

Some Key Current Info-Bits at Random (December 1 – December 15)

- **Border Security Force celebrates 49th Raising Day**
 - The Border Security Force (BSF) celebrated its 49th Raising day on December 1.
 - BSF was raised on this day in 1965 with the motto *Jeevan Paryant Kartavya*.
 - The force will celebrate its *Golden Jubilee year* from *December 1, 2014 to November 30, 2015*.
- **Ranbaxy launches arthritis drug Infimab BOW015**
 - Ranbaxy Laboratories Limited, *India's largest pharmaceutical company*, launched arthritis drug Infimab BOW015.
 - *Infimab is India's first bio-similar of infliximab drug*. The product was launched at the Indian Rheumatology Association Conference (IRACON) in Chandigarh.
 - Rheumatoid arthritis is *one of the most common chronic inflammatory diseases* that cause disability.
 - The literature estimates a prevalence of *0.5 percent to 0.75 percent* in India.
- **World AIDS Day: December 1**
 - 26th World AIDS Day was observed across the world on December 1 with the theme **Focus, Partner, Achieve: An AIDS free generation**.
 - The day is observed *to raise awareness to the Aids pandemic caused by the spread of the HIV infection*.

- **MRF Limited is global partner for ICC cricket World Cup 2015**
- **SEBI allows 123 entities to set up Alternative Investment Funds in India**
 - Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) allowed as many as 123 entities to set up *Alternative Investment Funds* (AIFs).
 - AIFs are basically *funds established or incorporated in India for the purpose of pooling in capital from Indian and foreign investors for investing as per a pre-decided policy.*
- **Singapore announces to adopt Euro VI emission standards for petrol and diesel vehicles from 2017 and 2018 respectively**
- **Ireland's film artist Duncan Campbell wins Turner Prize for 2014**
- **IBM signs ten year deal with Dutch bank ABN Amro**
 - US based major International Business Machine (IBM) signed a ten year, multi-billion dollar deal with Dutch bank ABN Amro *to provide computer infrastructure services to ABN Amro running on its cloud systems.*
- **RBI announces fifth Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement 2014-15**
 - On December 2, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced fifth Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement. RBI in its fifth bi-monthly monetary policy statement kept the policy rates unchanged.

- **United Nations General Assembly adopts resolution on establishment of a nuclear weapon free world**
 - India has been firm in rejecting the *Non-Proliferation Treaty* (NPT), which it considers discriminatory in trying to preserve the nuclear weapon monopoly of five nations *namely* the US, Russia, China, France and Britain.
- **Indian Army test fires nuclear capable missile Agni-IV**
 - On December 2, the *nuclear capable missile Agni-IV* was test fired from Integrated Test Range in Wheeler Island, Odisha. The test fired was conducted by *Strategic Force Command* (SFC) of Indian Army.
 - This was the *fourth successful trial* in a series.
 - Agni-IV is a surface-to-surface missile with *4000 km range* and *20 meter long indigenously developed missile*.
- **Vajpayee's birthday to be 'Good Governance Day' in India**
 - December 25 – the birthday of the *former Prime Minister* Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be observed as *National Good Governance Day*.
 - Born on December 25, 1924 in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, Vajpayee was three time Prime Minister of India.
 - He was elected to the *Lok Sabha* nine times and twice to the *Rajya Sabha*.
- **Anil Kumar Sinha is new CBI Director**
 - On December 2, Bihar cadre IPS officer of 1979 batch, Anil Kumar Sinha was appointed as the CBI Director.
 - *Anil Sinha will succeed Ranjit Sinha.*

- **Union Cabinet approves various Bills on December 2**

- The Union Cabinet approved introduction of a comprehensive *Anti-Hijacking Bill, 2014* providing for stringent punishment including death penalty to hijackers in case of death of a hostage or security personnel.
 - It also provides imprisonment for life and confiscation of the moveable & immoveable property of such persons.
 - Cabinet also decided to *repeal* the Anti-Hijacking Act, 1982 (*as amended in 1994*) and *withdrawal* of the Anti-Hijacking Amendment Bill, 2010.
 - The Anti-Hijacking Amendment Bill, 2010 was brought after incident of hijack of Indian Airlines flight IC-814 in 1999 from Kathmandu.
- Also, the Cabinet approved *Regional Rural Banks (Amendment) Bill, 2013* seeking to amend the Regional Rural Banks Act, 1976.
 - The Bill will help enhance authorized and issued capital to strengthen their capital base and to bring flexibility in the shareholding between Union Government, State Government and Sponsor Bank.
- Further, the Cabinet approved a Bill on *coal block auctions* to replace the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Ordinance, 2014.
 - Supreme Court in its order of September 24 had *cancelled 214 coal block mines out of 218 allotted since 1993* saying they were given in an *illegal and arbitrary* manner.

- **Azim Premji gets Swiss Ambassador Award**

- **Chinese & Maldives signs MoU for study on bridge construction**
 - Chinese and Maldives government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) *for a preliminary study of a proposed bridge connecting the international airport to Maldives capital Male.*
- **India joins Thirty Meter Telescope Project as a full member**
 - India joined the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) Project as a full member becoming part of the elite group of countries including USA, China, Japan and Canada *to build the largest telescope in the World at Mauna Kea in Hawaii.*
- **International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: December 2**
 - International Day for the Abolition of Slavery marks the date of adoption on December 2, 1929 by the *United Nations General Assembly's Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others.*
 - According to the data, *21 million women, men and children are trapped in slavery all over the World.*
 - The world religious leaders gathered in Vatican City and signed a joint declaration against modern slavery.
- **Meghalaya forms panel to expedite inclusion process of Khasi language in the Eighth Schedule of Indian Constitution**
- **20th edition of the Corruption Perceptions Index 2014 released**

- **International Day of Persons with Disabilities: December 3**

- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) was observed across the World on December 3.
- *With the aim of improving technology and making it more widely available to those living with disabilities, the **theme** of IDPD was *Sustainable Development: the Promise of Technology*.*
- IDPD was proclaimed by the *United Nations General Assembly resolution in 1992*. The day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well being of persons with disabilities.

- **Ashok Lahiri to head Committee for hearing industry's tax issues**

- The Union Finance Ministry constituted a *high level committee*, headed by former Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) *Ashok Lahiri*, to interact with trade and industry on tax related issues on a regular basis.
- The Committee will interact with trade and industry and ascertain areas where clarity in tax laws is required.

- **Boeing 787 aircraft completes the World's first flight using Aviation Biofuel**

- A Boeing 787 aircraft completed the *World's first flight using green diesel as Aviation Biofuel*.
- *Green Diesel is a sustainable biofuel made from vegetable oils, waste cooking oil and animal fats*. The airplane performed in the same manner as it does with conventional jet fuel.
 - *Sustainable green diesel is widely available and used in ground transportation.*

- **Lok Sabha passes the School of Planning and Architecture Bill, 2014**
 - The Bill intends to declare *Schools of Planning and Architecture* (SPA) at New Delhi, Bhopal and Vijayawada as institutions of *national importance* to promote education and research in architectural studies.

- **Oldest litigant of Babri Masjid case decides to withdraw his plea**
 - The main and oldest litigant in the *Ram Janmbhoomi Babri Masjid dispute*, Mohammad Hashim Ansari (94) decided to withdraw his plea on the case has been *fighting the case since 1959*.
 - His decision came three days before the *December 6, the anniversary of Babri Masjid demolition*.

- **Supreme Court constitutes Social Justice Bench**
 - In lieu of the specialized approach needed for dealing with such social issues, the Supreme Court set up a Social Justice Bench *to exclusively hear cases related to women, children and underprivileged*.
 - *Brainchild of Chief Justice of India H.L. Dattu*, the two judge SC bench will be headed by *Justice Madan B Lokur* and comprises of *Justice U.U. Lalit* as member.
 - The bench will assemble every Friday from *December 12 onwards* at 2:00 pm.
 - On earlier occasions also the apex court has dedicated a bench to deal with environmental cases which was earlier called *Forest Bench* but was later renamed the *Green Bench*.

- **World's fastest 2D camera developed at the Washington University**
- **FDI norms for the construction development sector relaxed**
- **Remember Bhopal Museum comes up after 30 years of tragedy**
 - Museum named ***Remember Bhopal*** was inaugurated on the eve of 30 years of Bhopal gas tragedy on December 3.
 - The museum houses photographs and personal items of the victims, accompanied by audio clips recorded by relatives *portraying the trauma and 30 years of relentless struggle by the victims to get justice.*
 - The museum is split into various sections – *Trauma Room, Health Room, Anderson Wall, Toxic Water Wall, Compensation Room and the Movement Room.*
- **Manipur government extends disturbed area status under AFSPA for another one year**
- **Raninder Singh: First Indian to be elected to ISSF executive committee**
 - Raninder Singh became the *first Indian to get elected as a member of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF's) Executive Committee.* ISSF was established in 1907.
 - Raninder is the *President of National Rifle Association of India.*
 - This is the *first time in the 107 year history of ISSF* that an Indian has been elected as the member of the global body representing the sport of shooting at International level.

- **Supreme Court directs Union to prosecute black money hoarders abroad by March 31, 2015**
- **Navy Day: December 4**
 - 43rd Navy Day was observed on December 4.
 - The day is *celebrated every year to commemorate the success of Operation Trident of Indian Navy on Karachi Harbour during the 1971 Indo-Pak war.*
- **Indian-American scientist Arun Majumdar is US Science Envoy**
- **India and Japan decides to cooperate in Cyber security & Green ICT**
- **Justice Vaidyanathapura Rama Krishna Iyer dies at 100**
 - On December 4, Justice Vaidyanathapura Rama Krishna Iyer died in Kochi at the age of 100 due to renal and cardiac failure.
 - He was *former Law Commission Chairman, Supreme Court Judge, an MLA from Kerala, a philosopher and a renowned social activist.*
 - There are *105 published books by V. R. Krishna Iyer.*
- **Justice Sardar Muhammad Raza Khan is new Chief Election Commissioner of Pakistan**
- **Union Ministry of Environment and Forests approves the construction of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue in Arabian Sea, off the Mumbai coast**

- **Union Cabinet relaxes norms for e-rickshaw drivers**
- **RBI notifies norms to set up TReDS trading platform for MSME receivables**
 - Reserve Bank of India notified norms to set up *Trade Receivables Discounting System* (TReDS) trading platform for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) receivables.
 - *TReDs is a scheme for setting up and operating the institutional mechanism to facilitate the financing of bills of MSMEs from corporate and other buyers, including government departments and public sector undertakings (PSUs).*
- **Narendra Modi named as the Asian of the Year 2014**
 - On December 5, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was named as the Asian of the Year 2014 by *Singapore's leading newspaper The Straits Times* for being a development-focused leader.
- **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) releases the first Adaptation Gap Report**
- **International Volunteer Day: December 5**
 - UN observed International Volunteer Day (IVD) on December 5.
 - The theme of the IVD 2014 was ***People's Participation. Make change happen, volunteer!***
 - *It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly through a resolution on December 17, 1985.*

- **Union Government divests 5% stake in SAIL**
- **India and Russia signs Inter-Governmental Agreement for developing Multi Role Fighter Aircraft**
- **UN declares 2015 as the International Year of Soils**
 - United Nations General Assembly declared 2015 as the *International Year of Soils* (IYS).
 - With this, UN celebrated the *first official UN World Soil Day 2014 on December 5, 2014.*
- **China launches Nuclear Power Expansion Scheme to expand large network of nuclear plants**
- **ICC withdraws case against President of Kenya**
 - International Criminal Court (ICC) withdrew the case against President of Kenya *Uhuru Kenyatta* thus ending the case against him. *He was being tried on count of charges of crimes against humanity for his involvement in ethnic violence that erupted after elections in 2007.*
 - More than 1,200 people died and 6,00,000 fled their homes in Naivasha and Nakuru due to ethnic violence.
 - *Kenyatta is the first sitting President to appear before the ICC court for ethnic violence.*
- **US football team goalkeeper Tim Howard wins 2014 US Player of year award**

- **Mahaparinirwan Diwas observed on December 6 to pay tribute to B.R. Ambedkar on his death anniversary**
- **CMEC launches mega water supply project in Sri Lanka**
 - The Beijing based *China Machinery Engineering Corporation* (CMEC) launched the mega water supply project in Sri Lanka to construct a water supply system in *Gampaha district*.
- **Pioneer of home video game console Ralph Henry Baer dies at 92**
 - He was famously known as the Father of Video Games due to his contributions to video game industry.
- **Indian Communication Satellite GSAT-16 launched successfully**
 - On December 7, Indian Communication Satellite GSAT-16 was launched successfully from the *Kourou space port* in *French Guiana*. It was launched by the *European Ariane-5 launch vehicle VA221* of *Arianespace*.
 - The GSAT-16 satellite was built by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in *Bengaluru*. It is the 18th, satellite launched by Arianespace for ISRO.
- **UK signes agreement with Bahrain to establish a permanent naval base at Mina Salman Port**
- **ICC suspends Pakistani off-spinner Mohammad Hafeez for illegal bowling action**

- **India set Guinness Record for largest human formation of a national flag in World**
 - India set the Guinness Record *for largest human formation of a national flag in the World. To set the record around 50,000 volunteers from Chennai gathered at YMCA Grounds to form the human Tricolour with Chakra, the National Flag of India.*
 - The previous World record was in the name of *Sports Club of Lahore, Pakistan* wherein 28,957 people were involved in forming the national flag of Pakistan.
- **James D Watson auctions his Nobel Prize medal for DNA discovery**
 - James D Watson auctioned his Nobel Prize (1962) medal for 4.8 million US dollars, becoming *the first living recipient to auction the Nobel Prize medal.*
 - He decided to donate part of the proceeds to charities and to support scientific research.
 - He was forced to auction off the medal after being excluded for seven years for his public comments about black African IQ in 2007 treating as racist.
 - *Russia's Alisher Usmanov decided to return the Nobel Prize medal of James D Watson which he bought at auction, thinking that the medal will stay with the person who deserved it.*
 - According to Forbes magazine, Steel and telecom tycoon of Russia Alisher Usmanov is worth 15.8 billion US dollars. He is a major shareholder in Arsenal Football Club. *He is the second richest man in Britain in 2014 according to the Sunday Times.*

- **India defeats Pakistan to win Blind Cricket World Cup for the year 2014**
 - Indian Blind Cricket team won the fourth edition of the Blind Cricket World Cup (BCWC) 2014 by defeating defending champions Pakistan.
 - *The captain of the Indian team was Shekar Naik.*

- **Armed Forces Flag Day: December 7**
 - The committee of Defence Minister in 1949 decided that *Flag Day* will be observed on December 7 each year.
 - *On this day, donations are collected by distributing token and car flags in return of donation for the welfare and rehabilitation of ex-Servicemen, war widows or disabled and their dependents.*

- **China rejects UN mediation to resolve South China Sea dispute**
 - In response to UN mediation sought by Philippines, Beijing in its Position Paper asserted that it should be settled through direct bilateral negotiations and not through compulsory arbitration under the UN Convention on Law of the Seas (UNCLOS).
 - The Philippines approached the UN body in 2013 and questioned China's claims to the Spratly islands, called as *Nansha islands* by Beijing and the waters around them. As a result UN Arbitral Tribunal was appointed to deal with the issue which had asked China to file its counter response by December 15, 2014.

- **Hockey Olympian Grihanandan Singh dies**

- **Warren buffet becomes second richest person of World**
 - According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Warren buffet became second richest person in the World replacing *Carlos Slim*, business magnate of Mexico.
 - *Bill Gates is the world richest person.*
- **AP signs MoU with Singapore for development of its new capital**
 - On December 8, Andhra Pradesh Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Singapore for the development of its new capital that is set to come up near Vijawayada region.
- **World's first herbal Holy Quran unveiled in Dubai**
 - On December 8, the world's first handcrafted herbal Holy Quran was unveiled in Dubai. *It is made from about 200 medicinal plants.*
 - The Quran has been made by the *Islamic Arts and Calligraphy Company, Heddem Arts* and has been crafted over 23 years from 1957 to 1979 by Turkish Unani Doctor *Hamdi Taher*.
 - The Quran is made of high potency herbal mixtures prepared as per Unani medical system.
 - Herbal sheets of the Holy Quran have many therapeutic properties when the reader moves his fingers on the letters or in and around the pages, the herbal mixture seeps through the pores in the fingers, providing health benefits.
 - The Quran includes *606 pages* and *weighs about 7.5 kg.*
 - Every *word and design* in the Holy Quran is made *without using any printing technology, tools or machinery* because of which it is truly one of a kind.

- **US and NATO ends combat mission in Afghanistan**
 - The United States (US) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ended their combat mission in Afghanistan.
 - The mission ended with lowering of flags by the NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command in a ceremony held in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan.
- **RBI notifies revised FDI policy in Defence and Railways**
 - The Reserve Bank of India notified revised Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in *Railways Infrastructure and Defence sectors*.
 - As per the revised norms notified by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in August 2014, foreign investment ceiling in defence sector was increased to *49 percent* and in rail infrastructure it was permitted *100 percent*.
- **Railways inaugurates Wi-Fi broadband services at New Delhi station**
 - Ministry of Railways inaugurated Wi-Fi broadband services at the New Delhi railway station.
 - *The Wi-Fi facility is being executed by RailTel, a Public Sector Undertaking of the Ministry of Railways.*
 - The RailWire powered Wi-Fi will give *maximum speed of 1 mbps* and the facility is *free for first 30 minutes* by registering on the Wi-Fi network through mobile.
 - If user wants to use beyond 30 minutes then the user may purchase scratch cards priced at Rs. 25 for 30 minutes & Rs. 35 for 1 hour and are valid for 24 hours.

- **BHEL commissions Nyaborongo Hydro Power Plant in Rwanda**

- Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) successfully commissioned a 28 MW Nyaborongo Hydro Electric Project in Rwanda on turnkey basis.
 - With the commissioning of this project, *the installed generating capacity of Republic of Rwanda has gone up by 24 percent from 119 MW to 147 MW.*

- **SBI launches two Composite Indices to track monthly and yearly economic trends**

- The State Bank of India (SBI) launched two indices namely *the SBI Monthly Composite Index* and *the SBI Yearly Composite Index*. These indices will primarily track manufacturing and services activity to determine contraction and expansion of the Indian economy.
 - *This is the first time that an Indian bank launched a forward-looking economic index.* Earlier to determine the economic trends, markets depended upon HSBC India Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) and HSBC India Services Business Activity.

- **Delhi government bans Uber taxi services**

- Delhi Government banned the US (*San Francisco*) based Uber taxi service in the national capital.
 - The services of the company were banned after a 27 year old MNC executive, who used its mobile app to book a cab on 5 December 2014, was raped allegedly by the driver.
 - Apart from Delhi, Telangana also followed the suit.

- **France and US signs agreement to compensate Holocaust survivors**
 - France and the United States signed a 60 million US dollars agreement to compensate thousands of Holocaust survivors who were deported to concentration camps by France's state rail company SNCF during Nazi occupation.
- **Bhutan becomes 181st member of MIGA, agency of World Bank**
 - Bhutan became the 181st, member of Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). *MIGA is the political risk insurance and credit enhancement arm of the World Bank Group.*
 - MIGA aims to promote FDI into developing countries to support economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve people's lives.
- **Richard Rahul Verma becomes first Indian-American to be appointed as US Ambassador to India**
 - Indian-American Richard Rahul Verma's nomination as the next US Ambassador to India was confirmed by the US Senate. With this, he became the *first Indian-American to be the US Ambassador to India.*
 - *Verma will replace Nancy Powell who resigned from the post in March 2014 after a damaging row over the treatment of a junior diplomat of India, Devyani Khobragade.*
- **First Arabic translation of Indian Constitution launched in Cairo**
 - On December 9, the first Arabic translation of Indian Constitution was launched in Cairo.
 - The translation was undertaken by the **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).**

- **International Anti-Corruption Day: December 9**

- The day was observed to raise public awareness about corruption and what people can do to fight it. The theme of 2014 International Anti-Corruption Day was *Break the Corruption Chain*.

- **Human Rights Day: December 10**

- The *theme* for the 2014 Human Rights Day is **Human Rights 365**. *The theme was based on the idea that every day is Human Rights Day and everyone is entitled to basic human rights.*
 - The date was chosen to honour the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on 10 December 1948.
 - *First Human Rights Day was celebrated in 1950.*
- In addition it is traditionally on December 10 that the *five-yearly United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights and Nobel Peace Prize are awarded.*

- **Advanced version of Mark-II Pinaka Rocket test-fired successfully**

- The advanced version of Mark-II Pinaka Rocket was successfully test fired from the *Proof & Experimental Establishment (PXE)* at Chandipur, near Balasore in Odisha. *It was test-fired using a multi-barrel launcher.*
 - The tests were conducted by the Pune-based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) of DRDO with logistical support from the PXE labs.
- The Pinaka rocket is also known as the *Weapon Area System (WAS)* and it can fire rockets with a range of 40-65 km.

- **President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe sacks Vice-President**
 - On December 9, President of Zimbabwe *Robert Mugabe* sacked Vice-President *Joice Mujuru*. She was sacked for *corruption* and *plotting to kill the President Mugabe*.

- **WWF-India launches project Mobile Apps for Climate Change**
 - On December 10, World Wide Fund for Nature – India (WWF-India) launched, at Hyderabad, the project *Mobile Apps for Climate Change: A Citizen Science Programme for Schools in Metros*.
 - It launched the project in collaboration with the Hyderabad-based *L.V. Prasad Eye Institute*.

- **Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices bans sale of 80 generic drugs**
 - German drug regulator *Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices* banned the sale of 80 generic drugs, on the grounds that their clinical trials were insufficient, with immediate effect.

- **Ebola fighters gets TIME's Person of the Year 2014**
 - Ebola fighters *collectively were named as the TIME's Person of the Year 2014* by the TIME's magazine.
 - They were *selected from an initial list of 50 world leaders, business heads and record-breaking artists* for their tireless acts of courage and mercy, for buying the world time to boost its defences, for risking, for persisting, for sacrificing and saving the thousands of lives from Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).

- **Delhi HC bans Xiaomi to sell phones in India over patent issue with Ericsson**
- **Randhir Singh is honorary member of International Olympic Committee**
- **World Wide Web Foundation's releases Web Index 2014**
 - The Web Index 2014 was released by World Wide Web Foundation *to measure the internet's contribution to social, economic and political progress in the world.*
 - *India ranks at the 48th* with 44.6 score in the index. It ranks behind China and other BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) nations.
- **Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz gets the Confucius Peace Prize 2014 for his important contributions in eliminating nuclear war**
- **On December 10, the Union Cabinet approves:**
 - *creation of five posts of Additional Solicitors General at High Courts of Punjab & Haryana, Patna, Jharkhand, Karnataka – its Circuit Benches at Hubli-Dharwad & Gulbarga and Gujarat to strengthen the litigation machinery.*
 - *setting up 500 crore rupees Credit Guarantee Fund for factoring for MSME units*
 - It aims to promote factoring without recourse.
 - The factoring will provides liquidity to MSMEs and facilitates collection of receivables.

- **Economy of India to grow 5 to 6% in 2015: Moody report**
 - The report titled, '*2015 Outlook: Global Credit Conditions*' was released by the Moody. According to report, Economy of India is expected grow to 5 to 6 percent and *pick up pace in 2015*.

- **Kailash Satyarthi and Malala Yousafzai receives Nobel Peace Prize**
 - *Child rights campaigner* of India *Kailash Satyarthi* and *Education activist* of Pakistan *Malala Yousafzai* received the Nobel Peace Prize for the year 2014.
 - Both the recipients received *medals and prize money 1.4 million US dollars* from the Norwegian Nobel Committee at Oslo, Norway.
 - Both Kailash and Malala were awarded for their struggle against the suppression of children & young people and for the right of all children to education.

- **Tea Development and Promotion Scheme gets CCEA approval**
 - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the implementation of the *Tea Development and Promotion Scheme* of the Tea Board for the 12th, Five Year Plan.
 - *The Cabinet approved the Scheme with a project outlay of 1,425 crore rupees.*
 - The Scheme, *proposed by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry*, is aimed at supporting development of improved varieties and technologies for increasing production, productivity and quality of tea. *It seeks to promote Indian tea in the overseas and domestic markets.*

- **Ruhi Singh wins Miss Universal Peace & Humanity 2014**
- **Union Home Ministry removes Section 309 of IPC decriminalizing attempt to suicide**
 - Union Home Ministry removed Section 309 of Indian Penal Code (IPC) decriminalizing attempt to suicide. *The Ministry decided to remove Section 309 of IPC after 20th, Law Commission, headed by Justice A.P. Shah (Retd.), in its 210th, Report on Humanization and Decriminalization of Attempt to Suicide recommended decriminalizing attempt to suicide.*
 - 18 states and 4 Union Territories have backed the government's decision.
- **Snapdeal acquires Gift Recommendation Platform Wishpicker**
- **Asha Bhosle gets DIFF Lifetime Achievement Award 2014**
 - Playback singer Asha Bhosle was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 11th, Dubai International Film Festival (DIFF) held in Dubai. *She received the award for her decades of dedication to Indian Film Industry.*
 - She was also awarded the *Dadasaheb Phalke Award* in 2000 and the *Padma Vibhushan* 2008.
 - Along with Bhosle, another Egyptian actor *Nour El-Sherif* also received the DIFF Lifetime Achievement Award for his work on over 100 films, in a career spanning nearly five decades.
- **WHO releases the Global status report on violence prevention 2014**

- **Tata Power acquires 540MW thermal power plant for 3,000 crore**
 - Tata Power acquired 540 megawatt (MW) thermal power plant in *Maharashtra* for 3000 crore rupees.
 - Part of the Tata Group, *Tata Power is an Indian electric utility company based in Mumbai*. The core business of the company is to generate, transmit and distribute electricity.
 - The thermal plant was acquired from the promoters of IRB Infrastructure. *With this deal, Tata Power aimed to increase its total capacity to 8885 MW.*
 - *Until now, Tata Power used to be the nation's biggest private sector electricity producer* but after the new announcements by Adani Power, Tata Power is under deficit of Production. *Adani Power has total capacity of 11040 MW.*
- **Essar Group & Rosneft signs agreement worth 10 billion US dollars**
 - Essar Group *of India* and Rosneft *of Russia*, crude oil producer of Russia signed a 10 billion US dollars contract to import crude oil over ten years from Russia.
 - The biggest deal of India is Reliance Industries 15 year deal to purchase 300000 bpd to 40000 bpd crude oil from Venezuela.
- **Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed of Mauritania is next head of the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER)**
- **PM of Haiti Laurent Lamothe resignes amidst anti-government protests**

- **UN releases WESP report**

- On December 10, the UN World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015 (WESP) report was released.
- According to report, *global economic growth is forecasted to continue increasing over the next two years, despite legacies from the financial crisis continuing to weigh on growth, and the emergence of new challenges, including geopolitical conflicts such as in Ukraine, and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.*
 - The recovery in South Asia will be led by India, which accounts for about 70% of regional output and other economies such as Bangladesh and Iran are also projected to see stronger growth in the forecast period.
 - Economic growth of India, will improve to 5.9 percent in 2015 and 6.3 percent in 2016.
 - India is likely to make progress in implementing economic policy reforms and help provide support to business and consumer confidence.

- **IAF launches second phase of air combat game – Guardian of the Skies**

- On December 11, the Indian Air Force (IAF) launched the second phase of its 3D mobile air combat game, Guardians of the Skies (GOTS). The game will be available on all three popular mobile platforms – *Android, iOS and Windows.*
 - In the game, IAF focused on getting a realistic picture of its flying operations, which is also a first of its kind effort by any Air Force in the world on a mobile based platform.

- **India-Russia signs 20 agreements during the 15th India-Russia Annual Summit in New Delhi**
 - The agreements signed included *eight agreements between government entities* and *12 between private enterprises*. The agreements covered the fields of *nuclear energy, oil & gas, health, investment, mining, media* and *wind power*. These agreement include Russia's help in building at least 12 nuclear reactors and a plan to manufacture advanced Russian military helicopters and defence spare parts in India
 - During the summit, *both the countries also vowed to strengthen the special strategic partnership* and unveiled **Druzhba-Dosti vision statement** for the next decade.
- **Union Government brings 52 new drugs under NPPA control**
 - Union Government brought 52 new drugs (*including some commonly used painkillers and antibiotics as well as medicines used to treat cancer and skin disorders*) under National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) control *to keep check on prices of essential medicines*.
 - The NPPA was established under *the Drugs Prices Control Order (DPCO)*.
 - Union Government established NPPA to fix or revise the prices of controlled bulk drugs and formulations and to enforce prices and availability of the medicines in India.

- **World Diamond Conference held in New Delhi**
 - World Diamond Conference was held with the aim to increase the global market for diamonds.
 - India is the world's largest centre for cutting & polishing diamond and its largest importer of uncut diamond.
- **RIL names former UK judge as its arbitrator in gas dispute**
 - Reliance Industries (RIL) named former UK Judge Sir Bernard Rix as its arbitrator in the *KG-D6 cost recovery dispute case* with the Government of India (GOI).
 - He will sit on a three member arbitration panel headed by Supreme Court appointed neutral arbitrator Michael Kirby, a former Judge of an Australian High Court.
- **D. Warner becomes 5th batsman to complete 1000 Test runs in 2014**
 - Australian Cricketer *David Warner* completed 1000 Test runs in 2014. With this, he became the first opener to achieve the feat in one calendar year since England skipper *Alastair Cook* in 2012.
 - He scored his century in the second innings of the first cricket Test against India at the Adelaide Oval.
- **Indian-origin Shriti Vadera is new Chairman of Santander UK Bank**
 - Indian-origin Shriti Vadera was appointed as the Chairman of Santander UK, a major British bank.
 - She will be the first woman to head a major British Bank.

- **Google announces to shut down its news linking services in Spain**

- Google announced to shut down its news linking services in Spain over new intellectual property law. As per the law, *publishers will soon be force to pay for re-publishing headlines or snippets of news to Internet sites.*

- The norm in the Spanish intellectual property law has been dubbed as the **Google Tax**. *New Law will come into effect on January 1, 2015.*

- **ICICI Bank launches India's first transparent credit**

- On 12 December, ICICI Bank launched India's first credit card with a *unique transparent design and a distinctive look*. The credit card named *ICICI Bank Coral American Express Credit Card*. The card is a part of Gemstone Collection of ICICI Bank *in association with American Express*.

- The new credit card will have the entire feature of plastic credit cards but without the opacity. The card provides features with an extended period for repaying of retail purchases for the first two bill cycles by paying the minimum amount due.

- **Pawan Chamling to become longest serving CM of India**

- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Chamling is all set to become longest serving Chief Minister of India. He completed his 20 years in the office on December 12. He has been CM since December 12, 1994.

- Till now, the longest serving CM is late Jyoti Basu.

- Chamling will create an Indian political history record of being 25 years in the office should he complete his present term, his fifth.

- **PM Modi launches 'Born Again on the Mountain' by Arunima Sinha**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a book titled, '*Born Again on the Mountain*' by Arunima Sinha. The book is about her unforgettable story of hope, courage and resilience.
 - *Arunima is the first Indian amputee and first female amputee to climb Mount Everest.*
 - *She was a national level volleyball player who was pushed out of a running train by thieves in 2011 as she attempted to fight them off.*
- The accident cost her left leg and sporting career. Two years later, she retrained as a mountaineer.

- **Nation remembers and pays homage to martyrs of Parliament attack**

- On December 13, Nation remembered and paid homage to martyrs of Parliament attack on 13th, anniversary of Parliament attack.
 - The five persons responsible for attack were Lashkar-e-Taiba (Let) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists.

- **Bangladesh launches manual campaign to clean up Sunderbans oil spill**

- Bangladesh launched an intensified manual campaign to clean up Sunderbans oil spill with nearly 100 boats to collect the furnace oil spilled from the tanker which sank in the Shela river in the Sundarbans after being hit by a cargo vessel.
 - The Sundarbans is the world largest mangrove forest, which covers 26000 square km in India and Bangladesh. It is also the habitat of famous Royal Bengal Tigers.

- **Japan teens Mima and Miu becomes youngest table tennis champions**
 - Japanese teens *Mima Ito* and *Miu Hirano* became youngest table tennis champions in table tennis World Grand Finals held in Bangkok.
 - They became the youngest ever winners to claim a 40,000 US Dollar share of the prize money.
- **Indian film Jal nominated for Oscar contenders of 2014 in two categories**
 - Indian film *Jal* was nominated for Oscar contenders of 2014 in two categories *namely* 'Best Picture' and 'Best Original Score'.
 - The film has the *backdrop of water scarcity* and tells the story of *a person gifted with a special ability to find water in the desert*.
- **Indian Navy wins 5th edition of Admirals Cup for Sailing Regatta**
 - Indian Navy won the fifth edition of Admirals Cup Sailing Regatta. The International Sailing Regatta for the Admiral's Cup was held at Ettikulam Bay, Ezhimala from December 11 to 13, 2014.
 - The International Sailing Regatta for the Admiral's Cup event was introduced in 2010.
- **Germany wins men's Hockey Champions Trophy for the year 2014**
 - On December 14, Germany won Hockey's Champions Trophy for the year 2014 at the final match played at the *Kalinga Stadium* in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Olympic Champions Germany defeated Pakistan by 2-0 margin.
 - This was *10th, Champions Trophy crown for Germany*. It had last won the tournament in 2007.

- **Japanese Prime Minister gets another four year term**
 - Japanese Prime Minister *Shinzo Abe* was re-elected for another four-year term after Japan's ruling coalition won a two thirds majority in the Snap elections held for the Lower House of the Bicameral legislature, *the National Diet*.
- **National Energy Conservation Day: December 14**
 - The National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated every year in India by the *Bureau of Energy Efficiency* (BEE).
 - The celebrations were marked by giving out of *National Energy Conservation Award* by the Ministry of Power to companies from different industry groups for creating benchmarks in energy conservation.
 - India has *the Energy Conservation Act, 2001* for Energy conservation.
- **Miss South Africa Rolene Strauss crowns Miss World 2014**
- **Government appoints Dineshwar Sharma as Director of IB**
- **Anerood Jugnauth is new Prime Minister of Mauritius**
 - *Anerood Jugnauth* was appointed as Prime Minister of Mauritius by the President Purryag. With this, he became the PM for the sixth time.
 - He replaced Navinchandra Ramgoolam.
 - Previously Jugnauth served as *President of Mauritius* from 2003 to 2012 and as PM from 1982 to 1995 and again between 2000 and 2003.

- **Vinicius and Tom are Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic mascots**

- The Rio 2016 Olympics and Paralympics Games mascot have been named as *Vinicius* and *Tom*, respectively. The names were chosen by a public vote that was conducted over the past three weeks, since the mascots were unveiled.
- *Mascot Vinicius* is a yellow feline animal similar to cat and represents Brazil's rich fauna and wildlife. *Tom* is a blue and green figure with leaves that covers its head and presents country's diverse and rich flora.
 - 2016 Olympics are scheduled from August 5 to 21 and will be the first one to be held in the continent of South America.

- **14th, Finance Commission submits its report to President**

- On December 15, the 14th, Finance Commission headed by former RBI Governor *Y.V. Reddy* submitted its report to the President.
- *The panel has given its views on the devolution of tax receipts from the Centre to the States between April 1, 2015 and March 31, 2020.*
 - Report submitted by the Commission will be a key input in the preparation of the *Union Budget 2015-16*.

- **Fortune 500 releases list of Indian companies 2014**

- Fortune 500 List of Indian companies 2014 was released by the Fortune Magazine.
 - Among the 500 companies, *Indian Oil Corp.* (IOC) tops the list with an annual revenue of 5,00,973 crore rupees followed by Mukesh Ambani led *Reliance Industries Ltd.* (RIL) with an annual revenue of 4,44,021 crore rupees.

- **GFI releases the Global Illicit Financial Flows Report 2014**
 - The Global Financial Integrity (GFI) released the Global Illicit Financial Flows Report 2014 titled, “*Illicit Financial Flows from the Developing World: 2003-2012*”.
 - The report finds that the *developing world lost 6.6 trillion US dollars in illicit financial flows from 2003-2012.*
- **Maleeha Lodhi is Pakistan’s new Ambassador to the United Nations**
 - Veteran journalist-turned-diplomat Maleeha Lodhi was appointed as 16th, Pakistan Ambassador to the United Nations (UN).
 - Lodhi succeeded incumbent Ambassador *Masood Khan*.
 - Lodhi will join the office in February 2015.
- **Carnival Cinemas Limited acquires Anil Ambani led Media Works Limited for 710 crore rupees**
- **Vivek Hallegere Murthy is the 19th Surgeon-General of America**
 - Indian-American physician *Vivek Hallegere Murthy* was appointed as the 19th, Surgeon-General of America.
 - His appointment was confirmed by the United States (US) Senate as he won 51 votes to 43 votes.
 - As surgeon general, *Murthy will serve as the US top spokesperson on public health issues*. He is the *youngest* and the *first Indian-American* to hold the post.
 - The post of Surgeon General of America was *vacant since 2013*. Boris Lushniak was the acting Surgeon General of America since July 2013.

- **Viswanathan Anand of India wins London Classic Chess title**
 - Five-time World Chess Champion Viswanathan Anand won his maiden London Classic Chess title.
 - To win the title, he defeated British Grandmaster Michael Adams in the fifth and final round.

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for IASC**