

Some Key Current Info-Bits at Random (January 11- January 20)

- On January 11, 2014 President Pranab Mukherjee presented the **Sunil Gangopadhyay memorial award** to renowned Bengali poets Nirendra Nath Chakravarty (2012) and Sankha Ghosh (2013).
 - While Chakravarty was given the award for the year 2012, Ghosh received it for the 2013.
- On January 12, 2014 in Bangladesh, **Sheikh Hasina** was sworn in as PM for the third time along with her 48-member cabinet.
 - **President Abdul Hamid** administered the oath - first to Hasina - at the Bangabhaban presidential palace.
 - Earlier, on January 11, 2014 former military ruler HM Ershad who heads the Jatiya Party, had taken oath as a parliamentarian.
 - This is the third time she takes over as the PM in the last two decades..
- On January 11, 2014 Dukezong, a resort county in **Yunnan Province** (China), suffered heavy damage after fire destroyed over 100 wooden houses.
 - Dukezong is one of the most renowned resorts in **Shangri-la**, known for its well-preserved ancient Tibetan dwellings.
 - Dukezong, meaning "*the town of moon*" in Tibetan, was built 1,300 years ago on the South Silk Road.
- On January 11, 2014 former Israeli PM **Ariel Sharon** was elected PM of Israel in 2001 and served until he suffered a massive stroke that left him comatose on January 4, 2006.
 - Revered by his countrymen as "Mr Security", he reviled across the Arab world as the "butcher of Sabra and Shatila".
- On January 12, 2014 in his inaugural address at **Petrotech 2014**, PM Dr Singh said . . .with India expected to become world's third largest energy consumer by 2020, adequate energy supply at affordable price is critical for economic growth.
 - India was the **world's seventh largest** energy producer accounting for 2.5 per cent of the world's total annual energy.
 - India "needs to increase its energy supply by 3-4 times over the next two decades".
- On January 12, 2014 three Chinese coastguard vessels sailed into the 12-nautical-mile territorial waters off one of the **Senkaku islands**, which China also claims and calls the Diaoyus.
 - It is said to be as first such incursion in the disputed waters off Tokyo-controlled islands in the East China Sea.
- On January 13, 2014 Petroleum Minister Veerappa Moily held a series of bilateral meetings with visiting ministerial delegations of various countries on the sidelines of the Petrotech 2014.

- The delegations sought to enhance mutual cooperation in the oil and gas sector.
- Recently, YouGov survey had named **Microsoft founder Bill Gates** as the most admired person on the planet.
 - Sachin, 40, was fifth with six other Indians featuring in the list- other Indians included Narendra Modi (7th), Amitabh Bachchan (9th), Abdul Kalam (10th), Anna Hazare (14th), Arvind Kejriwal (18th) and Ratan Tata (30th).
 - The 'World's most admired people poll' was conducted in 13 countries, including India.
- On January 13, 2014 India declared herself a **polio-free country** for the third consecutive year without a single new case of the disease and termed it as a “monumental milestone”.
 - The last case was reported on **January 13, 2011** when a two-year-old girl suffered polio paralysis in Howrah district of West Bengal.
 - In 2009, India was reported as home to nearly half the world’s polio cases.
 - 741 cases were reported in 2009, 42 in 2010 and one case in 2011.
 - Polio or infantile paralysis is a viral, infectious disease which spreads from person to person, primarily via the fecal-oral route.
 - Polio, which usually infects children under the age of five, can be prevented by vaccine.
- World Health Organisation would certify the country -- and the entire South-East Asian Region (SEARO) -- polio-free by late March or early April.
- Now only three countries - Pakistan, Nigeria and Afghanistan, remain polio-endemic.
- After having taken over as Air Force Chief, Arup Raha on January 13, 2014 visited Leh to check out winter preparedness and see if the winter supply sorties of the IL-76.
 - There are full-fledged paved landing strips in Leh, Kargil and Thoise to meet the needs of troops.
 - The IAF Chief visited operations bases in the Leh and Ladakh sector
 - The IAF has already made public its plans of having a full-fledged fighter air base at **Nyoma** in south-eastern Ladakh.
- On January 13, 2014 at Los Angeles, Con-artist caper “**American Hustle**” won three trophies at the 71st Golden Globe Awards including best picture comedy or musical, lead and supporting honours for its stars Amy Adams and Jennifer Lawrence.
- On January 13, 2014 at Gorakhpur (Fatehabad), PM Dr Singh laid the foundation stone for the **2800 MW Fatehabad nuclear power** project that promises to boost growth and provide job avenues to the people in the state.
 - The GHAVP would have an indigenously developed pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs)
 - Such reactors were already being set up at :
 - Kakrapar in Gujarat and
 - Rawatbhata in Rajasthan.

- Recently, long jumper **Anju Bobby George**, who had second place finish at the 2005 Monaco World Athletics Final, was upgraded to a gold medal, following a dope violation by a Russian competitor Tatyana Kotova.
 - Anju has become **the first Indian track and field athlete** to win a gold medal in a major world event.
- Anju, whose fifth place finish in the 2005 Helsinki World Championships was also upgraded to fourth following disqualification of Kotova.
- On January 13, 2014 Portugal and Real Madrid forward **Cristiano Ronaldo** was named the world best footballer for the second time.
 - Ronaldo was also voted FIFA Player of the Year in 2008, before Messi began a run of four successive titles.
- On January 13, 2014 **Egyptians voted** for the first time since the military ousted president Mohamed Morsi in a constitutional referendum that may set the stage for a presidential bid by army chief General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.
- Recently, the 13th edition of joint exercises by the Indian coast guard and its Japanese counterpart was held off Kochi.. exercise titled **Sahayog- Kaijin 2014**
 - The Japan Coast Guard Ship Mizuho and its integral helicopter, Indian Coast Guard Ship Samrat, Chetak helicopter, Dornier aircraft, and Coast Guard participated in the exercises.
- On January 15, 2014 CCEA extended the special **industrial package** for Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand till 2017.
 - The move will boost industrialisation and create more employment in the two hilly states.
 - Both the states have seen phenomenal growth in investment and industrial growth in the last 10 years due to the package.
- Recently, Koteswar Rao, scientific secretary, ISRO , at Central Power Research Institute (CPRI) shared that ISRO would conduct six missions from April 2014 to March 2015, including GSLV Mk III-X, a preparatory for the manned space mission.
 - ISRO founded 15 August 1969.
- On January 16, 2014 India, China and Russia held a trilateral meeting on Afghanistan security situation against the backdrop of the US' plans to withdraw its troops from the war-ravaged country.
 - Deputy National Security Advisor Nehchal Sandhu led the Indian delegation at the talks.
- On January 16, 2014 inaugurating 5th **SAARC business leaders conference**, Commerce and Industry Minister announced support to a liberalised regional visa regime and more than doubling of the number of business visa exemption stickers from the current level of 200 to 500.
 - **Ahmed Saleem** is Secretary-General of SAARC.
 - The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is an economic and geopolitical union of eight member nations.

- Its secretariat is headquartered in Kathmandu.
- On January 17, 2014 Indian Council for Child Welfare released the list of 25 winners of **National Bravery Awards**.
 - 8 ½ year old Kumari Mahika Gupta won **Bharat Award**.
 - **Geeta Chopra Award** has been conferred to 16 year old Kumari Maleka Singh Tak of Rajasthan.
 - **Sanjay Chopra Award** given to 17 year old Master Shubam Santosh Chaudari of Maharashtra.
 - Master Sanjay Navasu Sutar (17 ½ years) of Maharashtra, Master Akshay Jairam Roj (13 years) of Maharashtra, Late Kum. Mausmi Kashyap (11 years) of Uttar Pradesh and Late Master Aryan Raj Shukla (14 years) of Uttar Pradesh **won Bapu Gaidhani Awards**.
 - Since the **inception of the scheme in 1957**, the Indian Council for Child Welfare has given awards to 871 brave Children- comprising 618 boys and 253 girls.
- On January 17, 2013 spiritual leader of **Dawoodi Bohra** community Dr Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin passed away.
 - Syedna was to celebrate his 103rd birthday in a few weeks . . .he was the eldest son of Syedna Taher Saifuddin, 51st Dai ul Mutlaq.
- On January 17, 2013 NTPCs Board approved an investment of Rs 12,532.44 crore for setting up **1,600 MW thermal power** project in Odisha.
- On January 17, 2013 legendary actress **Suchitra Sen**, 83, died.
 - She symbolised the golden age of Bengali cinema with memorable films like Agnipariksha, Devdas and Sat Pake Badha died at a private hospital following a cardiac arrest.
 - Her hits included Saptapadi, Sare Chuattar, Silpi, Fariad, Bipapa, Dip Jele Jai, Saber Upare, Hospital, Uttar Falguni etc.
 - Pranay Pasha, the last film that she acted in 1978, was not a big success.
 - Suchitra won the best actress award at the **Moscow film festival** for her performance in Sat Pake Badha.
 - Suchitra Sen won the Filmfair and BFJ awards.
 - **Padma Shree** was bestowed on her in 1972.
 - She was selected for the **Dadasaheb Phalke** Award.
- Recently, The Netherlands defeated New Zealand 7-2 in the final to win the title at the Hockey World League Final.
 - Hosts India lost to Belgium to finish sixth in the Hockey World League Final.
 - **Robbert Kemperman**, Dutch field hockey won the Player of the Tournament award.
 - **Mandeep Singh** was adjudged the Junior Player of the Tournament.
- Recently Jaipur hosted the seventh edition of Zee **Literature Festival**.

- Pulitzer prize winner author Jhumpa Lahiri along with other globally known authors like Jim Grace, Maaza Mengiste, Xiaolu Guo and Jonathan Franzen, were amongst the noted participants.
- Recently, **Meera Chandrasekhar**, an Indian-American university professor of physics and astronomy, was awarded Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching for her exceptional career.
- In UAE, the cabinet has recently approved **compulsory military service** for all men aged between 18 and 30.
 - The service will be optional for women.
- On January 20, 2014 the Union Cabinet:
 - approved setting up of the **Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor** (AKIC) and formation of the AKIC Development Corporation (AKICDC).
 - cleared several projects as part of the **Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor** (DMIC), including availing Japanese loans of \$ 4.5 billion.
 - Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor project is being developed as a global manufacturing and investment destination by utilising a high-capacity **1,483-km-long western dedicated** Freight Corridor as the backbone.
- On January 20, 2014 the Union Cabinet approved Central **minority status for Jains**, who have been agitating over the issue for years.
 - India will henceforth have six religious minorities notified at the Central level — **Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains.**
 - The government exercised its powers under Section 2(c) of the National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992.
 - So far, Jains were considered a minority at the level of 13 states only.
 - The Jain community comprises 0.4 per cent of India's population qualifying as a minority.

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For IASC*