

November 2013 Current Affairs Study Material

INTERNATIONAL

Taiwan and Singapore Signed Free Trade Agreement

Taiwan signed a free trade agreement with Singapore on 7 November in Taipei, the capital of Taiwan. It is its first trade agreement with a member of the Association of Southeast Nations. Singapore is Taiwan's fifth-largest trade partner and fourth-largest export market, with bilateral trade totalling US\$28.2 billion in 2012.

U.S. named Nigeria's Boko Haram 'Terrorist' Group

The US State Department has on 13 November officially designated Boko Haram, the Nigerian Islamist group responsible for the 2011 bombing of the UN headquarters in Abuja, as a "foreign terrorist organisation". The designation is significant because it directs US law enforcement and regulatory agencies to block business and financial transactions with Boko Haram, which is fighting to impose Islamic law in northern Nigeria and has ties to al Qaeda. Boko Haram means "Western education is sacrilege".

Abdullah Yameen Elected as President of Maldives

Abdulla Yameen, the candidate of Progressive Party, has been elected as president of the Maldives on 16 November. In the presidential election, Yameen defeated Mohamed Nasheed of Maldivian Democratic Party with a margin of six thousand votes. Yameen secured 51.39 percent (1 lakh 11 thousand) of votes, whereas Mohamed Nasheed received 48.61 (1 lakh 5 thousand votes). Yameen is an economist and the half-brother of Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, the former autocratic ruler, who ruled Maldives for 30 years.

Iran and P5+1 Group of Nations Signed The Historic Nuclear Deal

Iran and P5+1 group of Nations reached a breakthrough deal on 24 November 2013 to curb Iran's nuclear programme in exchange for limited sanctions relief. An agreement to this effect was signed at UN Headquarters in Geneva on 24 November 2013 between the Chief negotiator for the six nations, Catherine Marie Ashton and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Jawad Zarief. The interim deal for six months is intended to give time and space to the international community to work towards a comprehensive agreement. After four days of negotiations, representatives of P5+1 group of nations – the US, the UK, Russia, China, France and Germany – reached an agreement with Iran. The deal is intended as the first step in a six-month process aimed at a permanent resolution to the decade-old global impasse over Iran's nuclear programme, and heading off the threat of a new war in West Asia.

INDIA & WORLD

India Ranked 7th In Expat Quality Life

According to the research survey commissioned by HSBC Expat and conducted by independent research company YouGov, India is placed seventh out of 37 in a list of countries ranked in terms of expat quality of life. Thailand tops the list which is dominated by Asian countries with mainland China, Singapore and Taiwan are ranked 3rd, 6th, and 8th places respectively. Others in the top 10 include Bahrain (2nd), Cayman Islands (4th), Australia (5th), Spain (9th) and Brazil (10th). The results show Asia to be the leading destination for expat quality of life, with the region also emerging as an expat social hotspot. The survey report was released on 4 November.

India and Kuwait Signed Five Agreements

India and Kuwait on 8 November discussed collaboration in petrochemicals, and Kuwaiti investments in infrastructure in India as

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held bilateral talks with Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak al-Hamad al-Sabah in New Delhi. After the bilateral talks, five agreements were signed including an agreement on the transfer of sentenced persons, cooperation in the field of sports and youth affairs and exchange of cultural and information programmes, besides cooperation in the field of education.

India and Japan Decided To Strengthen their Cooperation in the Maritime Sector

India and Japan have decided to further strengthen their cooperation in the maritime sector as a part of the overall robust bilateral relations. The two countries on 9 November agreed to enhance their interaction through the existing forums and through port-to-port exchanges. These issues came up for a discussion between the Union Minister of Shipping Shri G.K. Vasan, and Akihiro Ohta, Minister of Land, Industries and Transport & Tourism, Government of Japan.

India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission Held In New Delhi

The fifth session of India-Ukraine Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, Industrial and Cultural Cooperation held in New Delhi on 13 November. The Commission was chaired by E. Ahamed, the Minister of State for External Affairs. The Ukrainian delegation was led by Mr. Ihor Mykolayovych Prasolov, Minister of Economic Development and Trade of Ukraine. During the session current status and future prospects of cooperation in trade and investment, heavy/light industry, fertilizers, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, mining and metallurgy, science and technology, energy (coal, nuclear), transportation, agriculture and food processing, education, culture and tourism were reviewed. The Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India, and the State Administration of Ukraine on Medicinal Products signed the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Joint Ventures and Research and Development in Pharmaceuticals and Bio-pharmaceuticals.

US exempts India, China From Iran Oil Sanctions

The US has on 29 November exempted some countries, including India and China, from the tough Iranian sanctions for reducing their dependence on Iranian oil. Secretary of State, John Kerry announced in a statement in Washington that other countries which have significantly reduced the purchases of Iranian crude oil are the Republic of Korea, Turkey, and Taiwan and these have qualified for an exception to sanctions under the National Defence Authorisation Act. This move came after the decision made by US President Barack Obama that there is sufficient supply of non-Iranian oil for countries to continue to reduce import of oil from Iran. This is the fourth time that these countries have qualified for an NDAA exception as a result of their continued significant reductions in the volume of crude oil purchases from Iran or their end to such purchases.

NATIONAL

Medical Council of India Reconstituted

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of India on 6 November reconstituted the Medical Council of India (MCI) with 68 members as per provisions contained in the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Second Ordinance, 2013. Among the 68 members of the Council, 29 members will represent the Universities/ Health Sciences Universities, 23 members will be nominated by the Central Government in consultation with the States, eight members will be nominated by the Centre, seven members will represent the Registered Medical Graduates of the states, and one member will be nominated by the Central Government representing the UT Administration of Daman and Diu. All the members would hold office for four years.

National Portal On Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Launched

Union Minister of Minority Affairs K Rahman Khan on 11 November launched a National Portal on Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The portal was inaugurated to mark 125th birth anniversary of the great national leader- Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. This portal is an initiative to digitise the heritage of the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and make his life and legacy available online. Along with a biographical account on Maulana Azad, the portal contains titles and information on over 20 books written by Maulana Azad, in Urdu and English, as well as information on over 45 books written on Maulana Azad in Urdu, Hindi and English.

India Poised To Become The Largest Provider Of Global Talent

According to the Ficci-EY Report on 'Higher Education in India: Vision 2030' released on 13 November, India is poised to become

the largest provider of global talent with one in four graduates in the world a product of the Indian system. The report further outlines that by 2030, the emergence of a robust higher education system would enable India to augment its gross enrollment ratio (GER) to 50%, with a student enrollment of more than 70 million across the higher education system; reduce disparity in GER to 5 percentage points across states, gender and various social groups and emerge as a better informed and evolved society, leading to improved social indicators including better health and sanitation, life expectancy, and law and order. India would also emerge among the top 5 countries in the world in terms of research output, with an annual R&D spend of US\$140 billion; have more than 20 universities among the global top 200 and become a global destination for higher education.

Government Released Postage Stamps On Sachin Tendulkar

Union Law Minister Kapil Sibal on 14 November released special edition postage stamps on cricketer Sachin Tendulkar at a felicitation ceremony to mark his 200th and final cricket test match at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. Tendulkar is the second living person after Mother Teresa to get a postage stamp in his honour.

STATES

Kannur Declared First Zero Landless District in the Country

Union Minister for Rural Development Jairam Ramesh on 1 November declared Kannur in Kerala as the first zero-landless district in the country. Kannur District Authorities provided land to as many as 1118 beneficiaries, including 85 families belonging to the Scheduled Tribes category. The prestigious Zero Landless programme of the United Democratic Front was flagged off by Congress president Sonia Gandhi in October 2013.

RAF Academy of Public Order inaugurated in Meerut

Ministry of Home Affairs on 9 November inaugurated RAF Academy of Public Order in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. This academy will train personnel of Rapid Action Force along with selected members of other paramilitary forces and civil police. Public administration, riot control, crowd management, disaster management, human rights, media management and first aid to the victims are some of the core issues on which focussed training will be provided to troops. Besides, security persons moving on to peace missions under the United Nations, will also be provided necessary training in the Academy.

India's First Private Rapid Metro Service Started Operation From Gurgaon

Rapid Metro India's First Private Metro service started operation from Gurgaon, Haryana on 14 November. Rapid Metro is India's first fully privately financed Metro system connecting NH-8 to Delhi Metro via Cyber City, Gurgaon. Rapid Metro, with an elevated route and six stations with a frequency of every four minutes, can carry 800 passengers in each trip. The 5.1 km long route covers six stations-Sikanderpur, Phase-2, Belvedere Towers, Cyber City, Mousari Avenue and Phase 3. The Rapid Metro is using a common ticketing system with Delhi Metro. Rapid Metro is a metro rail system in the Indian city of Gurgaon, Haryana, linked with the Delhi Metro system's Yellow Line. Built and operated by Rapid Metro Rail Gurgaon Limited (RMGL), the system is India's first fully privately financed metro.

Union Cabinet Approved For Legislative Council In Assam

Union Cabinet on 28 November 2013 approved a proposal to create a Legislative Council in Assam. According to the Article 169 of Constitution of India, Parliament can create or abolish the Legislative Councils in States. According to the proposal, the Legislative Council will have 42 members. As per Article 171 of the Constitution, the total number of members in the Council of a state having such a House shall not exceed one third of the total number of members in the Legislative Assembly of that state.

CONFERENCES

Delhi To Host 12th Edition Of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2014

The 12th edition of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention to be held in Delhi from 7th to 9th January 2014. The theme of the convention is -Engaging Diaspora – Connecting across Generations- with a special focus on the younger generation. One of the focus areas of the PBD this year is a Youth PBD on 7th January 2014 to open new horizons of a strong network of young overseas Indian. This was announced by Shri Vayalar Ravi, Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs on 5 November 2013 in New Delhi.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Bihar Health Worker Martha Dodray Gets 'UN' Award For Polio Work

Martha Dodray, a health worker from Bihar on 6 November won the global UN Award for her commitment and dedication to eradicate Polio in India. United Nations has conferred the UN Frontline Workers Global Leadership Award to Martha Dodray. The award was given in recognition of the roles to individuals, organizations, and corporations played in supporting the work of the United Nations' to advance global peace, justice, and prosperity. The United Nations Foundation and the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) honored recipients of the 2013 Global Leadership Awards at the annual Global Leadership Dinner in New York City.

Indian-American Doctor Rahul Jindal Gets Prestigious US Award

An Indian-origin doctor, Eminent transplant surgeon and philanthropist, Rahul Jindal has been selected for prestigious "Outstanding American by Choice" award for his valuable contribution to US health sector. He was honoured by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia on 13 November. The initiative recognises naturalised citizens who have made significant contributions to both their community and their adopted country. Jindal, who recently received the Leadership Award from the International Leadership Foundation, has been appointed the Commissioner on Service and Volunteerism.

'RGIA' wins 'Best Cargo Airport Award

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad being managed by GMR Group has been adjudged the 'Best Cargo Airport of The Year' at the recently concluded 40th Annual Convention of Air Cargo Agents Association of India (ACAAI) held at Jaipur. This is the second year in a row that RGIA has won the accolade for its cargo operations.

CSIR Scientist Rajesh S. Gokhale Gets 'Infosys Prize 2013'

The Infosys Prize 2013 in Life Sciences is awarded to Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, Director, CSIR-Institute of Genomics & Integrative Biology, on 13 November for his work in the field of lipid metabolism in tubercle bacilli. Each year two million people are infected and die of tuberculosis (TB) and there will be 10 million new patients every year. Dr. Gokhale discovered biochemical networks and new paradigms necessary for the synthesis of Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) cell envelope coat that makes these bacteria escape host immune systems.

Prof. CNR Rao and Sachin Tendulkar Selected for 'Bharat Ratna' Award

The Government of India on 16 November decided to confer, the 'Bharat Ratna', the highest civilian award on eminent scientist Prof CNR Rao (Chintamani Nagesa Ramachandra Rao) and cricket player Sachin Tendulkar.

Sachin Tendulkar :- Sachin will be the youngest recipient of the award. He is also the first sports person to be chosen for the honour. He will also become the ninth person from Maharashtra to join the exclusive club of 43 Bharat Ratna awardees till date, which includes a galaxy of presidents, prime ministers, Nobel laureates, scientists and artistes. The award was announced hours after Tendulkar retired from international cricket following India's victory over the West Indies in a Test in Mumbai on 16

November. Tendulkar received the Arjuna Award in 1994 for outstanding sporting achievement, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award in 1997, India's highest sporting honour, and the Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan awards in 1999 and 2008, respectively, India's fourth and second highest civilian awards.

Prof CNR Rao :- He is the third scientist to be awarded the highest civilian award— Bharat Ratna, a crowning glory of his inexorable list of outstanding achievements. Before Rao, C V Raman and former President A P J Abdul Kalam were bestowed with the award. Rao, founder of the Bangalore-based Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, has served as Chairman of the Scientific Advisory Council to Prime Minister under different regimes, a manifestation of immense faith different governments have placed in him. A renowned scientist and an institution builder, Rao has worked mainly in solid-state and structural chemistry. He was also conferred with Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan by Government of India and Karnataka Ratna by the Karnataka State Government. He was awarded the Hughes Medal by the Royal Society in 2000, and he became the first recipient of the India Science Award, instituted by the Government of India, for his contributions to solid state chemistry and materials science, awarded in 2004. He has become the first Indian to reach the h-index of 100, reflecting the enormity of the body of his published research work.

* Rao, a Kannadiga and Sachin, a Maharashtrian have got India's highest civilian award together. After engineering genius Sir M Vishweshwaraiah and the Hindustani music great Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, CNR Rao is the third Kannadiga to get Bharat Ratna. Sachin is the 6th Maharashtrian to get the same honour.

SPORTS & GAMES

Sebastian Vettel Won Abu Dhabi F1 Grand Prix 2013

Red Bull Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel of Germany won the Abu Dhabi Formula 1 Grand Prix on 3 November at the Yas Marina circuit, Abu Dhabi. Vettel's team-mate Aussie Mark Webber finished with second position, with Mercedes driver Nico Rosberg of Germany finishing third. Sebastian Vettel won the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix for the second time in his career. (First time is in 2009). This victory has drawn Vettel level with compatriot Michael Schumacher's mark of seven successive wins.

Indian Men's Hockey Team Qualified For Hockey World Cup 2014

Indian men's team has qualified for the Rabobank Hockey World cup 2014 to be held at The Hague, Netherlands. International Hockey Federation (FIH) confirmed the India's berth in a official press release at Switzerland. Australia success at Oceania Cup on 3 November confirmed latest teams for world cup 2014. The Rabobank Hockey World Cup will be held from 31 May to 15 June 2014.

Novak Djokovic Won Paris Masters Title

Novak Djokovic of Serbia won the Paris Masters Tennis Title on 3 November at Paris, France. He defeated David Ferrer of Spain in the final. It is the first time Djokovic, the 2009 Paris Masters champion, has won back-to-back Masters Series events since his successive triumphs in Rome, Madrid and Montreal in 2011. This Paris Master title was Novak Djokovic's 40th career title and sixth title in 2013.

Yuki Bhambri Won Traralgon Challenger Title

Indian Yuki Bhambri won the ATP men's singles title of Traralgon event in Australia on 4 November. He defeated Bradely Klahn of America in the final. It was his first ATP Challenger level singles title of the season and second of his career.

India To Host Men's Hockey World Cup In 2018

India will host the men's section of the hockey World Cup in 2018, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced on 7 November. The finals will be played from 1 to 16 December 2018. Also, England will host the Women's World Cup of hockey from 7-21 July, 2018. India last hosted the World Cup in New Delhi in 2010, while the 2014 edition of Hockey World Cup would be played in The Hague, Netherlands. Hockey's World Cup is held every four years and is second only to the Olympics in significance.

Heena Sidhu Won Pistol Gold In World Cup Shooting

Shooter Heena Sidhu created history by becoming the first pistol exponent from India to win a gold medal at the ISSF World Cup finals on 10 November in Munich, Germany. In the Women's 10-metre Air Pistol event final, She defeated World Champion Zorana

Arunovic of Serbia to bag her first Gold. The earlier gold medallists in this competition were Anjali Bhagwat (2002) and Gagan Narang (2008) in small bore rifle shooting.

Sebastian Vettel Won United States Grand Prix 2013

Red Bull Formula One driver Sebastian Vettel of Germany on 17 November won United States Grand Prix. France's Romain Grosjean in Lotus was second with Red Bull's Mark Webber took the third place. This was his eighth successive race of Vettel in a season. With this win he succeeded ahead of Michael Schumacher's previous record of winning seven races in a row in the same season, which was set in 2004. This was also Vettel's 12th win of the season.

ECONOMY

India Will Be World's 3rd Largest Economy By 2030

According to the Standard Chartered's Super-Cycle Report released on 6 November, India will world's third largest economy by 2030, behind China and the USA, adding that the world is in the midst of an economic super-cycle. A super-cycle is a period of historically high global growth, lasting a generation or more, driven by opening up of new markets, increasing trade, high rates of investment, urbanisation and technological innovation. India is likely to be the third largest economy with a GDP size of \$15 trillion by 2030. China with a GDP of \$53.8 trillion is projected as the biggest economy, followed by the US at \$38.5 trillion.

World's 6th Largest Number Of Billionaires In India

According to the 'World Billionaire Census 2013' released on 6 November, India has more number of billionaires than France, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland and Hong Kong and is home to the sixth largest group of super rich population in the world. Moreover, the country's financial capital Mumbai with 30 billionaire, is among the top 5 'billionaire cities' globally, which was topped by New York that is home to 96 billionaires. Hong Kong, Moscow and London make the top five with 75, 74 and 67 billionaires respectively. Notwithstanding the number of billionaires in India having decreased between July, 2012 and June, 2013, India still enjoys a decent 6th position in the top 10 league with 103 billionaires. This list was topped by United States with 515 ultra-rich people, three times more than in China, which ranks second with 157 billionaires. Germany, United Kingdom and Russia make the top five countries with a billionaire population of 148, 135 and 108 respectively.

Azim Premji Tops India Philanthropist List

According to the China-based Hurun Report Inc 'Hurun India Philanthropy List – 2013' released on 13 November, Wipro chief and IT tycoon Azim Premji tops the list of Indian philanthropists with donations amounting to Rs8,000 crore in the past year. Shiv Nadar, chairman of HCL group, is the second highest contributor in the list with a donation of Rs.3,000 crore. Hurun India Philanthropy List is a ranking of 31 Indians who donated more than Rs.10 crore cash or cash equivalent during Apr 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013.

Three of Indian Origin Among Africa's 50 Richest

Three persons of Indian-origin are among the 50 richest people in Africa, according to a list released by Forbes magazine on 14 November. Vimal Shah, Sudhir Ruparelia and Naushad Merali figure in the list which has been topped by Aliko Dangote who has a networth of USD 20.8 billion and is the largest cement manufacturer in sub-Saharan Africa. Vimal Shah is a newcomer on the list and ranks 18 with a networth of USD 1.6 billion. Ruparelia ranks 24 on the list and has a networth of USD 1.1 billion. On the 48th spot is Merali with a networth of USD 430 million.

Prime Minister Inaugurates India's First 'Bharatiya Mahila Bank'

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and UPA Chairperson, Sonia Gandhi jointly inaugurated India's first all-women bank, Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) in Mumbai on 19 November, marking the 96th birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. This

first branch of BMB was inaugurated at Air India building at Nariman Point in Mumbai. The main objectives of the bank will be to focus on the banking needs of women and to promote their economic empowerment. The bank will commence operations with an initial capital of one thousand crore rupees. The new Bharatiya Mahila Bank, with the tagline "Empowering Women, Empowering India," is due to have 25 branches by next March and 771 total branches over a seven-year period. The Union Cabinet cleared the proposal for setting up of all-women bank on August 2013. The Reserve Bank of India gave its in-principal approval for the Bharatiya Mahila Bank in June 2013 and the banking company was set up. The Union government approved 1000 crore Rupees seed capital for the women-focused public sector bank, announced by Union finance minister P. Chidambaram in his 2013-14 budget speech.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Pakistan Successfully Test-Fires Short Range 'Hatf IX' Missile

Pakistan on 5 November successfully test fired Hatf IX (Nasr) missile, a short range surface to surface missile that has a range of 60-kilometres. The test fire was conducted with successive launches of 4 x missiles (Salvo) from a state of the art multi tube launcher. Nasr, with a range of 60 Kilometer and in-flight maneuver capability is a quick response system, with shoot and scoot attributes. The missile has the capability to carry nuclear weapons.

Indian Navy Inducts Advanced Jet Trainer 'Hawk 132'

Indian Navy on 6 November inducted the fourth generation advanced jet trainer aircraft 'Hawk 132', which has led to a jump in the operational versatility. "Hawk 132' was inducted into the Navy at a ceremony held at the Naval Air Station INS Dega at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The aircraft was built by the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) with Transfer of Technology from M/s British Aerospace, UK. 'Hawk 132' is equipped with advanced and reliable navigation systems and has the capability to deploy an impressive array of weaponry including air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground rockets, bombs and guns. It can also carry two extra fuel tanks under the wing, which extends its considerable strike range. "Hawk 132' is a proven aircraft operating with over 24 nations around the world. The induction of this highly capable aircraft will provide the much needed fillip to the training of combat pilots in the Navy by bridging the gap between basic flying training and advanced fighter flying.

Carbon Dioxide Levels Pollution Levels Hit Record High In 2012

According to the United Nations (UN) weather agency World Meteorological Organization (WMO) latest report released on 6 November, the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere reached a record-breaking high in 2012. The report found the greenhouse gas measure at 393.1 parts per million in 2012, exceeding the 350 parts per million that some scientists and environmental advocates have pegged as the maximum safe limit. The 2012 levels were an increase of 2.2 parts per million from the previous year. The U.N. weather agency predicts worldwide pollution levels will surpass 400 parts per million by 2016.

3D Printer Creates World's Smallest Working Human Liver

In the month of November 2013, A group of US scientists have created the world's smallest human liver which can survive for 40 days and works like the real thing – using a 3D printer. The mini-livers, made by California-based medical research company Organovo, are just half a millimetre deep and four millimetres wide but can perform most of the functions that a real liver can. The printer builds up 20 layers of hepatocytes cells, which carry out liver functions, along with two major types of liver cell. It also adds cells from the lining of a blood vessel. This allows the liver cells to receive nutrients and oxygen.

NASA Releases Natural Color Portrait Of Saturn

NASA has released the first natural-color image of Saturn from space showing the planet, its moons and rings, as well as the planets Earth, Venus and Mars. The new panoramic image of the Saturn system, taken by NASA's Cassini spacecraft, shows the view, as human eyes would see it. It was unveiled at the Newseum in Washington on 12 November. The spacecraft's imaging team processed 141 wide-angle images to create the single panorama mosaic, which sweeps across 404,880 miles of Saturn and its inner ring system.

World's First Green Helicopter Tested in Germany

The world's first green helicopter which is noiseless and emission-free has been successfully tested in Germany on 17 November. The helicopter, named Volocopter, developed by the German company e-volo, two seat prototype made its earlier voyage in Kalsruhe,

Germany. The volocopter uses eighteen electrically driven rotors instead of one combustion engine which is environmentally friendly and emission-free. The emission-free Volocopter is a vertical take-off and landing manned aircraft, with rich features and incredibly quiet sound, absolutely no noticeable vibrations, new spring strut landing gear and extremely calm rotor plane that replace conventional aircraft.

PERSONS IN NEWS

A) APPOINTMENTS

Usha Sangwan First Woman Managing Director of Life Insurance Corporation

Usha Sangwan has become the first woman managing director (MD) at the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India in its near six decades of existence. Along with Sangwan, Vijay Kumar Sharma also took charge as an MD of the country's premier financial institution on 1 November. Sangwan joined LIC in 1981 as a direct recruit. Prior to taking charge as MD, she was executive director, corporate communications, LIC of India.

Usha Ananthasubramanian is first Bharatiya Mahila Bank CMD

Usha Ananthasubramanian has been appointed as the first Chairperson and Managing Director (CMD) of Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB), the first all-women bank of India. Ananthasubramanian assumed charge on 12 November. Before joining BMB, she was an executive director with Punjab National Bank (PNB). In a career spanning over 31 years, she has worked in various positions in the banking and allied areas.

R. Banumathi Appointed Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court

Justice R. Banumathi, Judge of the Madras High Court was on 12 November appointed as the Chief Justice of the Jharkhand High Court. Justice R. Banumathi entered the Tamil Nadu Higher Judicial Service in 1988 as a direct recruit district judge. She worked as District and Sessions Judge in Coimbatore and Vellore, and Principal District and Sessions Judge in Pudukottai, Madras, Tirunelveli and Salem.

Justice A.P. Shah is the new Chairman of Law Commission of India

Former Delhi High Court Chief Justice Ajit Prakash Shah has been appointed on 22 November as the new chairman of the 20th Law Commission of India. Justice Ajit Prakash Shah succeeded Justice D. K. Jain who resigned in October 2013 to take over as the President of National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. Justice Ajit Prakash Shah was Chief Justice of the High Court of Delhi from May 2008 till his retirement in February 2010. The 20th Law Commission was established in September 2013. Its tenure has been fixed till 2015. The terms of reference of the 20th Law Commission include review/repeal obsolete law, examine the existing laws, revise Central acts of general importance etc.

Five Central Information Commissioners Appointed To CIC

Five new Information Commissioners are appointed to the Central Information Commission (CIC) on 22 November. Chief Information Commissioner Deepak Sandhu administered the oath of office to them in New Delhi. The new commissioners are Yashovardhan Azad, Sharat Sabharwal, Manjula Parasher, M A Khan Yusufi and Madabhushanam Sridhar Acharyulu. With this the total number of Information Commissioners including the Chief Information Commissioner has gone up to 10.

B) RESIGNS

PFRDA Chairman Yogesh Agarwal Resigned

Yogesh Agarwal, chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory Development Authority (PFRDA), resigned from the post of Chairman on 13 November. He resigned because of the Government's decision to not allow him to be a part of the selection panel for members of the regulator.

C) DEATHS

Legendary Pakistani Folk Singer Reshma Died

Legendary Pakistani folk singer Reshma, who mesmerised music lovers in the Indian subcontinent with soulful rendition of songs like 'Lambi Judai' and 'Dama Dam Mast Kalandar' in her trademark rustic voice, died in Lahore on 3 November. Reshma, known as "Nightingale of the Desert", was born in 1947 in Bikaner, Rajasthan, in a Banjara family. She has no formal education in music, but at the age of just 12 years, she was seen singing at the Shahbaz Qalandar's shrine. Thereafter, her iconic song Laal Meri was recorded on the state-run Pakistan Radio. With this, she became the most popular folk singer of Pakistan.

British Nobel Laureate Author Doris Lessing Died

Doris Lessing, one of Britain's most-influential authors and a Nobel Literature laureate, has died on 17 November at London. She was 94 years old. Her best-known works are The Golden Notebook, Memoirs of a Survivor and The Summer Before the Dark. In her life time she wrote more than 80 books, including poetry, two operas, short stories, plays and non-fiction. In 2007, the 88-year-old Doris Lessing became the oldest recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, and only the 11th woman to win the award.

D) VISITORS

Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Visited India

Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah visited India from 7 – 10 November 2013. During his four day visit, Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber held detailed bilateral consultations with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in New Delhi. Both nations discussed collaboration in petrochemicals, and Kuwaiti investments in infrastructure in India. India and Kuwait agreed to expand cooperation in key areas, which includes energy and investment. The two Prime Ministers were held extensive talks on trade, energy and investment and also on labour laws after which both sides inked five pacts, including on the transfer of prisoners and cooperation in the field of culture and education.

E) MISCELLANEOUS

Miss Venezuela Gabriela Isler Won "Miss Universe 2013" Title

Miss Venezuela Gabriela Isler won the 'Miss Universe 2013' crown on 9 November, beating 85 other contenders from around the world at a glittering ceremony held in Moscow, Russia. Miss Spain Patricia Yurena Rodriguez was named runner-up, while Miss Ecuador Constanza Baez came third in the contest. Miss Universe 2012 Olivia Culpo of USA crowned the new beauty queen Miss Venezuela Gabriela Isler. Manasi Moghe from India had been shortlisted for the top 10 finalists of Miss Universe 2013 but failed to win the crown. Isler's triumph was the seventh Miss Universe win for Venezuela, where beauty pageants are a major source of national pride.

Malala, Malia Obama Among 'Times' Influential Teens List

Pakistani education activist Malala Yousafzai and the elder daughter of US President Barack Obama, Malia, are on Time magazine's list of 16 most influential teens of 2013. The list, published on 12 November, took young people who have inspired the society by their work in various fields like music, sports, technology, science, writing and media.

PLACES IN NEWS

One World Trade Center is Tallest Building in US

One World Trade Center was on 12 November declared the tallest building in the Americas, standing at a symbolic (and now official) 1,776 feet. The Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, an international body that determines the heights of skyscrapers, has ruled that the spire atop One World Trade is an architecturally significant feature of the building — not an antenna. The decision makes the official height of the building 1,776 feet, not 1,368 feet, which is the height of the building's roof. It also allows One World Trade to beat out Chicago's Willis Tower as the tallest in the US. Willis Tower's antenna does not count towards its official architectural height. One World Trade Center has been built on the lower Manhattan site of the iconic WTC Twin Towers, which were destroyed in the terrorist attacks of 11 September, 2001. More than 2,000 people were killed in that attack.

ABBREVIATIONS

BPCL	-	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited
AAA	-	Asian Athletics Association
CITU	-	Centre of Indian Trade Unions
EVM	-	Electronic Voting Machine
ERDA	-	Energy Research and Development Administration
FEMA	-	Foreign Exchange Management Act
GFCI	-	Global Financial Centres Index

BOOKS IN NEWS

Vice President Released a Book on India's Nuclear Energy Programme

Indian Vice President Mohammad Ansari released a book entitled "India's Nuclear Energy Programme : Future Plans, Prospects and Concerns" edited by Prof. R. Rajaraman at a function organized by Indian National Science Academy (INSA) in New Delhi on 7 November. The book is aimed at creating the public opinion on nuclear energy.

COMMITTEES

Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai Committee To Deal with Sexual Harassment Complaints

The Supreme Court on 26 November constituted a 10-member committee headed by its woman judge, Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai, to deal with complaints of sexual harassment within its precincts. Chief Justice of India P Sathasivam formed the Supreme Court Gender Sensitisation and Internal Complaints Committee (GSICC) in which there are six other female members. There are two members who are outsiders and not connected with the apex court in any manner. The committee is in consonance with the guidelines laid down by apex court in its judgement in Vishaka case for dealing with complaints of sexual harassment at workplace. Under the guidelines, it is required that the committee has a majority of female members and two members of civil society nominated by the Chief Justice of India.

IMPORTANT DAYS AND DATES

National Education Day of India Observed Across the Country on 11 November

The National Education Day of India was celebrated on 11 November 2013 at Gangtok, Sikkim. The National Education Day has been celebrated in India since the year 2008. It is celebrated to commemorate the anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a great freedom fighter, an eminent educationist and the first Education Minister of India. It was also celebrated at Mewat in 2008.

National Press Day observed on 16 November

National Press Day is celebrated across the country on 16 November 2013. The day is symbolic of a free and responsible press in India. It is the day on which the Press Council of India started functioning as a moral watchdog to ensure that not only the press maintains the high standards expected from this powerful medium but also that it was not fettered by the influence or threats of any extraneous factors. The Press Council of India was first constituted on 4 July 1966 as an autonomous, statutory, quasi-judicial body, and it started functioning from 16 November 1966 with Justice J R Mudholkar, then a Judge of the Supreme Court, as Chairman.