

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

- Government of India replaces **Planning Commission** (*established in 1950*) with **National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog**
 - NITI Aayog will serve as Policy think Tank, under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister, for Central as well as State Government.
 - Aayog will have a **CEO** and a **Vice Chairman**, to be appointed by the Prime Minister.
 - Aayog will have a **Governing Council** comprising of all state **Chief Ministers** and **Lt. Governors** and will work towards fostering a ‘**co-operative federalism**’ for providing a “**national agenda**” to the Centre and States.
- On January 1, the Government of Gujarat announced the new industry policy for 2015.
 - **New Industry Policy of Gujarat Government** has been announced to motivate business man and to create the friendly business environment.
- **Nilesh Jayantilal Samani** gets **knighthood** award as part of **Queen’s New Year Honours 2015**.
- Maharashtra Government opens an **online facility** to file **Right to Information** (RTI) application.
- **Shailesh Nayak**, Secretary in Ministry of Earth Sciences appointed as ad-hoc **Chairman of ISRO**.

- Union Home Minister, Rajanath Singh launches *Mobile Application* – **Himmat** for women safety.
 - It allows women to send **distress call** to **Police Control Room** and their relatives in case of emergency.
- On January 2, **Jiji Thomson** resigns as Director General of **Sports Authority of India** (SAI).
- Government accepts recommendations of **Bezbaruah Committee**.
- **Raghuram Rajan** makes a strong case for cleaning up bad debts of banks and also to restructure other possible NPAs within a year to put economy back on track.
- On January 4, **Andy Murray** wins the ATP World Tennis Championship in Abu Dhabi, UAE.
 - Andy Murray won because **Novak Djokovic** withdrew before the final match of ATP.
 - **ATP World Tennis Championship** is first title of Andy Murray.
- President Pranab Mukherjee extends India's good wishes to **Myanmar** on the eve of its **Independence Day**.
- In April 2015 New Jersey will host **International Hindi Conference 2015**
 - The theme of the Conference is, “**Expanding World of Hindi: Possibilities and Challenges**”.

- **O.T. Anilkumar** of Kerala wins the **7th Chennai Open FIDE Rating Chess Tournament (Category B)** at Nehru Stadium, Chennai.
- **Madhu Kinnar** (*transgender*) wins the Mayoral election at **Raigarh Municipal Corporation of Chhattisgarh**.
- On January 5, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a national program for **LED-based Home and Street Lighting** in New Delhi.
 - The LED-based Home and Street Lighting will reduce the electric consumption.
- **Project Lettuce On Mars** – Scientists at University of Southampton plans to grow first life on Mars under **Project Lettuce on Mars** in 2018.
- **Sutirtha Bhattacharya** is the new MD and Chairman of **Coal India**
 - **Bhattacharya** is succeeding **S. Narsing Rao**.
- Economist **Arvind Panagariya** is the first Vice Chairman of **NITI Aayog**
 - **Panagariya** is a Professor of Economics at Columbia University.
 - Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Arun Jaitley, Suresh Prabhu and Radha Mohan Singh were appointed as **Ex-Officio Members** while Nitin Gadkari, Smriti Zubin Irani and Thawar Chand Gehlot will be **Special Invitees**.
 - Economist Bibek Debroy and former DRDO Chief V.K. Saraswat were appointed as **full-time members** of the Niti Aayog.

- **Reserve Bank of India** permits FIIs/RFPs investment up to **49% of the paid-up capital of Bajaj Corp.** under the Portfolio Investment Scheme (PIS).
- **S. Shrikrishna** wins **National Sub-Junior Billiards Championship** at the **BRC Gloster National Billiards & Snooker Championship 2015** on January 5.
- Union Government will set up **India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO)** in **Tamil Nadu**.
- On January 6, **BCCI announces** the cricket team squad for **World Cup 2015**
 - The team comprises of *Virat Kohli, Suresh Raina, Shikhar Dhawan, Rohit Sharma, Ajinkya Rahane, Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Ambati Rayudu, Ravindra Jadeja, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Ishant Sharma, Stuart Binny, Umesh Yadav and Mohammed Shami.*
- On January 6, China launches the first online bank **WeBank** by **Tencent Holdings Limited of China**.
- On January 6, **Ishpreet Singh Chadha** wins **National Sub-Junior Snooker 2015** at **BRC Gloster National Billiards & Snooker Championship 2015**.
- **Indian weightlifters bag a total of 14 medals** including 6 Gold Medals in the 17th Asian Youth (Women's and Men's), 29th Junior Men Asian Weightlifting Championships 2015 and 22nd Junior Women at Doha, Qatar.

- On January 6, **Amitabh Bachchan** is named as the Brand Ambassador of Health Sector by the Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi releases a commemorative coin on the birthday of **Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata**.
- **Popov Ivan** of Russia wins **7th Chennai International Open Grandmaster Chess** title of 2015 and bagged Rs. 2 lakh as prize money.
- President of India Pranab Mukherjee signs Ordinance to amend the **Motor Vehicles Act, 1988**.
 - Article 123 of the Constitution of India deals with Ordinance.
- The **102nd Indian Science Congress** held at **University of Mumbai** with the theme, “**Science and Technology for Human Development**”.
- The scientist of **Harvard-Smithsonian Centre for Astrophysics** discovers couple of planet which looks like earth.
 - Their names are **Kepler 438b** and **Kepler 442b**.
- India will host **42nd World Bridge Championships 2015** from **September 26, 2015 to October 10, 2015** in **Chennai**.
- Senior Indian diplomat **Atul Khare (55)** appointed as the **UN Under-Secretary-General**.
 - Khare has been named by **Secretary General Ban Ki-moon** as the head of the UN department that provides dedicated support to

peacekeeping missions around the world, making him one of the highest ranking Indian officials in the world body.

- Khare will succeed **Ameerah Haq of Bangladesh** as the Under-Secretary-General for Field Support, Department of Field Support (DFS).
- ICICI Bank launches contactless credit card and debits called **Expressions Wave Debit Card and Coral Contactless Credit Card**.
- Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment **Thaawar Chand Gehlot** launches the **National Toll Free Helpline** to assist the drug dependent persons of India.
- On January 8, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates **Museum Dandi Kutir** in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
 - The **Museum** was inaugurated on the **13th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD)**.
 - This time Pravasi Bhartiya Divas marks the **100th anniversary** of Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's return to India from South Africa.
- On January 8, India announces to provide **69 Million Rupees** to **Nepal** for **Iodine Deficiency Disorder Control Programme (IDDCP)**.
- On January 8, authors **Prof. Sudha Pai** and **Avinash Kumar** releases book titled, **The Indian Parliament – A Critical Appraisal** .

- On January 8, **Modibo Keita** becomes **Prime Minister** of **MALI**.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi approves to provide **60 million dollars** for creating road infrastructure projects at **Line of Credit to Guyana**.
- Hindi feature film – **The Lunchbox** nominated for **BAFTA 2015** under **Non-English Best Film Category**.
- **Maithripala Sirisena** wins Presidential Elections 2015 in Sri Lanka.
 - Sri Lanka's Supreme Court Judge K. Sri Pawan administered the oath to Sirisena at the Independence Square in Colombo.
- On January 9, the Chinese scientist **YU MIN** gets **the State Preeminent Science and Technology Award 2014**.
- On January 9, Vice President Mohd. Hamid Ansari presents the **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2015**.
- **TATA Group** airline **Vistara** starts domestic services.
- **Sindhushree Khullar** becomes the first **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of **NITI Aayog**
- On January 10, **MYS Prasad** selected for **Vikram Sarabhai Memorial Award 2015**.

- Switzerland's **Stanislas Wawrinka** wins **Chennai Open Title 2015** of Tennis.
 - He defeated Aljaz Bedene.
- On January 12, India observes **National Youth Day – 2015**.
 - The **19th National Youth Festival** was celebrated in **Guwahati, Assam**.
- USA will host **Anti Terror summit 2015** on February 18.
- **Roger Federer** wins **Brisbane International Tennis title 2015**
 - He defeated **Milos Raonic** of Canada by 6-4, 6-7 (2), 6-4.
- **Tech Mahindra** signs MoU to acquire Swiss firm **SOFGEN Holdings Limited**.
- **SunEdison** and **Adani Enterprises** signs an agreement to create a Joint Venture (JV) to build **Solar Park** in Mundra, Gujarat.
- **Croatia elects first woman President**
 - **Kolinda Grabar Kitarovic** (46) of HDZ party won the 2015 elections of **Croatia**.
 - Kitarovic happens to be Croatia's **first woman President** on January 11.
 - **Ex-Foreign Minister** and **former NATO Official** Kitarovic, won 50.4% of the vote, according to results based on more than 99% of the ballots cast.

- On January 12, **Cristiano Ronaldo** wins the **FIFA Ballon d'Or Award 2014**.
 - Ronaldo won the award in 2014 for the third time.
- Government removes DRDO Chairman, **Avinash Chander**
 - The Union Government removed **top missile scientist** Avinash Chander as the **Chief of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** before six month of his contract end.
- **Google** comes up with **Flight Search Tool in India**
 - The search tool will hurt many Online Travel Agents Company.
- **Idukki in Kerala** becomes the **first district of India** with **Complete Rural Broadband Coverage**.
 - Currently the district has a total of **8 Block Offices & 53 Gram Panchayats** of which 8 Block Offices & 52 Gram Panchayats have been connected on **Optical Fibre Cables** and one Gram Panchayat, namely Edamalakudy, is connected through **VSAT**.
- On January 13, Amitabh Bachchan gets **Social Media Person of the Year Award 2015**.
 - Megastar Amitabh, an active blogger and user of different social networks, has been named the Social Media Person of the Year, by the **Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)**.

- Reserve Bank Governor **Raghuram Rajan** named as the ‘**Governor of the Year**’ by a London based financial journal Central Banking.
- On January 13, **India** and **Australia** signs **MoU** to develop the **skill and infrastructure in sports industry**.
- **Bengaluru FC** defeats **Goa’s Dempo Sports Club** to win their maiden **Football Federation Cup 2015**
 - Goa’s Dempo Sports Club was defeated by 2-1.
 - Football Federation Cup was played at the Nehru Stadium **Margao, Goa**.
- NGO Pratham releases 10th **Annual Status of Education Report – 2014** (ASER).
- Government **reconstitutes** the body of **Pollution Control Board of India**.
- **Bhakti Sharma** set world record by swimming 1.4 miles in 52 minutes in the Antarctic Ocean
 - The temperature just one degree.
- On Januray 14, Well known Sanskrit scholar **Prabhu Nath Dwivedi** named as the winner of the **Sahitya Akademi Award 2014**.
- On January 14, the Reserve Bank of India eases some of norms of **Import and Export law**.

- **Anupam Shrivastava** becomes **CMD** of **BSNL**.
- **Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)** imposes 100 crore rupees fine on **Riddhi Siddhi Bullion**
 - The fine was imposed for **violation of RBI norms**.
- On January 14, **Brett Lee** announces retirement
 - **Australian pace bowler and cricketer** Lee announced his retirement from all forms of cricket after a 20 year career.
- On January 15, **Reserve Bank of India** cut **Repo Rate** by 0.25% in sixth Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement 2014-2015.
- On January 15, **India** observes **67th Army Day**.
- **Hari Shankar Brahma** named as the next **Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of Election Commission of India**
 - President has appointed, the senior most Election Commissioner in the Election Commission of India, Brahma as the new CEC.
 - Brahma is 1975 batch IAS Officer of the Andhra cadre.
 - He will assume the office of CEC from January 16.
 - He will succeed V.S. Sampath who will retire on January 15.

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