

## Some Key Current Info-Bits at Random (January 1- January 10)

- On January 1, 2014 India and Pakistan exchanged **lists of nuclear installations** and facilities and nationals of each country lodged in others jails.
  - The list of nuclear installations and facilities is exchanged by the two countries on January 1 every year as part of an *Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities*.
    - The agreement, signed on December 31, 1988.
    - It came into force on January 27, 1991.
- On January 1, 2014 **mountain strike corps**, aimed at countering China, was formally raised by holding a flag hoisting ceremony at Ranchi
  - This is the first corps to be raised since the 9 Corps was raised **at Yol, near Dharamsala**, in 2005.
- On January 1, 2014 Lt Gen Dalbir Singh Suhag, tipped to be the next Army Chief, took over as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff.
- On January 5, 2014 India joined the big league of space powers when its mega launcher, the Geosynchronous **Satellite Launch Vehicle or GSLV-D5**, was successfully blasted off from the Shriharikota (SHAR).
  - The towering rocket injected **GSAT-14 in orbit 213 km** above the Earth over Indonesia.
- On January 10, 2014 Space Secretary K Radhakrishnan shared that success of the **Chandrayaan-I mission** has encouraged India to launch the second mission to the Earth's satellite, Moon, Chandrayaan-II.
  - India will land an indigenously- built rover there in the next two to three years using the Geo-Synchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV).
- On January 1, 2014 Ministry of Defence scrapped the Rs 3,600-cr deal with Anglo-Italian firm **AgustaWestland** to supply 12 copters to fly top politicians.
  - The 2010 deal was mired in controversy and there were allegations of payoffs.
- On January 1, 2014 new Land Acquisition Act, enacted by Parliament to replace a **120-year-old legislation**, came into force.
  - "*The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act*", received the Presidential assent on September 27.

- The historic Act is to provide just and fair compensation to farmers was passed by both Houses of Parliament with overwhelming majority during its Monsoon Session.
- On January 1, 2014 Maldivian President **Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom** reached New Delhi on a four-day visit to India.
  - The President is the half-brother of former president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.
- On January 1, 2014 wrestlers **Sushil Kumar and Yogeshwar Dutt** announced to compete in 74kg and 65kg categories respectively at the 2016 Rio Olympic Games to avoid face-off against each other.
- On January 1, 2014 at Queenstown, **New Zealand all-rounder Corey Anderson** scored fastest 36-ball ton in ODI, against West Indies and broke 17 yr old 37-ball record of Shahid Afridi against Sri Lanka in 1996.
- On January 2, 2014 having set up the **Nirbhaya Fund** almost a year ago to implement projects to improve the safety of women, GoI finally gave its approval to one such project of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
  - The CCEA has also approved the construction of a 220kV transmission system from Alusteng (Srinagar) to Leh and an interconnection system for **Drass, Kargil, Khalsti and Leh** substations in Jammu and Kashmir.
- On January 2, 2014 **India and Saudi Arabia signed an accord** for protection of the rights of domestic Indian workers in the kingdom.
  - The agreement is intended to benefit **28 lakh Indian workers** in that country.
  - Nitaqat came into force from last year and since then, 1.40 lakh Indian workers have returned home.
- The “**Nitaqat**” policy aims at encouraging employment for the locals in the kingdom.
- On January 2, 2014 the 44,500 tonne and 284 metres long **INS Vikramaditya** entered the Arabian Sea via the Suez Canal while on its journey from Russia.
  - INS Vikramaditya that cost India \$2.35 billion (approx Rs 14,000 cr at today's dollar rupee exchange rates) was delivered by Russia on November 16 at the northern city of Severodvinsk.
  - It is for the first time since 1994 that two Indian Naval aircraft carriers have operated together.

- On January 4, 2014 at Sharjah, India skipper Vijay Zol (100) and Sanju Samson (100) scored contrasting centuries as **India** (314/8) colts posted a comprehensive 40-run win over arch-rivals Pakistan to clinch the **Under-19 Asia Cup title**.
- Recently a **Abbott study**, undertaken to assess the prevalence of thyroid dysfunction in adults in India, has revealed that hypothyroidism is more common in women . . thyroid disorders may be of autoimmune nature.
- On January 5, 2014 Portuguese great Eusebio, top scorer at the 1966 World Cup, died from a heart attack at the age of 71.
  - Nicknamed the '**Black Panther**', Eusebio, whose full name was Eusebio da Silva Ferreira, was European Footballer of the Year in 1965.
- He had earned 64 caps and scored 41 goals for Portugal, records that stood for almost two decades.
- On January 5, 2014 **Punjabi University** emerged overall champions in the 6th All India Inter-University Fencing Championship that concluded at Punjabi University.
- On January 5, 2014 Swiss, playing his 500th ATP Tour match, World number eight **Stanislas Wawrinka** defeated Edouard Roger-Vasselin at the Nungambakkam Tennis Stadium and won **ATP Chennai Open title**.
- On January 6, 2014 Delhi High Court ruled that **revenues of private telecom** companies, estimated at over Rs 3,00,000 cr (Rs 3 trillion) a year, are **subject to scrutiny by CAG**.
  - It has dispelled the general notion that the CAG is only responsible for verifying the accounts of the Centre and the state governments and their companies.
- On January 6, 2014 Young shuttler **Aditya Joshi** from Madhya Pradesh became the first male junior badminton player from India to be ranked top in the world.
- On January 6, 2014 **in Nepal**, Supreme Court gave voters the right to cast negative votes during the parliamentary or local elections.
  - The court also directed the government and the Election Commission to introduce laws to this effect so the voters can reject candidates, weeks after India introduced '**None of the above**' option.
- Recently, **Raheel Khursheed**, a young Kashmiri communication expert has been tasked to head a crucial unit in Twitter India to manage and track micro-blogging website relationship with govt officials and politicians.

- On January 7, 2014 **National Adolescent Health Programme** was launched by Ministry of Health . . . peer educator concept being introduced for the first time in India.
- On January 7, 2014 President Pranab Mukherjee for the first time as the visitor of the Central universities and institutions used the **National Knowledge Network (NKN)** to address the students of 400 institutes of the country.
- On January 7, 2014 US President Barack **Obama re-nominated three Indian-Americans** (Vince Girdhari Chhabria, Manish S Shah, Indira Talwani) for federal judgeship.
- On January 7, 2014 **Janet Yellen** was confirmed as the chairwoman of the US Federal Reserve by the Senate, making her the first woman to lead the world most powerful central bank in its 100-year history.
- On January 7, 2014 three-day **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** began at New Delhi, under the theme - Engaging Diaspora; Connecting Across Generations.
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- On January 7, 2014 India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable **Prithvi-II missile**, which has a strike range of 350 km and is capable of carrying warheads of up to 1,000 kg, from Balasore (Odisha)
- On January 8, 2014 over 20 Indian-origin youths got among Forbes magazine annual list of “**brightest young stars**” under the age of 30 from diverse fields like finance, media, sports and education
  - The Forbes third annual ‘30 Under 30’ list comprises young achievers in 15 different fields.
- The list includes icons like pop singers Justin Bieber, Miley Cyrus and Taylor Swift, founder and CEO of the short-form blogging platform Tumblr David Karp, tennis player **Maria Sharapova** and Pakistani girls’ rights activist **Malala Yousafzai**.
- On January 9, 2014 Nepal shared plans to build an international airport near Lord Buddha birthplace in Lumbini, a town close to the Indo-Nepal border, under a Chinese-backed \$3 billion project modelled on Mecca.
  - Plans are to construct **Gautam Buddha International Airport** in Bhairahawa near the Indo-Nepal border by 2017.
- On January 9, 2014 relaxing FDI norms, RBI gave foreign investors an option to exit their investments by selling their holdings of equity or debt.

- FDI contracts can now have optionality clauses, which allow investors to exit, subject to the conditions of minimum lock-in period and without any assured returns.
- FDI in India declined by about 15% to \$12.6 billion (Rs 74,971 crore) in April-October. FDI in the same period a year earlier was \$14.78 billion.
- On January 10, 2014 South Korean steel maker **POSCO received environment clearance** for its Rs 52,000 crore steel plant in Odisha, ending an eight-year wait for the project to get off the ground.
  - The clearance will pave the way for Posco to build the steel plant with an annual production capacity of 12 million tonnes.
- The POSCO project, **the largest FDI in India**, has languished since 2005 due to problems related to environmental clearance and land procurement.

*Compiled by ravi k mahajan*  
For IASC