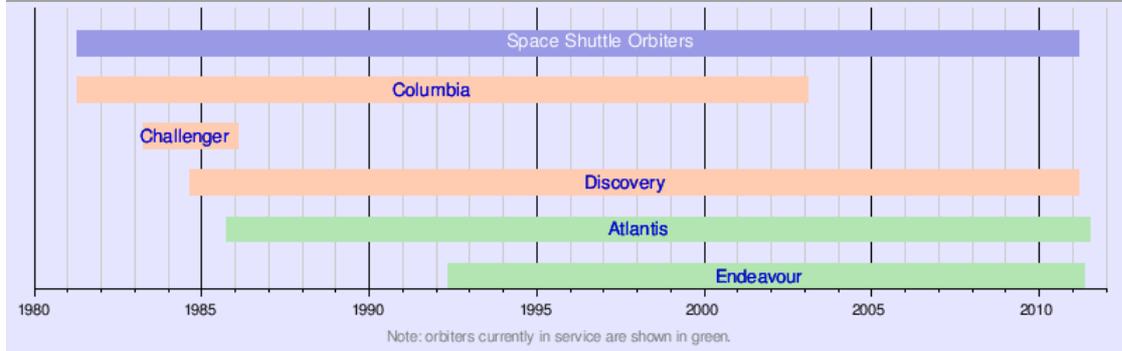
### **Background:**

#### **Space Shuttle**

- The Space Shuttle is a reusable launch system and orbital spacecraft operated by the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for human spaceflight missions.
- The system combines rocket launch, orbital spacecraft, and re-entry spaceplane with modular add-ons. The first of four orbital test flights occurred in 1981 leading to operational flights beginning in 1982, all launched from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida.
- The system is scheduled to be retired from service in 2011 after 135 launches.

Name	Start	End	Comment
Columbia	April 1981	February 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ On February 1, 2003, Columbia disintegrated during re-entry, killing its crew of seven.</li><li>▪ <b>Kalpana Chawla</b>, an Indian-born aerospace engineer was on her second space mission died onboard.</li></ul>
Challenger	April 1983	Jan 1986	On January 28, 1986, Challenger disintegrated 73 seconds after launch
Discovery	August 1984	February 24, 2011	Retired

Atlantis	October 1985	Last planned on April 19, 2011
Endeavour	May 1992	Last planned on June 28,, 2011

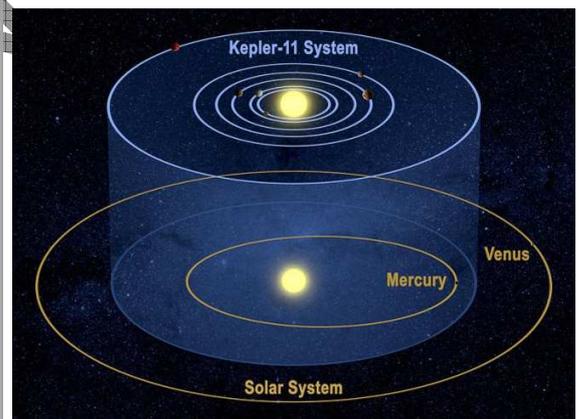


### Kepler ATV

The Johannes Kepler ATV, or Automated Transfer Vehicle 002 (ATV-002), is a European unmanned cargo resupply spacecraft named after German astronomer Johannes Kepler. The spacecraft was launched on 17 February 2011[3], on a mission to supply the International Space Station (ISS) with propellant, air and dry cargo.

### Kepler-11

- Kepler-11 is a **sun-like star** in the constellation Cygnus, located some **2,000 light years** from Earth.
- It is located within the field of **vision of the Kepler spacecraft**, the satellite that NASA's Kepler Mission uses to detect planets that may be transiting their stars.
- Announced on February 2, 2011, the star system is the most compact yet discovered and is the flattest known.
- **It is the first discovered case of a star system with six planets.**
- All discovered **planets are larger than Earth**, with the larger ones being about Neptune's size.
- The five inner planets hav orbital periods **less than 50 days**. Orbital period of sixth planet is **118 days**.
- As is the case in our solar system, all of the Kepler-11 planets orbit in more or less the **same plane**.
- All six planets have **densities lower than Earth's**.



### Kepler-10b

- Kepler-10b is the **first confirmed terrestrial planet to have been discovered outside the Solar System**.
- The planet's discovery was announced on January 10, 2011.
- Kepler-10b has a mass between **3.3 and 5.7 Earth masses** and a **radius of 1.4 Earth radii**.
- However, it lies extremely close to its star, Kepler-10, and as a result is **too hot (2,500 degrees Fahrenheit )** to support life.

### Dream Chaser(Spacecraft)

- The Dream Chaser is a planned crewed suborbital and orbital vertical-takeoff, horizontal-landing (VTHL) lifting-body spaceplane being developed by SpaceDev, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC).

- The Dream Chaser design is planned to carry seven people to and from low earth orbit. The vehicle would launch vertically on an Atlas V and land horizontally on conventional runways.
- The Dream Chaser was publicly announced on September 2004 as candidate for NASA's Vision for Space Exploration and later Commercial Orbital Transportation Services Program (COTS).

## **ICT(Information Communication Technology)**

### **Bharat Operating System Solutions (BOSS)**

- Bharat Operating System Solutions (BOSS) is a **free and open source computer operating system** developed by the National Resource Centre for Free/Open Source Software (NRCFOSS)[**CDAC, Chennai**] of India.
- The latest version of this operating system, **BOSS GNU/Linux Version 4.0**, was released in February 2011.
- It has enhanced Desktop Environment integrating **Indian language support** and other packages that are relevant for use in the Indian government domain.
- This software package has been described as "**India's own PC operating system**" and as "the most meaningful product to come out of the Indian software industry"

### **Information Technology (Due Diligence observed by intermediaries guidelines) Rules, 2011** (Draft)

- Internet service providers are usually treated like a telecom provider ie the ISP is not responsible for any sort of information provided through its services
- But with the 2008 amendment in IT act , it stipulated that ISPs need to observe due diligence while discharging their duties
- The new act lists out rules regarding the due diligence

#### **Criticism:**

Draft IT guidelines may gag internet freedom.

#### **Background:**

##### **What is Malware?**

Malware, short for malicious software, is a software designed to harm or secretly access a computer system without the owner's informed consent. The expression is a general term used by computer professionals to mean a variety of forms of hostile, intrusive, or annoying software or program code

##### **What are different type of malware?**

Malware includes computer viruses, worms, trojan horses, spyware, dishonest adware, scareware, crimeware, most rootkits, and other malicious and unwanted software or program.

##### **What are the features of malware?**

Software is considered to be malware based on the perceived intent of the creator rather than any particular features.

##### **What is Rootkit?**

A rootkit is software that enables continued privileged access to a computer while actively hiding its presence from administrators by subverting standard operating system functionality or other applications. The term rootkit is a concatenation of "root" (the traditional name of the privileged account on Unix operating systems) and the word "kit" (which refers to the software components that implement the tool). The term "rootkit" has negative connotations through its association with malware.

##### **What is Virus?**

A virus is a small piece of software that piggybacks on real programs. For example, a virus might attach itself to a program such as a spreadsheet program. Each time the spreadsheet program runs, the virus runs, too, and it has the chance to reproduce (by attaching to other programs) or wreak havoc.

**What is E-mail virus?**

An e-mail virus travels as an attachment to e-mail messages, and usually replicates itself by automatically mailing itself to dozens of people in the victim's e-mail address book. Some e-mail viruses don't even require a double-click -- they launch when you view the infected message in the preview pane of your e-mail software.

**What is Trojan horse?**

A Trojan horse, or Trojan, is software that appears to perform a desirable function for the user prior to run or install, but (perhaps in addition to the expected function) steals information or harms the system. The term is derived from the Trojan Horse story in Greek mythology.

**What is Spyware?**

Spyware is a type of malware that can be installed on computers, and which collects small pieces of information about users without their knowledge. The presence of spyware is typically hidden from the user, and can be difficult to detect.

**What is the difference between Spyware and Trojan horse?**

Trojan horse has the ability to take over the system operation, while access to important files are blocked. IT also has the characteristics of a spyware by monitoring every keystroke and collecting secret information of the affected person.

**What is Adware?**

Adware, or advertising-supported software, is any software package which automatically plays, displays, or downloads advertisements to a computer. These advertisements can be in the form of a pop-up. The object of the Adware is to generate revenue for its author. Adware, by itself, is harmless; however, some adware may come with integrated spyware such as keyloggers and other privacy-invasive software.

**What is Crimeware?**

Crimeware is a class of malware designed specifically to automate cybercrime.

**What is cybercrime?**

cybercrime, refers to any crime that involves a computer and a network. The computer may have been used in the commission of a crime, or it may be the target. Netcrime refers, more precisely, to criminal exploitation of the Internet.

**What is computer worm?**

A computer worm is a self-replicating malware computer program, which uses a computer network to send copies of itself to other nodes (computers on the network) and it may do so without any user intervention. This is due to security shortcomings on the target computer.

**What is the difference between worm and Virus?**

Unlike a computer virus, it does not need to attach itself to an existing program. Worms almost always cause at least some harm to the network, even if only by consuming bandwidth, whereas viruses almost always corrupt or modify files on a targeted computer.

**In News: National IPv6 Deployment Roadmap Released****Task Force to Guide Transition from IPv4 To Ipv6 Formed Major Telecom Operators to be IPv6 Compliant by December, 2011**

- The Government has released the roadmap for Internet Protocol Version 6 (IPv6) deployment in the country in a time bound manner. It has also decided to form an IPv6 Task Force in **Public Private Partnership (PPP)** mode for timely implementation of IPv6 in the country.
- IPv4, the initial version of address platform is already overburdened in India with 18.4 million registered

addresses and is expected to exhaust the available space globally by March 2012.

- **[note: On February 3rd, 2011, ICANN announced that it had distributed the last batch of its remaining IPv4 addresses.]**
- **All Central and State Government Ministries and Departments, including its PSUs, shall switch over to IPv6 services by March-2012.** The transition from IPv4 to IPv6 will affect many organisations and no organisation can bring this change alone. The Task Force will bring together all stakeholders to discuss, develop and implement the strategies for making the transition possible.

#### **Background:**

- Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) is a version of the Internet Protocol (IP) that is designed to succeed Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4).
- Since 1981, IPv4 has been the publicly used Internet Protocol, and it is currently the foundation for most Internet communications.
- IPv6 was developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)
- IPv6 provides additional features not present in IPv4. some of these are
  - **Larger address space:** 128 bit address=  $2^{128}$  addresses.
  - **Multicast:** Multicast, the transmission of a packet to multiple destinations in a single send operation, is part of the base specification in IPv6. In IPv4 this is an optional although commonly implemented feature
  - **Better Security:** Internet Protocol Security (IPsec) is an integral part of the base protocol suite in IPv6. IPsec support is mandatory in IPv6 but optional for IPv4.
  - **Simplified processing by routers** makes it faster than IPv4.
    - Supports better **Mobility features.**
  - **Options extensibility:** The extension header mechanism provides extensibility to support future services for quality of service, security, mobility, and others, without redesign of the basic protocol.
    - It can support **bigger packet sizes** called **Jumbograms.**
- Transition mechanisms: Until IPv6 completely supplants IPv4, a number of transition mechanisms are needed to enable IPv6-only hosts to reach IPv4 services and to allow isolated IPv6 hosts and networks to reach the IPv6 Internet over the IPv4 infrastructure. Some of the techniques are
  - **Dual IP** (v4 and v6) support (stack) implementation by operating system.
  - **IPv4-mapped IPv6 addresses**
  - **Tunneling:** encapsulating IPv6 packets within IPv4.
- **A 2008 study by Google Inc. indicated that penetration was still less than one percent of Internet-enabled hosts in any country at that time.**
- **On June 8, 2011 the Internet Society together with several other big companies and organizations will hold World IPv6 Day, a global 24 hour test of IPv6**

#### **2G: TRAI for over six-fold price hike**

- The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) (on 9 Feb 2011) recommended that the price of pan-India 2G licence (that comes with contracted 6.2 MHz spectrum) be fixed at Rs.10,972.45 crore — over six times higher than the 2001 price of Rs.1,658 crore that was charged from new operators in 2008.
- It also said that each MHz of spectrum on pan-India basis beyond 6.2 MHz should be charged at Rs. 4,571.87 crore.
- The earlier price of pan-India 1 MHz spectrum based on the 2001 cost was just Rs. 267.51 crore. The revised price now is Rs.1,769.75 crore (up to 6.2 MHz) and Rs. 4,571.87 crore (beyond 6.2 MHz). The TRAI recommended that these **prices be implemented retrospectively from April 1, 2010.**
- **Reaction:** TRAI suggestion disastrous, say mobile operators.

#### **Space Commission moves to restructure Antrix**

- Reiterating its earlier decision to cancel the two-satellite deal, the Commission, the apex policymaking body for space-related issues, set up a three-member committee to select a full-time Chairman-cum-Managing Director

for Antrix.

- Until now, the Secretary, Department of Space (DoS), who is also the Chairman of the Space Commission and ISRO, was its Chairman, looking after day-to-day activities. K. Radhakrishnan held all three posts.

#### **Antrix-Devas S-Band Spectrum deal**

- Government has decided to annul the Antrix-Devas deal where Antrix reportedly allocated to Devas **70 MegaHertz** of scarce S-band spectrum for a 20-year period through ISRO's to be launched GSAT 6 and 6A satellites.
- Under the deal, Devas Multimedia was to get access to 70 Mhz of broadband spectrum in the 2500 Mhz band.
- Devas Multimedia was planning to launch broadband services through a combination of satellite and terrestrial networks.
- This was once used by Doordarshan to deliver programmes by satellite to all parts of the country but is now considered to be of enormous commercial value for high-speed, terrestrial mobile communications.
- The frequency, also known as 2.5 Ghz band, is globally used for providing mobile broadband services using fourth generation technologies such as WiMax and Long Term Evolution (LTE).
- Globally, this frequency band has been put up for auction in many countries and has fetched governments billions of dollars.
- The usability of spectrum depends on how harmonious it is with global usage. That is because mobile device makers and network equipment manufacturers can focus on developing products for a specific radio frequency for every country. If each country were to have its own plan for using spectrum, then telecom networks and devices would become very complex and expensive.

#### **Background:**

##### **Microwave frequency bands**

- The microwave spectrum is usually defined as electromagnetic energy ranging from approximately 1 GHz to 100 GHz in frequency, but older usage includes lower frequencies. Most common applications are within the 1 to 40 GHz range. Some of Microwave frequency bands, as defined by the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB), are shown in the table below:

L band	1 to 2 GHz
<b>S band</b>	<b>2 to 4 GHz</b>
C band	4 to 8 GHz
X band	8 to 12 GHz
Ku band	12 to 18 GHz
K band	18 to 26.5 GHz
Ka band	26.5 to 40 GHz

- **Radio Spectrum for Mobile applications in India**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Bandwidth Allocated in India</b>	<b>Frequency Band</b>	<b>comment</b>
2G	for 2G services a bandwidth of 30-200 KHz is used	In India GSM technology works in the frequency bands of 900 and 1800 MHz and CDMA technology works in the 800 MHz band.	The initial allotment of spectrum along with the licence was 4.4 MHz for GSM and 2.5 MHz for CDMA. This could be further scaled up to 6.2 MHz for GSM and 5 MHz for CDMA operators depending on availability and the operator's ability to justify the need for it. For additional spectrum they had to meet the subscriber linked criterion laid

			down by DoT.
3G	2x5Mhz(UL+DL) (paired)	2.1 GHz (UL-1920–1980 MHz DL-2110–2170 MHz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• auctioning Rs. 67,718 cr earned from</li> <li>• In USA-1900 MHz used</li> </ul>
BWA (Broadband Wireless access)	20 MHz (unpaired)	2.3 GHz(2 blocks) 2.5 GHz(2 blocks) (1 bloc for BSNL/MTNL reserved in 2.5GHz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• auctioning Rs 38,300 cr earned from</li> </ul>

SPECTRUM AVAILABILITY FOR TELECOM IN DIFFERENT FREQUENCY BANDS		
Frequency Band*	Bandwidth	Usage/Availability
450	20 Mhz (450-470 Mhz)	9 Mhz with Govt agencies and 11 Mhz with captive users. TRAI has suggested refarming.
700	108 Mhz (698-806 Mhz)	24 Mhz is with Defence, 48 Mhz with Doordarshan and 36 Mhz with Govt agencies for captive usage. Refarming for telecom.
800	20 Mhz (824-844 MHz)	Almost all allocated to CDMA operators. 1.5 to 3.75 Mhz left in some circles.
900	25 Mhz (890 – 915 MHz)	All allocated to old GSM operators.
1800	75 Mhz (1805-1880 MHz)	Almost all given to GSM players. Between 2.4 Mhz and 4.4 Mhz left in some circles.
1900	10 Mhz (1900-1910) and 60 Mhz (1920-1980)	60 Mhz allocated to Government agencies. 10 Mhz available for CDMA players.
2100	60 Mhz (2110-2170 MHz)	20 Mhz auctioned for 3G services. 40 Mhz with Defence forces.
2300	100 Mhz (2300-2400 MHz)	20 Mhz auctioned for broadband. 60 Mhz is with Government agencies. 20 Mhz is available.
2500	190 Mhz (2500-2690Mhz)	150 Mhz with Department of Space. 40 Mhz can be made available for telecom.

\*(Mhz) Source: TRAI

### Ankle monitor

- An ankle monitor (commonly called a tether or Radio Tag) is a device that individuals under house arrest are often required to wear. At timed intervals, the ankle monitor sends a radio frequency signal containing location and other information to a receiver. If an offender moves outside of an allowed range, the police will be notified.
- The residence unit uses either a land line or a cellular network to relay information to a service center computer.
- GPS units are similar in design, but the offender also carries a GPS cell phone unit that receives a signal from the ankle unit, or both functions may be combined into one ankle unit.

### In news:

- Tri-Valley University, California, USA was shut down on suspicion of immigration fraud and the overwhelming majority of the students were from India.
- Because of VISA issues students were required to wear ankle monitor.
- India protested against the monitors but USA described it as normal procedure. USA said if monitors were not put students have to be arrested and released on bail after paying some \$20,000 to \$25,000.
- The issue was worsened when US diplomat described it 'hep and happening' drawing a parallel with anklets worn by her servant maid.

### **software-defined radio**

- A software-defined radio system, or SDR, is a radio communication system where components that have been typically implemented in hardware (e.g. mixers, filters, amplifiers, modulators/demodulators, detectors, etc.) are instead implemented by means of software on a personal computer or embedded computing device.
- Software radios have significant utility for the military and cell phone services, both of which must serve a wide variety of changing radio protocols/frequency in real time.

### **Mobile number portability launched**

**Pan India-** 20 Jan 2011

- **Start-** 25 November 2010 (Haryana)
- **Fee-** ₹ 19

#### **Technical Details**

- Mobile number portability (MNP) enables mobile telephone users to retain their mobile telephone numbers when changing from one mobile network operator to another.
- MNP is implemented in different ways across the globe.
- The International and European standard is different from UK's standard.
- India will use some features of UK and some of EU/International.

**Porting:** In India MNP is "Donor Led" similar to UK.(where a customer wishing to port his/her number is required to contact the Donor to obtain a Porting Authorisation Code (PAC) or UPC (Unique Porting Code) which he/she then has to give to the Recipient.)

**Call Routing:** India will use European standard that uses All Call Query (ACQ)/ a central database (CDB) method of call routing as it is more efficient. Network operator makes copies of CDB and queries it to find out which network to send a call to.

- Customers can port between prepay and post pay options.
- The master database will be managed by a third party firm.
- Customer can not port between service areas/circles.
- The time period of transferring the MNP is 7 days except Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and North East service areas where it will be 15 days.

## **Energy and Nuclear Technology**

### **Radioactive Waste Management in India**

Radioactive wastes from the nuclear reactors and reprocessing plants are treated and stored at each site. Waste immobilisation plants are in operation at Tarapur and Trombay and another is being constructed at Kalpakkam. Research on final disposal of high-level and long-lived wastes in a geological repository is in progress at BARC.

#### **Background:**

Radioactive waste is a waste product containing radioactive material. It is usually the product of a nuclear process such as nuclear fission.

Radioactivity diminishes over time, so in principle the waste needs to be isolated for a period of time until it no longer poses a hazard.

The main approaches to managing radioactive waste to date have been segregation and storage for short-lived wastes, near-surface disposal for low and some intermediate level wastes, and deep burial or transmutation for the long-lived, high-level wastes.

## **Health Technology**

### **Artemisinin**

- Artemisinin, also known as qinghaosu, and its derivatives are a group of drugs that possess the most rapid action of all current drugs against falciparum malaria(Severest malaria). Treatments containing an artemisinin derivative are now standard treatment worldwide for falciparum malaria.
- The starting compound, artemisinin, is isolated from the plant *Artemisia annua*, a herb described in Chinese traditional medicine, though it is usually chemically modified and combined with other medications.

**In news:** Resistance to the drug is developing.

**Note:** Artemisinin is also a herbal treatment for parasitic infections and malaria that also protects against particular types of cancer

### **Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF)**

- Crimean–Congo hemorrhagic (bleeding) fever (CCHF) is a widespread tick-borne viral disease, a zoonosis (An animal disease that can be transmitted to humans) of domestic animals and wild animals, that may affect humans.
- It is a severe disease with a high mortality (death) rate (about 30%). The geographical distribution of the virus, like that of the tick that carries it, is widespread. CCHF has been found in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

**In news:** In January 2011, the disease has been reported in Gujarat, India, with 4 reported deaths, which consisted of the patient along with the doctor and the nurse who treated the patient.

#### **Related info:**

National Institute of Virology, Pune confirmed the presence in India.

Scientists in the Anthropological Survey of India (AnSI) have been studying mitochondrial DNA of various tribal communities in India for the past five years. In humans, mitochondrial DNA has 16569 base pairs which is always inherited maternally. Most of the tribal communities in India have mitochondrial DNA lineage “M” and its sub-lineages which are more specific to the Indian sub-continent, indicative of common ancestry.

## **Transport Technology**

### **Dreamliner by year-end**

The Boeing Company announced that it would deliver the first 787 Dreamliner to Air India by the end of the year. While Air India has ordered 27 Dreamliners, Jet Airways has ordered 10 aircraft.

#### **Background:**

- The Boeing 787 Dreamliner is a long-range, mid-size, wide-body, twin-engine jet airliner developed by Boeing Commercial Airplanes. It seats 210 to 330 passengers, depending on the variant.
- Boeing states that it is the company's most fuel-efficient airliner and the world's first major airliner to use composite materials for most of its construction.
- The 787 consumes 20% less fuel than the similarly-sized Boeing 767.
- Some of its distinguishing features include a four-panel windshield, noise-reducing chevrons on its engine nacelles, and a smoother nose contour.

### **3D Express Coach**

- China is planning to test an innovative new type of bus that aims to solve the problem of Beijing's overcrowded roads by straddling traffic lanes, allowing cars to drive underneath.
- If successful, the 3D Express Coach could reduce vehicle congestion by up to 30 percent on main routes.
- The bus will run along a fixed route and its passenger compartment spans the width of two traffic lanes.
- The straddling bus will be electrically powered using overhead lines or other roof electrical contact systems designed for it, supplemented with solar power panels, batteries or supercapacitors on board. It will travel at a speed of up to 60 km/h (37 mph).
- The bus will also be equipped with alarms to warn cars traveling too close to the bus and signals to warn other vehicles when it is about to turn. It would also have inflatable escape chutes similar to those of an aircraft.

## Robotics

### **Robovie-PC Wins World's First Robot Marathon**

- The world's first robot marathon, which held in Osaka, Japan, ended with mini humanoid Robovie PC emerging as the winner. Mini humanoid Robovie-PC stands 40cm tall, weighs 24.kg, and has 20 joints.
- A group of five robots ran around a 100m long course exactly 421 times plus another 95m to complete a full marathon (42.195km). Robovie-PC beat his closest rival by "just a second" .
- He completed the marathon after about 55 hours of running.

### **Related info:**

The world record time for men over the distance is 2 hours 3 minutes and 59 seconds, set in the Berlin Marathon by **Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia** on September 28, 2008.

VISION IAS

## PRIZES / AWARDS

### World Famous

#### WEF Crystal Award 2011

- Internationally renowned music composer **A.R. Rahman** was honoured with the Crystal Award of the World Economic Forum (WEF) at the opening ceremony of its annual meet being attended by 2,500 global leaders from the fields of business, government, art, culture and religion.
- Mr. Rahman, received the award, given to outstanding artists who use their talent for social and charitable work.
- The WEF took note of his work for the welfare of children.
- **Jose Carreras**, an opera artist from **Barcelona**, was also given the Crystal Award for his work for the patients of leukemia.

#### **Related info**

Amitabh Bachchan and Kuchipudi and Bharatnatyam dancer Mallika Sarabhai received the crystal award 2009.

### Literary

#### Pushkin Gold Medal

- Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has awarded the prestigious Pushkin Gold Medal to Professor Arun Mohanty of the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) for his contribution to studies on Russia and promotion of bilateral cultural ties and friendship.
- The Pushkin Gold Medal is the highest honorary award given in recognition of outstanding contributions to the promotion of the Russian language and culture. More than 10 Indian scholars and public figures have been awarded the medal since its institution in 1977.

### Nationally Acclaimed

#### Ashok Chakra

- In a first-of-its-kind, an Army doctor, Major Laishram Jyotin Singh became the first officer from Army Medical Corps (AMC) to receive the highest peacetime gallantry award - Ashok Chakra - posthumously for fighting militants barehanded during an attack on Indians in Kabul last year.

#### Padma Awards

- 128 awards including one duo case (counted as one) and 12 in the category of Foreigners/ NRIs/ PIOs/ Posthumous.
- These comprise 13 Padma Vibhushan, 31 Padma Bhushan and 84 Padma Shri Awards.
- There are 31 ladies among the awardees.

### Padma Vibhushan

Name	Discipline	Comment
Dr. (Smt.) Kapila Vatsyayan	Art - Art Administration and Promotion.	
Mrs. Homai Vyrawalla	Art - Photography	
Shri A Nageshwara Rao	Art- Cinema	

<b>Shri Parasaran Kesava Iyengar</b>	<b>Public Affairs</b>	<b>former Attorney-General and jurist</b>
Dr. Akhlaq-ur-Rehman Kidwai	Public Affairs	
<b>Shri Vijay Kelkar</b>	<b>Public Affairs</b>	<b>chairperson of the 13th Finance Commission</b>
<b>Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia</b>	<b>Public Affairs</b>	
Shri Palle Rama Rao	Science and Engineering	
<b>Shri Azim Premji</b>	<b>Trade and Industry</b>	
<b>Shri Brajesh Mishra</b>	<b>Civil Services</b>	
<b>Prof. (Dr.) Ottaplakkal Neelakandan Velu Kurup</b>	<b>Literature and Education</b>	<b>Jnanpith awards for 2007, Malayalam writer</b>
Dr. Sitakant Mahapatra	Literature and Education	
Late Shri L. C. Jain*	Public Affairs	

### Padma Bhushan

<b>Name</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Shri Satyadev Dubey</b>	<b>Art - Theatre</b>	
<b>Shri Mohammed Zahur Khayyam Hashmi alias Khayyam</b>	<b>Art - Cinema - Music</b>	
<b>Shri Shashi Kapoor</b>	<b>Art - Cinema</b>	
Shri Krishen Khanna	Art - Painting	
<b>Shri Madavur Vasudevan Nair</b>	<b>Art - Dance - Kathakali</b>	<b>Kathakali exponent</b>
<b>Ms. Waheeda Rehman</b>	<b>Art - Cinema</b>	
Shri Rudrapatna Krishna Shastri Srikantan	Art - Music-Vocal	
Ms. Arpita Singh	Art - Painting	
<b>Dr. Sripathi Panditharadhyula Balasubrahmanyam</b>	<b>Art - Playback Singing, Music Direction &amp; acting</b>	<b>playback singer</b>
Shri C.V. Chandrasekhar	Art - Classical Dance-Bharatanatyam	
Shri Dwijen Mukherjee	Art	
<b>Smt. Rajashree Birla</b>	<b>Social work</b>	<b>Birla Group</b>
Mrs. Shobhana Ranade	Social work	
Dr. Suryanarayanan Ramachandran	Science and Engineering	
<b>Shri S.(Kris) Gopalakrishnan</b>	<b>Trade and Industry</b>	<b>Infosys Chief Executive</b>

<b>Shri Yogesh Chander Deveshwar</b>	Trade and Industry	<b>ITC</b>
<b>Ms. Chanda Kochhar</b>	<b>Trade and Industry</b>	<b>Managing Director of ICICI Bank</b>
<b>Dr. K. Anji Reddy</b>	Trade and Industry- Pharmacy	<b>Dr. Reddy Laboratories</b>
Shri Analjit Singh	Trade and Industry	
<b>Shri Rajendra Singh Pawar</b>	Trade and Industry	<b>NIIT</b>
<b>Dr. Gunapati Venkata Krishna Reddy</b>	<b>Trade and Industry</b>	<b>GVK Group</b>
Shri Ajai Chowdhary	Trade and Industry	<b>HCL</b>
Shri Surendra Singh	Civil Services	
Shri M. N .Buch	Civil Services	
<b>Shri Shyam Saran</b>	<b>Civil Services</b>	<b>former Foreign Secretary</b>
Shri Thayil Jacob Sony George	Literature and Education	
Dr. Ramdas Madhava Pai	Literature and Education	
Shri Sankha Ghosh	Literature and Education	
Late Shri K. Raghavan Thirumulpad *	Medicine - Ayurveda.	
Late Dr. Keki Byramjee Grant *	Medicine - Cardiology	
Late Shri Dashrath Patel*	Art	

**Padma Shri**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Comment</b>
<b>Shri Girish Kasaravalli</b>	<b>Art - Film making</b>	
<b>Ms. Tabassum Hashmi Khan alias Tabu</b>	<b>Art - Cinema</b>	
<b>Shri Dadi Dorab Pudumjee</b>	<b>Art - Puppetry</b>	<b>puppetry artist</b>
<b>Smt. Usha Uthup</b>	<b>Art - Music.</b>	
<b>Smt. Kajol</b>	<b>Art- Cinema</b>	
<b>Shri Irfan Khan</b>	<b>Art- Cinema</b>	
<b>Shri Sushil Kumar</b>	<b>Sports - Wrestling</b>	
<b>Shri Vangipurapu Venkata Sai Laxman</b>	<b>Sports - Cricket</b>	
<b>Shri Gagan Narang</b>	<b>Sports - Shooting</b>	
<b>Smt. Krishna Poonia</b>	<b>Sports - Discus Throw</b>	

<b>Shri Harbhajan Singh</b>	<b>Sports - Mountaineering</b>	
<b>Dr. Indira Hinduja</b>	<b>Medicine - Obstetrics and Gynaecology.</b>	<b>pioneer of the GIFT (test-tube) technique, which resulted in the birth of India's first test-tube baby in 1978.</b>
<b>Ms. Urvashi Butalia #</b>	<b>Literature and Education</b>	<b>feminist-publishers</b>
<b>Ms. Ritu Menon #</b>	<b>Literature and Education</b>	<b>feminist-publishers</b>
<b>Prof. Krishna Kumar</b>	<b>Literature and Education</b>	
<b>Dr. Subra Suresh (USA)*</b>	<b>Science and Engineering</b>	<b>as recently nominated to the (United States) National Science Foundation by President Barack Obama.</b>
<b>Shri Satpal Khattar(Singapore)*</b>	<b>Trade and Industry</b>	<b>Singapore-based investor</b>
<b>Shri Granville Austin(USA)*</b>	<b>Literature and Education</b>	<b>independent historian and a leading authority on the Indian Constitution. He characterized Indian federalism as "Cooperative federalism"</b>

**Note:** \* indicates awardees in the category of Foreigners / NRIs/ PIOs/ Posthumous.

# indicates duo case.

Padma Awards, the country's highest civilian awards, are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The Awards are given in all disciplines/ fields of activities, viz. art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, civil service, etc. '**Padma Vibhushan**' is awarded for exceptional and distinguished service; '**Padma Bhushan**' for distinguished service of high order and '**Padma Shri**' for distinguished service in any field. The awards are announced on the occasion of Republic Day every year. The awards are conferred by the President of India at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhawan sometime around March/ April.

#### National Bravery Award 2010

Total -23 boys and girls including Eight children from North-Eastern states.

<b>Award</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>for</b>
1. Bharat Award, since 1987	No award	-
2. Sanjay Chopra Award, since 1978	Priyanshu Joshi of Uttarakhand	saved his sister from a leopard
3. Geeta Chopra Award, since 1978	Jismi P.M. of Kerala	saved two children from drowning
4. Bapu Gayadhani Award, since 1988	Master Vishnudas K.(17 years) of Kerala, Master Moonis Khan (15 years) of Madhya Pradesh and	Master Vishnudas saved two children from drowning. Master Moonis Khan

	Km. Ipi Basar (16 years) of Arunachal Pradesh	saved an old man from a railway accident while Km. Ipi Basar saved two lives in a fire incident.
5. National Bravery Award, since 1957	18 boys and girls	-

#### **Background**

- The National Bravery Award Scheme is an endeavour by the Indian Council for Child Welfare to give due recognition to the children who show exceptional courage and perform meritorious service to inspire others to emulate their example.
- The award is given to around 24 children below the age of 16. One of two coveted awards in this category are the Sanjay Chopra Award and Geeta Chopra Award instituted in 1978, in the memory of Chopra children who laid their lives while confronting their kidnappers, and are given to a boy and a girl respectively for acts of bravery. The highest award in the category is the Bharat Award, constituted in 1987, and the Bapu Gayadhani Award was instituted in 1988.
- Children get a medal, certificate and cash under the scheme and the awardees will be granted financial assistance until they complete their schooling. The Government has reserved some seats for the awardees in medical and engineering colleges and polytechnics.
- The awards are usually announced on 14 November, Children's Day or in January following year, and later given by the Prime Minister of India, on the eve of the Republic Day, and prior to this the President hosts a reception in their honour, where the children meet the media. On 26 January, the awardees take part in Republic Day Parade at Rajpath, New Delhi.

#### **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2011**

1. **Sir Anand Satyanand from New Zealand, (Chief Guest)**
2. Prof. Veena Harbhagwan Sahajwalla from Australia,
3. Ms. Lata Pada from Canada,
4. Mr. Harindrapal Singh Banga from Hong Kong,
5. Mr. Mohammad Munir Nazir Hassan Ansari from Israel,
6. Mr. Upjit Singh Sachdeva from Liberia,
7. Tan Sri Dato' Ajit Singh from Malaysia,
8. Mr. Saleh Wahid from Netherlands,
9. Indian Community Benevolent Forum of Qatar,
10. Dr. Mohiaddin Syed Karimuddin from Saudi Arabia,
11. Mr. Mano Selvanathan of Sri Lanka,
12. Mr. Mohan Jashanmal from UAE,
13. Baroness (Dr.) Sandip Verma from UK,
14. Mr. Ashook Kumar Ramsaran from USA and
15. Dr. Rajiv Shah from USA.

#### **Background:**

- The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award (PBSA) is the highest honour conferred on overseas Indians.
- PBSA is conferred by the President of India as a part of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Conventions organized annually since 2003 on a Non-Resident Indian, Person of Indian Origin or an organization or institution established and run by the Non-Resident Indians or Persons of Indian Origin, who has made significant contribution in any one of the following fields:
  - (a) Better understanding abroad of India;
  - (b) Support to India's causes and concerns in a tangible way;
  - (c) Building closer links between India, the overseas Indian community and their country of residence;

- (d) Social and humanitarian causes in India or abroad;
- (e) Welfare of the local Indian community;
- (f) Philanthropic and charitable work;
- (g) Eminence in one's field or outstanding work, which has enhanced India's prestige in the country of residence; or
- (h) Eminence in skills which has enhanced India's prestige in that country (for non-professional workers).

## Scientific, Academic and related

### **National e-governance awards 2011**

- The national e-governance awards instituted by department of **administrative reforms and public grievances** have been announced.
- The awards are given to recognize and promote excellence in implementation of e-governance initiatives.
- This year the awards have been announced in seven categories namely, excellence in government process re-engineering, exemplary re-use of ICT based solutions, outstanding performance in citizen-centric service deliver, innovative use of technology in e-governance, innovative use of ICT by PSUs for customer's benefits, best government portal and special award for e-governance in agriculture sector.
- The award were presented at Aurangabad on Feb 10, 2011 by the union government.

The various award winners are :

#### ***Category 1 - Excellence in Government Process Re-engineering***

- **GOLD** Processing of Income Tax Returns at Centralized Processing Center, Directorate of Income Tax (System), Income Tax Department, New Delhi.
- **SILVER** e-Stamping for MCA Services, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, New Delhi.
- **BRONZE** Aasthi(GIS based Property Tax Information System), Directorate of Municipal Administration, Urban Development Department, Government of Karnataka.

#### ***Category 2 - Exemplary Re-Use of ICT Based Solutions***

- **GOLD** Panch Tantra – Gram Panchayatha Online System, Rural Development and Panchayatha Raj Department , Government of Karnataka and NIC
- **SILVER** **Geoinformatics in implementation of Forest Rights Act 2006 in Maharashtra, Tribal Research and Training Institute, Tribal Development Department, Government of Maharashtra.**
- **BRONZE** e-grantz, Centre for Development of Imaging Technology (C-DIT), Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Government of Kerala .

#### ***Category 3 - Outstanding performance in Citizen-Centric Service Delivery***

- **GOLD** SWAGAT – State-Wide Attention on Grievances by Application of Technology, Chief Minister's Office, Gujarat.
- **SILVER** Aarogyam, District Health Society, Bagpat & J.P. Nagar, Government of Uttar Pradesh.
- **BRONZE** Tele Samadhan – Call Centre for Citizen facilitation and grievances redressal, Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation, Department of IT, Government of Madhya Pradesh.

#### ***Category 4 - Innovative use of Technology in e-Governance***

- **GOLD** BTRAC 2010, Bangalore Traffic Police.
- **SILVER** Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP), Gujarat State Watershed Management Agency, Department of Rural Development, Government of Gujarat.
- **BRONZE** e-Disaster Management Cell, Collector Office, Gadchiroli.
- **BRONZE** e-Governance, Computer Department, Rajkot Municipal Corporation .

**Category 5 - Innovative use of ICT by PSUs for Customer's Benefits**

- GOLD Financial Inclusion, Punjab National Bank, New Delhi.
- SILVER Enhanced National Train Enquiry System (ENTES), Centre for Railway Information Systems, Indian Railways.
- BRONZE Electronic Fund Transferring System, Rajiv Gandhi Rural Housing Corporation Limited, Housing Department, Government of Karnataka.

**Category 6 - Best Government Portal**

- GOLD Indian Customs EDI Gateway Project (ICEGATE), Directorate General of Systems & Data Management, Central Board of Excise and Customs.
- SILVER Net-Portal Project of Geological Survey of India, Geological Survey of India, Kolkata.
- BRONZE National Data Warehouse of Official Statistics, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, New Delhi.

**Category 7 - Specific Sectoral Award - Focus Sector – Agriculture**

- GOLD Agrisnet – Agriculture Information Service Network, Agriculture Department, Government of Tamil Nadu.
- SILVER e-Krishi, Kerala State IT Mission, Department of IT, Government of Kerala.
- BRONZE e-Auction, Tea Board of India, Kolkata.

**ILO's Decent Work Research Prize**

- The International Labour Organisation's Decent Work Research Prize has been awarded to economist Jayati Ghosh and Professor Eve Landau.
- Dr. Ghosh, who teaches at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, is honoured for her major contributions to the analysis of socio-economic relationships and policy instruments for the advancement of decent work.
- The prize carries a cash reward of \$5,000.
- Dr. Ghosh has also been invited to make a presentation at a special ceremony to be held during the ILO's Governing Board session scheduled in Geneva for November.

**Ernst & Young announces 2010 year awards**

Dilip Shanghvi, Chairman and Managing Director of Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., is named as the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the year 2010.

Category	Person and Company
Entrepreneur Of The Year – Lifetime Achievement	 Brijmohan Lall Munjal , Hero Honda Motors
Entrepreneur Of The Year 2010	 Dilip Shanghvi, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries

Business Transformation	Rajiv Bajaj, Managing Director of Bajaj Auto
Life Sciences & Consumer Products	Shyam S. Bhartia, Chairman and Managing Director of Jubilant Life Sciences, and Hari S. Bhartia, Co-Chairman and Managing Director
Services	Rahul Bhatia, Managing Director of InterGlobe Enterprises
Start-up	N.K. Chaudhary, Managing Director of Jaipur Rugs Company Pvt. Ltd
Energy & Infrastructure	Naveen Jindal, Executive Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of Jindal Steel & Power
Manager	R. Sridhar, Managing Director of Shriram Transport Finance Company
Manufacturing	Mallika Srinivasan, Chairman of Tractors and Farm Equipment

### Film and Television, Beauty contest etc

#### **83rd Academy Awards**

- The King's Speech won four top awards in the categories like Best Picture, Best Actor (Colin Firth), Best Director (Tom Hooper) and Best Original Screenplay (David Seidler).
- Leonardo DiCaprio's movie Inception has also got four awards in the Best Cinematography, Best Sound Mixing, Best Sound Editing and Best Visual Effects categories.
- Other multiple winners included The Social Network with three awards and Alice in Wonderland, The Fighter, and Toy Story 3, with two awards each.

Best Picture: The King's Speech

Best Actor: Colin Firth, The King's Speech

**Best Actress: Natalie Portman, Black Swan**

Best Supporting Actor: Christian Bale, The Fighter

Best Supporting Actress: Melissa Leo, The Fighter

Best Directing: Tom Hooper, The King's Speech

**Best Foreign Language Film: In a Better World, Denmark**

Best Adapted Screenplay: Aaron Sorkin, The Social Network

Best Original Screenplay: David Seidler, The King's Speech

Best Animated Feature Film: Toy Story 3

#### **Background:**

- The Academy Award, also known as the Oscar, is an accolade bestowed by the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS) to recognize excellence of professionals in the film industry, including directors, actors, and writers.
- The first Academy Awards ceremony was held in 1929.
- MGM's art director **Cedric Gibbons**, one of the original Academy members, supervised the design of the award trophy.
- Peepli Live, the Hindi film produced by actor Aamir Khan, was India's official entry to this year's Academy Awards (Oscar) in the Best Foreign Language Film category.

### Golden Globes awards 2011

- **"The Social Network"**, a film about Harvard-graduate Mark Zuckerberg's ultra-popular Facebook website, swept up **four awards**
- It beat British historical tale **The King's Speech**, which had entered the awards ceremony with the most nominations but collected just one award
- **A.R. Rahman** ,missed a second win at the forum.
- Mr. Rahman, who was nominated for a Golden Globe Award in the Original Score for **"If I Rise,"** from director Danny Boyle's **"127 Hours,"** lost the Award to Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross.

#### Important winners:

1. Best Motion Picture - Drama: **"The Social Network"**
  2. Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture - Drama: **Natalie Portman, "Black Swan"**
  3. Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture - Drama: **Colin Firth, "The King's Speech"**
  4. Best Motion Picture - Comedy or Musical: **"The Kids Are All Right"**
- The Golden Globe Awards are sponsored by the Hollywood Foreign Press Association to recognise excellence in film, television both domestic and foreign.
  - Ceremony held in Beverly Hills, **California**

### Rajiv Gandhi National Quality Awards for 2009 Presented

The **Best of All Award** was given to **Tata Motors Limited, Lucknow**. The other category award winners include Glaxosmithkline Consumer Healthcare Limited, Sonapat, Haryana (Large Scale Manufacturing Industry); Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, Bangalore (Large Scale Service Industry); Elin Appliances Private Limited, Solan, Himachal Pradesh (Small Scale Manufacturing Industry); and Quality Evaluation and Systems Team Private Limited, Bangalore (Small Scale Service Industry).

#### Background:

- The award, given annually, was instituted by the Bureau of Indian Standards in the year 1991 with a view to encouraging Indian Manufacturing and Service Organizations to strive for excellence and giving special recognition to those, who are considered to be the leaders of quality movement in India.

#### Related info

- Bureau of Indian Standards is under Department of Consumer Affairs under Ministry of Food & Consumer Affairs.

### Sitaram Jindal announces huge prize for the noble in India

- Saying that he was ashamed to belong to a business community that did not do enough to help the rest of society, Sitaram Jindal said that companies should earmark at least 25 per cent of their profit for CSR programmes and pledged to spend more than a million dollars of his own every year to encourage those **working for the welfare of the underprivileged in India**.
- Announcing the institution of **five annual prizes of Rs.1 crore each** on behalf of the Sitaram Jindal Foundation, the **aluminium magnate** said these would be given away to people working in the categories of rural development and poverty alleviation, health including drugless therapy, education with an emphasis on moral fortification, science, technology and environment, and peace, social harmony and development.

### MacArthur Foundation award

Eleven organisations based in six countries, including one in India(**Action Research & Training for Health, based in Rajasthan**), will receive the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has announced in Chicago. These constitute grants of \$350,000 to \$1 million each.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Name of Book	Author/Editor	comment
Lal Bahadur Shastri Past Forward	Sunil Shastri	This book rewinds four decades of Indian history when Shastriji was an active participant in the national affairs and brings it forward to 25 years after his demise. It also captures the essence of a wholesome relationship between father, mother and their son.
Black Brown and the Blue	well-known artist Shuvaprasanna	
Witness the Night	Kishwar Desai, the U.K.-based Indian writer and broadcaster	novel Witness the Night, about female infanticide has just been awarded Britain's prestigious <b>Costa prize</b> (previously known as the Whitbread award) for a first book.
THE WORLD BANK IN INDIA — Undermining Sovereignty, Distorting Development	Edited by Michele Kelley, Deepika D'Souza	The material for this book emerged from a two-year preparation that culminated in the holding of the first national "Independent People's Tribunal on the Impact of the World Bank Group in India," held in 2007 in New Delhi. Over 150 persons presented testimonies and these were discussed or elaborated further at the Tribunal. A 12-member jury went into those testimonies and framed as many as 29 'charges' (listed in the concluding chapter of this volume).

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## COMMITTEES

### Ashok chawla committee

Central government has setup a committee under Ashok chawla to look into **pricing, allocation and utilisation of India's natural resources**

### Task force to review deemed universities

- to examine applications by the deemed-to-be-universities to review whether they had overcome the deficiencies that would allow them to continue with their deemed status.
- As many as 44 such institutions had been given three years time to overcome their deficiencies in 2009
- The task force comprises P.N. Tandon, professor emiretus at AIIMS; Goverdhan Mehta, National Research Professor; Prof Anandkrishnan, chairman IIT, Kanpur; and Prof Mrinal Miri, former Vice-Chancellor of North East Hill University.

### Nilekani to head task force on direct subsidies

- It will work out a suitable mechanism to provide direct subsidies on kerosene, cooking gas (LPG) and fertilizers for the intended beneficiaries.
- Besides Mr. Nilekani, the task force will comprise secretaries of the Ministries of Finance, Chemicals & Fertilizers, Agriculture, Food & Public Distribution, Petroleum & Natural Gas and Rural Development, along with the Director-General of UIDAI.

### Malegam panel on MFI

#### Recommendations

- micro finance institutions (MFIs) be allowed to charge a maximum interest of 24 per cent on small loans which cannot exceed Rs.25,000.
- a separate category of non-banking financial companies (NBFC-MFI) for the micro finance sector be created
- The panel also said small loans of up to Rs 25,000 could be given to families having an income up to Rs.50,000 per annum.
- the borrowers should be given the option of weekly or fortnightly or monthly return of the loan.
- 75 per cent of loans extended by MFIs should be for income generation purposes
- a borrower cannot take loans from more than two MFIs
- should be implemented from April 1, 2011.
- regulations of MFIs, the Malegam Committee should be done by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in close coordination with the RBI

#### Background:

The RBI constituted the committee in October last in the wake of allegations of overcharging and using coercive recovery practices by MFIs that led to a spate of suicides in Andhra Pradesh.

The decisions taken by the State government to regulate MFIs slowed down the loan recovery process hitting the financial health of the sector. It was further aggravated by the reluctance of banks to support MFIs

### Sunder Committee Set up to Review the Motor Vehicle Act Submits its Report

Expert Committee set up to **review the Motor Vehicles Act 1988** and to suggest changes therein submitted its report to the Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shri C.P.Joshi.

#### Recommendations

- Suggested that a **unique number be issued to every licensee**. It will help to check fake licenses. (current it is possible that different RTO even within the State may allot same number ).
- To ensure better driving and road safety, there will be **different categories of licences**.
- The committee has suggested **portability of registration numbers** allowing the original registration number to remain valid throughout the country instead of changing it with a shift in residence or place of business

from one State to another. The implementation of this provision will start with non-transport vehicles.

- **Periodic Fitness Check:** Doing away with the present system of registering non-transport vehicles for 15 years with no requirement of a fitness certificate till the end of this period, the committee has called for a change and left it to the Union government to fix the periodicity.
- But, for transport vehicles it suggested that the validity period be initially for two years and that the fitness certificate be obtained annually.
- **To put a stop to overloading, both the owner and the consignor will be presumed to have committed the offence.**

#### **More**

- A two-stage procedure has been suggested for grant of the licence and subsequent authorisation where necessary.
- Under the proposed law, the validity of a driving licence for a non-transport vehicle will be for 20 years or until the holder attains the age of 50. It could be renewed every five years till the age of 70 and thereafter renewal will be based on medical certificate.
- For a transport vehicle, the driving licence will be for three years and it will be renewed thereafter for periods of five years.
- The government will also provide for disposal of vehicles and components thereof when they cease to be roadworthy.
- The committee has suggested that the Centre withdraw protection to state transport undertakings and enable them to use both the public and private sectors to provide public transport.

**Background Note:** Don't get confused with another Sunder committee.

#### **Sunder Committee on Road Safety and Traffic Management(2007)**

The Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri S. Sundar, former Secretary, Ministry of Surface Transport, submitted its report on 20.2.2007, recommending creation of the National Road Safety and Traffic Management Board and also creation of a dedicated fund namely 'National Road Safety Fund'.

## SCHEMES / PROGRAMMES / POLICIES

### **Swabhimaan**

(a special Campaign for Financial Inclusion to bring banking to the masses)

Swabhimaan is a movement that promises to bring basic banking services to all 73,000 'unbanked' villages with over 2,000 population by March, 2012. It will facilitate opening of bank accounts, provide need-based credit, remittance facilities and help to promote financial literacy in rural India. New technologies and Business Correspondents will drive the movement. Swabhimaan is a path-breaking initiative by the Government of India and the Indian Banks' Association to cover the economic distance between rural and urban India.

### **Benefits**

- Banking at the door step through Business Correspondents (Bank Saathi)
- Simplified procedures for opening bank accounts
- Facility of easy access to credit and savings products
- Speedy transfer of funds/remittances and payment of Government subsidies and social security benefits directly to beneficiary accounts
- Micro-insurance and Micro-pension products

### **Highlights**

- Covering all 73,000 unbanked rural habitations with over 2,000 population
- Opening 5 crore new rural bank accounts
- Providing branchless banking through technology
- Ensuring safe and secure banking
- Enhancing linkages between rural and urban markets

**Launch:** 10 Feb. 2011



### **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS)**

- CCTNS is a Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Pan of Govt of India.
- CCTNS aims at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of policing through adopting of principle of e-Governance and creation of a nationwide networking infrastructure for evolution of IT-enabled-state-of-the-art tracking system around 'Investigation of crime and detection of criminals'.
- Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the project in June 2009.
- It is 100% centrally sponsored scheme.

### **Objectives of 'CCTNS'**

The objectives of the Scheme can broadly be listed as follows:

1. Make the Police functioning citizen friendly and more transparent by automating the functioning of Police Stations.
2. Improve delivery of citizen-centric services through effective usage of ICT.
3. Provide the Investigating Officers of the Civil Police with tools, technology and information to facilitate investigation of crime and detection of criminals.

4. Improve Police functioning in various other areas such as Law and Order, Traffic Management etc.
5. Facilitate Interaction and sharing of Information among Police Stations, Districts, State/UT headquarters and other Police Agencies.
6. Assist senior Police Officers in better management of Police Force
7. Keep track of the progress of Cases, including in Courts
8. Reduce manual and redundant Records keeping

Under the CCTNS Project, approx. 14,000 Police Stations throughout the country has been proposed to be automated beside 6000 higher offices in police hierarchy e.g. Circles, Sub-Divisions, Districts, Range, Zones, Police Headquarters, SCRBx including scientific and technical organizations having databases required for providing assistance and information for investigation and other purposes e.g. Finger Print Bureaux, Forensic Labs etc. by 2012.

### **Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP)**

#### Updates

- Programme achieved a case-detection rate of over 73 per cent and a treatment success rate of over 87 per cent in 2010 against the global benchmark of 70 and 85 per cent respectively.
- RNTCP is being expanded by roping in more private practitioners for providing universal access to **quality care**.
- Since the launch of RNTCP in 1997, more than 12.6 million patients have been treated and 2.2 million deaths averted.
- The programme is well on track to achieve TB-related Millennium Development Goals. It was expected to achieve a case detection rate of 90 per cent by 2015, even as the twin challenges posed by multi-drug resistant **TB (MDR-TB)** and **TB-HIV co-infection** were also being addressed.

#### **MDR-TB**

- MDR-TB is a specific form of drug-resistant TB due to a bacillus resistant to at least isoniazid and rifampicin, the two most powerful anti-TB drugs. MDR-TB is spread from person to person as readily as drug-sensitive TB and in the same manner.
- **Why:** This can happen for a number of reasons: Patients may feel better and halt their antibiotic course, drug supplies may run out or become scarce, or patients may forget to take their medication from time to time.

#### **TB-HIV co-infection**

- TB is a major cause of death among people living with HIV/AIDS, whose impaired immune systems make them particularly vulnerable to the devastating effects of TB.

#### **Background:**

- To control TB, National Tuberculosis Control Programme (NTCP) is in operation in the country since 1962
- Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP), which is an application to India of WHO- recommended strategy of Directly Observed Treatment Shortcourse (DOTS), was launched in the country in 1997.
- India accounting for one-fifth of all global TB cases.

### **First ever Defence Production Policy (DPrP) Released**

#### Summary:

- **Domestic Entities to get Preference in Defence Procurement**
- **Private Sector to be Roped in for Design, Development and Production of Defence Products**
- **Bigger Role for Academic and Research Institutions**
- **Stage Process to be followed in Defence Production**
- **Separate Corpus to be set up for Research Activities**

#### Background:

- For the armed forces, India procures nearly 70 per cent of the requirements through imports, and according to industry estimates, it will spend up to \$50 billion on defence procurement over the next five years.

- Highly volatile scenario around India was a cause for anxiety, and the country had to not only strengthen but also protect its economic and security needs. This led to the government embarking on the programme to modernise the armed services.
- In a land mark policy change, the defence industry was thrown open to the private sector in May 2001.
- The Government permitted 100 per cent equity with a maximum of 26 per cent Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) component, both subject to licencing.

#### Highlights :

- With a view to achieve substantive self reliance in design, development and production of defence equipment, weapon systems and platforms, the policy also aims at creating conditions conducive for the private industries to play an active role to achieve the objective. DPRP will act as a catalyst to enhance potential of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for indigenisation as also for broadening the defence research and development base of the country.
- As for the DPP, preference will be given to indigenous design, development and manufacture of defence equipment. Only if the Indian industry is unable to make and deliver the equipment as per specifications within the specified time frame will procurement be made from foreign sources.
- The time taken for procurement and delivery from foreign sources vis-à-vis the time required for making the equipment in the country, along with the **urgency and criticality** of the requirement, will be examined as per the DPP before deciding to proceed with procurement from foreign sources.
- Sub-systems that are not economically viable or practical to be made within India may be imported, ensuring their availability at all times. However, as far as possible, the design and integration of the platforms and systems will be undertaken within the country.
- Based on the approved Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP), equipment, weapon system and platforms required **ten years** and further down the line will by and large be developed within the country. Sub-systems that are not economically viable or practical to be made within the country may be imported, ensuring their availability at all times. However, as far as possible, the design and integration of the platforms and systems will be undertaken within the country.
- Policies will also be put in place to encourage the DPSUs, OFB and the private sector to strengthen their research and development wings so that constant upgradation and improvement in systems under manufacture is possible. The government will set up a separate **fund** to provide necessary resources to public and private sector including SMEs as well as academic and scientific institutions to support research and development of defence products.

#### Defence Procurement Procedure-2011

Intent of the revised Defence Procurement Procedure is to expand our defence industrial base, encourage indigenous defence production and reduce defence imports.

#### Highlights :

- **offset clause\***: The scope of Offset Policy Guidelines is being expanded to include “civil aerospace”, “internal security” and “training” within the ambit of eligible products and services for discharge of offset obligations.
- **Ship Building**: level-playing field to the DPSUs, shipyards and private sector, as well as promote indigenization
- In an effort to ensure that Indian Industry is placed at par with the Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUS), the **Exchange Rate Variation clause** has now been made applicable to all Indian vendors when they compete with their foreign counterparts under the “Buy Global” category.
- Bank Guarantees under the **Integrity Pact** have now been linked to the validity of the Commercial Offer submitted by vendors and are, therefore, no longer open ended.

#### Background:

- The Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) is the defining document published by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to enable decisions regarding defence capital acquisition for the Armed Forces to be made in a cost effective, timely and transparent manner.

- The scope of the DPP has been enlarged gradually through amendments in 2003, 2005, 2006, 2008 and 2009. The categorization of defence procurement proposals also been expanded over the last decade from “Buy” to “Buy and Make”. “Buy and Make Indian” and “Make” procedures. The basic thrust of the enlargement has been to promote development of indigenous defence industry.
- The procedures have also been made more transparent and effective.

**Offset Clause**

- The DPP has an inbuilt offset clause that requires the manufacturers in the category of ‘Buy’ and ‘Make and Buy’ for acquisitions over and above Rs. 300 crore to invest 30 per cent of the estimated cost in indigenous defence industries.

VISION IAS

## REPORTS

### International

#### Scope for generating 68,000 MW of green power: World Bank report

- The World Bank has stated in its latest report that India can generate 68,000 MW of power, costing less than Rs.6 a unit from renewable energy sources, a step that can address the country's energy security concerns.
- The report released by the multilateral funding agency said the 68,000 MW of wind, hydro and biomass energy can be harnessed at less than Rs.6 a unit. "Developing indigenous renewable energy sources, which have low marginal costs of generation, are more economically viable in the long run," the study — **Potential of renewable energy in India** — has stated.
- **India's electricity demand is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 7.4 per cent in the next 25 years.** The generation capacity will have to increase five-fold to keep pace with the growth of demand.
- At present, the installed capacity of the country stands at about 1.70 lakh MW from all sources of energy, as per official data.
- **The report also suggested that renewable energy development can be an important tool for regional economic development within the country.**
- Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand have 65 per cent of India's small hydro power resources. Much of the economically attractive wind potential in Orissa or the biomass potential in Madhya Pradesh lies largely undeveloped, the report adds.
- **The report emphasises that coal, gas and oil have witnessed considerable price volatility in recent years, renewables are the only free hedging mechanism against price volatility of fossil fuels.** The risk-adjusted cost of renewable energy is lower than that of fossil-based fuels, and their use enhances the price certainty of the portfolio and increases energy security, the report says.
- The entire renewable potential, including solar, is less expensive than diesel, where the existing 20,000 MW of diesel based installed capacity points to innovative possibilities of scaling up renewable in a big way, according to N. Roberto Zaghera, World Bank Country Director in India.
- The government has set an ambitious target of installing at least 44,000 MW of additional capacity of renewables in the next 10 years.

### National

#### Panel for revamping crop data collection

- The Vaidyanathan Committee of Experts on Agricultural Statistics has recommended restructuring of the methodology for collection of farm statistics in a phased manner to ensure objective, reliable and timely estimates of crop areas and yields.
- It has suggested setting up of a **National Crop Statistics Centre (NCSC)** as the nodal agency to undertake the work in collaboration with the Departments of Agriculture and Space.
- The primary responsibility of such a centre will be to provide reliable and timely estimates of area under major crops through complete enumeration of plots in selected sample villages and of the crop yields based on properly conducted crop cutting experiments at the State and Central levels.
- The experts' panel, headed by **Professor A. Vaidyanathan**, was constituted in 2009 to study the system of working out agricultural statistics and to recommend improvements.
- Highlighting the deficiencies in the area and crop yield estimation in the current system, the report said there were "serious lacunae" in institutional arrangements to collect, supervise and validate basic data on a large scale on diverse crops.
- The committee also suggested strengthening of the **Directorate of Economics and Statistics** for effective implementation of the recommendations of the Committee.

### **G.R.Majithia Wage Board for Journalists- Recommendations**

The Wage boards formed for Working Journalists, Non-Journalists and other newspaper employees have submitted their recommendations to the Central Government. G.R. Majithia has been acted as Chairman of the Wage Boards. The recommendations have sparked a row with managements of newspapers. The Boards for Journalists and non-journalists were formed 3 years back for fixing and revising wages and allowances for working journalists and non-journalists and other newspaper employees. Following are the important recommendations of G.R. Majithia Wage

#### **Board:**

1. Hike in basic pay from 2.5 to 3 times
2. Fixing the retirement age at 65.
3. Revised basic pay has to be calculated after merging the existing basic pay, DA and the 30 per cent interim relief already granted besides 35 per cent variable pay.
4. The recommendations have to be implemented from 8th January 2008 if accepted by the Govt. of India.
5. Introduced variable pay concept for all employees working in newspaper establishments and news agencies. The Boards proposed a variable pay of 35 per cent.
6. Variable Pay has to be implemented from 1st July 2010.
7. The basic pay at the entry level could be somewhere around Rs. 9,000 and Basic Pay at senior level could be around Rs. 25,000 in a category 1 media organisation.
8. Need of a permanent tribunal to redress grievances between employers and employees
9. DA should be paid bi-annually with effect from July 1 and January 1 every year.
10. Need of revision of allowances such as HRA, transport allowance, night shift allowance etc.
11. HRA shall be paid at the 30 percent, 20 percent and 10 percent of the basic pay based on the areas specified.
12. Medical allowance of Rs. 1000 and Rs. 500 per month per employee working in newspaper establishment of classes I and II and classes III and IV respectively. No medical allowance for employees covered by ESIC.

## SUMMITS / CONFERENCE

<u>Name</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Outcome/Background</u>
Environment Ministers of the BASIC bloc — Brazil, South Africa, India and China meeting	New Delhi	Feb 27, 2011	'Fast start finance for climate change has not even passed double digit' rich nations are attempting to sneak in their existing aid to large developing economies as part of the "fast start finance" package. [Background: At the U.N. climate change summit at Copenhagen in December 2009, rich nations pledged to give \$30 billion in "fast start finance" between 2010 and 2012 to help the poorest countries and those most affected by climate change. ]
INDIA-LDC MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE	New Delhi	Feb 18-19 2011	largest-ever gathering of LDC Ministers hosted by India
G20-Finance ministers and central bank governors meeting	Paris, France	Feb 19 2011	G-20 Ministers reach compromise deal to correct global economic imbalances.
INDIPEX 2011: The World Philatelic Exhibition	Delhi	Feb 11 2011	After 14 long years To make the event memorable, India Post will also release a set of stamps on six legendary actors — Meena Kumari, Nutan, Kanam Devi, Devika Rani, Leela Naidu and Savitri. The department has earlier released stamps honouring actors like Madhubala, Nargis, Guru Dutt and Raj Kapoor, singers like K.L. Saigal, Mukesh, Kishore Kumar, Mohammad Rafi, Hemant Kumar and Begum Akhtar, and directors like Dada Saheb Phalke, Satyajit Ray and Bimal Roy, to name a few.
Aero India 2011	Bangalore	Feb 9 2011	40 countries participated in the show
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• born business professor at the University of Geneva.</li> </ul>
World Social Forum 2011	Dakar(Senegal)	Feb 7-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Social Forum (WSF) is an annual meeting, based in Brazil, which defines itself as "an opened space – plural, diverse, non-governmental and non-partisan – that stimulates the decentralized debate, reflection, proposals building, experiences exchange and alliances among movements and organizations engaged in concrete actions towards a more solidary, democratic and fair world....a permanent space and process to build alternatives to neoliberalism."</li> <li>• It tends to meet in January at the same time as its "great capitalist rival", the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos, Switzerland.</li> <li>• Originated by <b>Oded Grajew</b>, the first WSF was held from 25 January to 30 January 2001 in Porto Alegre, Brazil</li> </ul>

Commonwealth Law Conference	Hyderabad	Feb 5 2011	Came back to India after four decades. 'Emerging economies and the rule of law: Challenges and Opportunities.' it is worthwhile to know and understand the experiences of different countries in the Commonwealth in tackling the problems raised by emerging issues, and which may be usefully drawn upon, consistent with the constitutional scheme and ethos of each country.
Delhi Sustainable Development Summit	Delhi	Feb 3 2011	organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum.	Davos,Switzerland	Jan 27-30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a Swiss non-profit foundation, based in <b>Geneva</b>, best known for its annual meeting in Davos.</li> <li>• The meeting brings together top business leaders, international political leaders, selected intellectuals and journalists to discuss the most pressing issues facing the world, including health and the environment.</li> <li>• Beside meetings, the foundation produces a series of research reports and engages its members in sector specific initiatives</li> <li>• The foundation was founded in <b>1971</b> by <b>Klaus Schwab</b>, a German-</li> </ul>
Geospatial World Forum meeting	Hyderabad	Jan 18, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bill to establish a National Geospatial Data Authority would be introduced in the budget session of Parliament</li> <li>• Lifetime Achievement award of the Forum conferred to Dr. Kasturirangan.</li> </ul>
9th meeting of the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar) Forum	Kunming, China	Jan 17-18, 2011	
21st Annual Conference of Indian Nuclear Society on 'Impact of Radiation Technology on human health and environment'	Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai	Jan 16, 2011	out of the 61 nuclear reactors under construction in the world, 39 are in Asia.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Polity and Governance

#### **Kerala House passes Bill to form Plachimada tribunal**

- In a trail-blazing legislative initiative, the Kerala Assembly passed the Plachimada Coca-Cola Victims Relief and Compensation Claims Special Tribunal Bill 2011 to secure for the inhabitants of Plachimada in Palakkad district compensation for the ecological damage caused by the Coca Cola unit that used to function in the village.

#### **Background:**

- In Plachimada, Coca-Cola is allegedly responsible for creating problems for communities by creating severe water shortages and polluting the groundwater and soil, destroying farms by draining them out completely. The plant here used about 900,000 liters of water last year, about a third of it for the soft drinks, the rest to clean bottles and machinery. It is drawn from wells at the plant but also from aquifers Coca-Cola shares with neighboring farmers. The water is virtually free to all users. These farmers who have been protesting say their problems began after the Coca-Cola factory arrived in 1999.

#### **JPC of 2G probe:**

- motion in the Lok Sabha by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee
- 30-member (20 Lok sabha+ 10 Rajya Sabha)
- Chairman:

#### **Terms of reference:**

- To examine the policy prescriptions and their interpretation thereafter by successive governments, including decisions of the Union Cabinet and the consequences thereof, in the allocation and pricing of telecom licences and spectrum from 1998 to 2009.
- To examine irregularities and aberrations, if any, and the consequences thereof in the implementation of the government decisions and policy prescriptions from 1998 to 2009.
- To make recommendations to ensure formulation of appropriate procedures for implementation of the laid down policy in the allocation and pricing of telecom licences.

#### **Centre hikes election expenditure limit by 60%**

- The spending limit for a **Parliamentary** constituency in major States, now stands at **Rs. 40 lakh** as against Rs. 25 lakh earlier. The limit for **Assembly** constituencies in the major States moves from Rs. 10 lakh to **Rs. 16 lakh**.
- Poll expense limits are not uniform across the country and vary according to the size, demographics and other factors of the smaller States and Union Territories

#### **Independent MLAs and 10th schedule**

- Under the 10th Schedule of the Constitution of India, an independent MLA has to remain an independent throughout the term of the Vidhan Sabha and in case he joins any political party, he is liable to be disqualified from the membership of the House.
- Supreme Court in Jagjit Singh's case had already held that even if an independent MLA does not formally join any political party but by his conduct loses his independent character, he is liable to be disqualified from the membership of the House.
- **In news:** INLD wants Independent MLAs disqualified

#### **Jamia Millia Islamia declared minority institution**

- In a historic order, the **National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (NCMEI)** granted minority institution status to the Jamia Millia Islamia University.

#### **Benefits:**

- This will allow the Jamia Millia — started in 1920 and declared a Central university by an Act of Parliament in 1988 — to reserve up to 50 per cent seats for Muslims.

- Minority status means the Jamia Millia will no longer have to give reservation to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students.

#### **Logics**

- Jamia was established for the purpose of keeping Muslim education in Muslim hands, entirely free from external control
- Section 2(o) of the Jamia Millia Islamia Act, 1988, acknowledges it in no uncertain terms that Jamia was founded by the leaders of the Khilafat Movement. It is well known that the Khilafat Movement was spearheaded by Maulana Shaukat Ali and Maulana Mohd. Ali Jauhar, and that the movement gave birth to the Non-Cooperation Movement launched by Gandhiji.

#### **Opposition**

- The Human Resource Development Ministry had opposed the move on the ground that a petition challenging the minority status of the Aligarh Muslim University was pending in the Supreme Court and its judgment would have a bearing on the Jamia case.

#### **NCMEI**

- The Government brought out an Ordinance in November 2004 establishing the Commission. Later a Bill was introduced in the Parliament in December 2004 and both Houses passed the Bill. The NCMEI Act was notified in January 2005.
- The Commission is mandated to look into specific complaints regarding deprivation or violation of rights of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Protection of rights of minorities are enshrined in Article 30 of the Constitution which states that “all minorities, whether based on religion or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice”.
- Chairman: **Justice M. S. A. Siddiqui** (as on 2 Apr 2011)

#### **Health and HRD Ministries agree on medical education jurisdiction**

The National Commission for Human Resources in Health (NCHRH) will get to lay down the minimum standards of medical education, while all health-related research will come under the purview of the National Commission for Higher Education and Research (NCHER), promoted by the HRD Ministry.

#### **Quraishi suggests “none of the above” option in EVMs**

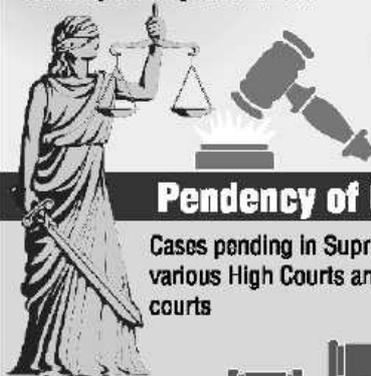
The Election Commission has suggested to the Union government that the law be amended for making a provision in electronic voting machines to enable voters to exercise the option of not casting their votes (Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Election Rules).

#### **Background:**

##### **Rule 49-O**

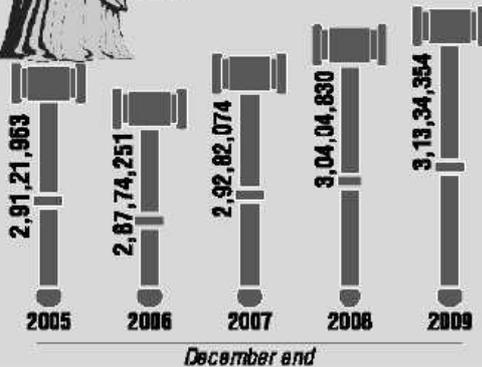
- Rule 49-O states that a voter can opt for a ‘negative/neutral vote’, if he/she finds the candidates are not up to the mark. The presiding officer will remark about the voter’s decision on the voter’s list and the latter has to sign or give thumb impression against the remark.
- The major flaw is the violation of secret voting since the voter has to inform the presiding officer about the further procedure of remarking.
- To overcome this, there should be an option such as ‘None of the Above’ in the ballot paper and Electronic Voting Machines (EVM).

# JUDICIAL FACT SHEET



## Pendency of Cases

Cases pending in Supreme Court, various High Courts and subordinate courts



Source: Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question Nos. 1553 and 1555

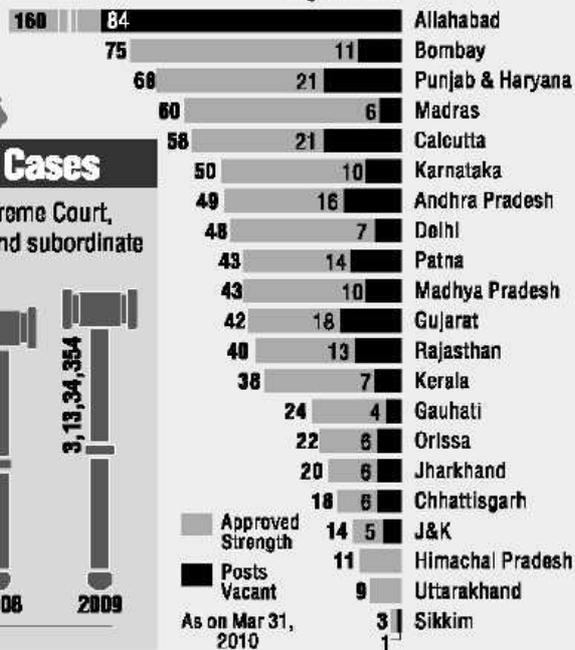
## Vacant Posts of Judges

Supreme Court of India

31

4

High Courts



As on Mar 31, 2010

KBK Infographics

### 1-year RI for former Kerala Minister, two others in Idamalayar project case

- The Supreme Court on Thursday convicted and sentenced the former Minister of the Kerala Congress (B), R. Balakrishna Pillai; the former Chairman of the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB), Ramabhadran Nair; and P.K. Sajeew, a close friend of Mr. Pillai, to one-year rigorous imprisonment in the Idamalayar Hydroelectric Power Project case.
- The prosecution case was that Mr. Pillai, who was the Electricity Minister in the UDF government during 1980-87, caused a pecuniary loss of about Rs. 2 crore to the KSEB by awarding contracts for the construction of a power tunnel and surge shaft of the Idamalayar project to K.P. Poulouse (now deceased) at "extraordinarily high rates."

### **Background:**

The Idamalayar Dam is a multipurpose concrete gravity dam located at Ennakal, near Bhoothathankettu, on the Idamalayar River, a tributary of the Periyar River in Kerala. It was completed in 1985.

### m-governance policy

- The government is framing a policy on mobile governance (m-governance) to be able to deliver citizen services through cellphones.
- The department of information technology (DIT) has set up an internal committee to draft a consultation paper.
- The policy will lay down a regulatory framework for m-governance and include mandates on security measures, supporting infrastructure and technology standards. It will span areas such as health, education and financial services.

### First state/UT to have children courts- Delhi

### **Armed Forces Tribunal throws up its hands**

- The Armed Forces Tribunal (HQ- New Delhi) has expressed its anguish over lack of powers to get its orders executed. Many a time it has found itself helpless as its orders are not being implemented by authorities, said the Tribunal.
- It is sad that the power of civil contempt has not been given in the Armed Forces Tribunal Act. It may be an error or omission or may be deliberate.
- Chairperson: Justice A.K. Mathur

#### **Background:**

- The country's first Armed Forces Tribunal launched on 8th August 2009.
- The Armed Forces Tribunal Act, passed by Parliament in 2007, came into effect in June last year.
- It provides for adjudication by the tribunal of disputes and complaints about commission, appointments, enrolment and service conditions in respect of those covered by the Three Services Act, and hearing of appeals arising out of orders, findings or sentences of court martial. The tribunal will have original jurisdiction in service matters and appellate jurisdiction in court martial matters.

### **Centre plans website for Indians studying abroad**

Concerned over the fate of Indian students who were enrolled in the now-derecognised Tri-Valley University (TVU) in the United States, the Human Resource Development Ministry has asked Educational Consultants India Limited (EdCIL) to prepare a project report on creating and maintaining a web page that could be dedicated to students abroad.

EdCIL, a public sector undertaking, offers consultancy and technical services in different areas of education, not only within the country but also on a global basis.

## **Economic and Social Development**

### **Railways announce project near Nandigram**

#### **New factories of Railway**

Type	Place	Comment
wagon component factory	Nandigram	
diesel multiple unit (DMU) factory	Haldia	
wagon component factory	Jellingham near Nandigram	a joint venture of the Railways, Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and Burn Standard.
Kisan Vision project (a perishable cargo centre of the Railways)	Singur	Kisan Vision Project has been initiated by identifying six locations, namely Dankuni, Mechheda, Nasik, New Jalpaiguri, New Azadpur and Singur for implementation as pilot projects
Haldia Dock II at Shalukkhalli		

### **98th Indian Science Congress**

- The 98th Indian Science Congress held at the SRM University, near Chennai, from January 3-7, 2010.
- **99th Indian Science Congress will be held in Bhubaneswar** during January 3-7, 2012. The focal theme will be 'Science and technology for inclusive innovation, the role of women.'

#### **Background:**

- Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA) is a premier scientific organisation of India, started in the year 1914, with Headquarters at Kolkata.. It meets annually in the first week of January every year.
- The ISCA was established by two British chemists, Professor J. L. Simonsen and Professor P.S. MacMahon to promote scientific research in India. As per tradition, Indian Science Congress has always been inaugurated on the 3rd of January by the Prime Minister of India and is chaired by the Chief Minister of the state in which it is held.

97th	Thiruvananthapuram
96th	Shilong
95th	Vishakhapatnam

## **Health**

### **Bird flu strikes India again**

- **Where:** State Duck Breeding Farm in Agartala
- With this, India has lost the bird flu-free status it acquired in June 2, 2010.
- The last outbreak was reported in January 2010 in Khargram block of Murshidabad district in West Bengal.

### **National Infant Mortality Rate Down to Fifty**

As per the latest Sample Registration System (SRS) estimates released by the Registrar General of India (RGI), Ministry of Home Affairs for the year 2009, it is noted that Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)\* has dropped by 3 points from 53 (during 2008) to 50 infant deaths per 1000 live births during 2009. The IMR for rural areas has dropped by 3 points from 58 to 55 infant deaths per 1000 live births.

STATE/UT	2009	2008	comment
<b>Goa</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>+1</b>
<b>Kerala</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	
Manipur	16	14	
Puducherry	22	25	
Daman	24	31	
Chandigarh	25	28	
Lakshadweep	25	31	
Nagaland	26	26	
<b>A&amp;N Islands</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>-4</b>
Tamil Nadu	28	31	
Maharashtra	31	33	
Tripura	31	34	
Arunachal Pradesh	32	32	

W. Bengal	33	35	
Delhi	33	35	
Sikkim	34	33	
Mizoram	36	37	
D&N	37	34	
Punjab	38	41	
<b>Karnataka</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>45</b>	-4
Uttarakhand	41	44	
Jharkhand	44	46	
Himachal Pr	45	44	
<b>J&amp;K</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	-4
Gujarat	48	50	
Andhra Pr.	49	52	
<b>ALL INDIA</b>	50	<b>53</b>	-3
Haryana	51	54	
<b>Bihar</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>56</b>	-4
Chhattisgarh	54	57	
<b>Rajasthan</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>63</b>	-4
Meghalaya	59	58	
Assam	61	64	
<b>Uttar Pradesh</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>67</b>	-4
<b>Orissa</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>	-4
Madhya Pradesh	67	70	

**While the national average is 3 points drop, the States of Bihar, Karnataka, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, J&K, Andaman and Nicobar islands have reported 4 points decrease.**

**Background:**

The Sample Registration System (SRS) is a large-scale demographic survey for providing reliable annual estimates of birth rate, death rate and other fertility & mortality indicators at the national and sub-national levels. The SRS sample is replaced **every ten years** based on the latest census frame. At present, SRS is operational in 7,597 sample units (4,433 rural and 3,164 urban) spread across all States and Union Territories and covers about 1.5 million households and 7.18 million population.

\*IMR= infant deaths per 1000 live births.

## Indian Geographical/Cultural/other Issues

### Balimela Reservoir

The Balimela Reservoir is located in Orissa.

### International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) on Vallarpadam/ India's first ICCT.

- Prime Minister Manmohan Singh dedicated to the nation the first phase of **International Container Transshipment Terminal on Vallarpadam** island. It will help exporters access mainline container vessels calling at the port.
- It is **India's first ICCT**.
- The project is a near 50-50 partnership between **Dubai Ports World (DP World)** and the Government of India, investing through the Cochin Port Trust. DP World has a 30-year BOT agreement with the Port Trust for the facility being commissioned in three phases. The first has a capacity to handle **one million TEUs** (20-foot equivalent unit) of cargo. The design capacity in the final phase is **5.5 million TEUs**.

#### **Background:**

**Vallarpadam** : is one among the group of islands, that form part of the city of Kochi, Kerala. It is situated in the Lake of Kochi.

#### **The need:**

- The absence of a global hub port and the lack of transshipment facilities had put Indian trade at a disadvantage as about 60 per cent of the country's export-import containers were transhipped through ports such as Singapore and Colombo.
- Transshipment of India-bound or outbound containers from these foreign ports involved an additional expense of \$300 a container and an extra seven to 10 days in transit time.
- Government of India had approved 22 PPP projects at an estimated investment of Rs.9,000 crore. Twenty-two more PPP projects were under bidding and would be awarded soon.

#### **Transshipment:**

- Transshipment or Transhipment is the shipment of goods or containers to an intermediate destination, and then from there to yet another destination.
- One possible reason is to change the means of transport during the journey (for example from ship transport to road transport), known as transloading.
- Another reason is to combine small shipments into a large shipment, dividing the large shipment at the other end

### Census 2011 will begin on February 9

- Census 2011, billed as the largest peacetime mobilisation in the world, will see the massive exercise of population enumeration across the country simultaneously, between February 9 and 28.
- While a column on the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes would be there in Census 2011, the government decided to hold caste-based enumeration as a separate exercise from June to September 2011.
- For the first time, enumerators would collect such information as ownership of mobile phones, computers and the Internet, having treated or untreated drinking water facility and banking services.
- The exercise will mark a milestone as the first ever NPR will also be prepared; all persons above 15 would be photographed and fingerprinted to create a biometric national database. With this, India would probably become the first democratic nation in the world that has its population fingerprinted in a year from now.
- Once the NPR's final database was created, it would be sent to the Unique Identification Authority of India for duplication and generation of UID number and for issue of identity smart card.
- Census 2011 would cover all people living in the country, including illegal immigrants from Bangladesh. It would cover anyone living in India, and enumerators would not ask their nationality.

### **Rail Bandhu**

- Passengers on high-end trains like the Rajdhani Express and the Shatabdi Express can now look forward to getting Rail Bandhu, an in-house magazine to be published by the Railways, free of cost.
- The first magazine by the Railways is all set to be launched on Rail Diwas on April 16 by Minister Mamata Banerjee.
- As a pilot project, the Rail Bandhu (rail friend) will be launched in Northern Railway and distributed in high-end trains.

### **Renaming of Tuticorin Port Trust as V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust**

- Ports in India are generally named after the city or the town in which these are situated. However, the Government, in special cases, after due consideration have renamed Ports after great leaders in the past.
- There have been frequent demands from several quarters in Tamil Nadu to re-name Tuticorin Port Trust as V.O. Chidambaranar Port Trust. Thiru V.O. Chidambaranar Pillai (5th September, 1872 – 18th November, 1936) hailed from Ottapidaram near Tuticorin in Tamilnadu. As part of Swadeshi movement, he started 'the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company', procured two ships and launched the first indigenous Indian Shipping service between Tuticorin and Colombo in the year 1906. He was an erudite scholar in Tamil, a prolific writer, a fiery speaker, a trade union leader of unique calibre and a dauntless freedom fighter.
- By renaming the Port of Tuticorin Port Trust as V.O. Chidambaranar, a grateful nation would be remembering the invaluable contribution made by the legendary freedom fighter in its freedom struggle.

## **Geographical**

### **SAIL to invest Rs. 5,000 cr to develop Chiria mines**

- in Jharkhand
- to feed its plants in Bokaro, Burnpur, Durgapur and Rourkela.
- Tagging along 13 conditions, Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh gave forest clearance to SAIL for mining iron ore from the Chiria reserves overturning the Forest Advisory Committee's recommendations.
- The existing mines of the steel major in the eastern part of the country have almost depleted and thus the Chiria mines would be the sole source for raw materials for these plants.

## **Cultural**

### **Makara Jyothi**

- Makara Jyothi is a man-lit fire which appears like a celestial star from the Sabarimala Temple and surrounding areas on the day of Makar Samkranti (Winter solstice).
- Its vision is considered as auspicious by the Hindus.

### **In news:**

- The Supreme Court has declined to entertain a writ petition for a direction to the Travancore Devaswom Board to stop lighting the Makara Jyothi at Ponnambalamedu on Makaravilakku day in January every year, as it is not a miracle but man-made fire.
- CJI told petitioner that he should approach the Kerala High Court as three similar petitions were already pending there.

### **Koro**

- Koro, discovered in 2008, is spoken by about a thousand people in Arunachal Pradesh and belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family.

### **Padmanabhaswamy Temple**

- A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court directed the State government to immediately take steps to constitute a body corporate or trust or any other authority on the lines of the Guruvayur Devaswom to take over control of

the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, its assets and management.

**Related info:**

It is a famous Hindu temple of Lord Vishnu, located inside the Fort in the city of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The temple is one of the 108 divya desam, the holiest abodes of Lord Vishnu. The main deity, Padmanabhaswamy, is a form of Vishnu in Ananthasayanam posture (in eternal sleep of yognidra).

## Indian Diaspora

### 9th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2011

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated on 9 January every year since 2003 to mark the contribution of Overseas Indian community in the development of India.
- The day commemorates the arrival of Mahatama Gandhi in India from South Africa.
- 9th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was held in New Delhi(7-9 Jan 2011).
- This year the theme of the event was “Engaging the Indian Diaspora”
- The North Eastern states of India were partner states for this year’s Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

### **Announcements**

- facility of the **Indian Community Welfare Fund** has now been extended to all the Indian Missions.
- The Government has also decided to establish new **Indian cultural centres** in the US, Canada, Saudi Arabia, France and Australia.
- Government has decided to merge the **Overseas Citizen of India Card and the people of Indian Origin Card** into a single facility.
- **NRI's right to participate in the country's electoral processes** (The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2010)
- The Government is in the process of setting up **Indian Worker Resource Centres** in countries with a large Indian emigrant worker population. (already been established in 18 Indian Missions)
- Ministry of overseas Indian affairs is launching a **project in collaboration with UNIFEM for “Empowering women workers** from India going to the Gulf countries.” Under the project, innovative institutional arrangements would be set up to enable delivery of a host of services for women emigrants.
- Government has signed **Social Security Agreements** with twelve countries and has finalised Labour Mobility Partnerships with two others to improve the conditions of overseas Indian workers.
- Similar generic arrangement is also being negotiated with the European Union.

### **Background:**

#### NRI\*

An Indian citizen who is **ordinarily residing outside India** and holds an Indian Passport

#### PIO

A person who or whose any of ancestors was an Indian national and who is presently holding another country's citizenship/ nationality i.e. he/she is holding foreign passport

#### PIO card:

Persons of Indian Origin Card ("PIO Card") is a form of identification issued to a Person of Indian Origin. It provides some benefits like no requirement of separate visa to visit India etc.

#### Eligibility PIO Card

1. Any person who at any time held an Indian Passport;  
or
2. he or either of his parents or grand parents or **great grand parents was born in or was permanently resident in India** as defined in Government of India Act, 1935 and other territories that became part of India thereafter provided neither was at any time a citizen of Afghanistan, Bhutan, China, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka;  
or
3. Who is a spouse of a citizen of India or a person of Indian origin as mentioned above.

### OCI

- This is a form of Indian nationality, the holders of which are known as Overseas Citizens of India.
- the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme was introduced by amending the Citizenship Act, 1955 in August 2005. The Scheme was launched during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention 2006 at Hyderabad.
- OCI is not to be misconstrued as 'dual citizenship'. OCI does not confer political rights. The registered Overseas Citizens of India shall not be entitled to the rights conferred on a citizen of India under article 16 of the Constitution with regard to equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.

### Eligibility for OCI

- was a citizen of India on 26 January 1950 or at any time thereafter; or
- was eligible to become a citizen of India on 26 January 1950; or
- belonged to a territory that became part of India after the 15 August 1947; or
- is the child or grandchild of a person described above;
- has never been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh.

### Some Benefits to OCI

- (i) A multiple entry multi-purpose life long visa for visiting India.
- (ii) Exemption from registration with local police authority for any length of stay in India.
- (iii) Parity with Non resident Indians (NRIs) in respect of economic, financial and educational fields except in relation to acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties. **No parity shall be allowed in the sphere of political rights.**

Any other benefits to OCIs will be notified by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) under Section 7B(1) of the Citizenship Act, 1955.

\*For different purposes "ordinarily residing outside India" may be defined differently.

### Provisions under the I.T. Act

The residential status for the Income Tax Act is determined in section 6 as under:

1. An individual will be treated as a resident in India in any previous year if he fulfills any of the following two conditions:

- (a) he/she is in India in that year for period or periods amounting in all to 182 days or more, or
- (b) Having within the four years preceding that year been in India for a period or periods amounting in all to 365 days or more, and has been in India for 60 days or more in that year.

### Foreign Exchange Regulation Act

The concept of Non-Resident under FERA is different as compared to that under Income Tax Act. Under Income Tax Act, the residential status of a person is determined on the basis of number of days he stays in India whereas under FERA, it is the intention of a person to be in India or outside India would be an important factor determining his residential status.

## Miscellaneous

### Godhra train fire case Verdict

- 31 convicted, 63 acquitted
- Coach S-6 of the Sabarmati Express, in which 59 people, mostly 'kar sevaks' returning from Ayodhya were travelling, was burnt on February 27, 2002 at Godhra.

### 3 of 6 WWF volunteers freed

- Three volunteers, all women, of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), who were among the six abducted by combat uniform-clad gunmen on 6 Feb 2011 from the Manas Tiger Reserve, were released on Tuesday night. Three men are still being held captive.
- These young volunteers were part of the WWF team carrying out tiger habitat occupancy surveys in the area.

### **WWF**

- The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is an international non-governmental organization working on issues regarding the conservation, research and restoration of the environment, formerly named the World Wildlife Fund.
- It is the world's largest independent conservation organization with over 5 million supporters worldwide, working in more than 90 countries, supporting around 1300 conservation and environmental projects around the world.
- It's mission is "to halt and reverse the destruction of our environment".
- WWF's ultimate goal is to build a future where people live in harmony with nature.

### **Hum Dono**

Hum Dono is a 1961 Hindi film produced by Dev Anand and Navketan films. It has been relaunched in Colour exactly after 50 years on 4th February 2011.

### **Related info**

- Film colorization may be done as a special effect, or to modernize black and white films, or to restore color films. Examples date from the early 20th century, but colorization has become common with the advent of digital image processing.
- Mughal-e-Azam is the first full feature-length movie to be revived/colorized for a theatrical re-release in the history of world cinema. Some Hollywood movies have been colorized, but only for re-release on home video.

VISION IAS

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### **India takes over as co-chair of Asia Pacific FATF**

Macau is the other co-chair of the FATF group, which consists of more than 30 countries and has a ministerial mandate for establishing the standards.

### **India backs U.N. curbs on Qadhafi**

- India voted in favour of sanctions against Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, his relatives and associates.
- The Council unanimously approved curbs on travel, freezing of financial assets, weapon sales and a reference to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague.
- Libyan Permanent Representative helped tilt the decision in referring the Libyan leader's case to the ICC, criticising the regime that appointed him.
- **Libya was among the countries that had voted against the setting up of the ICC and is not a member.**
- India is opposed to broad-based sanctions as it believes they spare the ruling elite and hit the people at large.

### **Background:**

#### **International Criminal Court**

- The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a permanent tribunal **to prosecute individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and the crime of aggression** (although it cannot currently exercise jurisdiction over the crime of aggression).
- It came into being on **1 July 2002**—the date its founding treaty, the **Rome Statute** of the International Criminal Court, entered into force—and it can only prosecute crimes committed on or after that date.
- The court's official seat is in The **Hague, Netherlands**, but its proceedings may take place anywhere
- The court can generally exercise **jurisdiction** only in cases where the accused is a national of a **state party, the alleged crime took place on the territory of a state party, or a situation is referred to the court by the United Nations Security Council.**
- **India is not a member.**
- India has consistently opposed the court. It abstained in the vote adopting of the statute in 1998, saying it objected to:
  - The **broad definition** adopted of crimes against humanity
  - The **right given to the Security Council** to refer cases, delay investigations and bind non-State Parties.
  - The use of **nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction** not being explicitly outlawed
- China and Pakistan are also not a member.
- Israel, Sudan and the United States—have "unsigned" the Rome Statute.

#### **Preah Vihear Temple**

- is a Hindu temple built during the reign of Khmer Empire on border of Cambodia and Thailand .
- In 1962, following a lengthy dispute between Thailand and Cambodia over ownership, a majority of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague awarded the temple to Cambodia.
- On July 7, 2008, Preah Vihear was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- The ongoing conflict between Cambodia and Thailand over the site since 2008 has led to periodic outbreaks of violence.
- In February 2011, whilst Thai officials were in Cambodia negotiating the dispute, Thai and Cambodian troops clashed, resulting in casualties and deaths on both sides.

#### **India joins hands with LDCs to seek global action programme**

- India, along with a large number of least developed countries, has called for an international programme of action aiming at reducing the number of LDCs by half over the next decade.
- India made this demand after noting that the **lack of international efforts led to the number of LDCs increasing from 25 in 1971 to 48 this year.**

- India and the LDCs also pressed for strengthening international support mechanisms in favour of the LDCs and called for augmenting the Official Development Assistance and South-South cooperation. In this respect, the declaration called for implementing suggestions emanating from South-South conferences such as the **Nairobi outcome document**, the **Marrakech Framework** and the **Yamoussoukro Consensus**. While calling for a more concerted action plan by the international community, the declaration expressed satisfaction over the increase in South-South cooperation and South-South trade and investment flows. Although this has had a positive impact on the LDCs' development process, "we see [this] as a complement, and not a substitute for North-South cooperation."
- Inaugurating the largest-ever gathering of LDC Ministers hosted by India, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna unveiled a **\$500-million credit line** facility over the next five years to be used specifically for projects and programmes of the LDCs, five additional scholarships annually for all 48 LDCs and a special fund for the four laggards

#### **Background:**

##### **LDC**

Least Developed Country (LDC) is the name given to a country which, according to the United Nations, exhibits the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with the lowest Human Development Index ratings of all countries in the world. The concept of LDCs originated in the late 1960s and the first group of LDCs was listed by the UN in **1971**.

##### **MARRAKECH FRAMEWORK OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

Outcome of High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 16 to 19 December 2000

##### **Nairobi outcome document**

Outcome of High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in December 2009

##### **Yamoussoukro Consensus on South-South Cooperation**

Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 10-13 June 2008

#### **Muslim Brotherhood**

- The Society of the Muslim Brothers (often simply The Brotherhood or MB) is an Islamic transnational movement and the largest political opposition organization in many Arab states.
- It was founded in 1928 in Egypt by the Islamic scholar and schoolteacher Hassan al-Banna.
- The Muslim brotherhood started off as a social organization, preaching Islam, teaching the illiterate, setting up hospitals, and even launched commercial enterprises. As it continued to rise in influence, starting in 1936, it began to oppose British rule in Egypt.
- Many Egyptian nationalists accuse the Brotherhood of violent killings during this period.
- After the 1948 Arab defeat in the First Arab-Israeli war, the Egyptian government dissolved the organization and arrested its members; its founder was assassinated.
- After the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, which was supported by the Brotherhood, it was once again banned and repressed.
- Though the Brotherhood spread to other countries, it was suppressed there too: in 1982, Syria violently crushed a Brotherhood revolt (the Hama massacre).
- Starting in the 1980s it entered Egypt's political arena, forming alliances with other parties, and fielding "independent" candidates.
- When in 2005, the Brotherhood won 20% of the seats, Hosni Mubarak cracked down on the group.
- As of 2011, the Brotherhood took an active part in the Egyptian protests

### Southern Sudan referendum

- A referendum on independence for Southern Sudan was held in January 2011, with 98.83% of the electorate opting for secession.
- The President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, accepted the results and issued a Republican Decree confirming the outcome of the referendum. Southern Sudan is expected to become an independent country on 9 July 2011.

### **Background:**

#### Southern Sudan

- Southern Sudan is a landlocked autonomous region in the southern part of the Sudan.
- **Juba** is its capital city.
- It is bordered by Ethiopia to the east; Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the south; and the Central African Republic to the west.
- Two decades of war between the predominantly Muslim north and rebels in the Christian-animist south killed at least 2 million people before a 2005 peace agreement (NAIVASHA AGREEMENT) was reached.
- President - **Salva Kiir Mayardit (since 2005)**



#### Darfur Conflict

- The Darfur Conflict is an ongoing guerrilla conflict or civil war centered on the Darfur region of Sudan.
- It began in February 2003 when the **Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A)** and **Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)** groups in Darfur took up arms, accusing the Sudanese government of oppressing non-Arab Sudanese in favor of Sudanese Arabs.
- One side of the conflict is composed mainly of the official Sudanese military and police, and the **Janjaweed**, a Sudanese militia group recruited mostly from the Arab Abbala tribes of the northern Rizeigat region in Sudan; these tribes are mainly camel-herding nomads.
- The other combatants are made up of rebel groups, notably the SLM/A and the JEM, recruited primarily from the non-Arab Muslim Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit ethnic groups.
- Sudanese government publicly denies that it supports the Janjaweed.
- **In July, 2010, Sudan's president Omar al-Bashir was finally charged by ICC(International Criminal Court),Hague for orchestrating Darfur genocide.**
- **The Sudanese government and the JEM signed a ceasefire agreement in February, 2010, with a tentative agreement to pursue further peace.**

### **Khanal sworn in Premier**

Nepal's President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav administered the oath of office and secrecy to newly-elected Prime Minister and chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist Leninist) Jhala Nath Khanal on 6 Feb 2011.

### **Background:**

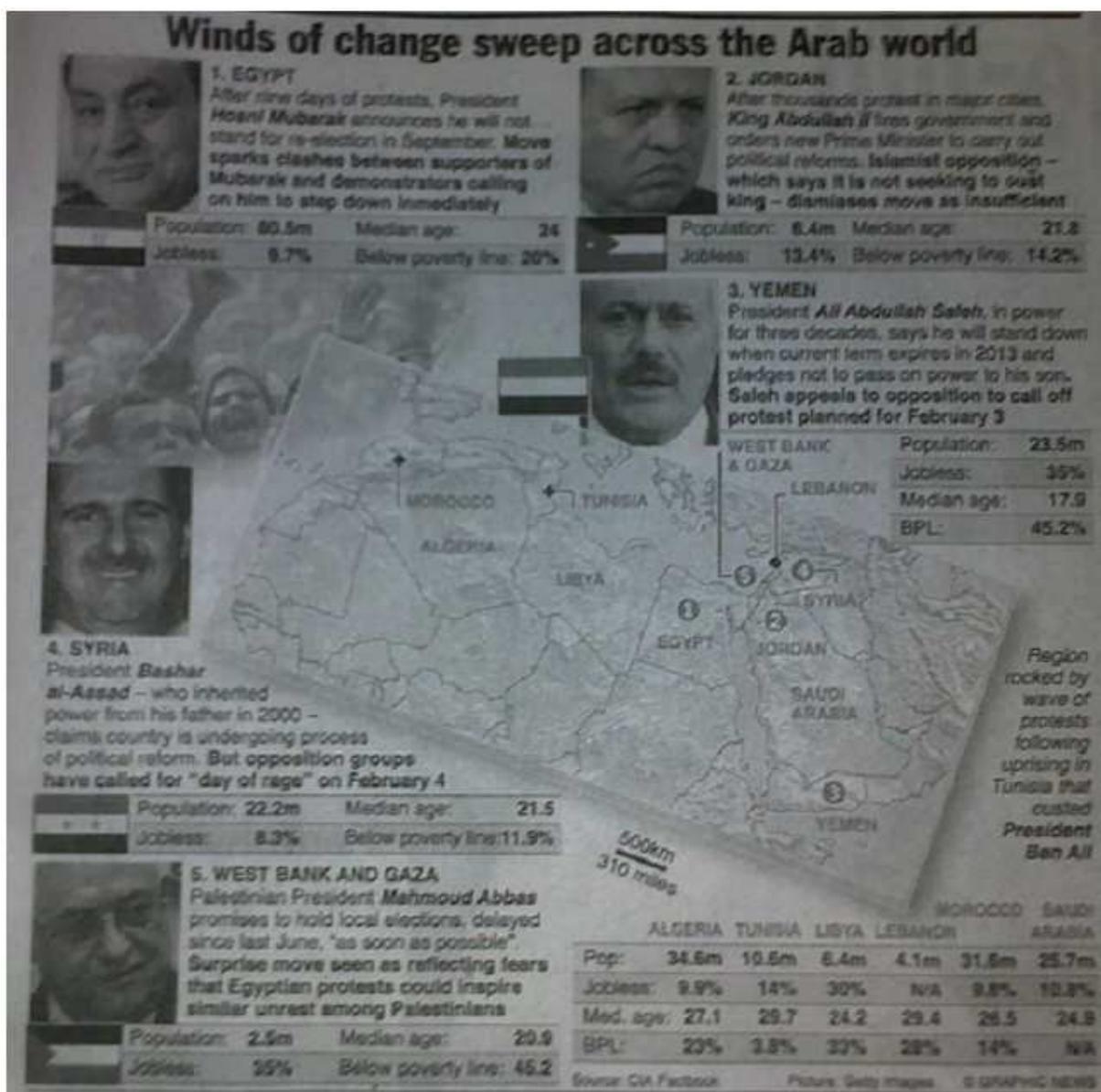
Nepal had no proper government since Madhav Kumar Nepal resigned in June 2010. Sixteen rounds of voting in parliament since July were unable to produce a new prime minister as no political party could muster a majority

However, on 3 February 2011 the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) (Nepal's largest party) withdrew its candidate, Pushpa Kamal Dahal ("Prachanda"), and backed Khanal, who as a result became the third Prime Minister of Nepal since it became a republic in 2008.

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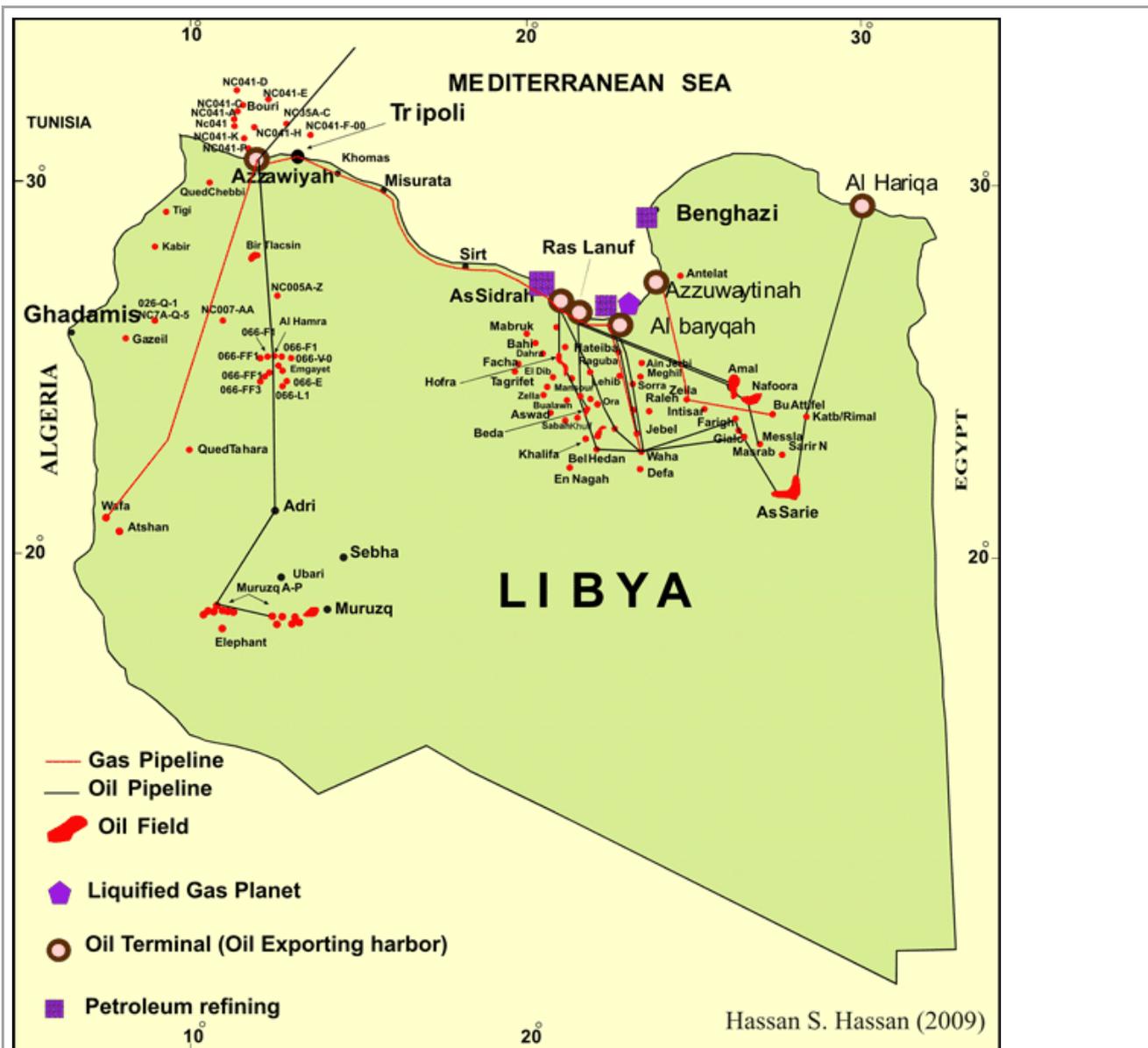
### **"Civilian" President for Myanmar**

- Thein Sein, a military general-turned-civilian leader, was elected Myanmar's first President under its 2008 Constitution, which came into force recently.
- Mr. Thein Sein (65) was chosen by the Presidential Electoral College in Myanmar's administrative capital of Nay Pyi Taw. The College was constituted on the basis of results of a controversial "democracy-restoring" general election, which was held in November last. New civilian representatives and the junta's military nominees formed the Electoral College.
- Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD), which was de-registered before the 2010 general election, did not participate in it.



### 40 years of UAE

- The United Arab Emirates, often abbreviated as UAE or shortened to The Emirates is a federation.
- It consists of seven states, termed emirates (because they are ruled by emirs), which are Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Quwain.
- The rulers of Abu Dhabi and Dubai decided to form a union between their two emirates independently, prepare a constitution, then call the rulers of the other five emirates to a meeting and offer them the opportunity to join. It was also agreed between the two that the constitution be written by December 2, 1971.
- On that date, at the Dubai Guesthouse Palace, four other emirates agreed to enter into a union called the United Arab Emirates. Ras al-Khaimah joined later, in early 1972.
- Islam is the official religion, and Arabic is the official language.



### 50 years of The Elysée Treaty

On January 22, 1963, German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles de Gaulle signed a cooperation Treaty, the founding text of the cooperation between the Federal Republic of Germany and France.

#### Deal on post-UNMIN mechanism

- As a part of a three-point agreement, the two sides (Nepal government and the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)) decided to form a special mechanism, consisting of three members of the all-party Special Committee for Supervision, Integration and Rehabilitation of Maoist combatants and three members from the committee's secretariat, to monitor the arms and armies of both the government and the Maoists, meaning the Nepal Army and the People's Liberation Army respectively.

Background:

#### United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN)

- Following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on 21 November 2006 between the Government of Nepal and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) at the end of the Nepalese Civil War, the United Nations

received a request for assistance, and established the political mission United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) on 23 January 2007 to monitor the disarmament of Maoist rebels and the preparations for Constituent Assembly elections.

- The mission provided support to the historic elections for a Constituent Assembly in 2008, which was one of its key tasks, along with monitoring the implementation of the arms monitoring agreement and the ceasefire code of conduct
- In 2009 the mandate was renewed, but with a phased withdrawal of UNMIN staff.
- UNMIN ceased operations on **January 15, 2011**.

#### **CHINA-TAJIKISTAN BORDER DISPUTE SETTLED**

- China and Tajikistan on January 13, 2011, said that they have settled a **century-old** border dispute, after the Central Asian nation agreed to cede land to China.
- The Tajik parliament voted on Wednesday to ratify a 1999 deal handing over 386 square miles (**1,000 sq km**) of land in the remote Pamir mountain range.
- The Tajik foreign minister said that this represented **5.5% of the land that Beijing had sought**.
- It should be remembered that basically China has territorial demands on all of south East Asia. Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Burma, to mention a few states, are important for China to control on the rise of China as a global power.

#### **ETA ceasefire**

The armed Basque separatist group ETA recently consolidated its four-month ceasefire by making it “permanent, general and internationally verifiable.”

#### **Background:**

- ETA or Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (English: Basque Homeland and Freedom) is an armed Basque nationalist and separatist organization.
- The group was founded in 1959 and has since evolved from a group promoting traditional Basque culture to a paramilitary group with the goal of gaining independence for the Greater Basque Country (parts the border between France and Spain on the Atlantic coast.).

## INDIA AND WORLD

### **India and Malaysia Signs CECA – To Promote Foreign Investments (Bilateral Trade to Touch US \$ 15 Billion by 2015)**

The Agreement will come into effect on 1st July 2011 and the first review will be held within a year of coming into force

### **India-Malaysia infra fund proposed**

India proposed the creation of a dedicated fund for the construction of infrastructure projects in India with Malaysian collaboration.

### **Japan to extend Rs. 2,557-crore aid to India**

- Japan is to extend an aid of Rs.2,557 crore (Yen 46.401 billion) to India for three projects through its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) window.
- The projects pertain to **cleaning the Yamuna** in the national capital, **crop diversification promotion in Himachal Pradesh** and **biodiversity conservation and greening in Tamil Nadu**.

### **India-Japan Signs CEPA – to give Greater impetus to trade and Investments (Bilateral trade to Touch US \$ 25 Billion by 2014, doubling of present level)**

- This Agreement is the most ambitious agreement signed by India so far and covers trade in goods, services and investment under its ambit.
- This Agreement follows from the commitment of the two Prime Ministers in October, 2010.
- India stands to gain significantly through this Agreement and 90% of tariff lines are covered while Japan has covered 5% more lines than India.
- The Agreement has ensured that the sensitive sectors for India are fully protected including agriculture, fruits, spices, wheat, basmati rice, edible oils, wines and spirits and also certain categories of industrial products such as auto and auto parts.

### **G4 nations to press for urgent UNSC reforms**

#### **G4 nations**

- The G4 is an alliance among Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan for the purpose of supporting each other's bids for permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council.
- The G4 suggested that two African nations, in addition to themselves, be included in the enlarged UNSC. In several conferences during the summer of 2005, the African Union was unable to agree on two nominees: Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa all lay claim to a permanent African UNSC seat

### **India, Iran resolve crisis**

In a major breakthrough that put an end to more than a month of uncertainty, India and Iran recently arrived at a settlement and agreed to use euro to pay for Iranian crude oil through a German bank(EIH Bank).

#### **Background:**

Reserve Bank of India has barred companies from using the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) to process current account transactions for oil and gas imports — a decision that directly hits at Indian energy imports from Iran.

### **150 years of arrival of Indians in South Africa**

- On **November 16, 1860** more than 300 labourers from southern India arrived in South Africa to work on the country's sugar cane plantations.
- A wall inscribed with the names of first batch of 200 Indian labourers, who arrived in South Africa 150 years ago, has been unveiled at the Freedom Park in Pretoria.

### **India, Sri Lanka sign MoU on ferry**

- The MoU envisages putting in place ferry services between Colombo and Tuticorin and Talaimannar and Rameswaram.
- Ferry service was suspended in 1982 due to LTTE issue.

### **Background:**

- V.O. Chidambaranar Pillai first started ferry service Tuticorin and Colombo in the year 1906.

### **India, Bangladesh finalise deal on Teesta, Feni river waters**

- agreed to sign a 15-year interim accord on sharing the waters of common rivers **Teesta and Feni**.
- decided at a Secretary-level meeting of the Indo-Bangladesh Joint River Commission (JRC) in Dhaka.
- The agreement is expected to be signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Dhaka this year
- discussions included formulation of a working plan on the sharing of the waters of five other common rivers — **Dharla, Dudhkumar, Manu, Khowai, Gumti and Muhuri**.

### **Teesta**

River Teesta (source in **Lake Cholamo**) is said to be the lifeline of Sikkim, flowing for almost the entire length of the state and carving out verdant Himalayan temperate and tropical river valleys. The emerald-coloured river then forms the border between Sikkim and West Bengal before joining the Brahmaputra as a tributary in Bangladesh.

### **Feni**

Feni River is a river in Tripura and southeastern Bangladesh.

### **State Visit of President Yudhoyono in January 2011**

- The President of Indonesia, Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono paid a State Visit to India as the Chief Guest for India's Republic Day from January 24-26, 2011.
- There were 17 MoUs/Agreements signed during the visit including the **Extradition Treaty, Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty**, Cultural exchange Programme and MoU on Cooperation in the Education sector.
- The visit also witnessed signing of business deals worth \$ 15 billion between the two sides.
- In the Joint Statement issued during the visit, inter alia, the two countries have agreed to the establishment of the Eminent Persons' Group, set up a **trade target of \$ 25 bn by 2015**, agreed to Biennial Trade Minister's Forum and **biennial Defence Ministers Forum** and established an **Energy Forum**. It was also announced to extend tourist visa on arrival facility to Indonesian nationals.
- announcement on the commencement of **CECA negotiations**.

### **Related info:**

- India implemented FTA on **goods** with Indonesia w.e.f. 1 October 2010.
- While India and the Asean grouping signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on goods in August, 2009, which came into force from 1 January 2010, it was to be separately notified by New Delhi for each member country.
- **Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) cover goods and services both.**

## ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

### Karnataka bans use of endosulfan

- Kerala was the first State to ban endosulfan, on October 31, 2006.
- Endosulfan is primarily used during certain periods of the year. With the ban, the State can prevent its use for a period not exceeding 60 days.

### **Background:**

Aerial spraying of endosulfan was undertaken every year (from 1983) by the Karnataka Cashew Development Board in many villages in Puttur, Belthangady and Bantwal taluks in Dakshina Kannada. Over 60 countries have banned the use of this deadly pesticide after they found viable alternatives.

### No tobacco in plastic pouches from March

The Supreme Court refused to relax its order banning the sale of tobacco products in plastic sachets beyond March 1, taking note of the Centre's submission that 86 per cent of oral cancer cases were caused by chewing of tobacco.

### Harit Moksha

- New environment friendly, fuel-efficient wood-based cremation system.
- It is capable of saving wood up to 60% besides reducing air and river pollution significantly.
- 'Harit Moksha' project is a CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiative by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in association with Mokshda Paryavaran Evam Van Suraksha Samiti (Mokshada PEVSS)
- So far, ONGC plans to set up 30 units in eight cities — including 10 in Mumbai and six in Delhi — at a cost of Rs.9.19 crore.
- The MPEVSS, which will implement the project on a turnkey basis over the next three years, estimates that it would help in saving 13,700 tonnes of wood and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26,500 tonnes every year. Air and river pollution would also be reduced.

### **Related info:**

- Two lakh hectares of forest area being felled annually just for burning bodies in the rites of death.

### Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011 Notified

#### **(Explicit Recognition to Waste Pickers under New Rules)**

- The Ministry of Environment and Forests has today notified the Plastic Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2011. It replaces the earlier Recycled Plastics Manufacture and Usage Rules, 1999 (amended in 2003). These Rules have been brought out following detailed discussions and consultations with a wide spectrum of stakeholders including civil society, industry bodies, relevant Central Government Ministries and State Governments.
- Some of the salient features of the new Rules are **ban on use of plastic materials in sachets for storing, packing or selling gutkha, tobacco and pan masala, no food stuffs will be allowed to be packed in recycled plastics or compostable plastics**, recycled carry bags to have specific BIS standards, colour to the prescription by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), uniform thickness shall not be less than 40 microns in carry bags etc.
- One of the major provisions under the new Rules is the explicit recognition of the role of waste pickers. The new Rules require the municipal authority to constructively engage agencies or groups working in waste management including these waste pickers. This is the very first time that such a special dispensation has been made.

#### **New breeding centre soon for Siberian cranes at Keoladeo Park**

- About a decade after the celebrated Siberian cranes ceased to visit the Keoladeo National Park near Bharatpur in Rajasthan, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests is planning to take up a captive breeding programme for the rare birds in the same terrain. The last pair of Siberian cranes was spotted at the national park in 2002.
- It is believed that the flock, which visited South Asia from distant Siberia every winter, is extinct, though there are a few birds left in two other flocks that migrate to Iran and China.
- Though the project is at a very preliminary stage at present, the Minister said initially the birds would be brought from a breeding centre in Belgium.

#### **India set to get Asia's first tidal power plant**

- With the proposed commissioning of a 50-Mw tidal power project off the **coast of Gujarat** in 2013, India is ready to place its first "seamark" that will be a first for Asia as well.
- London-based marine energy developer **Atlantis Resources Corporation**, along with Gujarat Power Corporation Ltd, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Gujarat government to start this project.

#### **China has highest wind power capacity: report**

- China has the world's highest wind power capacity after adding 62 percent or 16 gigawatts (GW) in new capacity last year.
- Top 10 wind power countries (as of March 2011)

Country	Wind power capacity (MW)
China	42,287
United States	40,180
Germany	27,214
Spain	20,676
India	13,065
Italy	5,660
France	5,660
United Kingdom	5,204
Canada	4,009
Denmark	3,752

#### **Meghalaya to have another elephant reserve**

- As man-elephant conflicts are on the increase in Meghalaya, the state government has decided to create another elephant reserve in an effort to cut down the incidents.
- A project is being conceived to declare a forest area in the northern part of Ri Bhoi and West Khasi Hills districts bordering Assam as an elephant reserve.
- Of the total 22,000 square-kilometre geographical area of the state, the forest cover is 15,657 square kilometres. But unlike in other states which have well-demarcated forest areas and reserves, most of the forested areas are not under the direct control of the state government.
- Only 1,027.20 square kilometres are under the control of the State Forest Department constituting only 4.58 per cent of the total geographical area of the state and 6.56 per cent of the total forest area of the state.

**Related info:**

**Project Elephant**

- Project Elephant (PE), a centrally sponsored scheme, was launched in February 1992 to provide financial and technical support to major elephant bearing States in the country for protection of elephants, their habitats and corridors.

**2010 tied for warmest year on record**

- The warmest year on record is a three-way tie- 2010, 2005 and 1998.
- ten warmest years after records began in 1854 have all occurred since 1998.
- So says WMO (HQ-Geneva), providing further evidence that the planet is slowly but surely heating up.
- The average worldwide temperature for the 20th century was 13.88 degrees Celsius.
- The year 2010 also was the wettest on record, according to the Global Historical Climatology Network. But since rain and snowfall patterns varied greatly around the world, scientists say more research is needed to establish a link between the warmer temperatures with the unusual moisture.

**POSCO: Conditional clearance**

- The project has been granted conditional clearance with 60 more conditions.
- Union Minister for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh also sought an assurance from the Orissa government that there was no violation of the Forest Rights Act in the land acquisition

Background:

**Posco Project:**

- In June 2005, South Korea's Pohang Steel Company (Posco), the world's fourth largest producer of steel, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Orissa government for setting up India's largest iron and steel plant to date.
- The project — to be located in Kujang tehsil of Jagatsinghpur district and completed in three phases — envisaged production of **12 million tonnes** of steel every year, almost equal to what six of India's existing public sector units at Bhilai, Bokaro, Durgapur, Rourkela, Burnpur and Salem together produce in a year.
- Most of the steel produced here would be exported. For this purpose, the company is setting up a **captive minor port**, about 12 kilometres south of Paradip port, and a captive power plant as well. The company is also awaiting finalisation of mining licences to source its raw material, iron ore, for the steel plant.
- The combined investment for the entire project is US\$ 12 billion, or more than Rs 51,000 crore, which makes it the single largest foreign direct investment in this country.

## ECONOMY

### Industry

#### Trading in renewable energy certificate launched

- Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) has announced the launch of trading in Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) on its platform.

#### Background:

- INDIAN ENERGY EXCHANGE (IEX)** is India's first-ever, nationwide, automated, and online electricity trading platform. It has been conceived to catalyse the modernisation of electricity trade in the country by ushering in a transparent and neutral market through a technology-enabled electronic trading platform.

#### Economy Growth projections

	<u>GDP 2011-12</u>	<u>GDP 2010-11</u>	<u>comment</u>
Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (PMEAC) (Chairman C. Rangarajan)(as on 21 Feb 2011)	<b>9%</b> (Agriculture-3%, Industry-9.25% Services-10.3%)	<b>8.6%</b> (Agriculture-5.4%, Industry-8.1% Services-9.6%)	itches for stimulus withdrawal
		-	

#### India to resume rare earth exports after seven years

- India is set to export about 6,000 tonnes of rare earth chloride to a Japanese company, marking its first entry into the rare earth exporters club, which is now totally dominated by China.
- The decision to enter into such a partnership was taken during a summit meeting between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Japanese counterpart, Naoto Kan, in Tokyo last year.
- Indian Rare Earths Limited, a public sector undertaking under the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL), will make the supplies of rare earth chloride to Toyota Tsusho.
- Good prices:** The Indian move to enter the rare earth exports market comes at a time when China is cutting down export quotas to ensure that its industry moves up the value chain instead of simply selling raw material for value addition by other companies and countries. India had stopped producing rare earths for exports in 2004 but is now confident of exporting it at good prices due to firming up of prices in the international market.
- India and Japan are now looking at the possibility of a joint venture between IREL and Toyota Tsusho. **"This will take India-Japan ties to the truly strategic level,"** said diplomatic sources.

#### Tata forms venture with Lockheed Martin

to manufacture aerostructures for the C-130 aircraft produced by Lockheed Martin(USA).

#### India's largest Naphtha Cracker plant at Indian Oil's Panipat Complex was dedicated to the Nation

- The Naphtha Cracker Unit at Panipat will produce 800 KTA of Ethylene and 600 KTA of Propylene, which will act as feed for downstream polymer units like Polypropylene Unit (600,000 MTPA), Linear Low Density/ High Density Polyethylene Swing Unit (350,000 MTPA), High Density Polyethylene unit (300,000 MTPA) and Mono Ethylene Glycol unit (300,000 MTPA).
- These polymer products will be used for manufacture of moulded plastic containers/barrels, heavy duty films, stretch wrap films, shopping bags, automobile parts, pipes and sheets, moulded furniture, Yarn & Fibre and many more household & industrial items.

**Background:**

- Naphtha normally refers to a number of different flammable liquid mixtures of hydrocarbons, i.e. a distillation product from petroleum or coal tar boiling in a certain range and containing certain hydrocarbons. It is a broad term covering the lightest and most volatile fraction of the liquid hydrocarbons in petroleum. Naphtha is a colorless to reddish-brown volatile aromatic liquid, very similar to gasoline.

**Exports grow 33 % in Jan**

Shipments are expected to cross \$220 b this fiscal.



**Industrial growth plunges to 1.6 % in Dec 2010**

Barely 1 per cent growth in manufacturing sector

**India's Industrial Growth**

Per cent change in Index of Industrial Production over corresponding month of the previous year

Base: 1983-84=100  
 General: 18.1 (Dec 2009), 1.6 (Dec 2010)

Manufacturing: 19.6 (Dec 2009), 1.0 (Dec 2010)

Electricity: 5.4 (Dec 2009), 6.0 (Dec 2010)

Mining: 11.1 (Dec 2009), 3.8 (Dec 2010)

KBK



**What is IIP?**

Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an abstract number, the magnitude of which represents the status of production in the industrial sector for a given period of time as compared to a reference period of time. It is a statistical device which enables us to arrive at a single representative figure to measure the general level of industrial activity in the economy. Strictly speaking the IIP is a short term indicator measuring industrial growth till the actual result of detailed industrial surveys become available. This indicator is of paramount importance and is being used by various organisations including Ministries/Departments of Government of India, Industrial Associations, Research Institutes and Academicians.

#### How and when is it computed?

- The scope of the index has been confined to mining, manufacturing and electricity sectors and does not cover gas, water supply and construction.
- The IIP estimate for a given month is always released within six weeks from that month. The data for the IIP estimate is supplied by 15 source agencies which include Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Indian Bureau of Mines, Central Statistical Organisation and Central Electricity Authority, among others.

The distribution of items covered by the index with 1993-94 base year are as follows :-

No. of Items

Sector	1993-94
Mining	64
Manufacturing	478
Electricity	1
Total	543

#### MMTC in Johannesburg

first branch office of state-run commodity trading enterprise MMTC

### Money and Banking

#### Rs.150 coin /Rs 5 Coin

- to mark the number of years of taxation(Income Tax Department) in India.
- The reverse faces of the Rs. 150 and Rs. 5 coins, minted to commemorate 'Income Tax — 150 years of Building India,' bear the portrait of 'Chanakya and Lotus with Honeybee' at the centre representing his famous lines, "..... **Ideally, governments should collect taxes like a honeybee, which sucks just the right amount of honey from the flower so that both can survive...**" The left and right peripheries of the coins are flanked with the words: "Income Tax — 150 years of Building India" in both Hindi and English.
- The Rs. 150 coin is not only unique for its denomination but also for its size and metal composition. The 44-mm circular coin is made of **50 per cent silver**.

#### **Background:**

- Direct tax collections during the current fiscal had so far posted a growth of **20 per cent** to touch nearly **Rs. 3.35 lakh crore**.
- In the last five years, direct tax collections have grown at an **average annual rate of 24 per cent** and nearly trebled from the Rs.1,32,771 crore in 2004-05 to about Rs.3,78,000 crore in 2009-10. Alongside, the share of direct taxes in the country's gross domestic product (GDP) also increased from 4.1 to **6.1 per cent**

#### Recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to improve their Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR)

- The Union Cabinet approved the recapitalization of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to improve their Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) in the following manner:
- Share of Central Government i.e. **Rs.1,100 crore** will be released as per provisions made by the Department of Expenditure in 2010-11 and 2011-12. However, release of Government of India share will be contingent on proportionate release of State Government and Sponsor Bank share.
- A capacity building fund with a corpus of Rs.100 crore to be set up by Central Government with NABARD for training and capacity building of the RRB staff in the institution of NABARD and other reputed institutions. The functioning of the Fund will be periodically reviewed by the Central Government. An Action Plan will be prepared by NABARD in this regard and sent to Government for approval.
- Additional amount of Rs.700 crore as contingency fund to meet the requirement of the weak RRBs, particularly those in the North Eastern and Eastern Region, the necessary provision will be made in the Budget as and when the need arises.

### Background:

- The Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) were established in 1975 with the objective to create an alternative channel to 'cooperative credit structure' with a view to ensure sufficient institutional credit for rural and agriculture sector. The RRBs are integral segment of the Indian banking system with focus on serving the rural areas. As on date 82 RRBs are functioning in the country.
- RRBs are jointly owned by Government of India, the State Government concerned and the Sponsor Banks. The issued capital of RRBs is subscribed by Central Government, State Government and sponsor banks in the proportion of 50%, 15% and 35%, respectively.
- Subsequent to review of the financial status of RRBs by the Union Finance Minister in August, 2009, it was felt that a large number of RRBs had a low Capital to Risk weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR). A committee was therefore constituted in September, 2009 under the Chairmanship of Dr K C Chakrabarty, Deputy Governor, RBI to analyse the financials of the RRBs and to suggest measures including re-capitalisation to bring the CRAR of RRBs to at least 9% in a sustainable manner by 2012. The Committee had submitted its report in May, 2010. The committee has inter-alia recommended the following:
  - RRBs to have CRAR of at least 7% as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and at least 9% from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 onwards.
  - Recapitalisation requirement of Rs. 2,200.00 crore for 40 of the 82 RRBs. This amount is to be released in two installments in 2010-11 and 2011-12.
  - The remaining 42 RRBs will not require any capital and will be able to maintain CRAR of at least 9% as on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 and thereafter on their own.
  - A fund of Rs. 100 crore to be set up for training and capacity building of the RRB staff.

## Trade, Commerce, Investments and External Sector

### Transaction Cost in Exports

- The transaction cost for exports is very high in India estimated at 7-10 per cent of the cargo value. The average cost to an exporter on account of transaction costs has been monetized at a level of US\$ 945 per container as compared to US\$ 460 in China, US\$ 450 in Malaysia and US\$ 625 in Vietnam.
- The Task Force chaired by Sri Jyotiraditya M Scindia, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry was constituted in October 2009 to identify and suggest ways to achieve significant improvement in the functioning of export processes and reduce time and money spent in export transactions, with a view to enhance the competitiveness of Indian exports.
- It is expected that implementation of 23 issues identified by Task Force is likely to mitigate the transaction cost by approximately Rs. 2100 crore.
- Permanent reduction of transaction cost through these initiatives will have a long term positive impact on the competitiveness of India's exports.
- The key benefits of these measures will especially accrue to the small and medium enterprises, who lack resources and infrastructure to deal with various aspects of regulatory framework.

### Economy to grow at 8.6 %: CSO

- Pumped by a strong agriculture growth and allied activities, the Central Government declared that the economy would grow at an estimated 8.6 per cent during the current financial year as against 8 per cent a year ago.
- According to data released, agriculture and allied activities are projected to grow by 5.4 per cent this fiscal, as against 0.4 per cent a year ago.
- **The growth rate of 8.6 per cent during 2010-11 has been due to the growth rate of over 8 per cent in sectors of manufacturing, construction, trade, hotels, transport and communication, financing, insurance, real estate and business services.**
- During the current fiscal, the trade, hotel, transport and communication sectors are projected to grow by 11 per cent as against 9.7 per cent last fiscal and construction by 8 per cent as compared to 7 per cent in 2009-10. Furthermore, the finance, insurance, real estate and business services sectors are likely to grow by 10.6 per cent this fiscal as against 9.2 per cent last fiscal.
- However, community social and personal services are likely to witness a slowdown in growth and register just 5.7 per cent expansion as compared to 11.8 per cent in the year-ago period.

- The size of the economy at current prices is projected to rise to Rs.72,56,571 crore at the end of the current fiscal, up 18.3 per cent from Rs.61,33,230 crore in 2009-10.



### Electricity Losses

Responding to a question on the losses of electricity distribution companies, Planning Commission Chairman said that a committee headed by former Comptroller and Auditor General V. K. Shunglu had been constituted to examine whether their losses were higher than what was reported.

“Without a healthy supply sector, it is not possible to have a healthy growth of the power sector,” he said.

### **Background:**

- Electricity losses in India during transmission and distribution are extremely high and vary between 30 to 45%.
- India has installed capacity of over 1.62 lakh MW, and the power deficit is about 13-14 per cent.
- Transmission and distribution losses in developing countries such as USA is around 6-7%.

### RPower gets nod for carbon credits

- Anil Ambani owned Reliance Power on recently said it expected to generate over Rs.2,000 crore by use of energy efficient and environment friendly coal technology at its 4,000 MW Ultra Mega Power Project at Sasan in Madhya Pradesh.
- According to an official statement issued, the company's Sasan project, using **super-critical technology**, has been registered with the Clean Development Mechanism Executive Board of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- The registration with CDM-EB allows the Sasan project to earn certified emission reduction (CER) credits, each equivalent to one tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- The project will generate about 22.5 million CERs in the initial ten years of operations with the expected incremental revenue from sale of CERs of over Rs.2,000 crore.
- The Sasan project is the first UMPP to be registered with the CDM-EB.

### IT-BPO sector revenue to rise 19 % to \$76 b

- The National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) recently said the Indian IT-BPO sector was estimated to grow 19 per cent in the current financial year to reach \$76 billion in revenues.
- Exports would continue to be the mainstay of the industry with estimated growth of 18.7 per cent to \$59 billion revenue, while the domestic market is estimated to grow 16 per cent to aggregate Rs.78,700 crore (about \$17 billion) in 2010-11.
- Direct employment is expected to reach nearly 25.40-lakh, an addition of 2.40-lakh employees in 2010-11.
- In the next fiscal, the software and services growth is expected to grow at 16-18 per cent and aggregate revenues

of \$68-70 billion, while the domestic market is estimated to grow by 15-17 per cent with revenues of Rs.90,000-92,000 crore (\$19-20 billion)

**Summary of IT BPO sector:**

Revenue: \$76 Billion

Export: \$59 Billion

Domestic: \$17 Billion

Direct Employment: 25.4 Lakhs

**SBI plans merger of 5 associate banks**

State Bank of India (SBI) plans consolidation of remaining five associate banks with itself in the next 12-18 months.

In the last two years, SBI merged two associates namely State Bank of Saurashtra and State Bank of Indore. State Bank of Saurashtra amalgamation took place in August 2008 while State Bank of Indore merged with the parent last year.

**Background:**

5 associate Bank of SBI

	Bank	Established	Comment
1	State Bank of Mysore	1913	
2	State Bank of Patiala	1917	
3	State Bank of Hyderabad	1942	
4	State Bank of Travancore	1945	
5	State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur	1963	
	State Bank of Indore	1920	merged with SBI in August 2010 smallest of SBI's six associate bank subsidiaries
	State Bank of Saurashtra	1902	merged with SBI in 2008

**CSO Data (31 Jan 2011/8 Feb 2011)**

	2007-08	2008-09(PE)	2009-10(QE)	Comment	2010-11(AE)
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost [at constant (2004-05) prices]	3,898,958	4,162,509	4,493,743	The growth rate of 8.0 per cent in the GDP during 2009-10 has been achieved due to high growth in transport, storage and communication (15.0%), community, social and personal services (11.8%), financing, insurance, real estate & business services (9.2%), and manufacturing (8.8%).	
	(9.3)	(6.8)	(8.0)	GDP growth rate at current prices=16.1%	8.6
PER CAPITA NATIONAL INCOME		Rs. 31,801	Rs. 33,731 (6.1%)	At current price- Rs. 46,492	Rs. 36,0003.

(real terms, i.e. at 2004-05 prices)					(6.7%) (Rs. 54,527)
DOMESTIC SAVING (current prices) % of GDP		32.2 %	33.7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increase in the rate of GDS has mainly been due to the increase in the rates of savings of public sector from 0.5 per cent in 2008-09 to 2.1 per cent in 2009-10 and private corporate sector from 7.9 per cent in 2008-09 to 8.1 per cent in 2009-10.</li> <li>In respect of household sector, the rate of saving has been decreased from 23.8 per cent to 23.5 per cent.</li> </ul>	
Gross Domestic Capital Formation at current prices % of GDP		34.5%	36.5 %		

PE=Provisional estimates, QE=Quick Estimates, AE=Advances Estimates

**Background:**

The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the Quick estimates of national income, consumption expenditure, saving and capital formation for the financial year 2009-10. The estimates of GDP and other aggregates for the previous years have been revised on account of using the new series of Wholesale price Index (WPI) with base 2004-05 and also subsequent revision in Index of industrial production (IIP). The revision in estimates is also on account of use of latest available data on agricultural production, industrial production, government expenditure and also detailed and more comprehensive data available from various source agencies.

**\$7.4 b ADB assistance for infrastructure**

- The ADB(HQ-Manila) and the Union Government have agreed on a new three-year business plan that will provide lending assistance of \$7.4 billion to support inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth in the country.
- A major thrust of ADB's '**India Country Operations Business Plan**' (COBP) for 2011-13, will be to support infrastructure development, particularly through public-private partnership (PPP) programmes.
- The ADB noted that supporting the government's efforts to redress inter-State economic disparities is also a key cornerstone of the COBP which is aligned to the country's XI Plan (2007-12) and the bank's long-term strategy for reducing poverty in the region.
- Continued assistance for development of the vital energy sector by means of projects involving clean and renewable energy is another key focus area.
- The ADB said that it would continue with its projects in transport, energy and urban sectors in States like Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan to help bridge inter-State economic disparities.
- It would also continue to provide assistance for the national rural roads development programme in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and West Bengal and for public resource management in Assam and Mizoram.

**Uttarbanga RINL RAIL Karkahana Limited**

- Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited(Visakhapatnam Steel Plant) has signed MoU with Indian Railways for setting up an **axle plant** under the name of Uttarbanga RINL RAIL Karkahana Limited at **New Jalpaiguri in West Bengal**.
- The plant will manufacture and supply rail axles for box in wagons and others to meet the growing requirement of Indian Railways

### 2011-12 to be Declared Civil Aviation Centenary Year

- Indian Civil Aviation is completing 100 years on 18th February, 2011.
- The year 2011-12 will be declared as the Civil Aviation Centenary Year, starting from 18th February, 2011 and ending on the same date in 2012.
- On this date in **1911, the first commercial plane flew in India between Allahabad and Naini.**
- Since then, aviation in India has grown from strength to strength.
- Today **India is the 9th largest civil aviation market in the world** and this forward march is likely to culminate in India becoming one of the three largest markets in the world by 2020.

## **Budget and Public Finance**

### **New CPI:**

- India has adopted the new Consumer Price Index (CPI) that will reflect the actual movement of prices at the micro-level.
- The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, has introduced the new series of consumer price indices for all-India, and States and union territories separately for rural, urban and combined for the purpose of intra temporal price comparison with effect from January, 2011, with 2010 as the base year.
- India is one of the few countries in the world using the WPI as benchmark. Experts say the new CPI is likely to help policymakers like the Reserve Bank of India in better framing of decisions.
- The initial data showed that retail inflation stood at 6 per cent in January this year. However, inflation, as measured by the Wholesale Price Index — which remains the top benchmark — stood at 8.23 per cent in January.

**The New CPI index will be based on state stats .Each state will have two\* consumer price indices, one for rural and another for urban areas. These CPI rural and urban will be added up to arrive at urban and rural retail indices at the national level. These indices will then be combined based on their relative weights to get a composite retail index.**

### **Advantages:**

**Help assess the origin and impact of price shocks, allowing faster and effective intervention.  
provide a good retail measure of inflation**

### **problems with current CPIs**

numerous: **too narrowly targeted**

Poor quality: **irrelevant for macro policy formulation.**

**large divergence between the wholesale price index (WPI) and the retail measures of inflation**

### **FSAP**

India has voluntarily sought a comprehensive Financial Sector Assessment Programme (FSAP) by IMF and World Bank.

**Why:** It will boost confidence in Indian Financial Sector.

### **Background:**

- The Financial Sector Assessment Program (FSAP), established in 1999, is a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of a country's financial sector.
- It is a key instrument of the Fund's (IMF) surveillance and provides input to the Article IV consultation. In jurisdictions with financial sectors deemed by the Fund to be systemically important, financial stability assessments under the FSAP are a mandatory part of Article IV surveillance, and are supposed to take place every five years; for all other jurisdictions, participation in the program is voluntary.
- In developing and emerging market countries, FSAPs are **conducted jointly with the World Bank.**

### **RBI wants foreign banks to take subsidiary route**

- The Reserve Bank of India is in favour of foreign banks taking the subsidiary model — which has clear advantages

over the branch model despite certain downside risks — while setting up their operations in India. As no foreign bank has approached the RBI for setting up a subsidiary under the existing policy, there may be a need to incentivise subsidiary form foreign banks by liberalising the branch expansion policy, the RBI has said in a "Discussion paper on the presence of foreign banks in India".

- While deciding the approach towards conversion of existing foreign bank branches, India's commitments to WTO will have to be kept in mind, it said. It may not, therefore, be possible to mandate conversion of existing branches into subsidiaries.

#### Background:

- In 2005, the Reserve Bank released the "Road map for presence of foreign banks in India" laying out a two track (either choose to operate through branch presence or set up a 100% wholly owned subsidiary (WOS))and gradualist approach aimed at increasing the efficiency and stability of the banking sector in India.
- Currently, there are 34 foreign banks in India and collectively they have at least 310 branches, 0.43% of the 71,998-strong branch network across the nation.
- As of 31 March 2010, the share of foreign banks in total banking assets stood at 10.52%, out of which that of the top five was 7.12%, RBI said. Among these, Citibank has 1.6% of the total assets of the banking system, while that of HSBC is 1.52% and Standard Chartered Bank is 1.5%.
- Under a 1997 World Trade Organization (WTO) agreement, total assets of foreign banks in India cannot exceed 15% of the total banking system. But RBI, in its discussion paper, has changed the limit in terms of capital and reserves of banks.
- As per this, when the capital and reserves of foreign banks in India exceed 25% of capital of the banking system, the regulator will put restrictions on the further entry of new banks, branch expansion and will make it mandatory to get prior approval for capital infusion, RBI said.
- Presently, the net worth of 21 foreign banks stands at 15% of the total banking system. Their market share in banking assets is 7.65% for the year ended 31 March 2010.
- Under the WTO agreement, RBI needs to give 12 new branch licences to foreign banks every year, including those given to new entrants and existing players, but the Indian regulator has all along been allowing foreign banks to open more branches, going beyond its commitment, but not as many as the foreign banks want.

#### Review of Monetary Policy 2010-11

	Jan-25-2011	Mar-17-2011	Comment
Repo	6.5 (+25bp)	6.75	
Reverse Repo	5.5(+25bp)	5.75	
CRR	6.0 (no change)	6	
SLR	24% (no change)	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• statutory liquidity ratio (SLR) of SCBs(Scheduled Commercial Banks) was reduced from 25 per cent of their NDTL to 24 per cent with effect from <b>December 18, 2010</b></li> <li>• The maximum and minimum limits for the SLR was 40% and 25% respectively in India. <b>Following the amendment of the Banking regulation Act(1949) in January 2007, the floor rate of 25% for SLR was removed.</b></li> </ul>
GDP Growth projection	8.5 % for 2010-11		

## Constitutional Issues/Supreme Court Decisions

### **Court caution on power of pardon**

- President or Governor cannot encroach into judicial domain and give a finding on guilt
- 'Governor's power is a constitutional power; hence it is amenable to judicial review'
- 'Deciding on innocence or otherwise of an accused is within exclusive domain of Court'

### **Sex workers entitled to a life of dignity: Supreme Court**

- The Supreme Court on directed the Centre and the States to prepare schemes for rehabilitation of physically and sexually abused women all over the country.
- The Bench said: "A woman is compelled to indulge in prostitution not for pleasure but because of abject poverty. If such a woman is granted an opportunity to avail herself of some technical or vocational training, she would be able to earn her livelihood by such vocational training and skill instead of by selling her body."

### **Mere membership of banned organisation not a crime: Supreme Court**

- "In our opinion, Section 3(5) cannot be read literally as otherwise it will violate Articles 19 9(free speech) and 21 (liberty) of the Constitution. It has to be read in the light of our observations made above. Hence, mere membership of a banned organisation will not make a person a criminal unless he resorts to violence or incites people to violence or creates public disorder by violence or incitement to violence," a Bench of Justices Markandeya Katju and Gyan Sudha Mishra said in an order.
- Section 3(5) of the TADA makes mere membership of a banned organisation a criminal offence.

### **Supreme Court warns of drastic steps to maintain rule of law**

Takes serious view of stir in Haryana(Mirchpur case) and Rajasthan by Jats and Gujjars

### **Amend Evidence Act to expedite corruption case trial: Santosh Hegde**

Karnataka Lok Ayukta Santosh Hegde has made a strong pitch for amending the Evidence Act and the procedural law to ensure trial and either conviction or acquittal is completed within six months in corruption cases, arguing that the country could ill-afford long periods of litigation.

### **Make changes in Contempt of Courts Act or scrap it: experts**

- Even as the debate over the limitations of the media in covering judicial proceedings is continuing, a section of legal professionals favoured amendments to the "Contempt of Courts Act" or its scrapping altogether.
- Media counsel for Bloomberg News Charles Glasser said contempt of court did not make sense any more when so much of information was available on the Internet. "What is the point in preventing the press from giving information that is already available? You cannot silence the press anymore."

### **Euthanasia**

- The Supreme Court on recently decided to examine whether mercy killing or euthanasia will come within the ambit of Article 21 (right to life and liberty) of the Constitution.
- A writ petition was filed by a patient Aruna Ramachandra Shanbaug, lying in a Mumbai hospital bed for 37 years in a vegetative state, through her next friend Ms. Pinki Virani of Mumbai, for mercy killing by stopping mashed food given to her.
- Supreme Court directing a three-member committee of doctors to look into the physical and mental status of nurse Aruna Shanbaug.

#### **Final Verdict:**

- while active euthanasia (mercy killing) was illegal, yet "passive euthanasia" can be permissible in exceptional circumstances.
- The apex court said that as per the facts and circumstances of Aruna's case, medical evidence and other material suggest that the victim need not be subjected to euthanasia.

## PERSONS IN NEWS

### International

#### Obituary

##### Ronald Gordon King-Smith

- pen name Dick King-Smith
- prolific English children's author, best known for writing The Sheep-Pig

#### Appointments

##### Yoweri Museveni

- Ugandan politician and statesman.
- Elected president of Uganda for third term.
- He has been President of Uganda since 26 January 1986.
- Museveni was involved in the war that deposed Idi Amin Dada, ending his rule in 1979, and in the rebellion that subsequently led to the demise of the Milton Obote regime in 1985.
- Museveni has brought relative stability and economic growth to a country that has endured decades of government mismanagement, rebel activity and civil war.

##### Marc Grossman

Marc Grossman, former U.S. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, to replace the late Richard Holbrooke as Obama Administration's **special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan**.

#### Other

##### Raymond Davis Incident

- Raymond Allen Davis, a former United States Army soldier, an alleged private security contractor with CIA, was on an American diplomatic mission in Pakistan shot dead two Pakistani locals On January 27, 2011 in what he said was in self-defense after they attempted to rob him. Pakistan acted tough on him despite U.S. demands that he be freed because he enjoys diplomatic immunity.
- Davis was jailed and criminally charged by Pakistani authorities with double murder and the illegal possession of a firearm.
- On March 16, 2011, Davis was released after the families of the two killed men were paid \$2.4 million in diyya (a form of monetary compensation or blood money). Judges then acquitted him on all charges and Davis immediately departed Pakistan.
- The incident led to a diplomatic furor and deterioration in Pakistan – United States relations (U.S. administration is reported to suspend high level contacts with Pakistan and may also suspend economical aid).

##### Ugyen Trinley Dorje

- Ugyen(or Ogyen) Trinley Dorje is a claimant to the title of **17th Karmapa**.
- The Karmapa is head of the Karma Kagyu school, one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Ogyen Trinley Dorje and Thaye Dorje are the persisting claimants to that office and title.
- In January 2011, the Himachal Pradesh Police seized money in currencies of 25 countries including China, valued at over \$ 1.3 million (Rs 60 million), during raids on the offices of a trust backed by Ogyen Trinley Dorje.
- Initially, the police suspected that the money was being used to spread Chinese influence in India, and that the Karmapa was a Chinese agent helping the Chinese government control Buddhist monasteries in India.
- Tibetan community says spiritual pilgrims frequently leave gifts and a tally of how much had not been kept.

**Background:**

Karmapa Lama is the spiritual head of the Karma Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism and is the third most important leader in Tibetan hierarchy after the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama

Post	Sect	Person holding the post
Dalai Lama	Gelug or Gelug-pa Sect	14th Dalai Lama (birth name-Lhamo Dondrub)
Panchen Lama	Gelug or Gelug-pa Sect	Gyancaïn Norbu
Karmapa Lama	Karma Kagyu	Ogyen Trinley Dorje and Thaye Dorje are the persisting claimants to that office and title.

**Anand Satyanand**

- Chief Guest of 9th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
- 19th and current Governor-General of New Zealand.
- Pravasi Bharatiya Samman

**Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**

Chief guest of 62nd Republic Day of India.

**Background:**

2010 President Lee Myung Bak Republic of Korea  
2009 President Nursultan Nazarbayev Kazakhstan  
2008 President Nicolas Sarkozy France  
2007 President Vladimir Putin Russia

1950 Chief guest of at the 1st Republic day of India : Indonesian President Sukarno

**National**

**Obituary**

**K. Subrahmanyam**

- K. Subrahmanyam was a prominent international strategic affairs analyst, journalist and former Indian civil servant.
- Considered a proponent of Realpolitik, Subrahmanyam has long been an influential voice in Indian security affairs.
- He was most often referred to as the doyen of India's strategic affairs community, and, more contentiously, as the premier ideological champion of India's nuclear deterrent.
- Subrahmanyam was a key figure in framing and influencing Indian security and nuclear policy. And in advocating Indian nuclear positions on the global stage, both as a policy wonk and as a journalist.
- He is the founding director of the New Delhi-based Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.
- He is also noted for having steered several Indian government committees and commissions of inquiry, including Kargil review committee.

### Related info:

Realpolitik refers to politics or diplomacy based primarily on power and on practical and material factors and considerations, rather than ideological notions or moralistic or ethical premises.

### K.G. Kannabiran

- Eminent **civil rights activist** and prominent lawyer
- He was the president of Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee between 1978 and 1994 and went on to become the national president of People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL).
- He authored a book '**The wages of impunity: power, justice and human rights**'

### Pandit Bhimsen Joshi

- Pandit Bhimsen Gururaj Joshi was a vocalist in the Hindustani classical tradition.
- A member of the **Kirana Gharana** (school), he is renowned for the **khayal** form of singing, as well as for his popular renditions of devotional music (**bhajans and abhangs**).
- He was the most recent recipient of the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, awarded in 2008
- Bhimsen Joshi was born in Gadag (Karnataka) on February 14, 1922.
- He has improvised and combined ragas to create new ragas like the Kalashri and LalitBhatiyar.
- Some of the famous numbers sung by Bhimsen Joshi include 'Piya milan ki aas', 'Jo bhaje hari ko sada', and '**Mile sur mera tumhara**'.
- Bhimsen Joshi was the recipient of several prestigious awards. These include: Padma Shri (1972) Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1976) Padma Bhushan (1985), Padma Vibhushan (1999) and Bharat Ratna (2008).

## Appointments

### Wajahat Habibullah

- India's first Chief Information Commissioner Wajahat Habibullah is the next chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities (NCM).
- Mr. Habibullah, a 1968-batch IAS officer, will be filling a post that has been lying vacant for the past five months.
- His predecessor, Mohammad Shafi Quereshi, retired on September 2, 2010.

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## General Studies Prelim 2011: Current Affairs

March – April

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Defence Technology

##### 'Hatf IX' (NASR)

- Newly developed short range surface-to-surface multi-tube ballistic missile 'Hatf IX' (NASR) by Pakistan.
- nuclear-capable battlefield range ballistic missile (BRBM)
- Viewed by some strategic analysts as Pakistan's answer to India's Cold Start Doctrine, NASR has a range of 60 km and "shoot-and-scoot" nuclear delivery capability.

Background:

##### India's Cold Start Doctrine

- Cold Start was a military doctrine developed by the Indian Armed Forces in 2004.
- It involves joint operations between India's three main services (Army, Navy, and Air Force) and integrated battle groups for offensive operations.
- A key component is the preparation of India's forces to be able to quickly mobilise and take offensive actions

**In news:** Pakistan tests short-range ballistic missile

##### India's explosive detection technology may be used by U.S. soon

- The U.S.' Homeland Security department may soon be using a technology developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) to detect explosives, after it proved a success in insurgency and militancy affected areas in India.
- The DRDO has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with US-based firm Crowe and Company LLC to further develop the Explosive Detection Kit (EDK) to meet the standards set by regulatory institutions in America, before introducing it in U.S. Army and Homeland Security forces.
- Developed by DRDO's Pune-based High Energy Material Research Lab (HEMRL), EDK can detect explosives of any combination based on TNT, dynamite or black powder.
- The testing requires only 3 to 5 mg of suspected sample. It comes packed in a box the size of a vanity case and in miniature vials that can be kept in shirt pockets. It contains reagents capable of detecting explosives, even in extremely small quantities

##### Iron Dome

- Iron Dome is a mobile air defense system in development by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems designed to intercept short-range rockets and artillery shells.
- The system was created as a defensive countermeasure to the rocket threat against Israel's civilian population on its northern and southern borders.
- It is designed to intercept very short-range threats up to 70 kilometers in all-weather situations.
- It was declared operational and initially deployed on March 27, 2011 near Beersheba.
- On April 7, 2011, the system successfully intercepted a Grad rocket launched from Gaza for the first time

## Space Technology

### 50 years ago: Man's first flight to space

- The first human spaceflight took place on April 12, 1961, when cosmonaut **Yuri Gagarin** made **one orbit around the Earth** aboard the **Vostok 1 spacecraft**, launched by the Soviet space program and designed by the rocket scientist **Sergey Korolyov**.
- Flight facts:
  1. **Duration-108 minutes**
  2. Space time: 89 minutes
  3. Speed: 27,400 km/hour
  4. Max altitude: 327 km

### **Related info:**

- Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman in space on board Vostok 6 on June 16, 1963.
- Both spacecraft (Vostok 1 and Vostok 6) were launched by Vostok 3KA launch vehicles.
- Alexei Leonov made the first spacewalk when he left the Voskhod 2 on March 8, 1965. Svetlana Savitskaya became the first woman to do so on July 25, 1984.
- The only countries to have independent human spaceflight capability are **Russia, United States and China**.
- As of 2010, human spaceflights are being actively launched by the Soyuz programme conducted by the Russian Federal Space Agency, the Space Shuttle program conducted by NASA, and the Shenzhou program conducted by the China National Space Administration.

### PSLV-C16

- The PSLV-C16 put into orbit three satellites: the ISRO's 1,200-kg **Resourcesat-2**; the 93-kg **Youthsat**, with a payload from Russia and two payloads from India; and the 103-kg **X-Sat** from Nanyang Technological University of Singapore.

### Resourcesat-2

- Resourcesat-2 is a continuation of Resourcesat-1, which was put into orbit on October 17, 2003. Resourcesat-1 is going strong, though it has lasted more than its mission life of five years.
- The images of the Resourcesat-2 will help in monitoring the health of crops, estimating crop yield, keeping a tab on deforestation and locating the groundwater.

### Youthsat

- Indo-Russian Nano satellite (one payload from Russia and two payloads from India)
- Youthsat is meant for studying the effects of the sun on the earth's upper atmosphere.
- Two ISRO payloads in Youthsat are from the Space Physics Laboratory of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, the Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, and the ISRO Satellite Centre, Bangalore.

### X-Sat

- The X-Sat is a technology demonstrator with remote-sensing and communication payloads.
- from Nanyang Technological University of Singapore.

### Glory (satellite)

- The Glory satellite was a planned NASA satellite mission.
- Glory was launched on a three-year mission to analyze how airborne particles (aerosols) affect Earth's climate. Besides monitoring particles in the atmosphere, it was also to track solar radiation to determine the sun's effect on climate change.
- The vast majority of aerosols occurs naturally, spewed into the atmosphere by volcanoes, forest fires and desert storms. Aerosols can also come from manmade sources such as the burning of fossil fuel.
- The satellite was lost on March 4, 2011, when its Taurus XL carrier rocket malfunctioned

### **Day shortened, says NASA**

- The massive earthquake that struck Japan was so powerful that it accelerated the Earth's rotation speed, shortening the length of the day by 1.8 microseconds, according to a new analysis by NASA.

- According to scientists at the U.S. space agency, the 8.9-magnitude quake shifted the way the Earth's mass is distributed, which made the planet spin a little faster, cutting the 24-hour day by an estimated 1.8 microseconds. That is less than two-millionths of one second.
- Initial data suggested the quake moved Japan's main island about eight feet and shifted the Earth's figure axis, around which the Earth's mass is balanced, by about 17 cm, said Richard Gross, a geophysicist at NASA.

### **Supermoon**

- The Moon's distance varies each month between approximately 357,000 (perigee)kilometers and 406,000 km(apogee) due to its elliptical orbit around the Earth .
- Full moon at perigee is 12% larger and brighter than an average full moon. This coincidence is called "supermoon"
- Technical name for a supermoon is the perigee-syzygy of the Earth-Moon-Sun system.
- The supermoon event, occurred on 19 march 2011 was around 14 per cent bigger and 30 per cent brighter than the other normal full moons.
- The phenomenon was special, as the moon came closest to the earth in 18 years.
- The supermoon phenomenon occurred in 1955, 1974, 1992 and 2005.

## **ICT(Information Communication Technology)**

### **Graphene Substitute Known as Silicene Has Been Produced**

- Silicene is a two-dimensional allotrope of silicon, similar to graphene.
- In 2010, researchers have observed for the first time silicon structures that are suggestive of silicene.

Related:

The scientists at the Germany's Max Planck Institute, the Department of Materials Science and Engineering, University of Utah, and Tsinghua University, Beijing have now created a Graphene transistor composed of 13 benzene rings. It has been named as Caronene

### **XBRL**

XBRL (eXtensible Business Reporting Language) is a freely available, market-driven, open, and global standard for exchanging business information.

In news: The ministry of heavy industries and public enterprises plans to adopt the eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) for filing of data by public sector enterprises (PSEs). The finance ministry is considering using the tool for its proposed goods and services tax (GST).

## **Energy and Nuclear Technology**

### **Japan raises severity of nuclear accident**

- The level of the Fukushima crisis was raised to 'seven' on the International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES).
- Fukushima crisis level is now equivalent to worst-case rating as the 1986 Chernobyl disaster.
- Score of 'seven' under the INES framework would imply the occurrence of "a major release of radioactive material, with widespread health and environmental effects, requiring the implementation of planned and extended countermeasures.

### **Background:**

- The International Nuclear and Radiological Event Scale (INES) was introduced in 1990 by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to enable prompt communication of safety significance information in case of nuclear accidents.
- There are 7 levels on the INES scale; 3 incident-levels and 4 accident-levels. There is also a level 0.

- The scale is intended to be logarithmic, similar to the moment magnitude scale that is used to describe the comparative magnitude of earthquakes.
- Each increasing level represents an accident approximately ten times more severe than the previous level.

	People and Environment	Radiological Barriers and Control
7	<i>Chernobyl, 1986</i> — Widespread health and environmental effects. External release of a significant fraction of reactor core inventory.	
6	<i>Kyshtym, Russia, 1957</i> — Significant release of radioactive material to the environment from explosion of a high activity waste tank.	
5	<i>Windscale Pile, UK, 1957</i> — Release of radioactive material to the environment following a fire in a reactor core.	<i>Three Mile Island, USA, 1979</i> — Severe damage to the reactor core.
4	<i>Tokaimura, Japan, 1999</i> — Fatal overexposures of workers following a criticality event at a nuclear facility.	<i>Saint Laurent des Eaux, France, 1980</i> — Melting of one channel of fuel in the reactor with no release outside the site.
3	<i>No example available</i>	<i>Sellafield, UK, 2005</i> — Release of large quantity of radioactive material, contained within the installation.
2	<i>Atucha, Argentina, 2005</i> — Overexposure of a worker at a power reactor exceeding the annual limit.	<i>Cadarache, France, 1993</i> — Spread of contamination to an area not expected by design.
1		



### **Fukushima I nuclear accidents**

- The Fukushima I nuclear accidents are a series of ongoing equipment failures and releases of radioactive materials at the Fukushima I Nuclear Power Plant, following the 9.0 magnitude Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami on 11 March 2011
- The plant comprises six separate boiling water reactors maintained by the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO).
- This accident is the largest of the 2011 Japanese nuclear accidents arising from the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami, and experts consider it to be the second largest nuclear accident after the Chernobyl disaster, but more complex as all reactors are involved.
- At the time of the quake, reactor 4 had been de-fueled while 5 and 6 were in cold shutdown for planned maintenance.
- The remaining reactors shut down automatically after the earthquake, with emergency generators starting

up to run the control electronics and water pumps needed to cool reactors.

- The plant was protected by a seawall designed to withstand a 5.7 m (19 ft) tsunami but not the 14 m (46 ft) maximum wave which arrived 41–60 minutes after the earthquake.
- The entire plant was flooded, including low-lying generators and electrical switchgear in reactor basements and external pumps for supplying cooling seawater.
- The connection to the electrical grid was broken.
- **All power for cooling was lost and reactors started to overheat, due to natural decay of the fission products created before shutdown.**
- The flooding and earthquake damage hindered external assistance.
- Evidence soon arose of partial core meltdown in reactors 1, 2, and 3; hydrogen explosions destroyed the upper cladding of the buildings housing reactors 1, 3, and 4; an explosion damaged the containment inside reactor 2; multiple fires broke out at reactor 4.
- Despite being initially shutdown, reactors 5 and 6 began to overheat.
- Fuel rods stored in pools in each reactor building began to overheat as water levels in the pools dropped.
- Fears of radiation leaks led to a 20 km (12 mi) radius evacuation around the plant while workers suffered radiation exposure and were temporarily evacuated at various times. One generator at unit 6 was restarted on 17 March allowing some cooling at units 5 and 6 which were least damaged. Grid power was restored to parts of the plant on 20 March, but machinery for reactors 1 through 4, damaged by floods, fires and explosions, remained inoperable.
- Flooding with radioactive water through the basements of units 1–4 continues to prevent access to carry out repairs
- Leaked Radiation levels varied widely over time and location, from well below 1 mSv/h to as high as 400 mSv/h.
- Japanese officials initially assessed the accident as level 4 on the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES) despite the views of other international agencies that it should be higher. The INES level was eventually raised successively to 5 and then the maximum 7.

#### **Sievert**

- The sievert (symbol: Sv) is the International System of Units (SI) SI derived unit of dose equivalent radiation. **It attempts to quantitatively evaluate the biological effects of ionizing radiation** as opposed to the physical aspects, which are characterised by the absorbed dose, measured in **gray**. It is named after Rolf Maximilian Sievert, a Swedish medical physicist renowned for work on radiation dosage measurement and research into the biological effects of radiation.

#### **Gray**

- The gray (symbol: Gy) is the SI unit of absorbed radiation dose of ionizing radiation (for example, X-rays), and is defined as the absorption of one joule of ionizing radiation by one kilogram of matter (usually human tissue). Named after the British physicist Louis Harold Gray, the SI unit replaces the traditional cgs unit, the rad (equivalent to 0.01 Gy).

#### **Curie**

The curie (symbol Ci) is a unit of radioactivity. It is named after Marie and Pierre Curie.

Note: Radioactivity was first discovered in 1896 by the French scientist **Henri Becquerel**.

## PRIZES / AWARDS

### World Famous

#### **2011 Abel Prize awarded to John Willard Milnor**

- John Willard Milnor of the Institute for Mathematical Sciences in the University of Stony Brook, U.S.A.
- For his pioneering discoveries in topology, geometry and algebra.

#### **Background:**

The Prize is given in recognition of contributions of extraordinary depth and influence to mathematical sciences and has been awarded annually since 2003. The Prize is named after the great Norwegian mathematical genius, Niels Henrik Abel (1802-29), often compared with the Indian wizard Srinivasa Ramanujan, who died at a very young age of 26.

It has often been described as the "mathematician's Nobel prize" and is among the most prestigious awards in mathematics. It comes with a monetary award of six million Norwegian kroner (approx US\$992,000).

### Literary

#### **Saraswati Samman for Kannada writer**

- Kannada writer S. L. Bhyrappa for his novel Mandra.
- He is one of the bestselling novelists in Kannada over the past 25 years.
- Rs.7.50 lakh, a citation and a plaque.

#### **Bihari Puraskar for Girdhar Rathi**

Noted poet Girdhar Rathi has been selected for the Bihari Puraskar for 2010 for his poetry collection "**Anta Ke Sanshaya**".

#### **Background:**

- The Bihari Puraskar, instituted by the K. K. Birla Foundation in 1991, is only for Rajasthani writers and carries a citation, a plaque and prize money of Rs. 1 lakh.
- Girdhar Rathi was born in Pipariya village of Madhya Pradesh although his ancestral family is from Jaisalmer in Rajasthan

#### **2010 Vyas Samman for Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari**

- Noted Hindi writer Vishwanath Prasad Tiwari has been selected for the prestigious Vyas Samman for 2010 for his collection of poems, **Phir Bhi Kuch Rah Jayega**.
- Tiwari was born in Bherihari village — now the rural region of Kushinagar — in Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh.

#### **Background:**

Past winners

2009 - AMAR KANTH for his book "INHI HATHON SE"

2008: Eminent Hindi author smt. Mannu Bhandari's autobiography Ek Kahani Yah Bhi.

2007- no award

#### **K. K. Birla Foundation**

The K.K. Birla Foundation was established in 1991 by Krishna Kumar Birla. Its mission is to promote literature (especially Hindi literature) and the arts, as well as education and social work. It regularly gets mentioned in the media for the awards it confers, including:

- the Saraswati Samman (Rs7.5 lakh) for prose/poetry work in any Indian language included in Schedule VIII to the Constitution of India (currently-22), published in the past 10 years.
- the Vyas Samman (Rs 2.5 lakh) for prose/poetry work in Hindi,
- the Bihari Puraskar (Rs 1 lakh) for prose/poetry work in Hindi/Rajasthani, only authors from Rajasthan are eligible,
- the Shankar Puraskar (Rs 1.5 lakh) for a work in Hindi concerning Indian philosophy, culture and/or art,
- the Vachaspati Puraskar (Rs 1 lakh) for any work in Sanskrit,
- the G.D. Birla Award for scientific research (Rs 1.5 lakh).

### **Rohinton Mistry in race for Man Booker**

India-born Canadian writer Rohinton Mistry, American master of letters Philip Roth and British 'spy novelist' John le Carré are among the 13 finalists for the £-60,000 Man Booker International Prize.

#### **Background:**

- The Man Booker International Prize is a biennial international literary award given to a living author of any nationality for fiction published in English or generally available in English translation.
- The award, sponsored by the Man Group and established in 2005 to complement the Man Booker Prize, rewards one writer's overall achievement in literature and their significant influence on writers and readers worldwide.
- The award is therefore a recognition of the writer's body of work, rather than any one title.

### **Indu Sharma Katha Samman**

- Indian novelist **Vikas Kumar Jha** has been chosen for the 2011 International Indu Sharma Katha Samman, for his novel 'McCluskieganj' .
- The International Indu Sharma Katha Samman was instituted (by Katha UK )in the memory of poetess and short story writer Indu Sharma who died of cancer in 1995.

## **Nationally Acclaimed**

### **President Confers Gallantry and Distinguished Service Awards**

3-Kirti Chakras

18 -Shaurya Chakras

2- Uttam Yudh Seva Medals

13- Param Vishisht Seva Medals,

27-Ati Vishisht Seva Medals

Captain Deepak Sharma of the Corps of Signals, who lost his life fighting militants in Jammu and Kashmir in March last year, received the Kirti Chakra.

#### **Background:**

Military honors and Decorations in India

Wartime	Param Vir Chakra Maha Vir Chakra Vir Chakra
Peacetime	Ashoka Chakra Kirti Chakra Shaurya Chakra
Wartime / Peacetime Service & Gallantry	Sena Medal (Army) Nao Sena Medal (Navy)

	Vayusena Medal (Air Force)
Wartime Distinguished Service	Sarvottam Yudh Seva Medal Uttam Yudh Seva Medal Yudh Seva Medal
Peacetime Distinguished Service	Param Vishisht Seva Medal Ati Vishisht Seva Medal Vishisht Seva Medal

#### **UIDAI Commences 'Aadhaar Governance Award'**

Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has instituted an 'Aadhaar Governance Award'. The award is instituted to acknowledge, recognise and reward the extraordinary and innovative work done by District Collectors/Deputy Commissioners in using the Aadhaar number to improve the service delivery in their respective districts for more transparent, efficient and effective governance.

#### **'Nirmal Gram Puraskar'(NGP) 2010**

- Only 2,808 gram panchayats and just one block panchayat have been chosen for the 2010 award
- the number of awards has been falling drastically since the last two years, after reaching the peak in 2008 when 12,144 panchayats, 112 blocks and eight zila parishads bagged the awards.
- Sikkim has been the first Nirmal State in the country having achieved full sanitation coverage.
- Maharashtra is the biggest beneficiary during the 2010 awards with 694 panchayats set to get the reward, followed by Madhya Pradesh at 344, Haryana at 259 and Tamil Nadu at 237.

#### **Background:**

- Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) is a comprehensive programme to ensure sanitation facilities in rural areas with the broader goal to eradicate the practice of open defecation. To add vigour to the TSC, in October 2003, Government of India initiated an incentive scheme named the 'Nirmal Gram Puraskar'(NGP). NGP is given to those "open defecation free" Nirmal Gram Panchayats, Blocks, and Districts which have become fully sanitized. The incentive provision is for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as well as individuals and organizations that are the driving force for full sanitation coverage.
- A "Nirmal Gram" is an "Open Defecation Free" village where all houses, Schools and Anganwadis having sanitary toilets and awareness amongst community on the importance of maintaining personal and community hygiene and clean environment.
- The concept of Nirmal Gram Puraskar has been acclaimed internationally as a unique tool of social engineering and community mobilization and has helped a difficult program like rural sanitation to pick up. After TSC was launched in 1999, average coverage between 2001 to 2004 rose to 3% annually. After NGP was launched in 2004, the average coverage has gone up by about 7-8% every year.
- Each Gram Panchayat getting the NGP has been creating ripple effect in the surrounding villages.
- The rewards range from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 5 lakh for gram panchayats, depending upon their population. In the case of blocks, it varies from Rs. 10 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh, while for the zila parishads it ranges from Rs. 30 lakh to Rs. 50 lakh.

#### **Women and Child Development Ministry Presented 'Stree Shakti Puraskar' 2010 on International Women's Day**

Rani Lakshmi Bai Award	Mrs. Pottabathini Padmavathi from Andhra Pradesh, who did not allow her disability to become an adversity and faced the challenge positively to learn music and become an established artist.
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Kannagi Award	Mrs Thagu Maya Bardewa from Sikkim, who has done great work helping people in distress, orphans, widows and destitutes.
Rani Gaidinliu Zeliang Award	Mrs. Rathnamma from Karnataka, for her extensive work for awareness generation on child labour and eradication of dowry, early marriage, untouchability and sexual harassment.
Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Award	Mrs. Monika S. Garg an officer of the 1989 batch of Indian Administrative service from Uttar Pradesh for her outstanding work for empowerment of women through promoting their participation in Government Programmes.

**Note:** The Mata Jijabai and Rani Rudrama devi awards were not awarded to anyone this year.

### **STREE SHAKTI PURASKAR**

As a measure of recognition of achievements of individual women in the field of social development, the Government of India has instituted six national awards which are to be called Stree Shakti Puraskar. These awards are in the name of the following eminent women personalities in the Indian history who are famous for their personal courage and integrity:-

1. Devi Ahilya Bai Holkar
2. Kanngi
3. Mata Jijabai
4. Rani Gaidenlou Zehang
5. Rani lakshmi Bai
6. Rani Rudramma Devi (For Both men & women)

The award will carry a cash prize of Rs.1 lakh and a citation. The awards will be given to women who have triumphed over difficult circumstances and have fought for and established the rights of women in various fields. It is envisaged that women who have worked for the support and rehabilitation of women and children in especially difficult circumstances such as destitute women, widows, old aged and disabled women and victims of atrocities and conflicts would be awarded. Also, achievements of women who have worked in the areas of education, health, agriculture and rural industry, protection of forests and environment and those who have created awareness and consciousness on women's issues through arts and media would be recognized and awarded by the Government.

One of the awards will be given towards recognition of personal achievements by a woman in difficult circumstances.

### **National Tourism Award 2009-10**

To promote excellence and recognize the efforts put in by various stakeholders in development and promotion of India Tourism, this Ministry has instituted National Tourism Awards. Some important awardees are

- Best State- Madhya Pradesh (Rest of India), J&K (NE and J&K)
- Best Civic Management of a Destination- Municipal Corporation of Khajuraho
- Tourist Friendly Railway Station: New Delhi Railway Station
- Best Rural Tourism Project: Bhootgarh Rural Tourism Project, Punjab
- Best Maintained and Disabled Friendly Monument: Red Fort Complex, Delhi, ASI Delhi Circle

## Journalism, Film and Television, Beauty contest etc

### Nisha Rajagopal, first recipient of The Hindu Saregama M.S. Subbulakshmi Award

- Carnatic vocalist
- An engineer by training

(details: see old notes)

### Femina Miss India 2011

Miss India World 2011 Kanishtha Dhankhar;

Miss India Earth 2011 Hasleen Kaur;

and Miss India International 2011 Ankita Shorey

### 2011 Pulitzer Prize

- **The Los Angeles Times won two prizes, including the highest honor for Public Service.**
- The New York Times also won two awards.
- No prize was handed out in the Breaking News category.
- The Wall Street Journal won an award for the first time since 2007.
- Jennifer Egan's A Visit From the Goon Squad picked up the Fiction prize after already winning the 2010 National Book Critics Circle Award.
- Photographer Carol Guzy of The Washington Post became the first journalist to win four Pulitzer Prizes.
- **Special: Indian-American physician Siddhartha Mukherjee's acclaimed book on cancer, The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer, has won the prestigious 2011 Pulitzer Prize in the general non-fiction category.**

### **Background:**

- The Pulitzer Prize is a U.S. award for achievements in newspaper and online journalism, literature and musical composition. It was established by Jewish-American publisher Joseph Pulitzer and is administered by Columbia University in New York City.
- Prizes are awarded yearly in twenty-one categories. In twenty of these, each winner receives a certificate and a US\$10,000 cash award.
- The winner in the public service category of the journalism competition is awarded a gold medal, which always goes to a newspaper, although an individual may be named in the citation.

### Dadasaheb Phalke Award to K. Balachander

- the veteran film maker, has been conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2010.
- The award consists of a Swarn Kamal, a cash prize of Rs.10 lakhs and a shawl.
- Shri K. Balachander has been film director, screen play writer and producer for more than 45 years. He has written, directed and produced more than 100 films in Tamil, Telugu, Hindi and Kannada.
- The films he scripts and directs analyze unusual or complicated inter-personal relationships and social themes.
- He has been responsible for bringing into limelight many stars of the present day, including Rajnikanth, Kamal Haasan, Prakashraaj and Vivek.
- He entered the film industry in 1965 and shot into fame with his very first film 'Neerkumizhi' starring Nagesh.
- He was conferred the Padma Shri in 1987.

### Chameli Devi Jain award for "Outstanding Woman Media Person"

- 'Open magazine' correspondent Shahina K.K.
- a former Tehelka correspondent from Thiruvananthapuram

## Miscellaneous

### National Panchayat Diwas Awards

#### Panchayat Empowerment & Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) - Assessment of the States for 2010-2011

- Panchayat Empowerment Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) was implemented by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) in 2005-06 to motivate states to empower the Panchayats by devolving Funds, functions and functionaries (3Fs).
- The scheme aims at encouraging the States for empowering the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and putting in place mechanism for transparency and accountability of the PRIs.
- Performance of the States in these respects is measured through a Devolution Index (DI) formulated by an independent institution.
- A token award is also given to the States, for which the annual provision is currently at Rs. 10 crore.

This year in addition to the cumulative achievement of the state, the DI study also took into account incremental achievement since 1st April 2009. For 2010-11, the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi was engaged for the task of preparation of DI and ranking the States.

### e Panchayat Puraskar 2011

Started: 2011

Objective: to appreciate the excellent achievement of various States in the implementation of Model Accounting system for Panchayats (MAS) and PRIA Soft.

prize money: 50 lakh, 30 lakh and 20 lakh (to be utilised for further strengthening / development of MAS/ PRIA Soft initiative in the state)

	STATE	PRIZE	PRIZE MONEY
1	ODISHA STATE	FIRST PRIZE	RS 50 LAKHS
2	MAHARASHTRA	SECOND PRIZE	RS 30 LAKHS
2	TRIPURA	SECOND PRIZE	RS. 30 LAKHS
3	PUNJAB	THIRD PRIZE	RS 20 LAKH
53	ASSAM	THIRD PRIZE	RS. 20 LAKHS

### Rashtryira Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar 2011

[National level Awards for Best Gram Sabhas]

Objective: to incentivise excellence in performance of Gram Panchayats through effective gram sabhas.

prize money: 10 Lakhs (will be utilized by the Panchayats for public purposes)

Special: three women sarpanch this year

S.No.	Name of the District	Name of the Gram Panchayat/ Gram Sabha Nominated	State	Name of the Sarpanch(recipient of the Award)
1	Belgaum	Shiraguppi	Karnataka	Sri VineshIragoudaPatil
2	South Goa	KirlapalDabal	Goa	Shri Rama Sonugaonkar
3	Rajkot	Depaliya	Gujarat	<b>SmtRasilabenDalsaniya</b>

4	Rohtak	Assan	Haryana	Shri Raj Singh
5	Jalgaon	Chahardi	Maharashtra	<b>Smt. SangitabaiKoli</b>
6	Ajmer	Aradaka	Rajasthan	<b>SmtRaheesaKhatoon</b>
7	South District	Mellidara-Paiyong	Sikkim	Shri Ganesh Rahi

**Mauritian honour for Maldives' Nasheed**

- Mauritius has conferred one of its highest honours, Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and the Key of the Indian Ocean (GCSK), on Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed.
- Among the few foreign dignitaries who had been conferred the award are the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, and the former President of Guyana, Cheddi Jagan. [reported by Hindu but not confirmed]

**Background:**

- The Most Distinguished Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean is the highest distinct order of merit in Mauritius. It was founded in 2000 to decorate people who have made a contribution to social progress in the nations of the Indian Ocean. It may be awarded to non-Mauritian citizens.
- The Order comprises five classes with GCSK being highest class.

**FM Presents Awards to Winners of National Architectural Design Competition for Rajaswa Bhawan**

The first prize of Rs. 10 Lakhs was awarded to Architect Shri Siddharth Shirur of M/s Vistaar Architects & Planners of Mumbai. The second prize of Rs. 5 Lakhs has been awarded to Architect Shri S. R. Sikka of M/s Sikka Associates while the third prize of Rs. 3 Lakhs has been given to the entry submitted by Architect Shri Manit Rastogi of M/s Morphogenesis. Three consolation prizes of 1 lakh each were received by Architect Shri Nishant Lall of M/s Sen & Lall Consultants Pvt. Ltd., Architect Shri Sanjay Nayak of M/s Edifice Consultants Pvt. Ltd. and Architect Shri Virender Khanna of M/s Virender Khanna Associates respectively. The winning entries were chosen by a panel of jurors, from a total of 58 participants from all over the country.

**DST(Department of Science and Technology)- Lockheed Martin India Innovation Growth Programme 2011 : Innovators' Competition and Awards Function**

The innovators were selected for their unique technology ideas that can be converted to commercial ventures in diverse fields such as environment, power, telecommunications, etc

## COMMITTEES

### **Committee to Review the Role, Functioning and Structure of CEIB Constituted**

Background:

The Government of India is determined to fight all economic crimes. For this purpose, the Government of India has set up the following Investigating Agencies which function under the Department of Revenue in Union Ministry of Finance:-

1. The Central Economic Intelligence Bureau (**Apex Intelligence & Co-ordinating body**)
2. Directorate General of Revenue Intelligence (for Customs related offences)
3. Directorate of Enforcement (for Foreign Exchange related offences)
4. Directorate General of Central Excise Intelligence (for Central Excise related offences)
5. Directorate General of Income Tax (Investigation) (for Income Tax related offences)
6. Narcotics Control Bureau (for Drugs related offences)

### **Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission**

- The Central Government has constituted the Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC) under the chairmanship of former Justice B. N. Srikrishna to rewrite and harmonise financial sector legislations, rules and regulations.
- The commission has been set up in pursuance of Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee's budget announcement last year.
- Apart from Justice Srikrishna as the head, other members of the 11-member commission include former PFRDA Chairman D. Swarup, former Axis Bank chief P. J. Nayak and PMEAC member M. Govinda Rao. Headquartered in Delhi, the commission is to hold its first meeting on April 5 and submit its report to the Finance Minister within 24 months.
- As for the terms of reference, the commission will examine the architecture of the legislative and regulatory system governing the financial sector in the country and also look at the most appropriate means of oversight over regulators and their autonomy from the government.
- There are over 60 Acts and multiple rules and regulations dealing with the financial sector and many of them have become archaic.

### **B. K. Chaturvedi committee on Devas S-band deal submits its report**

The committee, constituted by PM, consisting of the former Cabinet Secretary, B.K. Chaturvedi, and Professor Roddam Narasimha, was asked to go into all aspects of the satellite deal.

#### **Related info:**

- The Committee headed by Sh. B.K. Chaturvedi Committee, looking into the issues pertaining to the development of National Highways has submitted its second report to the Government.
- B.K. Chaturvedi is Planning Commission member and former Cabinet Secretary.

### **New steps in National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC)**

- To reduce the pendency of cases thirteen cities across the country have been notified by the Govt. where NCDRC can hold Circuit Benches .
- The number of Members of the Commission has been increased from 5 to 9 enabling the Commission to set up 5 Benches.
- Further 2 additional posts of Members have been created for a period of five years for setting up an additional Bench to clear backlog of cases in NCDRC.
- The Government is implementing an important scheme CONFONET to make the Consumer Fora more efficient, transparent and systematic in their functioning. This project for Computerization & Computer Networking of Consumer Fora in the country is being executed on a turnkey basis by the National Informatics Centre.
- Under this scheme, the consumer fora at all the three tiers would be fully computerized and inter-connected

enabling them to access information leading to quicker disposal of cases.

- With the implementation of this scheme consumers across the country will be able to file complaints online and can also find out the status of the case on the website.
- Out of 35 State Commissions and 607 District Fora, 34 State Commissions and 593 District Fora have been covered under this project so far.
- Similarly, Government has another scheme titled 'Strengthening of Consumer Fora' where financial assistance is being extended to States/UTs to supplement their efforts in strengthening infrastructure of the Consumer Fora.

**Background:**

**National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission(NCDRC)**

- As per provisions of Consumer Protection Act, 1986 .
- To provide inexpensive, speedy and summary redressal of consumer disputes, quasi-judicial bodies have been set up in each District and State and at the national level, called the District Forums, the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions and the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission respectively. At present, there are 604 District Forums and 34 State Commissions with the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) at the apex.
- Each District Forum is headed by a person who is or has been or is eligible to be appointed as a District Judge and each State Commission is headed by a person who is or has been a Judge of High Court.
- The National Commission was constituted in the year 1988. It is headed by a sitting or retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India.
- A written complaint, can be filed before the District Consumer Forum for pecuniary value of upto Rupees twenty lakh, State Commission for value upto Rupees one crore and the National Commission for value above Rupees one crore, in respect of defects in goods and or deficiency in service.
- The service can be of any description and the illustrations given above are only indicative. However, no complaint can be filed for alleged deficiency in any service that is rendered free of charge or under a contract of personal service.

**Wadhwa Committee's tenure extended**

The Supreme Court extended by six months the tenure of the Justice Wadhwa Committee formed to probe the issues in the Public Distribution System.

**Background:**

Pursuant to the order dated 12th July, 2006 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in Writ Petition (C) No.196 of 2001, "People's Union for Civil Liberties vs. Union of India and Ors"., the Government of India, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Food) vide Notification No.6-1(Accommodation)/2006-BP-II dated 01.12.2006 has constituted a Central Vigilance Committee under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Mr. Justice D.P. Wadhwa, a former Judge of the Supreme Court of India, to be assisted by Dr. N.C. Saxena, the Commissioner earlier appointed by the Supreme Court, to look into the maladies affecting the proper functioning of the Public Distribution System and also suggest remedial measures.

## SCHEMES /PROGRAMMES / POLICIES

**Girls Corner more Post-Matric Scholarships than boys under the Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme of The Ministry of Minority Affairs during 2010-11**

**More than 48 % of the Scholarships Granted during 2010-11 under the Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme of the Ministry of Minority Affairs Went to Girl Students**

	eligibility	2010-11	started	cumulative Total (upto 31.3.2011)	Target (2011-12)
Post-matric Scholarship Scheme	students of class XI up to Ph.D. belonging to the Minority communities. (annual family income- 2 Lakh)	5.25 lakh (51% girls)	2007-8	11.08 lakh	4.50 lakh fresh
Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme	class I to class X (annual family income- 1 Lakh)	44.21 lakh (48% girls)	2008-09	66.63 lakh	27 lakhs
Merit cum means based scholarship to students belonging to minority communities [in news: Student Module of the Online Scholarship Management System ]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to pursue professional and technical courses</li> <li>• 20000 scholarships (Based on the state-wise population) (annual family income- 2.5 Lakh)</li> </ul>	41,056 (19,518-fresh and 21,538-renewals ) (34.29% girls)	2007-08	1,20,491	20,000

- All three schemes are part of Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities.
- As per the general guidelines for the Post-matric Scholarship Scheme, 30% Scholarships are reserved for the girl students.

**Union HRD Minister Chairs first Meeting of National Mission of RMSA**

Background:

**Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)**

The programme was launched in March, 2009 as part of the Central Government's commitment to make secondary education of good quality available, accessible and affordable to all young persons.

The objective of the Scheme is:

- to achieve a General Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 75% for classes IX-X within 5 years by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of every habitation;
- to improve quality of education imparted at secondary level through making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms;
- to remove gender, socio-economic and disability barriers, Universal access to secondary level education by 2017, i.e. by the end of 12th Five Year Plan and Universal retention by 2020.

**Funding:** As regards the Financing pattern and fund flow, Union Government shall bear 75% of the project expenditure during the 11th Five Year Plan, with 25% of the cost to be borne by State Governments. Sharing pattern will be 50:50 for the 12th five year plan. For both the 11th and 12th Plans, funding pattern will be 90:10 for North Eastern States.

### Scheme for National Rollout of e-District Mission Mode Project

Scheme of National Rollout of e-District Mission Mode Project to be implemented in all 640 districts (including the 41 districts where e-District Pilot Projects have already been initiated) of the country for a period of 4 years.

#### **Background**

- National e Governance Plan (NeGP) was approved by the Government in May **2006**, with the following vision: "Make all Government Services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man".
- To realize this vision, **27 Central, State and Integrated Mission Mode projects (MMPs)** along with 8 support components were identified and approved under NeGP. States have the flexibility to identify upto 5 additional state-specific projects, which are particularly relevant for the economic development of the State. NeGP also envisages creation of the core IT infrastructure in the form of State Wide Area Networks (SWANs), State Data Centres (SDCs) State Service Delivery Gateways (SSDGs) and one lakh Front Ends namely Common Services Centres (CSCs), in rural areas across the country to deliver public services electronically.
- **e-District is one of the 27 MMPs under NeGP**, with the Department of Information Technology (DIT), Government of India as the nodal Department, to be implemented by State Government or their designated agencies. The MMP aims at electronic delivery of identified high volume citizen centric services, at such district and sub-district level, which are not part of any other MMP.
- The estimated total project cost for the nation-wide rollout of e-District MMP is Rs 1663.08 crore, out of which Government of India's share is estimated to be Rs 1233.08 crore and States' share Rs 430 crore.
- Citizens will be able to access Government to Citizen (G2C) services close to their houses through Common Service Centers (CSCs) in an integrated manner. Service delivery of G2C services will be responsive, transparent and accountable at Districts and Sub-District offices.
- Citizens will have to travel less distance, make less trips to Government offices and also will have to wait for much less time to get these services delivered to them. Citizen will also be able to track on line the progress of the application/request.
- Offices and Sub-Offices of district administration will get modernized and Government processes automated which will ultimately empower the citizens.
- [in news: The Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure has approved the project]

### Iron fortified Iodized Salt to be Promoted to battle Malnutrition in the Country

[A meeting was held in the Prime Minister's Office]

The following points were noted and discussed :

i. The prevalence of anaemia in majority of India's population, particularly among adolescent girls, women and children, is a major public health challenge and it should be tackled urgently. **Anaemia is caused by inadequate intake and poor absorption of iron.** Anaemia can be prevented and cured by promoting consumption of iron rich foods and iron supplements. **One cost effective way of increasing the intake of iron is fortification of salt with iron in addition to iodine.**

ii. The **National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad**, has developed technologies for the double fortification of salt with iodine and iron. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has issued gazette notification prescribing the legal

standard for double fortified salt. The NIN has also shared the technology with some of the salt manufacturers by signing MoU with them.

iii. Before moving towards mandatory double fortification of salt, which is a desirable goal to aspire for in future, Government, may promote the consumption and production of DFS through effective communication campaign, mandating its use in Government sponsored food and nutrition programmes like ICDS, Mid-day-Meals, etc., and by supplying DFS through the Public Distribution System. The Government could also encourage salt manufacturers to invest in technology by making a clear policy statement about the Government's intent of promoting the use of DFS.

Actions on the following lines were agreed upon:

a) To begin with, Ministries dealing with food and nutrition programmes like ICDS and Midday Meal Programme will make the use of iron fortified iodized salt (double fortified salt) mandatory in those programmes, in an appropriate manner;

b) The Dept. of Food & Public Distribution will examine the possibility of supplying DFS through the PDS;

c) A major mass media campaign will be taken up to promote the use of iron fortified iodized salt (DFS) by the Ministries of Women and Child Development and Health & Family Welfare;

d) The communication campaign and the decision to use DFS in Government programmes needs to be associated with efforts to increase the supply of DFS in the country. The Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion will work with the private industry and cooperatives to promote manufacture of iron fortified iodized salt (DFS). The Department will also explore the possibility of taking up a scheme to promote capital investment and technology upgradation so that the installed capacity for producing iron fortified iodized salt (DFS) in the country is substantially stepped up.

e) The Departments of Health and Family Welfare and Health Research under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will take necessary measures for promoting the use of DFS in the country, including advising the Ministries of Women and Child Development, Human Resource Development and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on use of DFS in Government programmes.

**[The Hindu: Double fortified salt mandatory in midday meal]**

#### **Setting up of National Mission for Electric Mobility**

- The Cabinet approved a proposal for setting up a council to promote electric mobility and manufacture of electric vehicles. The National Council for Electric Mobility (NCEM) will be the apex body in the Union government for making recommendations in these matters.
- The meeting also cleared the setting up of a National Board for Electric Mobility (NBEM) under the Department of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises. The National Automotive Board (NAB) after its formation will be the technical adviser and secretariat for both the NCEM and the NBEM.
- The government is taking up promotion and manufacturing of electric vehicles in mission mode: 'National Mission for Electric Mobility.'
- "As a first step, an enabling, empowered, fast decision and policy making structure at the apex level in the form of the NCEM and the NBEM is being set up. The NCEM will comprise Ministers from the key Central Ministries and departments, eminent representatives from industry and the academia, and will be chaired by the Minister [Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises]."
- The NCEM will be aided by the 25-member NBEM, comprising the Secretaries of stakeholder Central Ministries and departments with representation from industry and the academia.

- Background :
- In wake of the fast dwindling petroleum resources, growing concerns on the impact of vehicles on the environment and climate change; the automobile industry worldwide is gradually shifting to more efficient drive technologies and alternative fuels including electric vehicles. Accordingly, world over major investments, incentives and policies are being introduced to propagate the development, adoption of electric vehicles (EV) and their manufacturing.
- At present, the barriers to greater adoption of Electric Vehicles (EVs) include higher cost of EVs, challenges in battery technology, limited range of EVs, lack of infrastructure, consumer mindset and inadequate government support.

#### **Black Carbon Research Initiative launched under National Carbonaceous Aerosols Programme (NCAP)**

'Black Carbon Research Initiative - Science Plan' of the National Carbonaceous Aerosols Programme being devised under the aegis of the Indian Network of Climate Change Assessment (INCCA) that was launched last year. The issue of 'black carbon' and its relationship with climate change has gained enormous scientific and popular interest over the last few years.

The knowledge and understanding on aspects such as vertical distribution and mixing of Black Carbon with other aerosols, effects of cloud cover and monsoon still remains uncertain and incomplete. There is thus a need to have better understanding on the following science questions:

- The contribution of black carbon aerosols to regional warming.
- Role of black carbon on atmospheric stability and the consequent effect on cloud formation and monsoon.
- Role of black carbon in altering the ability of hygroscopic aerosols to act as cloud condensation nuclei.
- Role of BC-Induced low-level temperature inversions and their role in formation of fog especially over northern India.
- Role of black carbon on Himalayan glacier retreat.

The Black Carbon research initiative builds on this approach and sets out the science program and to respond to the scientific questions. The science plan has been developed through an intensive consultative process and with the involvement of experts in the subject and builds upon the work of ISRO, MoES and other experts. The initiative is visualised as an ambitious programme with the involvement of over 101 institutions with 60 observatories nationwide. The study would lead to:

- Long-term monitoring of aerosols
- Monitoring of impact of BC on snow and
- Estimating magnitude of BC sources using inventory (bottom-up) and inverse modelling (top-down) approaches,
- Modelling BC atmospheric transport and climate impact.

#### **INCCA**

- Network for Climate Change Assessment (INCCA) was launched in October 2009.
- It is a network of over 125 R&D institutions countrywide to publish peer-reviewed findings on climate change in India..
- Under the aegis of INCCA, two national level assessments have already been published, one in May 2010 on Greenhouse Gas Emissions 2007 and the other, a 4x4 Climate Change Impact Assessment in November 2010, for 4 climate sensitive regions of India for 4 sectors – Agriculture, Water, Forests and Health.

#### **Aerosols**

Aerosols are suspended particulates in the atmosphere and have implications for climate and health

through different mechanisms. Several studies have suggested that aerosols may be mitigating global warming by increasing the planetary albedo, although the sign and magnitude of aerosol effects on climate are still uncertain as outlined in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports.

### **Black carbon**

Black carbon (BC) is the result of incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, biofuel, and biomass. It consists of elemental carbon in several forms. Black carbon warms the atmosphere due to its absorption and by reducing albedo when deposited on snow and ice. Life time of black carbon in the atmosphere is only a few days to weeks compared to CO<sub>2</sub>, which has an atmospheric lifetime of more than 100 years.

In addition to exerting its own radiative impact, black carbon aerosol can substantially contaminate other aerosol species, thereby altering the radiative properties of the entire aerosol system and in fact their ability to act as cloud condensation nuclei.

### **Green India Mission(GIM)**

- The National Mission for a Green India is one of the eight Missions under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)
- The target is to increase 5m ha of forest and non-forest land and improve quality of forest cover on another 5m ha of non-forest lands. Over next ten years it will be 10 m ha.

### **PROGRESS Under PMEYSA**

- Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) was launched in the year 2007. The Scheme has two components namely, Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan and Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan.
- Aims of PMEYSA are to organize the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) in a network and through group action to empower themselves, so that both their participation and representation on local governance issues improves.

## REPORTS

### International

#### **Gallup's 2010 global well-being surveys: India placed 71**

- The surveys asked people to rate themselves on a ladder with steps labelled 0 to 10.
- People who rate their current lives a 7 or higher and say they expect their lives in five years to be an 8 or higher are considered to be thriving.
- Those who rate their lives between 4 or less are considered "suffering", while "struggling" respondents fall between the two groups.
- majority of Indians (64 per cent) believe they are "struggling" while 19 per cent think they are "suffering".
- Denmark-1
- Bangladesh-89
- Sri Lanka-114

### National

#### **Declare Higher Education as a National Mission for the Next Decade: SAC-PM**

- submitted a 10-point checklist covering various issues.
- The council suggested reviewing the system of final, entrance, qualifying and selection examinations.
- The council said students suffer so much in an effort to succeed in these entrance examinations, that they lose the excitement in education itself during the process.
- Background:
- 28-member Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (SAC-PM) headed by chemical scientist, C.N.R. Rao was constituted in 2005.

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## SUMMITS / CONFERENCE

### 2011 BRICS summit

**Place:** Sanya on the island of Hainan, China

**Date:** 14 April 2011

**BRIC to BRICS:** Following a meeting in Brasilia in 2010, to which South Africa was invited as a guest, the group invited South Africa to join as a full member in 2011 and the group formerly called BRIC officially became BRICS.

**Theme:** "Broad Vision, Shared Prosperity."

#### **Outcome:**

- China was lobbied by the other leaders to import not only commodities but also value added products and other commodities such as oil, soybeans and iron ore.
- Brazil and India also pressed China to buy such goods as Brazilian aircraft and Indian pharmaceuticals; the two states also complained about the artificially undervalued yuan that they claimed was undermining their exports.
- All five countries also called for an early conclusion to deadlocked talks on anti-terror law under UN auspices that would curtail funding for illegal groups that partake in violence against states and deny their supporters access to funds, arms, and safe havens.
- All BRICS countries called for "comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council."
- China said it would endorse the aspirations of India, Brazil and South Africa for permanent membership of the UNSC.
- Coincidentally, the five countries are all now members of the Security Council, China and Russia as permanent members and the other three non-permanent.
- The 5 BRICS countries will henceforth give credits to one another in their national currencies solely.
- The leaders of BRICS states expressed misgivings about NATO air strikes and urged an end to the two-month conflict in Libya.

#### **Background:**

	<b>Summit Participant</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Host country</b>	<b>Host leader</b>	<b>Location</b>
1st	BRIC	June 16, 2009	Russia	Dmitry Medvedev	Yekaterinburg
2nd	BRIC	April 16, 2010	Brazil	Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva	Brasília
3rd	BRICS	April 14, 2011	China	Hu Jintao	Sanya
4th*	BRICS	2012	India	Manmohan Singh	New Delhi

### International Renewable Energy agency-IRENA meeting

- Held at **Abu Dhabi**, UAE (interim headquarter of the agency)
- The **world's first intergovernmental agency on renewable energy** was established in **2009** with the main objective of fostering international cooperation and promoting international understanding on renewable energy.
- India has been associated with the formation of IRENA from the beginning and was among the first 25 countries to ratify its statute.
- Its statute entered into force on 8 July 2010.
- To Date 148 states and the European Union signed the Statute of the Agency.
- On 4 April 2011, **Adnan Amin was sworn in as the first Director-General.**

#### **Related info:**

- India today stands among the **top five countries of the world in terms of renewable energy capacity** with an installed base of over **19000 MW of grid interactive** renewable power which is around **11% of our total** installed capacity.
- In addition, it adds about 2500 MW of renewable power annually

#### **Fourth Ministerial Consultation of Colombo Process**

- Held in Dhaka

#### **Background:**

- The Colombo Process is a Regional Consultative Process on the management of overseas employment and contractual labour for countries of origins in Asia.
- According to best estimates, over 2.5 million Asian workers leave their countries every year under contract to work abroad.
- The ten initial participating states - Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam - made recommendations for the effective management of overseas employment programmes and agreed to regular follow-up meetings.

1st	2003- Colombo, Sri Lanka
2nd	2004- Manila, Philippines
3rd	3005-Bali, Indonesia

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## NATIONAL NEWS

### Polity and Governance

#### **National Panchayat Diwas (24th April)**

- **why:** function organised to mark the enactment of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 from 24th April, 1993 which institutionalized Panchayati Raj through the Village, Intermediate and District levels Panchayats.
- Theme: "Roadmap for the Panchayati Raj (2011-16) : An All India Perspective with focus on Gram Sabha"
- the Ministry of Panchayati Raj had observed the "Year of the Gram Sabha" , from 2nd October 2009 to 2nd October 2010.

#### **Cease Fire Agreement with NSCN (K) Extended by One Year**

A Ceasefire is in operation between Government of India and National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) (NSCN/K) since 28.04.2001.

#### **Assam Rifles Celebrates 176th Anniversary**

- Started: 1835 as 'Cachar Levy'
- Assam Rifles is the only para-military force to have taken part in both the World Wars and all operations in Independent India

#### **Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology Commemorates Golden Jubilee Celebration**

Commission for Scientific and Technical Terminology was set up on 1st October, 1961 by a resolution of Government of India, Ministry of Education

#### **Vice President Dwelt Upon the Working of Three Language Formula in the Country**

while in the non-Hindi speaking States, students learn Hindi either a second or third language, the same is not happening in Hindi speaking States.

Background:

#### **Three Language Formula**

- This Formula as enunciated in the National Policy Resolution of 1968 and reiterated in the National Policy on Education 1986 provides Hindi, English and modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in the Hindi speaking states and Hindi, English and the Regional language in the non-Hindi speaking States.
- But most of the north Indian states selected Sanskrit as third language.

#### **MPLAD Scheme**

Increase in Allocation under MPLAD Scheme from Rs.2 Crore to Rs.5 Crore Per Member.

Note: The nodal ministry for MPLAD scheme is ministry of statistics and programme implementation.

#### **UPSC**

UPSC and Canada Public Service Commission Sign MoU to Promote Best Practices

### ***Defence***

#### **Territorial Army**

- It is an organization of volunteers who receive military training for a few days in a year so that in case of an emergency they can be mobilized for the defence of the country.
- It is a second line of defense after the Regular Indian Army; the Indian Territorial Army is not a profession, occupation or a source of employment. It is only meant for those people who are already in mainstay civilian

professions, in fact, gainful employment or self-employment in a civil profession is a pre-requisite for joining the Territorial Army.

- The Territorial Army was raised by the Britishers in 1920 through Indian Territorial Act of 1920.
- After Independence Territorial Army Act was passed in 1948 and the Territorial Army was formally inaugurated by the first Indian Governor General Shri C Rajagopalachari on 09 Oct 1949.
- Over the past few years, actor Mohanlal and the former India cricket captain, Kapil Dev, were granted honorary rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Territorial Army while the Indian Air Force accorded honorary rank of Group Captain to Sachin Tendulkar last year.

**In news:** Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni would soon become the latest high profile celebrity to get an honorary commission in the Territorial Army.

#### **'Hall of Fame' of US Army War College**

General VK Singh becomes the first Indian Officer to be inducted into the 'Hall of Fame' of US Army War College, Carlisle, USA, on 11 Mar 2011. This distinction is extended by the US Army, to all officers from friendly foreign countries, who rise to the post of 'Chief' of their respective Armies, after attending the coveted Course at US Army War College.

#### **Armed Forces Tribunal**

- Armed Forces Tribunal has been established with its Principal Bench at Delhi and Regional Benches at seven locations, namely, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Lucknow, Guwahati, Kolkata, Chennai and Kochi. It has also been decided to set up another Bench at Mumbai.
- The provision for Circuit Benches in the scheme of AFT is expected to take care of any problems relating to accessibility of the Tribunals to the Servicemen and Ex-servicemen.

#### **Miscellaneous**

##### **Government Issues Notification to Constitute a Joint Drafting Committee to Prepare Draft Lok Pal Bill**

The Joint Drafting Committee shall consist of Five nominee Ministers of the Government of India and Five nominees of Shri Anna Hazare (including himself).

The five nominee Ministers of the Government of India are as under:-

- (i) Shri Pranab Mukherjee, (Chairperson )  
Union Minister of Finance.
- (ii) Shri P. Chidambaram,  
Union Minister of Home Affairs.(Convenor )
- (iii) Dr Veerappa Moily,  
Union Minister of Law and Justice.
- (iv) Shri Kapil Sibal,  
Union Minister of Human Resource and Development and  
Minister of Communication and Information Technology
- (v) Shri Salman Khursheed,  
Union Minister of Water Resources and  
Minister of Minority Affairs

The five nominees of Shri Anna Hazare (including himself) are as under:-

- (i) Shri Anna Hazare
- (ii) Shri Justice N. Santosh Hedge
- (iii) Shri Shanti Bhushan, Senior Advocate (Co-Chairperson )
- (iv) Shri Prashant Bhushan, Advocate
- (v) Shri Arvind Kejriwal.

Committee shall evolve its own procedure to prepare draft.

Committee shall complete its work latest by **30th June, 2011**.

**Background:**

- The Lokpal Bill provides for filing complaints of corruption against the prime minister, other ministers, and MPs with the ombudsman.
- The First Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC)(initially Chaired by Morarji R Desai, MP, and later on K.Hanumanthaiah) while recommending the constitution of Lokpal was convinced that such an institution was justified not only for removing the sense of injustice from the minds of adversely affected citizens but also necessary to instill public confidence in the efficiency of administrative machinery.
- Following this, the Lokpal Bill was for the first time presented during the fourth Lok Sabha in 1968, and was passed there in 1969.
- However, while it was pending in the Rajya Sabha, the Lok Sabha was dissolved so the bill was not passed at that time.
- The bill was revived in 1971, 1977, 1985, 1989, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2005 and most recently in 2008.

**Attempt by different governments:**

- There were two attempts by Mrs. Indira Gandhi to bring this bill into law in 1968 and 1971. They met failures due to dissolution of Lok Sabha two times.
- In 1977, there was an attempt by Morarji Desai to fructify the law which was not done due to dissolution of Lok Sabha.
- This time Rajiv Gandhi had taken initiative for this bill in 1985. Again the same issue of dissolution haunted.
- In 1989, V.P. Singh had proposed the bill but later taken back.
- In 1996, Deve Gowda government had taken the issue and no decision was taken until dissolution of Lok Sabha.
- In 1998 and 2001, A.B. Vajpayee had taken the issue of Lokpal, but the situation was not changed.
- There were two attempts by Congress government in 2005 and 2008.
  
- Each time, after the bill was introduced to the house, it was referred to some committee for improvements - a joint committee of parliament, or a departmental standing committee of the Home Ministry - and before the government could take a final stand on the issue the house was dissolved.
- Several flaws have been cited in the recent draft of the Lokpal Bill.
- Meanwhile the activists of India Against Corruption (IAC) have prepared a draft for the bill called Jan Lokpal Bill.

**Jan lokpal Bill vs Govt's Lokpal Bill**

1. The government Bill provides for nothing to recover ill-gotten wealth. A corrupt politician or bureaucrat can come out of jail and enjoy the money. The Jan Lokpal Bill seeks to recover from the accused the loss caused to the government due to corruption. It also increases punishment for the corrupt from a minimum of six months and a maximum of seven years to a minimum of five years and a maximum of life imprisonment.
2. The Jan Lokpal Bill seeks to empower the Lokpal to initiate probe suo motu and directly entertain public complaints. The government Bill requires complaints to be routed through the Speaker and the Rajya Sabha Chairperson.
3. The government Bill makes the Lokpal only an advisory body, vesting powers in the Prime Minister for action on its reports against cabinet ministers and in Parliament for action against the Prime Minister and MPs. The Jan Lokpal Bill gives the Lokpal powers to initiate prosecution after completing investigations. It also gives the Lokpal police powers to register FIRs, proceed with criminal investigations and launch prosecution.
4. It would be impossible for the Prime Minister to act against a cabinet minister on the basis of the Lokpal's report due to the compulsion of coalition politics. It gives the example of former telecom minister A Raja.
5. The Jan Lokpal Bill proposes merger of the Central Vigilance Commission with a part of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to create a single point of investigation in cases of corruption. The government Bill proposes to

- take away powers from the CBI to investigate politicians, thereby insulating them from investigations.
6. The government Bill gives power to the Lokpal to send to jail through summary trial anybody filing false and frivolous complaints, but it does not give the Lokpal power to send corrupt politicians to jail.
  7. The government Bill proposes that all three Lokpal members should be retired judges, which could make retiring judges vulnerable to government influence just before retirement.
  8. The government Bill proposes to have the Vice-President, the Prime Minister, leaders of both houses of Parliament, leaders of the Opposition in both houses, law minister and home minister in the selection panel for the Lokpal member. Barring the first one, the rest are politicians whose offices the Lokpal can investigate for corruption. Also, the committee will have a majority members from the ruling party or coalition.
  9. Civil society has suggested that the committee consist of members with judicial background, the Chief Election Commissioner, the Comptroller and Auditor General and international awardees, like Nobel and Magsaysay awardees, of Indian origin.
  10. It would become impossible for the Lokpal to investigate a case like the Bofors scam if the government Bill is enacted, as it proposes that the Lokpal will have no powers to probe a case against the Prime Minister, if the case deals with foreign affairs, security and defence.
  11. The government Bill prescribes a time limit of six months to a year for the Lokpal to complete the inquiry. There is no time limit suggested for the completion of trial. The Jan Lokpal Bill, however, proposes that the investigations be completed within a year and the trial be over within the next year.
  12. The government Bill gives no powers to the Lokpal to provide protection to those exposing political corruption, while the Jan Lokpal Bill empowers the Lokpal to provide protection to whistleblowers.

#### **Silver Jubilee Function of NCB**

The Narcotics Control Bureau was constituted by the Government on 17th March, 1986. It takes measures, among others, to prevent illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

## **Economic and Social Development**

#### **Poverty rate declines from 37.2% to 32%**

<b><u>Year</u></b>	<b><u>Poverty</u></b>
2009-10	32%
2004-5	37.2

**By:** preliminary data worked out by the Planning Commission member Abhijit Sen

**Based on:** based on the formula suggested by the Tendulkar Committee

The Tendulkar Committee had suggested that poverty be estimated on the basis of consumption based on the cost of living index instead of caloric intake. It said that the basket of goods should also include services such as health and education. The new poverty line, as suggested by the Tendulkar Committee, is different for rich and poor States, and for rural and urban areas within a State.

Background:

#### **Expert Groups for Estimating Poverty and BPL Families**

##### **I. Tendulkar Committee Report to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty**

The Planning Commission constituted an Expert Group in December 2005 under the chairmanship of Professor Suresh D. Tendulkar to review the methodology for estimation of poverty. The Expert Group submitted its report in December 2009. While acknowledging the multidimensional nature of poverty, the Expert Group recommended moving away from anchoring poverty lines to the calorie - intake norm to adopting MRP based estimates of consumption expenditure as the basis for future poverty lines and MRP equivalent of the urban

poverty line basket (PLB) corresponding to 25.7 per cent urban headcount ratio as the new reference PLB for rural areas. On the basis of the above methodology, the all-India rural poverty headcount ratio for 2004-05 was estimated at 41.8 per cent, urban at 25.7 per cent, and all-India at 37.2 per cent. It may, however, be mentioned that the Tendulkar Committee's estimates are not strictly comparable to the official poverty estimates because of different methodologies. The relevant estimates for 1993-94 and 2004-05 are shown in the Table.

### Poverty Ratios

Year	1993-94			2004-05		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Planning Commission (URP)	37.3	32.4	36.0	28.3	25.7	27.5
Tendulkar Estimates (2004-05) (MRP)	50.1	31.8	45.3	41.8	25.7	37.2

As has been indicated in the Mid Term Appraisal of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, the revised poverty lines for 2004-05 as recommended by the Tendulkar Committee have been accepted by the Planning Commission. The Tendulkar Committee has specifically pointed out that the upward revision in the percentage of rural poverty in 2004-05, resulting from the application of a new rural poverty line should not be interpreted as implying that the extent of poverty has increased over time. These estimates, as reported by the Committee, clearly show that whether we use the old method or the new, the percentage of BPL population has declined by about the same magnitude.

### II. Saxena Committee Report to Review the Methodology for Conducting BPL Census in Rural Areas

An Expert Group headed by Dr N.C. Saxena was constituted by the Ministry of Rural Development to recommend a suitable methodology for identification of BPL families in rural areas. The Expert Group submitted its report in August

2009 and recommended doing away with score-based ranking of rural households followed for the BPL census 2002. The Committee has recommended automatic exclusion of some privileged sections and automatic inclusion of certain deprived and vulnerable sections of society, and a survey for the remaining population to rank them on a scale of 10.

#### Automatic Exclusion

Households that fulfil any of the following conditions will not be surveyed for BPL census:

- Families who own double the land of the district average of agricultural land per agricultural household if partially or wholly irrigated (three times if completely unirrigated).
- Families that have three or four wheeled motorized vehicles, such as, jeeps and SUVs.
- Families that have at least one mechanized farm equipment, such as, tractors, power tillers, threshers, and harvesters.
- Families that have any person who is drawing a salary of over ` 10,000 per month in a non-government/private organization or is employed in government on a regular basis with pensionary or equivalent benefits.
- Income tax payers.

#### Automatic Inclusion

The following would be compulsorily included in the BPL list:

- Designated primitive tribal groups.
- Designated most discriminated against SC groups, called Maha Dalit groups.

- Single women-headed households.
- Households with a disabled person as breadwinner.
- Households headed by a minor.
- Destitute households which are dependent predominantly on alms for survival.
- Homeless households.
- Households that have a bonded labourer as member.

Survey of the remaining rural households is to be conducted and scores given depending upon the different socio-economic parameters recommended by the committee. The Ministry of Rural Development is in the process of conducting the pilot studies and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) exercises to fine tune the methodology.

### **III. Expert Group (S.R. Hashim Committee) on the Methodology for Identification of BPL Families in Urban Areas.**

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (HUPA) is the nodal Ministry for issue of guidelines to identify BPL families in urban areas. Till now, no uniform methodology was being followed by the States/UTs to identify the urban poor. An Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Professor S.R. Hashim has been constituted by the Planning Commission to recommend the methodology for identification of BPL families in urban areas. The Expert Group is expected to submit its report shortly.

### **Constitution of a National Data Bank**

The Government has said that one of its decisions on the follow-up action on the recommendations of the Sachar Committee was to set up a National Data Bank (NDB). A National Data Bank, to compile data on the various socio-economic and basic amenities parameters for socio-religious communities, has been set up in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

### **NFLMW**

- With effect from 1.4.2011 the **National Floor Level Minimum Wage(NFLMW )is raised to Rs.115/- per day.**
- In order to have a uniform wage structure and to reduce the disparity in minimum wages across the country, the concept of National Floor Level Minimum Wage (NFLMW) was mooted.
- The NFLMW per day has been revised from time to time primarily taking into account the increase in the **Consumer Price Index Number for Industrial Workers.**
- Since the NFLMW is a **non-statutory measure**, the State Governments are persuaded to fix/revise minimum wages in such a way that in none of the scheduled employments, the minimum wage is less than NFLMW.
- **The last time NFLMW revised was on November 1, 2009.** It moved up by Rs.20 per day to Rs.100 from Rs.80 then.

### **Packages for Development of North Eastern States**

Government has announced a number of special packages/programmes for the socio-economic development of the North East Region with a major emphasis on improving infrastructure, including connectivity. major programmes include the following:-

- Special Accelerated Road Development Programme
- Extension of rail network
- BTC(Bodo Territorial Council) Package
- Socio-economic Infrastructure Development Fund (SIDF)
- Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources
- Other NEC(North Eastern Council) efforts

## Indian Geographical/Cultural/other Issues

### AERB Reviews Safety in Indian Nuclear Power Plants

In India, out of 20 reactors (19 are in operation), only two units namely Tarapur 1&2 are Boiling Water Reactors (BWRs) similar to ones at Fukushima, Japan. All the reactors in India are designed to withstand the effects of earthquake and tsunami of specific magnitudes, which are decided, based on conservative criteria.

### *Geographical*

#### Census 2011(provisional data) highlights

- The population of the country is **1210.19 million** of which 623.7 million (51.54%) are males and 586.46 million (48.46%) are females.
- The population of India has **increased by more than 181 million** during the decade 2001-2011 -- almost as much as the population of Brazil, the fifth-most populous nation.
- The absolute addition is slightly lower than the population of Brazil, the fifth most populous country in the world.
- The country now accounts for **17.5% of the world's population**, equal to the combined headcount of the US, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Bangladesh & Japan(1214.3 million).
- Percentage **growth** in 2001-2011 is **17.64**; males 17.19 and females 18.12.
- **2001-2011 is the first decade (with the exception of 1911-1921) which has actually added lesser population compared to the previous decade.**
- The percentage decadal growth during 2001-2011 has registered the sharpest decline since Independence - **a decrease of**
- **3.90 percentage** points from 21.54 to 17.64 percent
- Uttar Pradesh (199.5 million) is the most populous State in the country(- population is more than the population of Brazil) followed by Maharashtra with 112 million(Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra (312 million), is greater than the population of USA).
- The total number of children in the age-group 0-6 is 158.8 million (-5 million since 2001)
- Population (0-6 years) 2001-2011 registered minus (-)3.08 percent growth with minus (-)2.42 for males and -3.80 for females.
- The proportion of Child Population in the age group of 0-6 years to total population is 13.1 percent while the corresponding figure in 2001 was 15.9 percent. The decline has been to the extent of 2.8 points.
- Overall sex ratio at the national level has increased by 7 points to reach 940 at Census 2011 as against 933 in Census 2001. This is the highest sex ratio recorded since Census 1971 and a shade lower than 1961. Increase in sex ratio is observed in 29 States/UTs.
- Three major States (J&K, Bihar & Gujarat) have shown decline in sex ratio as compared to Census 2001.
- Kerala with 1084 has the highest sex ratio followed by Puducherry with 1038, Daman & Diu has the lowest sex ratio of 618.
- Literacy rate has gone up from 64.83 per cent in 2001 to 74.04 per cent in 2011 showing an increase of 9.21 percentage points.
- Percentage growth in literacy during 2001-2011 is 38.82; males : 31.98% & females : 49.10%.
- Literates constitute 74 per cent of the total population aged seven and above and illiterates form 26 per cent.

#### **Background:**

- Provisional Population is arrived at by adding the Population as reported by each Enumerator for the Enumeration Block assigned to her/him
- There could be errors in addition or there could be cases of omission/ duplication of Enumeration Blocks

	provisional data	2001		provisional data	2011
<b>Top 5 States</b>			<b>Bottom 5 States</b>		
Uttar Pradesh	19,95,81,477	No change	Lakshadweep	64,429	No change
Maharashtra	11,23,72,972	No change	Daman & Diu	2,42,911	No change
Bihar	10,38,04,637	No change	D. & N. Haveli	3,42,853	No change
West Bengal	9,13,47,736	No change	A. & N. Islands	3,79,944	No change
Andhra Pradesh	8,46,65,533	No change	Sikkim	6,07,688	No change

<b>Top 2 Districts</b>	<b>provisional data</b>	<b>Bottom 2 Districts</b>	<b>provisional data</b>
Thane (Maharashtra)	1,10,54,131	Dibang Valley (Arunachal Pradesh)	7,948
North Twenty Four Parganas (West Bengal)	1,00,82,852	Anjaw (Arunachal Pradesh)	21,089

#### **New Categories for Census 2011**

A number of changes have been incorporated in Cenus 2011 for the better capturing and analysis of data. The details of the changes incorporated are given hereunder:

1. Gender: New category "Other" introduced in addition to Male and Female.
2. Date of Birth question introduced along with Age.
3. Current Marital Status: Separate codes Assigned for Separated and Divorced.
4. New filter Question on SC/ST Introduced – "Is this person SC/ST?"
5. Disability: The question on disability canvassed at the Census 2001 has been modified. Household Schedule attempts to collect information on eight types of disabilities as against five included in the Household Schedule of Census of India 2001. The information is being collected on disabilities namely, disability 'In Seeing', 'In Hearing', 'In Speech', 'In Movement', 'Mental retardation', 'Mental Illness', 'Any Other' and 'Multiple Disability'.
6. Literacy Status for "Other" sex added in addition to existing Male and Female.

7. New Codes under Status of Attendance in Educational Institutions introduced for Not Attending viz., (i) Attended before and (ii) Never attended.
8. Work: In the previous censuses, workers were categorized as 'Main workers' and 'Marginal workers'. Those who worked for more than 6 months during last year were categorized as 'Main workers' whereas those who worked less than 6 months were categorized as 'Marginal Workers'. At the Census 2011, for better capturing and analysis of Census data, 'Marginal workers have been classified into two categories viz., (i) worked for 3 months or more but less than 6 months (ii) worked for less than 3 months. The definition of 'Main worker' remains the same.
9. A separate code-5 has been included under Non-economic activity for rentiers.
10. Migration – Provision to specify the present name of the Village/Town of the Birth Place as well as the Place of Last Residence introduced.
11. Name of the Institutional Household is also being recorded.

#### **Study Regarding the Recent Changes Occurred in the Pattern of Weather**

Under the Global and Regional Climate Change (GRCC) programme of the Ministry of Earth Sciences during the XI plan, the Government has established a dedicated Centre for Climate Change Research (CCCR) under the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune.

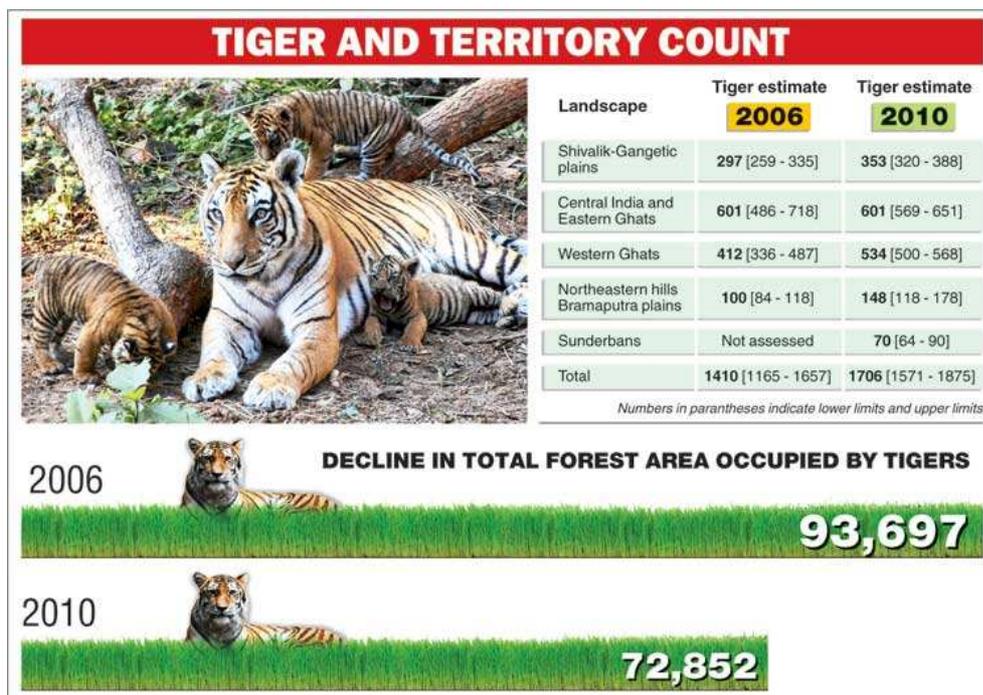
The primary focus and goal of the CCCR is to build a high resolution Earth System Model (ESM), which is a fully coupled atmosphere-ocean-land-biosphere-cryosphere dynamical model, required to address issues on attribution and projection of regional climate change; and provide reliable inputs for various multi-sector impact assessments studies. CCCR addresses the critical issues of science of regional climate change with particular emphasis on the variability of the South Asian monsoon system in the global warming environment.

- World Meteorological Day-23-March
- INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TROPICAL METEOROLOGY- PUNE

#### **Tiger Census-2010**

- population estimate **1706** (lower limit as 1571 and the upper limit at 1875).
- grown 12 per cent in the last four years.
- The estimate of 2006 shows lower limit at 1465 and upper limit at 1675. The population estimate for Tiger Census 2006 was total 1411.
- Sunderbans was not surveyed in 2006 but is included in 2010 census.
- **Concern:** Tiger occupancy areas shrunk from 9 million hectares to less than 7.5 million hectares over the last four years.
- two States that have fared the worst in the census, with tiger populations falling to 213 in Madhya Pradesh and 65 in Andhra Pradesh.
- The largest number of tigers lives in Karnataka – about 280.
- close to 30% of the estimated tiger population, it is outside the 39 Tiger Reserves.
- This monitoring exercise was carried out between December 2009 and December 2010.
- The three phases of the tiger estimation procedure included field data collected at the beat-level (i.e. the primary patrolling unit) by trained personnel using a standardised protocol in the first phase.
- The second phase was analysis of habitat status of tiger forests using satellite data and the third phase dealt with camera trapping. It was the primary method used, where individual tigers were identified from photographs based on their unique stripe patterns. This information was analysed using a well established scientific framework.
- Based on the tiger numbers recorded in sampled sites, an estimate for other contiguous tiger-occupied landscapes was made.
- For this, additional information such as tiger signs, prey availability, habitat conditions and human disturbance was used.
- New findings of 2010 national tiger assessment suggest that most tiger source sites continue to maintain viable tiger populations. Evidence of new areas populated by tigers, e.g. Kuno-Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary and

Shivpuri National Park in Madhya Pradesh



### Indian Railway

Indian Railways has made the highest ever achievement in construction of new line and doubling projects in the financial year 2010-11. Railways has achieved the progress of construction of 709 kilometres of new lines in the year 2010-11, against the annual average progress of 180 kilometres new lines since independence. The highest achievement in construction of new lines in one year has been 357 kilometres in the year 2008-09.

### Seismic Monitors to Study Earthquakes in Koyna Region/'Deep Scientific Drilling to Study Reservoir Triggered Earthquakes at Koyna India

- Efforts are underway to build a new scientific initiative especially to understand the seismic activity of Koyna region in more detail by drilling deep-bore holes below the ground to place a network of seismic sensors. For this purpose, MoU has been signed on 7th January, 2011 with German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) on behalf of the International Continental Scientific Drilling Programme (ICDP) for an initial period of 5 years.
- Koyna is considered a "classical site" of Reservoir Triggered Seismicity (RTS). Earthquakes have been occurring since the impoundment of the reservoir in 1962, including the largest RTS event of M 6.3 on December 10, 1967. The RTS increased following the monsoon period and almost every year one or more earthquakes of magnitude above 4 have occurred. A deep borehole will provide direct observational data and contribute to earthquake hazard reduction.
- although the Koyna region was located in 'stable continental region,' earthquakes were taking place in a localised area. It was like a "mini-laboratory" for studying earthquakes and the results of the proposed project would be applicable in general to earthquakes because the "basic earthquake mechanism is the same.

### NDMA Felicitates NDRF Team for Commendable Work in Search & Rescue Operations in Japan

The 46 member team of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) under the leadership of Contingent Commander Shri Alok Avasthy, Commandant to conduct search & rescue operations in the aftermath of recent Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan, returned from Japan after a successful operation. This was the first ever overseas operation of a

NDRF Team since their operationalization in 2006.

## *Cultural*

### **National Archives of India**

National Archives of India completes 120 years of its establishment on 11 March 2011.

Background:

The National Archives of India (NAI) (External website that opens in a new window), New Delhi known until Independence as Imperial Record Department was originally established in Kolkata on 11 March 1891. It is the official custodian of all non-current record of permanent value to the Government of India and its predecessor bodies. It has a Regional Office at Bhopal and three Record Centres at Bhubaneswar, Jaipur and Pondicherry.

### **National Museum of Performing Arts (NMPA) to be set up in Delhi**

- is an approved Plan activity of the Sangeet Natak Akademi.
- The NMPA is also to host a National repository of Indian music.
- While initially, the NMPA will operate out of the Akademi's premises at Chanakyapuri, the Delhi Development Authority has been approached to allot 5 acres of land in Dwarka for a full fledged building for NMPA.

### **Regional Centres of National School of Drama**

it has been proposed to open 5 Regional Schools/Centres of the National School of Drama across the country. The five locations identified for the setting up of these Schools/Centres are – (i) Bengaluru (upgradation of existing Regional Resource Centre), (ii) Kolkata, (iii) Maharashtra/Goa, (iv) Jammu & Kashmir and (v) North East.

### **President Inaugurates "Prakriti" [National Festival of Tribal Dances]**

- Prakriti – the integrated event, is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) and the Ministry of Culture to present tribal art and culture in a holistic manner.
- Tribal Dances being presented in Prakriti give glimpses of various art forms. These include some of the well-known tribal dances like Karma Dance, Uttar Pradesh; Bhagoriya, Navai, Korku and Gudum, Madhya Pradesh; Harul and Chholiya, Uttarakhand; Theyyam, Kerala; Lompi, Manipur; Vasava Holi, Rathwa ni Gair and Siddhi Dhamal, Gujarat; Dhol and Chakri Gowri, Maharashtra; Gair Ghoura, Rajasthan; Lambadis and Gussadi, Andhra Pradesh; Gorwara dance of Karnataka; Parichakali, Lakshadweep; Kaksar, Chhattisgarh; Khariya, Jharkhand; Bardoi Sikhla, Assam; Santhali, West Bengal; Tamang Selo, Sikkim; Saura, Orissa; War, Manipur; Jabro, Ladakh; Cheraw, Mizoram; Aphilo Kiwo, Nagaland; Wangala, Meghalaya and Hai-Hak, Tripura.

### **President of India Greets his Holiness Dr. Syedna Mohd. Burhanuddin on his Birthday**

Dr. Syedna Mohd. Burhanuddin

- leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community.
- The Dawoodi Bohras are a sub group within the Mustaali, Ismaili Shia branch of Islam.
- 100th Birthday

### **Mahatma Gandhi's House in Johannesburg**

A proposal has been received from the Coal India Ltd. (CIL) to purchase the said House "The Kraal" in the name of employees of CIL. After purchase, the house is proposed to be converted into a museum and to handover the upkeep of the monument to Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The proposal envisages the said purchase to be made from contribution made by the employees of CIL and its subsidiaries, through formation of a trust.

### **Road Traffic Injuries Globally Claim 5 Million lives Every Year**

- According to WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety, over 50 million are injured on the world's road every year and as many as five million deaths happen due to road accidents. Road accident deaths at a global level were ranked ninth as a cause of disability adjusted years of life lost in 2004 and is expected to be ranked fifth by the year 2030. In India more than half of the road accidents victims are in the age group of 25-65 years, the key wage earning and child raising age group.
- Officially proclaimed by the **UN General Assembly** in March 2010, a **Decade of Action Plan for Road Safety 2011-2020** provides the framework to countries and communities to increase action to save lives on the world's roads. The global launch of the Decade is planned for May, 2011.

### **States Should Strictly Implement The PC & PNDT Act: Health Secretary**

#### **Background:**

- Seventeen States, where the child sex ratio has been reported to be low by the recent census data, were called for this meeting.
- It was noted in the meeting that the absolute decline from 927 (2001) to 914 (2011) in the Child sex ratio figure at national level and the declining trend evident in 27 states/UTs – particularly Haryana with 830, is a matter of grave concern. Jhajjar and Mahendragarh in Haryana emerged in the country with the lowest CSR of 774 and 778 respectively. Data for 346 districts in 11 States (released so far) shows 6 distt recorded CSR below 800; 47 distt between 800-850 and 103 distt between 850-900 against the national average of 914.

### **Azad Reconstitutes Central Supervisory Board Under PNDT Act**

Chairman- Health Minister

Co-chair- Women and Child Development minister

#### **Background:**

The recent census figures highlighted the declining trend in Child Sex Ratio in the country. In order to check female foeticide, the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 (PNDT Act), was brought into operation from 1st January, 1996. The Act was amended to make it more comprehensive and was renamed as "Pre-conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994" (PC & PNDT Act). The amended Act and Rules framed there under came into force with effect from 14.2.2003. The main objective of the Act/Rules is to ban the use of sex selection techniques before or after conception as well as misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for sex selective abortions and to regulate such techniques, so as to pre-empt the misuse of such technologies and consequent adverse impact on the sex ratio.

Stringent punishments are prescribed under the Act so as to serve as a deterrent for minimising violations of the Act. Appropriate Authorities are empowered with the powers of Civil Court for search, seizure and sealing the machines, equipment and records of the violators of law, including sealing of premises and commissioning of witnesses. It has been made mandatory to maintain proper records in respect of the use of ultrasound machines and other equipment capable of detection of sex of foetus and also in respect of tests and procedures that may lead to pre-conception selection of sex. The sale of ultrasound machines has been regulated through laying down the condition of sale only to the bodies registered under the Act.

### **Tobacco Users in India**

- According to the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), 2010, more than one-third (35%) of adults in India use tobacco in some form or the other. Among them, 21 % adults use smokeless tobacco, 9 % smoke, and 5 % smoke as well as use smokeless tobacco. As per this report, the estimated number of tobacco users in India is 274.9 million, with 163.7 million users of only smokeless tobacco, 68.9 million only smokers, and 42.3 million users of both smoking and smokeless tobacco.

- As per Report on Tobacco Control in India, 2004, an estimated number of 8-9 Lakh people die every year in India due to diseases caused by consumption of tobacco products.
- According to ICMR, 50% of cancers among men and 25% among women in India are related to tobacco use. Nearly 90% of oral cancers are related to use of chewing tobacco

### **Banned Medicines**

The Central Government has prohibited six drugs on the recommendations of the Expert Committee constituted by DTAB in view of the safety issues involved in the use of these drugs by a Gazette Notification dated 10.02.2011 with immediate effect. The names of these drugs along with the brief reasons for their ban are furnished below:

1. Nimesulide formulations in children below 12 years of age - Nimesulide containing products are not permitted in many countries in children under 12 years of age. The drug has been considered to be hepatotoxic and children are considered more susceptible to hepatotoxicity.
2. Cisapride and its formulations for human use - Use of this drug is reported to be associated with increased risk of serious cardiac arrhythmia.
3. Phenylpropanolamine and its formulations for human use - Use of this drug is associated with risk of hypertensive episodes like cardiac congestive failures and hemorrhagic strokes.
4. Human Placental Extract and its formulations for human use - There is no clear evidence of efficacy of this drug in most of the conditions and there are safety concerns like transmission of blood borne infections, immunoreactions and unwanted exposure to hormones associated with its use.
5. Sibutramine and its formulations for human use - Use of this drug is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular events such as heart attack and stroke.
6. R-Sibutramine and its formulations for human use - Use of this drug is associated with increased risk of cardiovascular events such as heart attack and stroke.

### **Universal Immunization Programme**

Under the Universal Immunization Programme (UIP), the following vaccines are provided free to all children including new borne:-

- 1) DPT (Diphtheria-Pertussis-Tetanus)
- 2) OPV/Oral Polio Vaccine
- 3) Measles
- 4) BCG (Bacillus Calmette-Guerin)
- 5) Hepatitis B (In selected States and selected cities)
- 6) Japanese Encephalitis (In selected areas)

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Supreme Court bans employment of children in circuses**

- The Bench directed the Centre to conduct simultaneous raids in all circuses to liberate children and check violation of their fundamental rights.
- The Bench **directed the Centre to frame a proper scheme of rehabilitation for the rescued children** from circuses. The government should talk to the parents of the children, and "in case they are willing to take their children back to their homes, they may be directed to do so after proper verification."

### **Establishment of the Mahatma Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) at New Delhi**

- The Union Cabinet approved to establish the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) as a Category I Institute of UNESCO at New Delhi which was recommended by the UNESCO.
- It will put India into the category of select countries with a Category I Institute of UNESCO.

- Currently there are eleven Category I Institutes of UNESCO in the world, out of which 9 are located in the developed countries while the remaining two are located in developing countries namely, Ethiopia and Venezuela.
- Further it will serve as a platform for India to emerge as a global leader from the Asia-Pacific region in the areas of education for Peace and Sustainable Development.

**Central Hindi Institute**

Central Hindi Institute of Agra completes fifty years of establishment on 28th March, 2011

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## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### International Institutions

#### **Referendum for Alternative Vote (AV) system in UK/ Britain Says No to AV**

- British voters have overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to abandon the current first-past-the-post voting system in favour of Alternative Vote (AV) in which people rank candidates in order of preference.
- Up to 70 per cent of those who voted in a referendum, held on 5, may 2011, said ``no'' to AV.
- Britain's first nationwide referendum in more than 30 years was called at the insistence of **Lib Dems** as part of their demand for broader electoral reforms and a condition for joining the coalition.
- The **Tories (or The Conservative Party ) campaigned on a ``no'' platform** arguing that AV –practised only in Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea—was complicated, more expensive and less fair than first-past-the-post system.
- The Opposition Labour party was divided on the issue with its leader Ed Miliband backing a change while nearly half the party, including some senior figures, in the opposite bloc.

	Campaigned for	Leader
Liberal Democrats.	YES	Nick Clegg
Conservative Party	NO	David Cameron
Labour Party	divided	Gordon Brown

#### **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1976**

- Decides to consider special courts to deal with piracy off the coast of Somalia
- 11 April 2011
- Vote: 15–0–0

#### **Egyptian Constitution Changes Pass in Referendum**

- 77 percent of the vote in favor according to final results.
- The changes eliminate restrictions on political rights and open the way for parliamentary and presidential elections within months.

#### **'Type-66' agreement/IAEA approves safeguards for new Pakistani reactors**

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) gave its approval to a safeguards agreement for two new reactors that Pakistan said China was building for it at Chashma.
- The 'Type-66' agreement for the two reactors approved by the IAEA's 35-nation Board of Governors was identical to similar agreements already in place for Chashma-1 and Chashma-2.
- Ignoring NSG, China gets approval for transfer of Chashma-3 & 4

#### **United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973**

- The resolution demands "an immediate ceasefire" and authorizes the international community to establish a **no-fly zone over Libya** and to use all means necessary short of foreign occupation to protect civilians.
- Ten Security Council members voted in the affirmative (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Colombia, Gabon, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, and permanent members France, the United Kingdom, and the United States). **Five (Brazil, Germany, and India, and permanent members China and Russia) abstained, with none opposed.**
- The Security Council resolution was proposed by France, Lebanon, and the United Kingdom.
- Date: 17 March 2011.

## International Events

### **2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami**

- officially named the Great East Japan Earthquake
- Friday, 11 March 2011
- magnitude 9.0 (Mw)
- epicenter approximately 70 kilometres (43 mi) east of the **Oshika Peninsula** of Tōhoku
- hypocenter at an underwater depth of approximately 32 km
- most powerful known earthquake to have hit Japan, and one of the five most powerful earthquakes in the world overall since modern record-keeping began in 1900.
- The overall cost could exceed \$300 billion, making it the most expensive natural disaster on record
- confirmed 14,981 deaths, 5,279 injured, and 9,880 people missing
- **Tōhoku region:** occupies the northeastern portion of **Honshu**, the largest island of Japan.
  
- Related info:
- Japan is an archipelago of 6,852 islands.
- **The four largest islands are Honshū, Hokkaidō, Kyūshū and Shikoku**, together accounting for ninety-seven percent of Japan's land area.
- Order from north to south- Hokkaidō->Honshū->Kyūshū ->Shikoku

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## INDIA AND WORLD

### **India Calls for Promotion of South-South Cooperation and Strengthening of Partners in Population and Development (PPD)**

- Partners in Population and Development (PPD) is an intergovernmental initiative created specifically for the purpose of expanding and improving South-to-South collaboration in the fields of reproductive health, population and development. PPD was launched at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), when ten developing countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America formed an intergovernmental alliance to help implement the Cairo Programme of Action (POA). This POA, endorsed by 179 nations, stresses the need to establish mechanisms to promote development through the sharing of experiences in Reproductive Health (RH) and Family Planning (FP) within and among countries and to promote effective partnerships among the governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), research institutions and the private sector.
- India is currently the Chairman of PPD and China is the Vice-Chair. The Secretariat of PPD is situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Annual Meeting of PPD in 2010 was held at Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The 2011 Annual Meeting of PPD is being held in South Africa in November, 2011.

### **The Challenges to Indian Diplomacy in the 21st Century: (Vice President Sri Hamid Ansari)**

1. In the first place and in terms of geography, our immediate neighborhood would be critical for regional stability and cooperation and the accretion of comprehensive national power by India.
2. The second challenge would be the emergence of Asia, as probably the most important locus of global power.
3. The third challenge would be to create an enabling international environment for unhindered economic development and growth, including through mutually beneficial arrangements concerning raw materials and markets for goods and services.
4. The fourth challenge is to foster a rule based international order underpinned by strong and functioning multilateral institutions.
5. The fifth challenge is to evolve a consensual approach, along with all major and minor powers, of dealing with the regimes regulating global commons.
6. A sixth challenge is the requirement to respond in real time to unanticipated happenings, political, economic or environmental and to have at hand the intellectual and organisational resources to do so adequately.

### **India and Brazil Sign Air Services Agreement**

It allows both the countries to designate any number of airlines on reciprocal basis, unlike in the past when only one airline each was allowed.

### **India and Saskatchewan (A Canadian Province) Sign MoU to Establish Cooperation in the Field of Mineral Resources**

- The Ministry of Mines and the Ministry of Energy and Resources of the Province of Saskatchewan, Canada, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a cooperation programme in the field of Geology and Mineral Resources.
- The MoU aims at establishing a basis for development of geological and mineral resources, to promote investment in mining and related activities like mineral exploration and development, to encourage and foster mining investment, transfers of technology and joint ventures in India and Saskatchewan.

### **India Pakistan Home Secretary Level talks Conclude**

- Both sides agreed to set up a Hotline between Home Secretary of India and Interior Secretary of Pakistan to facilitate real time information sharing with respect to terrorist threats.
- Pakistan conveyed its readiness, in principle, based upon the principle of comity and reciprocity, to entertain a Commission from India with respect to Mumbai Terror Attack investigations.
- Both sides shared the concern of the growing menace of Narcotics/Drugs and agreed that cooperation between NCB of India and ANF of Pakistan should be enhanced to ensure an effective control on drug trafficking.
- Both sides agreed to set up a Joint Working Group to examine the modalities for streamlining the visa procedure/modalities and for giving a final shape to revision of the Bilateral Visa Agreement.

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## ECOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

### From Next Year 'World Water Day' Celebrations to be Extended as 'World Water Week' – Salman Khurshid

From next year the 'World Water Day' will be extended to a full week and celebrated as 'World Water Week' to reach out to all the states, schools, colleges and media to highlight various issues relating to water.

### India and Japan Sign TKDL Access Agreement

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), India signed the TKDL (Traditional Knowledge Digital Library) Access Agreement with the Japan Patent Office (JPO) here today. This TKDL Access Agreement would help prevent misappropriation of India's traditional knowledge at JPO.

### scheme of Rural tourism

The scheme of Rural tourism was started by the Ministry in 2002-03 with the objective of showcasing rural life, art, culture and heritage at rural locations and in villages, which have core competence in art and craft, handloom, and textiles as also an asset base in the natural environment. The intention is to benefit the local community economically and socially as well as enable interaction between tourists and local population for a mutually enriching experience. The promotion of village tourism is also aimed at generating revenue for the rural communities through tourist visitations.

**Fund:** Central scheme of 'Product/Infrastructure development for destinations and circuits' (PIDDC) and GOI-UNDP Endogenous Projects scheme

[in news: 169 Rural Tourism sites Sanctioned]

### World Bank Assistance to National Ganga River Basin Authority for abatement of pollution of River Ganga

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the Project for cleaning of River Ganga to be implemented by the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) at an estimated cost of Rs. 7000 crore.
- The share of Government of India will be Rs 5100 crore and that of the State Governments of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal will be Rs 1900 crore.
- The World Bank has agreed in-principle to provide a loan assistance of US \$ 1 billion (approx. Rs 4600 crore) to the Government of India for the NGRBA project, which will form part of the central share of the project. The duration of the project will be eight years.
- The project will have three components relating to (a) institutional development for setting up dedicated institutions for implementing the NGRBA program, setting up Ganga Knowledge Centre, strengthening environmental regulators (Pollution Control Boards) and local institutions (ULBs, etc) (b) infrastructure investments including for municipal sewage, industrial pollution, solid wastes and river front management, and (c) project implementation support.

#### **Background:**

NGRBA was constituted in February, 2009 as an empowered planning, financing, monitoring and coordinating authority for the Ganga River under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. The objective of the Authority, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, is to ensure conservation of the river Ganga and to maintain environmental flows by comprehensive planning and management, adopting a river basin approach.

### Creation of National Clean Energy Fund

- The CCEA has approved constitution of an 'National Clean Energy Fund' (NCEF) in the **public account of India** along with the guidelines as well as modalities for approval of projects to be funded from the Fund.
- The **Finance Bill 2010-11** provided for creation of a corpus called National Clean Energy Fund to invest in entrepreneurial ventures and research in the field of clean energy technologies.
- An Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) has been constituted to approve the projects/schemes eligible for financing under the National Clean Energy Fund.
- The National Clean Energy Fund will be used for funding research and innovative projects in clean energy technologies. **Any project/scheme** for innovative methods to adopt to clean energy technology and

research & development shall be eligible for funding under the NCEF. Such projects may be:

- (a) Sponsored by a Ministry/Department of the Government; and
- (b) Submitted by individual/ consortium of organizations in the **government/public sector/private sector** in the form of loan or viability gap funding, as the IMG deems fit on case to case basis. Government assistance under the NCEF shall **in no case exceed 40% of the total project cost**.

#### **National Water Mission under National Action Plan on Climate Change**

The National Water Mission is one of the **8 National Missions** which form the core of the National Action Plan for Climate Change.

**The objective: "conservation of water, minimizing wastage and ensuring its equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management".**

**Five goals:** identified in the National Water Mission are

1. Comprehensive water data base in public domain and assessment of the impact of climate change on water resources;
2. promotion of citizen and state actions for water conservation, augmentation and preservation;
3. focused attention to vulnerable areas including over-exploited areas;
4. **increasing water use efficiency by 20%**; and
5. promotion of basin level integrated water resources management.

**A two-tier setup:** for framing the policies and guidelines for implementation

At the Central level, an **apex Board under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Water Resources** and at the State level, a **Monitoring Committee under the Chairmanship of the Principal Secretary / Secretary** will be constituted.

#### **More info:**

A very compact Mission Secretariat under a Mission Director to be supported by Adviser (Technical) and Adviser (Coordination and Monitoring) is envisaged under the National Water Mission. The technical support to the Secretariat will be provided by Central Water Commission, Central Ground Water Board, Brahmaputra Board and National Institute of Hydrology.

The prioritized strategies of the Mission will be taken up through the continuing schemes of Ministry of Water Resources by suitably modifying scope and outlay of the respective schemes. The overall additional requirements for such activities have been duly taken into consideration while working out the revised outlays of the various schemes of the Ministry of Water Resources.

[in news: The Union Cabinet has approved the Comprehensive Mission Document of the National Water Mission.]

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of the **Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) by India**.

- India would be hosting the next Conference of Parties (CoP) to the CBD in October 2011.
- The ABS Protocol is open for signature from 2nd February 2011 to 1st February 2012. So far six countries have signed the Protocol including three megadiverse countries (namely Brazil, Mexico and Colombia). As the incoming President of CoP-11, it is expected that India would be one of the early signatories to the ABS Protocol.
- India is one of the identified megadiverse countries rich in biodiversity. With only 2.4% of the earth's land area, India accounts for **7-8% of the recorded species of the world**.

**Background:**

- India is a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) which is one of the agreements adopted during the Rio Earth Summit held in 1992. **One of the three objectives of the CBD relates to ABS, which refers to the way in which genetic resources may be accessed, and benefits resulting from their use shared by the users with the countries that provide them.** The CBD prescribes that access to genetic resources is subject to national legislation. Accordingly, India after extensive consultative process had enacted Biological Diversity Act in 2002 for giving effect to the provisions of the CBD. However, in the near absence of user country measures, once the resource leaves the country providing the resources, there is no way to ensure compliance of ABS provisions in the country where it is used. Towards this, a protocol on access and benefit sharing has been negotiated under the aegis of CBD, and adopted by the tenth Conference of Parties (CoP-10) held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010. India has participated actively and contributed meaningfully in the ABS negotiations which formally started about six years back. The objective of the Nagoya Protocol on ABS is fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies.
- It is expected that the ABS Protocol which is a key missing pillar of the CBD, would address the concern of misappropriation or biopiracy of its genetic resources.

**Megadiverse countries**

- The megadiverse countries are a group of countries that harbor the majority of the Earth's species and are therefore considered extremely biodiverse.
- For some authors, the group incorporates 12 countries: Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Zaire, Madagascar, China, India, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia. Others (including Conservation International, a NGO) increase the list to more than 17, adding Papua New Guinea, South Africa, **USA**, Congo, Philippines and Venezuela.

**National Ambient Noise Monitoring Network**

- Will be active 24 X 7
- In its first phase, it will cover 35 stations in 7 cities.
- Real Time Ambient Noise Monitoring Network will cover seven metros in phase-I viz. Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai have been selected and in each Metro five Remote Monitoring Terminals have been installed in different noise zones for continuous monitoring.
- In Phase-II, another 35 Noise Monitoring Stations will be installed in the same seven cities and in
- Phase III, Real Time Noise Network will be expanded by 90 stations to cover 18 other major cities by 2012.
- Phase-III cities include Kanpur, Pune, Surat, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Jaipur, Indore, Bhopal, Ludhiana, Guwahati, Dehradun, Thiruvananthapuram, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Gandhinagar, Ranchi, Amritsar and Raipur.
- The network in the major Metros will also be augmented by establishing more noise monitoring stations.

**Related:**

The Central Government has notified The Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 which have been amended in January, 2010. The said Rules require the State/UT Administration to designate an 'Authority' responsible for maintaining the ambient noise standards in respective States/UTs. The designated 'Authority' has to be an officer not below the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police.

**NAMP (NATIONAL AIR QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAMME)**

Central Pollution Control Board is executing a nation-wide programme of ambient air quality monitoring known as National Air Quality Monitoring Programme (NAMP). The network consists of three hundred and forty two (342) operating stations covering one hundred and twenty seven (127) cities/towns in twenty six (26) states and four (4) Union Territories of the country.

### **New Lion Reserves in The Country**

In order to conserve the single isolated population of Asiatic Lions, the Ministry of Environment and Forests had initiated habitat feasibility study through the Wildlife Institute of India, which inter alia has identified Kuno Palpur Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh as an alternate home for the Gir Lions and for the release of wild lions from Gujarat.

While State Government of Madhya Pradesh is agreeable for translocation of Gir Asiatic Lions in Kuno Palpur, State Government of Gujarat has so far not agreed to part with Gir Asiatic Lions.

### **Steps for Holistic Growth of Green Gold Sector in North Eastern Region**

Bamboo plantation is one of the plantation models for afforestation under the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Bamboo is referred to as Green Gold in India especially in North Eastern Region. For the development of Bamboo sector, a numbers of steps have been taken such as establishment of National Bamboo Mission under the Ministry of Agriculture, National Mission for Bamboo applications under the Ministry of Science and Technology, etc. The Mission approach for the development of this sector is a step toward the institutional reforms.

### **Preservation of Biodiversity of The Country**

The Government of India has taken several steps for conservation of biodiversity of the country. They include survey and inventorization of floral and faunal resources; assessment of forest cover to develop an accurate database for planning and monitoring; establishment of a Protected Area Network; designating Biosphere Reserves for conservation of representative ecosystems; conservation of ecologically fragile areas such as mangroves, wetlands and coral reefs; implementing species-oriented conservation programmes, ex-situ conservation through setting up of botanic gardens, zoos and gene banks; and enactment of the Biological Diversity Act in 2002, under which a National Biodiversity Authority and State Biodiversity Boards have been set up for implementing the provisions of the Act.

### **Delimitation of Areas(GO and No GO)**

The Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) and the Ministry of Coal (MoC) had jointly undertaken an exercise to overlay the forest cover map on the coal blocks boundaries in respect of 9 coalfields in the country and identified various coal blocks as category 'A' (No-Go areas) and Category 'B' (Go areas). As per the exercise, 449 coal blocks covering about 3,80,000 ha have been categorised as category 'B' out of total number of 602 coal blocks covering about 6,48,750 ha.

criteria :

#### **Category 'A' (No-Go areas)**

Gross Forest Cover (GFC) $\geq$ 30%

Weighted Forest Cover (WFC) $\geq$  10%

### **Setting up of Coastal Zone Management**

The Ministry has established the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM) under the World Bank assisted Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project. A consortium of eleven research institutions covering all the coastal States and Union Territories, has been constituted to work along with NCSCM in the area of coastal zone management . On 24th December, 2010, a Memorandum of Association between the Ministry and Anna University, Chennai was signed to set up NCSCM.

### **Protection of Elephants**

Estimated population of wild elephants in the country is in the range of 27669 – 27719 (Mid value 27694).

**Related:**

In 2010, the Gujarat government reported that 411 Asiatic lions were sighted in the Gir forest; a rise of 52 over the

last census of 2005.

**'WWF (India) 2011-Earth Hour 60+'**

- In India, the Earth Hour 2011 was held on 26 March 2011 from 8.30 PM to 9.30 PM IST, the Earth Hour 2011 was flagged off by the Delhi Chief Minister Smt. Sheila Dixit and Earth Hour 2011 Ambassador and Bollywood Heroine **Vidya Balan** in the presence of Mr. Jim Leape, Director General, WWF International.
- New new '60+' logo represents commitment beyond 60 minutes.

**Background:**

- Earth Hour is a global event organized by WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature, also known as World Wildlife Fund) and is held on the last Saturday of March annually, asking households and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights and other electrical appliances for one hour to raise awareness towards the need to take action on climate change.
- Earth Hour was conceived by WWF and The Sydney Morning Herald in 2007, when 2.2 million residents of Sydney participated by turning off all non-essential lights.
- Following Sydney's lead, many other cities around the world adopted the event in 2008.

**Zero Kero Programme**

- Indonesia is providing an LPG kit comprising 3kg Cylinder, cooking stove and pressure regulator free to kerosene customers and thereafter stop kerosene supply.
- this has led to a subsidy saving of about US \$5 billion per annum.
- In news: R P N Singh Visits LPG Plant near Jakarta to Study Zero Kero Programme of Indonesia

VISION IAS

## ECONOMY

### Banking and Finance

#### **ICICI Bank to be treated as foreign company for computing FDI**

Besides ICICI Bank, the other lenders which have more than 50 per cent foreign equity holding are: HDFC Bank, Yes Bank, IndusInd Bank, Federal Bank, ING Vysya and Development Credit Bank.

#### **RBI working group under Thorat to study NBFC issues**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has formed a working group to examine issues pertaining to the regulation of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). The group will be headed by former Reserve Bank deputy governor, Director, Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning (CAFRAL), Usha Thorat.
- The group would deal with emerging issues concerning the definition and classification of NBFCs, regulatory gaps and arbitrage, maintaining governance standards and appropriate approach to NBFC supervision.
- The central bank has been emphasising on tighter regulations and monitoring of NBFCs.
- Last month, RBI raised the minimum capital adequacy ratio of deposit-taking NBFCs to 15 per cent, to align it with the systemically important non-deposit taking NBFCs.
- Similarly, late last year, RBI introduced a new regulatory framework for NBFCs which were 'core investment companies', primarily focusing on investments in group companies.

#### **Background:**

##### **NBFC**

- Non-banking financial companies, or NBFCs, are financial institutions that provide banking services (such as loans and advances, acquisition of shares/stock/bonds/debentures/securities), but do not hold a banking license.
- These institutions are not allowed to take demand deposits from the public. It is not a part of the payment and settlement system and as such cannot issue cheques to its customers.
- Nonetheless, all operations of these institutions are still covered under banking regulations.

#### **Move to prevent fraud in loan cases**

- The Central Registry has become operational with effect from 31st March, 2011.
- The objective of setting-up the Central Registry is to prevent frauds in loan cases involving multiple lending from different banks on the same immovable property.
- The Central Registry Of Securitisation Asset Reconstruction And Security Interest Of India, a Government Company, licensed under Section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956 has been incorporated for the purpose of operating and maintaining the Central Registry under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act 2002).
- The Central Registry shall be under the superintendence and direction of the Central Registrar.
- For a period of three months, National Housing Bank Chairman R.V. Verma, shall hold additional charge as the Registrar of the Central Registry and he shall also be the Managing Director and CEO of the government company incorporated for the purpose of operating the registration system.

#### **Background:**

The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI) empowers Banks / Financial Institutions to recover their non-performing assets without the intervention of the Court.

The Act provides three alternative methods for recovery of non-performing assets.

1. Securitisation,
2. Asset Reconstruction,
3. Enforcement of Security without the intervention of the Court

## Public Finance

**External debt: \$297.5 (December-2010)**

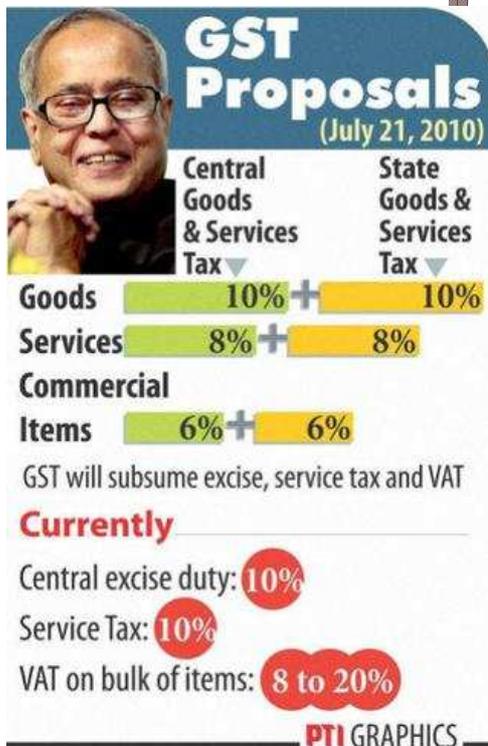
**12th plan target: 9-9.5%**

### **GST Bill tabled in Lok Sabha**

- The Centre introduced a Constitution Amendment(One Hundred and Fifteenth Amendment) Bill in the Lok Sabha to facilitate implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), a tax regime that would subsume levies such as excise, service tax and sales tax.
- The Bill seeks to amend the Constitution with a view to conferring simultaneous powers on the Centre and the States to levy taxes on goods and services.
- It will also subsume State VAT/sales tax, entertainment tax (unless levied by the local bodies), luxury tax, taxes on lottery, betting and gambling as also tax on advertisements, cesses and surcharges levied by States.
- However, crude petroleum, diesel, petrol, aviation turbine fuel, natural gas and alcohol for human consumption have been kept out of the GST ambit.

### **GST Council**

- The Bill provides for creation of a GST Council to be headed by Union Finance Minister. The council will be empowered to recommend tax rates and exemption and threshold limits for goods and services.
- **GST Dispute Settlement Authority:**
- The Bill proposes a GST Dispute Settlement Authority to deal with grievances of the Centre and the States with regard to GST.
- The chairperson of the authority will be a retired judge of the Supreme Court or the Chief Justice of a High Court, who would be appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of India. The GST, considered to be a major tax reform, has been pending for the last four years due to disagreement between the Centre and some States over the structure of the new tax regime.



### **Tax Exemption under section for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2011**

The Union Cabinet approved the proposal of Ministry of Finance for exempting ICC Cricket World Cup 2011 from income tax under section 10(39) of the Income Tax Act 1961 in respect of income which is arising in the India from the ICC World Cup, 2011 to the subsidiaries of the ICC, only where the contractual obligation to bear the income-tax liability is on these entities.

The financial implication will be Rs.45 crore approximately.

#### **Background:**

In 2005, the Cabinet has approved a proposal to amend the Income Tax Act, 1961 to give an exemption to the income of both residents and non-residents arising from an international sporting event conducted in India. Consequently, exemption from income tax was granted to ICC for the ICC Championship Trophy 2006.

### **Creation of seven posts of Indirect Tax Ombudsman**

The Union Cabinet approved creation of seven posts of Indirect Tax Ombudsman to be located at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Lucknow.

The Indirect Tax Ombudsman Guidelines, 2011 has also been approved.

The Indirect Tax Ombudsman shall have powers to receive complaints from tax payers on indirect tax matters and consider such complaints and facilitate their satisfaction or settlement by agreement through conciliation and mediation between the Customs, Central Excise and Service Tax department and the aggrieved parties or by passing an 'Award' in accordance with the Guidelines.

It is expected that this will result in making the grievance redressal mechanism in the Customs, Central Excise and the Service Taxes offices under the CBEC more effective and transparent.

### **Extension of Indian Development and Economic Assistance (IDEA) Scheme**

The CCEA has approved the operating and extending Indian Development and Economic Assistance (IDEA) Scheme during the period 2010-11 to 2014-15 for both African and non-African countries. Under the IDEA scheme, Government supported Export and Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) Lines of Credit (LoCs) are made available to developing countries for support of developmental and other projects as recommended by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

#### **Background**

The IDEA Scheme initially known as the India Development Initiative had its genesis in the announcement made by Finance Minister in the Union Budget for 2003-04, as an initiative for providing grants or project assistance to developing countries in the Africa, South Asia and other parts of the developing world and with a view to also leverage and promote our strategic economic interests abroad.

## **Agriculture**

### **Lab to Land Initiative**

- Under the initiative, 43 districts have been identified from 28 states across the country wherein on a pilot basis the effectiveness of program implementation would be enhanced through field level training.
- The initiative aims to build a collaborative knowledge and innovation community and demonstrate full achievement of the objective of all schemes of the rural sector (Rural Development, Agriculture, Watershed, Environment, Income generation, Employment, Roads, Health, Education, Sanitation, Drinking water, Electrification, Food Security, Land records, Industries, Irrigation, Citizen's charter, Grievance redressal mechanism etc.).

[in news: RD Ministry Organizes National Seminar on Lab to Land Initiative in Gangtok]

**Highest Ever Foodgrain Production: Estimated at 235.88 Mt 3rd Advance Estimates of Crop Production for 2010-11 Released**

**Foodgrains** – 235.88 million tonnes: **highest ever**

Rice – 94.11 million tonnes  
Wheat – 84.27 million tonnes: **highest ever**  
Coarse Cereals – 40.21 million tonnes  
Maize – 20.23 million tonnes  
Pulses – 17.29 million tonnes: **highest ever**  
    Tur – 3.15 million tonnes  
    Urad – 1.82 million tonnes  
    Moong – 1.37 million tonnes

**Oilseeds** – 30.25 million tonnes: **highest ever**

Soyabean – 12.59 million tonnes  
Groundnut – 7.09 million tonnes

**Cotton** – 33.93 million bales of 170 kg each: **highest ever**

**Sugarcane** – 340.55 million tonnes

**Shri Arun Yadav (Minister of State for Agriculture) Exhorts Cooperatives to Maintain Identity, Bring in Professionalism**

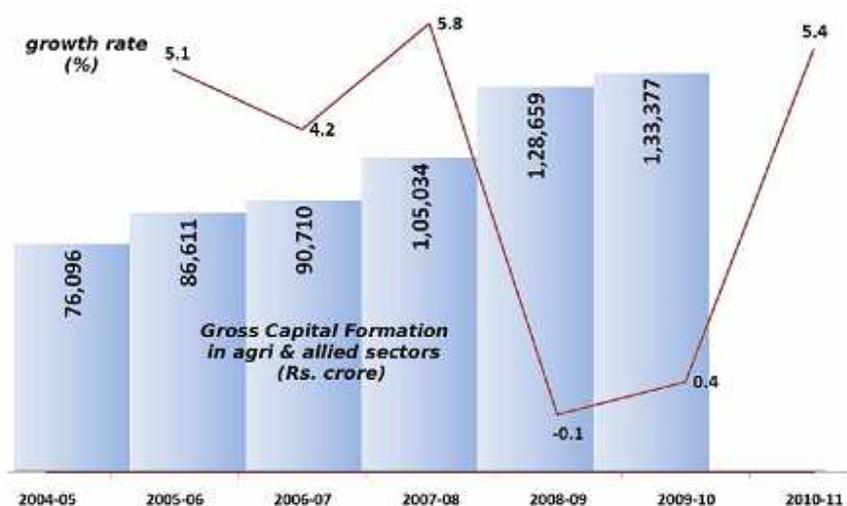
- Shri Yadav said that the Government is determined to give full autonomy to cooperatives through **amendment of the Constitution**.
- The Government has already accepted the recommendations of the **Vidyanathan Committee** for strengthening the cooperative sector.
- The Minister informed that the Multi-State Cooperatives (Amendment) Bill 2010 and a Constitutional Amendment Bill have been placed in the Lok Sabha and expressed the hope that passage of these Bills will go a long way in strengthening the cooperative sector.

**Background:**

The Government of India (GoI) appointed a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Prof. A Vaidyanathan in 2004 to analyse the problems faced by the CCS (cooperative credit structure) institutions and to suggest an action plan for their revival.

**Annual Report of Department of Agriculture & Cooperation**

Farm Sector to Grow 5.4% in 2010-11  
Public Investment in Agriculture on The Rise;



### **progress of implementation of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana**

The Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) will be implemented in the coming year (2011-12) with a budget of Rs. 7860 crore and nine sub-schemes. This represents a quantum jump in funds from Rs. 6775 crore in 2010-11 and wide expansion in the scope of the scheme.

The RKVY will now have nine sub-schemes. Three of the sub-schemes were introduced in 2010-11 and will be continued this year also. The sub-schemes are as follows:

1. Extending Green Revolution to the Eastern Region of the Country
2. Integrated Development of 60,000 Pulses Villages in Rainfed Areas.
3. Promotion of Oil Palm
4. Initiative on Vegetable Clusters.
5. Nutri-cereals.
6. National Mission for Protein Supplements.
7. Accelerated Fodder Development Programme.
8. Rainfed Area Development Programme.
9. Saffron Mission.

### **Inviting Private Participation in Agriculture Supply Chain**

The Government proposes to invite private sector participation in agriculture supply chain, in order to eliminate the existing marketing inefficiency due to multiplayer structure of intermediaries.

In order to facilitate adequate investment for development of marketing infrastructure and supply chain including that by the private sector, the Ministry of Agriculture has circulated Model Agricultural Produce Marketing (Development and Regulation) Act (APMC Act) 2003 to all the States/Union Territories for their adoption.

The Model Act provides for contract farming, direct marketing, setting up of markets by private and cooperative sectors which is intended to improve the remuneration to the farmers for their produce through provision of efficient supply chain and reduction of intermediation in the marketing system.

### **States Receive Over Rs. 360 Crore for Oilseeds and Maize Promotion**

The Centre has released Rs. 362.67 crore to 19 states for promotion of oilseeds, oil palm and maize so far in the current financial year.

The major states receiving funds for this purpose under the Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) are: Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Orissa.

Government of India is implementing Integrated Scheme of Oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize (ISOPOM) for the benefit of the farmers since 1.4.2004. Since 1.4.2010, the pulses development programme of ISOPOM has been merged with National Food Security Mission (NFSM).

#### **Measures Being Taken to Keep Fruit, Vegetable Prices Under Check**

- In order to contain the prices of horticulture products especially onion, government uses Minimum Export Price (MEP). The MEP of onion was raised from US \$ 275 PMT to US \$ 1200 PMT during September, 2010 to December, 2010.
- The most effective measure for stabilizing prices of horticulture products is to establish good Post Harvest Management infrastructure in the country for which Department of Agriculture & Cooperation provides assistance under National Horticulture Mission (NHM) and Horticulture Mission for North-East and Himalayan States (HMNEH).
- An Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG), under the chairmanship of Chief Economic Adviser (CEA), Ministry of Finance, with representatives from Departments of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Agriculture and Cooperation, Animal Husbandry, Planning Commission and Economic Affairs was recently constituted to review and suggest measures for control of prices with focus on primary food articles including onion.

#### **India Free from Wheat Rust Disease Ug99**

There are occurrences of stem rust fungal disease in wheat in different parts of the world including Africa.

Wheat varieties grown in India are resistant to most of the Indian races of stem rust. Several varieties are also resistant to the new race (Ug99) of stem rust as per testing carried out in Kenya and Ethiopia. Ug99 stem rust has not yet been spotted in India as per the survey and crop health monitoring reports.

The following steps have been taken to prevent outbreak of Ug99 in India.

1. Extensive surveys are in operation for detection of Ug99.
2. Indian wheat varieties have been evaluated at Kenya and Ethiopia against stem rust race Ug99 and around 30 of those varieties have been found to carry resistance to this disease.
3. Ug99 resistant genetic stocks are being used in wheat breeding programme to develop disease resistant varieties.

#### **Wheat Sown in 294.06 and Pulses in 156.01 Lakh Hectare**

- As per data received from States, wheat has been sown in 294.06 lakh hectare, which is 10.46 lakh hectare more than last year on this date.
- The pulses acreage is up by 13.66 lakh hectare and oilseeds by 3.41 lakh hectare compared to last year.

#### **Focus on Raising Productivity of Pulses**

- As per the FAO Statistics 2009, the productivity of pulses in India is lesser than the advanced countries including China.
- Government has been implementing National Food Security Mission-pulses in 16 major pulses producing states in the country to enhance the production and productivity of pulses in the country.
- Besides, Accelerated Pulses Production Programme (A3P) was also launched from Kharif, 2010 as a part of NFSM-Pulses for demonstration of Production and Protection Technologies as Village Level Compact Blocks for enhanced production and productivity of pulses as well as motivating farmers for increased investment in promoting pulses production. Assistance is also being provided to the farmers under other crop

development programmes such as Integrated development of 60,000 villages of Pulses, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Macro Management of Agriculture (MMA) & "Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India" (BGEI) for enhancing agricultural production including that of pulses.

### **Agriculture Census in XI Plan**

The main objective of the Agriculture Census is the collection and derivation of quantitative information about the structural aspects of agricultural holdings in the country.

### **Negotiable Warehouse Receipt System**

- Henceforth, farmers can seek the loan from banks against the warehouse receipts issued to them against their storage. These receipts issued by the warehouses registered with the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) would become a fully negotiable instrument backed by a Central legislation.
- The WDRA was setup by the Government in October 2010 to regulate and development of warehouses in the country(implementation of the provisions of the Warehousing (Development and Regulation) Act, 2007).

## **Industry**

### **Maharatna status to Coal India**

w. e.f. 8 April 2011

Background:

- The Central Public Sector Enterprises fulfilling the following criteria are eligible to be considered for grant of Maharatna status: -
  - **Having Navratna status**
  - **Listed on Indian stock exchange** with minimum prescribed public shareholding under SEBI regulations
  - An average **annual turnover** of more than **Rs. 25,000 crore** during the last 3 years
  - An average **annual net worth** of more than **Rs. 15,000 crore** during the last 3 years
  - An average **annual net profit after tax** of more than **Rs. 5,000 crore** during the last 3 years
  - Significant **global presence** or international operations
- Four PSU's IOC, NTPC, ONGC and SAIL were conferred Maharatna status in May 2010.

### **Setting up of an Empowered Committee for identifying technology and investors for Semiconductor Wafer Fabrication (Fab) Manufacturing Facilities in the country**

- Comprising Adviser to PM on Public Information, Infrastructure and Innovation and others.
- The Empowered Committee will identify technology and potential investors for establishment of Semiconductor Wafer Fabs, and thereafter ascertain their interest in setting up of Semiconductor Fab facilities in the country; to assess and recommend the nature and Quantum of Government support such as equity/grant/ subsidy in physical/financial terms that may be required.

**Background:**

A Committee comprising the Chairman, National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council (NMCC) and Adviser to Prime Minister on Public Information Infrastructure and Innovation and including the Member Secretary, NMCC; Secretary, Information Technology and Secretary, Telecommunications has made five recommendations: (i) Set up Semiconductor Wafer Fabs; (ii) Create policies for preferential access to "Manufactured-in-India" "Indian Products" electronics goods for all government procurements and procurement by Government Licensees; (iii) Set up a dedicated "Electronic Development Fund"; (iv) Set up of a National Electronics Mission (NEM) and (v) Encourage manufacture of specific high priority electronic product line in India by providing capital grant and creation of electronic manufacturing clusters. ;

The Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) of investment for the two wafer fabs (Fab-1 and Fab-2) is estimated at to be Rs.25,000 Crore (approx. US\$ 5 Billion).

#### **Pharma Sector**

There are 10,563 manufacturing units in the country according to first directory of Pharmaceuticals manufacturing units.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) is in the process of examining a proposal to set up a Venture Fund for promoting Pharma drug discovery and innovation.

#### **Shortage of Coal**

As per the Annual Plan Document 2011-12, the likely demand for coal in the country is 696.03 MT and the projected domestic coal production is 554.00 MT. However, 5 MT of coal stocks are proposed to be liquidated by CIL bringing down the gap to 137 MT. The gap will have to be met through imports.

#### **FDI in Defence**

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has circulated a Discussion Paper suggesting raising FDI cap in Defence manufacturing sector to 74% or more from the existing 26%.

#### **Contribution of Mining Sector to the GDP**

The contribution of mining and quarrying sector (excluding Atomic minerals & metals) to the Gross Domestic product (GDP) at current prices in 2009-10 was 2.52%.

### **Trade and commerce**

#### **Third edition of the Consolidated FDI Policy**(Circular 1 of 2011)

- Removal of the condition of prior approval in case of existing joint ventures/ technical collaborations in the 'same field'
- Companies have now been classified into only two categories – 'companies owned or controlled by foreign investors' and 'companies owned and controlled by Indian residents' rather than earlier three categories.
- In the agriculture sector, FDI will now be permitted in the development and production of seeds and planting material, without the stipulation of having to do so under 'controlled conditions'.

#### **Patent Proposals**

83,686 Patent applications for examination are pending as on 8th March, 2011. This pendency is due to substantial increase in filing requests for examination and shortage of examiners of Patent and Designs.

#### **Promotion of Tea Industry in North-Eastern Region**

Government is promoting teas of North East region. The mark Assam orthodox has been registered as a geographical indication. Apart from this Assam logo has also been registered as copyright on the lines of Darjeeling. Moreover, India Tea Logo promoted extensively by the Board also covers teas of NE region. As far as the flavour of Tea is concerned, it depends on many factors like agro-climatic conditions of the area including soil and type of variety grown. Darjeeling tea which has the peculiar muscatel flavour cannot be compared with any other teas in India.

The quality of rubber production in the district of Karbi Anglong is reasonably good. Due to the efforts of the Rubber Board, an area of around 4200 hectares has so far has been planted with rubber in Karbi Anglong. Out of this, around 2000 hectares is mature and the yield is around 3000 metric tonnes per annum. Rubber Board is providing necessary assistance to improve the productivity, quality and marketing of the rubber in the district.

## Public Distribution

### TPDS

- Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of Central Government and State/Union Territory (UT) Governments.
- Instructions have been issued to State/UT Governments for involving Panchayati Raj Institutions in the functioning of the TPDS. The instructions, inter alia, stipulate that the list of BPL beneficiaries should be displayed in the Fair Price Shop (FPS) as well as the office of the Gram Panchayat for public scrutiny.

### Sugar Production

season	production (in lac tons)	export (in lac tons)
2007-08	263	58.23
2008-09 (Prov.)	147	2.16
2009-10 (Prov.)	188	2.37

Government did not export sugar on its account during the last three year. Export of sugar is undertaken by sugar mills /merchant exporters, as per their commercial operations.

Related info:

There are seven broad categories of essential commodities covered by the Act. These are (1) Drugs; (2) Fertilizer, inorganic, organic or mixed; (3) Foodstuffs, including edible oilseeds and oils; (4) Hank yarn made wholly from cotton; (5) Petroleum and petroleum products; (6) Raw jute and jute textile; (7) (i) seeds of food-crops and seeds of fruits and vegetables; (ii) seeds of cattle fodder; and (iii) jute seeds. Recently cotton seed was also included in the list.

## Corporate Affairs

### Serious Fraud Investigation Office

- Serious Fraud Investigation Office is investigating 14 cases
- Jurisdiction of Companies Act under which SFIO is functioning is restricted to India only.
- since inception, the Serious Fraud Investigation Officers have Investigated 61 Companies.

### Corporate social responsibility

- it is not mandatory for every company to have a corporate social responsibility.
- But the Government has issued "Corporate Social Responsibility Voluntary Guidelines 2009" for adoption by Companies voluntarily.

## Miscellaneous

### 15795 MW Highest Ever Capacity Addition in the Power Sector During 2010-11

The prominent companies which added to the capacity include NTPC, Adani Power, Reliance Power and Tata Power etc.

Background:

11th plan addition target - 62300 MW(revised) [78700 MW-original]

12th plan addition target- 75000-100000 MW (tentative)

### **Civil Aviation Ministry Reiterates Air Safety**

In news: Fake pilot scam, helicopter accidents, security lapses by private airlines etc.

#### **Background:**

#### **DGCA**

- Directorate General of Civil Aviation is an attached office of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.
- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation is the regulatory body in the field of Civil Aviation primarily dealing with safety issues. It is responsible for regulation of air transport services to/from/within India and for enforcement of civil air regulations, air safety and airworthiness standards. It also co-ordinates all regulatory functions with International Civil Aviation Organisation.
- The headquarters are located in New Delhi with regional offices in the various parts of India.
- There are 14 (fourteen) Regional Airworthiness Offices located at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Trivandrum, Bhopal, Lucknow, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Kanpur, Guwahati and Patiala.
- Apart from the Regional Airworthiness Offices, there are 5 (five) Regional Air Safety offices located at Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and Hyderabad, the Regional Research and Development Office located at Bangalore and the Gliding Centre at Pune.
- India is participated in ICAO by the Representative of India.

### **Food Processing**

- In order to increase level of processing and to promote Food Processing Industries to exploit both the domestic and international market potential for processed food products, Vision 2015 document has been finalized by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MFPI), which envisages tripling the size of the processed food sector by increasing the level of processing of perishables from 6% to 20% value addition from 20% to 35% and share in global food trade from 1.5% to 3% by 2015.
- The average annual growth rate of Food Processing Sector was 7% in 2004 which has gone up to over 14% in 2010. The over-all processing level was 6%, value addition was 20% in 2004 which has gone up to 11% and 26% respectively.

### **NATRIP**

The National Automotive Testing and R&D Infrastructure Project (NATRIP) had been approved by the Government to create state-of-the-art Homologation, Testing, Validation and R&D infrastructure in the country.

### **Foreign Tourist Arrivals(FTAs)**

The FTAs from top five countries in India in 2009 and their percentage share are as given.

Country	FTAs	% share
USA	8,27,140	16.01
UK	7,69,251	14.89
Bangladesh	4,68,899	9.07
Sri Lanka	2,39,995	4.64
Canada	2,24,069	4.34
<b>Other Countries</b>	<b>26,38,345</b>	<b>51.05</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,67,699</b>	<b>100.00</b>

## PERSONS IN NEWS

### International

#### *Obituary*

##### **Norio Ohga**

- Norio Ohga was the former president and chairman of Sony Corporation, accredited for driving the development of the compact disc as a commercially viable audio format.

##### **Sidney Lumet**

- Sidney Lumet was an American director, producer and screenwriter with over 50 films to his name.
- He was nominated for the Academy Award as Best Director for 12 Angry Men (1957), Dog Day Afternoon (1975), Network (1976) and The Verdict (1982).

#### *Appointments*

##### **Raul Castro**

- President of Cuba since 2006.
- Raúl Castro was also elected First Secretary( Cuba Communist Party chief) of the Communist Party at its Sixth Congress on April 19, 2011, after having served as Second Secretary behind his brother for 46 years.
- Fidel Castro not included in the leadership for the first time since the party's creation 46 years ago.

##### **H. S. Shiv Kumar**

- New director of Tagore Centre in Berlin

##### **Jacob Mathew**

- Elected WAN-IFRA president
- Executive Editor of the Malayala Manorama Group of Publications.
- The World Association of Newspapers, founded in 1948, and IFRA, the research and service organisation of the news publishing industry, founded in 1962, merged in 2009 to form WAN-IFRA. Its core mission is to defend and promote quality journalism, editorial integrity, press freedom and development of new media business.
- WAN-IFRA, based in Paris and Darmstadt (Germany), with subsidiaries in Singapore, India, Spain, France and Sweden

#### *Other*

##### **Siddhartha Mukherjee**

Indian-American physician Siddhartha Mukherjee's acclaimed book on cancer, The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer, has won the prestigious 2011 Pulitzer Prize in the general non-fiction category.

##### **Mitt Romney**

Mitt Romney, former Governor of Massachusetts and one of several frontrunner Republican Party candidates, has announced his presidential bid for 2012 through a campaign video that sought to fix the spotlight firmly on job-creation.

### **Rohinton Mistry**

- finalists for the £-60,000 Man Booker International Prize
- Indian born Canadian.

## **National**

### *Obituary*

### **Sujatha**

Sujatha was popular South Indian actress who has performed in Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada and Hindi language films.

### **Ajit Bhattacharjee dead**

- Veteran journalist
- a leading figure of the right to information movement

### **Venkatraman Radhakrishnan**

Venkatraman Radhakrishnan (18 May 1929 – 3 March 2011) was an internationally renowned space scientist and member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. He was Professor Emeritus of the Raman Research Institute in Bangalore, India, where he had been Director from 1972 to 1994.

### **Biren De (1926-2011)**

one of the pioneers of neo-Tantrik art in the country.

### **P.C. Mathew**

one of the last surviving members of the Indian Civil Service passed away.

### *Appointments*

### **Rajendra Pawar**

- New NASSCOM chairman.
- Chirman and co-founder NIIT

### **Smt. Yasmeen Abrar takes over as Chairperson, NCW(National Commission for Women)**

- w. e. f. 8th of April, 2011 on completion of the tenure of Dr. Girija Vyas
- She will hold the Office of Chairperson, NCW till the vacancy is filled by a fresh nomination under NCW Act 1990.
- She is member of NCW since 2005 (second term-2008)

### **Lalit Bhasin**

- new Chairperson of the Film Certification Appellate Tribunal
- Noted lawyer

### **Leela Samson**

- new chairperson of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)
- Bharatnatyam dancer
- Padma Shri awardee
- Non-film background

### **Mahashweta Devi**

- Mahashweta Devi is an Indian social activist and Bengali writer.
- She was recently conferred the Yashwantrao Chavan National Award 2010 "for her contribution

to national integration, democratic values and the socio-economic development of India.”

- Human Resource Development Ministry has appointed her as **National Research Professor for a second term of five years from February 2011.**

### *Other*

#### **President Releases Commemorative Postage Stamp on freedom fighter Smt Subhadra Joshi**

- Attracted by the ideals of Gandhiji, she visited his Ashram at Wardha when she was studying in Lahore. As a Student she took part in the Quit India Movement in 1942. She went underground and edited a journal 'Hamara Sangram'. For the education of dalit children she opened evening schools in Delhi. She was arrested and sent to Lahore Central Jail.
- During the dark days of Partition she set up a peace volunteer organization 'Shanti Dal' which went from door to door spreading the Gandhiji's message of peace and amity. She also organized rehabilitation of evacuees from Pakistan.
- As a parliamentarian for four terms, she made an outstanding contribution to the passage of Special Marriage Act, the Nationalization of Banks, Abolition of Privy Purses, Aligarh University Amendment Act and others. Above all, she pioneered the move to amend the code for Criminal Procedure whereby organized propaganda leading to fear or ill will among communities was made a cognizable offence.

#### **Sunitha Krishnan**

- Sunitha Krishnan is an anti-human trafficking pioneer and co-founder of the NGO Prajwala.
- She was honoured with the Human Rights award of the prestigious Vital Voices Global Leadership Award.

## **Exercises and Operations**

### **IMBEX**

The Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Indian Navy (IN) are conducting the annual Singapore Indian Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) from 18 to 25 Mar 2011. Hosted by Singapore, this year's exercise is the 18th in the series of bilateral exercise held since 1994. The exercise comprises a shore phase, already held at the Changi Naval Base and a sea phase currently being carried out in the South China Sea.

### **MALABAR**

- MALABAR is an annual bilateral exercise between Indian Navy and US Navy. On two occasions, Japanese Navy and one occasion Australian and Singaporean Navies have participated in the same.
- Thirteen exercises of MALABAR series have so far been conducted.
- Out of 13 exercises, 11 have been held off Indian Coast and 2 in the Pacific. The exercises were he

## SPORTS

SPORTS																																					
	<p><b><u>34th National Games 2011</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The 2011 National Games, also known as the 34th National Games of India, was held from 12 February 2011 to 26 February 2011 in Ranchi, Jharkhand, India.</li> <li>▪ The mascot of the games was "'Chhau'"(little boy in the local language), a <b>deer in running motion</b> holding the torch.</li> <li>▪ Though National Games supposed to be held once in 2 years but this edition of games is <b>4 years after Guwahati games.</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Services (Services Sports Control Board - SSCB), which was a combined team of the Indian armed forces, retained the overall title with 70 gold medals.</b></li> <li>▪ Services were presented with the <b>Raja Bhalendra Trophy</b> for the champions team.</li> <li>▪ <b>The Maharashtra swimmer Virbhawal Khade</b> who won <b>12 medals</b> including 8 golds was adjudged the best male athlete while the <b>Delhi swimmer Richa Mishra</b> who won <b>16 medals</b> including 11 golds was adjudged the best female athlete.</li> <li>▪ The best state award was won by <b>Manipur who won 48 gold medals</b> to finish in second place overall.</li> <li>▪ Medal tally:</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>No</th> <th>Team</th> <th>G</th> <th>S</th> <th>B</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td><b>Services</b></td> <td><b>70</b></td> <td><b>50</b></td> <td><b>42</b></td> <td><b>162</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td><b>Manipur</b></td> <td><b>48</b></td> <td><b>37</b></td> <td><b>33</b></td> <td><b>118</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Haryana</td> <td>42</td> <td>33</td> <td>40</td> <td>115</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Maharashtra</td> <td>41</td> <td>44</td> <td>47</td> <td>132</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Jharkhand</td> <td>33</td> <td>26</td> <td>37</td> <td>96</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No	Team	G	S	B	Total	1	<b>Services</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>162</b>	2	<b>Manipur</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>118</b>	3	Haryana	42	33	40	115	4	Maharashtra	41	44	47	132	5	Jharkhand	33	26	37	96
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Laureus World Sports Awards	<p>Laureus World Sportsman of the Year: <b>Rafael Nadal (Tennis - Spain)</b>            Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year: <b>Lindsey Vonn(Skiing - USA)</b>            Laureus World Team of the Year: <b>Spain World Cup Team (Football - Spain)</b>            Laureus World Breakthrough of the Year: Martin Kaymer(Golf - Germany)            Laureus World Comeback of the Year: Valentino Rossi (Motor Cycling - Italy)            Laureus World Sportsperson of the Year with a Disability: Verena Bentele (Skiing - Germany)            Laureus World Action Sportsperson of the Year: Kelly Slater (Surfing - USA)            Laureus Lifetime Achievement Award: Zinedine Zidane (Football - France)            Laureus Sport for Good Award: May El-Khalil (Running - Lebanon)            Laureus Spirit of Sport Award: European Ryder Cup Team (Golf - Europe)</p>																																				

	<p><b>Background:</b> The Laureus World Sports Awards are awarded annually to sportspeople who have been outstanding during the previous year. The Laureus World Sports Awards were established in 1999 by Founding Patrons Daimler and Richemont and is supported by its Global Partners Mercedes-Benz, IWC Schaffhausen and Vodafone. The first gala was held on May 25, 2000 in Monte Carlo.</p>		
Narinder Batra	lected as the vice-president of the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) at its recent congress held at Kuala Lumpur.		
<b>Taekwondo</b>			
commonwealth taekwondo championships 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ India bagged the overall championship in the fifth Commonwealth taekwondo championships held in Chennai with a whopping tally of 261 points.</li> <li>▪ The host nation clinched 21 gold, 23 silver and 45 bronze medals. England (38 points) won three gold, four silver and five bronze medals to finish second, while Australia (33) ended up with four gold and five bronze.</li> <li>▪ India walked away with the 'best player award' in all four categories: Vipan Singh (junior boys), Janey Dharma (senior), Tasim Begum (junior girls) Shraddha Dixit (senior).</li> </ul>		
<b>Cricket</b>			
Sachin Tendulkar	Tendulkar became the first batsman to score five hundreds in the World Cup, powering India to 338 in the Group B match at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore.		
Duleep Trophy	<p>South zone won the trophy after fifteen years defeating North Zone</p> <p>Background: The Duleep Trophy is a domestic first-class cricket competition played in India between teams representing five geographical zones of India. The competition is named after Kumar Shri Duleepsinhji (also known as "Duleep").</p>		
<b>Tennis</b>			
2011 Australian Open	Category	Champion(s)	Runnerups(s)
	<b>Men's singles</b>	<b>Novak Djokovic (Serbia)</b>	<b>Andy Murray (Great Britain)</b>
	<b>Women's singles</b>	<b>Kim Clijsters (Belgium)</b>	<b>Li Na (China)</b>
	Men's doubles	Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan ( U.S.)	<b>Mahesh Bhupathi and Leander Paes (India)</b>
	Women's doubles	Gisela Dulko (Argentina) and Flavia Pennetta (Italy)	Maria Kirilenko(Belarus) and Victoria Azarenka (Russia)

	Mixed doubles	Daniel Nestor (Canada) and Katarina Srebotnik (Slovenia)	Chan Yung-Jan (Taiwan) and Paul Hanley (Australia)
Justine Henin	Belgian tennis player and former World No. 1. retired from professional tennis once again because of an elbow injury.		
<b>Squash</b>			
Dipika Pallikal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieves India's Highest WISPA Ranking</li> <li>Dipika Pallikal scales to a new high of 24 in the February WISPA(Womens International Squash Players Association) rankings. This is the highest by any Indian female player in the history of squash. Dipika still 19 years, held the no. 1 junior ranking from May 2010 till September when she crossed into the senior category. Dipika finished her junior career by winning the Asian Junior Championships last June</li> </ul> <p>Related info:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saurav Ghosal is also at 24(Men's ranking by SPA-Squash Professionals Affiliate) after slipping one place from 23.</li> </ul>		
15th Asian junior squash championship	India made history at the <b>Ratmalana courts</b> in Colombo by clinching the boys' title for the first time, beating defending champion Pakistan. It was India's maiden triumph since the inception of the tournament in 1981.		
<b>Chess</b>			
M. Aditya	Six-year-old M. Aditya (1492) has become the youngest rated Indian chess player, according to the January 2011 list released by FIDE, the international chess body.		
<b>Football</b>			
Asian Cup 2011	Japan won an unprecedented fourth Asian Cup title after beating Australia 1-0 after extra-time in the final played in the Khalifa Stadium(Doha, Qatar ).		
<b>Golf</b>			
Asian junior golf championship	Led by Chikkarangappa, the Indian junior team won the Asian juniors golf team championship at the Damai Laut Golf & Country Club(Kuala Lumpur,Malaysia).		
<b>Shooting</b>			
Abhinav Bindra	Gold in French GP at Paris		
<b>Table Tennis</b>			
Sharath Kamal	Three gold in 34th National Games		
<b>Athlete</b>			
Sharadha Narayanan	The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) has filed an appeal with the National Anti-		

	Doping Appeal panel against the exoneration of athlete Sharadha Narayana in a doping case.
	<p><b><u>“Come and Play Scheme”</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Under the Scheme unveiled by Sports Minister on 15th April, 2011, it was envisaged of opening of SAI(Sports Authority of India) stadia in the city for usage by school children, students, sports persons as also the common people.</li> <li>▪ The designated area in the stadia will be thrown open for imparting professional training to the establishment sports persons and also to beginners with the twin objective of encouraging participation in sports as also optimum utilization of the stadia.</li> <li>▪ <b>Fee:</b> Free-of-Cost Facilities to People below Poverty Line and at One-Third Rates to Students of Government Schools. For others minimal fee.</li> </ul>
<b>Cricket</b>	
	<p><b><u>Wisden honours Tendulkar</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sachin Tendulkar has been named Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World for the year 2010.</li> <li>▪ The Indian batsman is the seventh recipient of the Wisden award.</li> <li>▪ Unlike the winners of Wisden's coveted five cricketers of the year, it is possible to be named the world's best in the almanack more than once.</li> <li>▪ Tendulkar is making it an Indian hat-trick, after Test opener Virender Sehwag took the honour in each of the last two years.</li> <li>▪ Tendulkar in the 22nd year of his international career, made more than 1,500 Test runs and seven Test hundreds, including an unparalleled 50th overall, in the year 2010.</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Dhoni more influential than Obama: Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people in the world</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dhoni, ranked 52nd in the chart, was the only Indian sportsperson to make the list which also included four of his compatriots in “Titan of Industry” Mukesh Ambani (61), “Brain Mapper” V.S. Ramachandran (79), “Philanthropist” Azim Premji (88) and “Change Agent” Aruna Roy (89).</li> <li>▪ He found himself way above Messi who was just below Obama at the 87th spot in a list topped by Wael Ghonim, the Google executive who became the “Spokesman for a Revolution” in Egypt.</li> <li>▪ The highest-ranked Indian in the latest Time list, he is only the second Indian sportsman after Sachin Tendulkar to make it there.</li> <li>▪ The other global celebrities included are U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who is incidentally ranked higher than Obama at 43rd, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg (6), and WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange (9).</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Duncan Fletcher</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The former England coach, Duncan Fletcher, has been appointed coach of the Indian cricket team for a period of two years. He takes over from the highly successful Gary Kirsten.</li> <li>• Zimbabwe's former captain.</li> </ul>
<b>Football</b>	
	<b><u>Sports Ministry Felicitates Members of Indian Football Team of Rome Olympics</u></b>

**Why:** Indian Football Team, which took part in 1960 Rome Olympics, had put up impressive performance by creating scare in football giants such as France and Hungary, the power houses of European Football. The Indian Team draw 1-1 with France and lost 1-2 to Hungary.

Related:

**Best Football performance by India:**

**World Cup 1950:** In Asia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Burma all withdrew, leaving India to qualify by default. However, India subsequently withdrew when FIFA imposed a rule banning barefoot play.

**Olympics 1956:** At the 1956 Olympic Games they finished fourth(semi final), which is regarded as one of finest achievements in Indian football.

**Asian Cup :** Runner up (1964)

**Racing**

Player	Country	Team	Comment
Sebastian Vettel	Germany	Red Bulls	Won Malasian Grand prix
Lewis Hamilton	Britain	McLaren	Won chinese grand prix

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## Miscellaneous (also in news)

### INSTITUTE

Institute	HQ	comment
National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM)	Kundli, Haryana.	cost estimates revised
National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC)	Hyderabad	
Central Arid Zone Research Institute(CAZRI)	Jodhpur	In a novel initiative, senior bureaucrats of the Union Agriculture Ministry here have been asked to tour the country to identify institutes and the technologies available for dissemination in the field. They will also interact with farmers to assess their demands and strengthen the extension services.
Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture(CRIDA)	Hyderabad	
National academy of agriculture research and management	Hyderabad	
Central Rice Research institute	Cuttack	
National Institute of Abiotic stress management	Malegaon	
Directorate of Medicinal and Aromatic plant research	Anand	
Counter Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School	Vainagte, Mizoram	
Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR)	New Delhi	The Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR), functioning from 1977 with offices in New Delhi and Lucknow, reviews the progress, sponsors or assists projects and programmes of research in philosophy, and gives financial assistance to institutions and individuals to conduct research in philosophy and allied disciplines.
Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology	Kochi	Ministry of Earth Sciences.
DRDO's Naval material Research laboratory	Ambarnath, MH	Developing AIP.

All India institute of speech and hearing	Mysore	
NEERI: National Environmental Engineering Research Institute	Nagpur	
CCMB- Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology	Hyderabad	
LaCONES (Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species);	Hyderabad	
<b>International</b>		
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Vienna	
International Rice Research Institute	Philippines	The miracle workers who sparked the Green Revolution of the 1960s in Asia are in the final stages of developing their next wonder -- <b>rice varieties that can survive flooding, salinity and drought. (Aerobic, submarine rice )</b>
EcoSoc		
UN-Habitat	Nairobi (Kenya)	
IPCC	Geneva(Switzerland)	

### Department/Agencies and Location

Department/Agencies and Location	Ministries	
NAFED (National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Fdration of India)	Ministry of Agriculture	NAFED is the Central agency for procurement of oilseeds at MSP under Price Support Scheme (PSS)
National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA)	Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers	NPPA hikes prices of six drugs.
Combat Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA)	unit of the Central Reserve Police Force , MoH	
Spices Board(Kochin)	Ministry of Commerce	
National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGBRA)	Ministry of Environment & Forests	
BRPSE(Board for	established in December 2004 as an advisory body	

Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises)	to advise the Government on the strategies, measures and schemes for strengthening, modernizing, reviving and restructuring of public sector enterprises.	
APMC(Agricultural Produce Market Committee)	It is a marketing board established by the state governments of India	
APEDA: Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority;	Ministry of Commerce & Industry	

## PLACES IN NEWS

Place	Comment
Grosvenor House Hotel	The conglomerate, Sahara India Pariwar, has bought London's luxurious Grosvenor House hotel from State-rescued Royal Bank of Scotland for 470 million pounds (545 million euro, \$728 million).
Vanuatu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An island nation located in the South Pacific Ocean.</li> <li>7.3 magnitude Earthquake struck of recently</li> </ul>
ICC HQ	Not to be sifted from Dubai to London
Chabahar port	Iran (on the coast of the Gulf of Oman)

## Parks/Sanctuary etc

Name	Place	Comment
Simlipal Tiger Reserve (STR)	Orissa	Orissa forest authorities suspect that poisoning is the cause of death of three juvenile elephants
Kudremukh National Park	Karnataka	Environment and Forests Minister Jairam Ramesh has sought a proposal from Karnataka for declaring the Kudremukh National Park a tiger reserve.
Satkosia Tiger Reserve	Orissa	
Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary	Kerala	A recent study of the Wayanad part of the Western Ghats has once again proved that the biodiversity of the region is still not explored fully, with even higher plants waiting to be discovered.
Arignar Anna Zoological Park (Vandalur Zoo)	Near Chennai	

Pinjore Gardens	near Chandigarh,	Mughal Gardens style
Rajiv Gandhi National Park	Orang, Assam;	
Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Botanical Garden	Kolkata	the oldest in the country Trees destroyed in 2 hour fire
Gahirmatha Marine Wildlife Sanctuary	Orissa	Beaches of Sanctuary , the site of the world's leading congregation of Olive Ridley sea turtles are sinking. Part of Bhitarkanika National Park in the Kendrapara district of Orissa.
Point Calimere wildlife Sanctuary	Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu	
Padmaja Naidu Himalayan zoological park	Darjeeling	three births of red pandas as a part of the zoo's conservation breeding programme

## PERSONS IN NEWS

Person	
K.V. Raman	Agricultural scientist K.V. Raman has been awarded the prestigious Bharat Jyoti Award of the India International Friendship Society for his contributions to science, technology and development.
Daisaku Ikeda	Buddhist philosopher, president of Soka Gakkai International conferred first MLBD Indology Award by Motilal Banarsidass Publishers (MLBD) and Bharat Soka Gakkai.
Baldev Raj	Baldev Raj, Director of the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) in Kalpakkam has been elected president of the Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE). It provides considered opinion on policy matters in domains of higher education, energy, heritage and industry either on request from the government or on the basis of the need envisaged.
G. R. Sufi	J&K's first CIC(Chief Information Commissioner); former IRS.
Aamir Khan	made it to the international jury of the 61st Berlin film festival
Rudolf Elmer	A Swiss banker who claims to have handed WikiLeaks details of rich tax evaders goes on trial on charges of coercion and breaking Switzerland's strict banking secrecy laws.
Abhay Kumar Srivastava	NALCO MD arrested on corruption charges
R. S. Butola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be next Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation.</li> <li>currently ONGC Videsh Ltd. (OVL) Managing Director</li> </ul>
Ajay Parida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ajay Parida, Executive Director, M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, has been</li> </ul>

	<p>selected for the prestigious TATA Innovation Fellowship of the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>for his research contribution in the area of basic and applied sciences in developing novel genetic combinations for abiotic stress and nutritional enhancement using advanced biotechnological tools.</li> </ul>
Rahat Fateh Ali Khan	Celebrated Pakistani singer detained at airport For allegedly carrying undeclared cash totalling \$124,000
Maulana Gulam Mohammad Vastanvi	Vice-Chancellor of Darul Uloom Deoband In controversy due to pro Modi remarks.
Ennapadam S. Krishnamoorthy	He has been awarded the Royal College of Psychiatrists President's Medal for 2011 in recognition of his significant contributions to policy, public knowledge and education in mental health and wellness. Dr. Krishnamoorthy, who is now honorary secretary of Voluntary Health Services, reportedly becomes the first Indian to be recognised by the Royal Colleges for contributions to both neurology and psychiatry
M.P. Prakash	former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka, passed away
aruna ramachandran shanbhag	The euthanasia debate is back with the Supreme Court directing a three-member committee of doctors to look into the physical and mental status of nurse Aruna Shanbaug who has been lying comatose for the past 38 years in Mumbai's King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital. Aruna has been lying comatose following a brutal sexual assault by a hospital ward boy Sohanlal Valmiki in 1973.
Prithviraj Chavan	New chief minister of Maharashtra as Ashok Chavan resigned over the "Adarsh Housing Society controversy"
Sanjeev Tripathi	new chief of the country's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW)
A. P. Singh	New Director of CBI
U.K. Sinha	To be appointed next SEBI chairman
Nehchal Sandhu	New IB chief.
Kiran Kumar Reddy	New chief minister of AP
Y S Dadwal	New chief of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
Eugenie Blanchard	World's oldest person, Eugenie Blanchard, dead at 114 years old
Irom Sharmila	Completed 10 years of his fast against ASPA (1958) in Manipur.
11. Sanmugham	Singapore's new Home Minister
Lord Swaraj Paul	stepped down from the deputy speaker of the Lords position due to allegations of financial impropriety
K. Vijay Kumar	new chief of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

Milon Kumar Banerjee	<b>Former Attorney General of India</b> who worked with five different prime ministers died recently.
K. M. Mathew	Padma awardee <b>chief editor of Malayala Manorama</b> died recently.
Maruti Mane	Asian games gold winner <b>wrestler</b> died.

### Temples/Dams etc

Name	Location	Comment
Emar Mutt	Puri	Rs. 90 Cr. Hidden Treasure (Silver slabs) found
Sardar Sarovar Dam	Gujarat/Narmada	
Omkareshwar and Indira-Sagar dams	MP/Narmada	The National Alliance of People Movements (NAPM) has urged the Centre to dissuade the Madhya Pradesh government from excavating huge canals for the Indira Sagar and Omkareshwar dams through the very villages that fall in the submergence zone of the mega Sardar Sarovar Project (SSP).
Jagannath Temple	Puri	non-Hindus are not allowed to enter.

### Multilateral Groups

Multilateral Groups	
BRIC(Brazil, Russia, India and China)	The BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) grouping will become BRICS with the inclusion of South Africa, according to sources in the government.
ISAF: International Security Assistance Force;	The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) is a NATO-led security mission in Afghanistan established by the United Nations Security Council on 20 December 2001 by Resolution 1386 as envisaged by the Bonn Agreement.
OSCE-The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe;	world's largest security-oriented intergovernmental organization. Its 56 participating states are in Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and North America and cover most of the northern hemisphere.
CSTO: Collective Security Treaty Organisation;	• is an intergovernmental military alliance which was

	<p>signed on 15 May 1992. On 7 October 2002, the Presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan signed a charter in Tashkent founding the CSTO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uzbekistan joined in 2006.</li> </ul>
AMISOM: African Union Mission for Somalia;	
IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development;	<p>is a seven-country regional development organization in East Africa. Its headquarters are located in Djibouti City.</p> <p>Djibouti (founding member, 1986)  Ethiopia (founding member, 1986)  Kenya (founding member, 1986)  Somalia (founding member, 1986)  Sudan (founding member, 1986)  Uganda (founding member, 1986)  <b>Eritrea</b> (joined soon after independence in 1993, unilaterally declared its suspension in 2007; an exit would be effective one year after being formally declared against IGAD)</p>

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Contact No. : 09650617807 , 09968029039

Email : [ajay\\_uor@yahoo.com](mailto:ajay_uor@yahoo.com)