

CURRENT AFFAIRS OF FEBRUARY 2015

Awards

The distinguished journalist and Editorial Chairman of Outlook group who was awarded the Yash Bharati Samman by the Uttar Pradesh government – **Vinod Mehta**

Indian Economist and Nobel laureate who was awarded the newly instituted **Charleston-EFG John Maynard Keynes Prize** in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the society – **Amartya Sen**

The author of book, **Where the Long Grass Bends**, who has won the trophy in the Best Children's Album category at the 57th Annual Grammy Awards for *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up For Education And Changed The World (Malala Yousafzai)* – **Neela Vaswani**

The Bengalurean music composer who was awarded the '**Best New Age Album**' trophy at the 57th Annual Grammy Awards for the album Winds of Samsara composed jointly with South African musician Wouter Kellerman – **Rickey Kej**

The Kannada writer and lexicographer who was chosen for the **Pampa Prashasti**, highest literary honour conferred by the Karnataka government on a litterateur for his/her lifetime contribution to Kannada literature – **G. Venkatasubbaiah**

The eminent Marathi litterateur who was chosen for the 50th Jnanpith Award for 2014 by a selection board chaired by writer and scholar Namwar Singh – **Bhalachandra Nemade**

Banks

The private sector bank which has decided to raise Rs. 500 crores through India's first ever green infrastructure bonds, which will be used by the Bank to finance green infrastructure projects in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects including solar power, wind power, biomass, and small hydel projects – **Yes Bank**

The private sector bank which has launched first digital Bank in the country named **Pockets** on a mobile phone – **ICICI Bank**

Countries

The country which has imposed a one year ban on importing ivory amid criticism that the demand among its consumers is encouraging poaching in Africa – **China**

The Caribbean nation which has decriminalised the possession of small amounts up to 2 oz (57g) of drug marijuana for personal use – **Jamaica**

The country which has become the first in the world to legalize three-person in-vitro fertilization, a method of conceiving a child that combines the genetic material of three different individuals (Mitochondrial Replacement Therapy) – **United Kingdom**

The venue of 14th International Conference on Tamil Computing and Tamil Internet (Tamil Internet 2015) scheduled to be held from May 30 to June 1 – **Singapore**

Days Observed

The day in the month of February which was chosen to be celebrated as Mother Tongue Day by the Central Board of Secondary Education – **February 21**

The Union Health Ministry has announced February 10 to be observed as – **National Deworming Day**

Defence

The place in Nepal where eighth India-Nepal Battalion level Combined Military Training named Exercise Surya Kiran-VIII, commenced on 23 Feb 15 – **Saljhandi**

The military exercise carried out by Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps in the Hormuz Strait aimed at enhancing the preparedness and defence capabilities of the country was codenamed – **Great Prophet 9**

The fast patrol vessel (FPV), commissioned by the Indian Coast Guard at Paradip Port on 07 February to enhance coastal security is named – **ICGS Amogh**

Persons

The Chairperson of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change who has stepped down from his post following allegations against him – **Dr. Rajendra K Pachauri**

The first Hindu to serve as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, who died in Karachi on 23 Feb 15 – **Rana Bhagwandas**

The social reformer and activist of Communist Party of India, well known author of Shivaji's biography Shivaji Kon Hota (Who was Shivaji), who died on 20 February after being shot by unknown assailants on 16 Feb 2015 – **Govind Pansare**

The Indian Yoga teacher in Hong Kong who has set Guinness World record for Longest Yoga Marathon (Male) by performing for 40 hours and demonstrating more than 1500 asanas – **Yograj C.P.**

The new US Secretary of Defence who was confirmed for the post by the Senate to replace Chuck Hagel on 17 February 2015 – **Ashton Carter**

The secretary in Union Ministry of Rural Development who was appointed as the Union Home Secretary replacing Anil Goswami who had resigned earlier – **LC Goyal**

The President of JK Organisation and a Promoter Director of JK Cement Ltd since its inception in 1994 who passed away on 04 February – **Gaur Hari Singhania**

The Italian constitutional court judge and politician who was chosen to be the 12th President of Italy (since World War II) for a 7-year term – **Sergio Mattarella**

The US scientist considered the father of birth control pill for leading a research team that developed norethindrone, a key component of the **first birth control pill**, who died on 30 Jan 15 – **Carl Djerassi**

The French artist whose painting of two Tahitian girls titled Nafea Faa Ipoipo, or **When Will You Marry?** sold for 300 million dollars making it the most expensive work of art ever sold – **Paul Gauguin**

Places - India

The state which has launched Operation Suraksha in its capital city, an aggressive law-enforcement drive to insulate civil society from crime. – **Kerala**

The place in Gujarat from where All Women Camel Safari 2015 jointly organised by Tata Steel Adventure Foundation and Border Security Force was flagged off on 24 February 2015 (The safari will end at Attari on Indo-Pak border in Punjab on 22 Mar 2015) – **Koteshwar, Bhuj**

The three cities of Uttar Pradesh which are a part of Heritage Arc being developed to promote tourism in the State – **Agra, Lucknow and Varanasi**

The venue of 12th Bring Your Own Film Festival (which allows anyone who has made a film to participate in it) being held from Feb 21 to Feb 25 – **Puri, Odisha**

The station in Arunachal Pradesh from where the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the first express train connecting the state to Delhi – **Naharlagun**

The Indian state where manual scavenging was completely eliminated under the implementation of provisions of Manual Scavengers and Rehabilitation Act, 2013 – **Himachal Pradesh**

The place in Madhya Pradesh at which the world's largest solar power plant with a capacity of 750 MW (larger than 550-megawatt Desert Sunlight solar project in California) is being set up – **Rewa**

The places in Rajasthan and Karnataka where the Environment Ministry has given clearance for setting up of no-frills airports – **Kishangarh and Belgaum**

The 16th century fort in Jaipur, Rajasthan which was opened for viewing at night by the Department of Art and Culture for promoting night tourism in the city – **Amber Fort**

Space

The NASA spacecraft launched in 2006, which has returned its first images of Pluto and its largest moon, Charon – **New Horizons**

The fourth satellite launched by Iran on 02 February 2015 aboard its launch vehicle "Safir" is named – **Fajr**

Sports

The West Indies batsman who became the first person to score a double-century in a World Cup match and also to score the fastest double century in one day matches in the match played against Zimbabwe – **Chris Gayle**

The Swiss tennis player who has won the 42nd ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament 2015 beating defending champion Tomas Berdych in the finals – **Stanislas Wawrinka**

The Indian golfer who has won the Malaysian Open beating Austria's Bernd Wiesberger at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club – **Anirban Lahiri**

The South Korea-born New Zealand golfer who has become the youngest world number one in golf history by reaching the top of the women's rankings at 17 years of age. (Tiger Woods was 21 when became No. 1 in 1997) – **Lydia Ko**

Technology

The mobile application launched by Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology to monitor the air quality in Delhi and Pune and get forecasts for the next day is named – **SAFAR-Air**

The telecommunications company which has partnered with UNICEF to provide health, education and youth-focused content to its customers in 17 African countries – **Airtel**

The Indian company with which Facebook has tied up to launch Internet.org in India to provide affordable internet access.(India is the 6th destination for Internet.org after Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Colombia and Ghana.) – **Reliance Communications**

The company with which Twitter has entered into a deal to make its tweets instantly searchable – **Google**

The private telecom operator which is providing WiFi services in India's first Wi-Fi enabled metro city, Kolkata – **Reliance Jio**

The date from which mobile subscribers will be able to retain the same mobile number throughout India (Pan India Mobile Number Portability) as announced by TRAI – **May 3**

Indices

The rank of India in the recently released World Press Freedom Index (WPFI), released by The Reporters Without Borders (RWB) (Note: Finland, Norway and Denmark are at rank 1, 2 and 3 respectively among the 180 nations on the index) – **136**

The rank of India in the International IP Index recently released by U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Intellectual Property Center (GIPC) for 30 economies (Note: USA and UK occupy the first and second position respectively) – **29**

Miscellaneous

The official language of Myanmar which was included in the list of supported languages by Gmail taking the total number of supported languages to 74 – **Myanma Bhasha (Burmese)**

The two tropical cyclones which hit Queensland and Northern Territory states of Australia respectively causing large scale destruction were named – **Marcia and Lam**

The Indian airport which was adjudged the best airport in the 25-40 million size category in the Airport Service Quality Awards 2014 announced by Airports Council International – **Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi**

The Bengaluru based institute of scientific research at which Centre for Nano Science and Engineering was dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi – **Indian Institute of Science**

The week-long National Tribal Festival which is being held at three venues in Delhi – the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Baba Khark Singh Marg and Central Park in Connaught Place, is named – **Vanaj 2015**

The project 'Friends for Life' aimed at protecting the habitats of Asian elephants in six states was launched in partnership with World Wide Fund for Nature-India by – **Muthoot Group**

The High Court in the premises of which the Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a Permanent Judicial Museum set up as a part of the court's sesquicentennial (150th year) celebration – **Mumbai High Court**

The 100 Resilient Cities project which has selected 3 Indian cities, Chennai, Bengaluru and Surat is being pioneered by – **Rockfeller Foundation**

The US company which has become the first company to cross the 700 billion dollar mark in market capitalization – **Apple Inc.**

Hero Hockey India League 2015

Winners – Ranchi Rays

Runners-up – Punjab Warriors

Best Player of Hockey India League 2015 – Ashley Jackson (Ranchi Rays)

Most Promising Player – Harmanpreet Singh (Dabang Mumbai)

Motivator of the Tournament – PR Sreejesh (Uttar Pradesh Wizards)

Note: Ashley Jackson was the top scorer of the tournament with 12 goals and also scored the first hat-trick in HIL 2015.

87th Academy Awards 2015

Best Picture – Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)

Best Director – Alejandro G. Iñárritu for Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)

Best Actor – Eddie Redmayne – The Theory of Everything as Stephen Hawking

Best Actress – Julianne Moore – Still Alice as Dr. Alice Howland

Best Foreign Language Film – Ida (Poland) in Polish directed by Paweł Pawlikowski

Indian Entry in the Foreign Language Film Category – Liar's Dice directed by Geetu Mohandas (Not nominated)

D. Ramanaidu – Film Producer of films in 13 Indian languages

Born – 06 June 1936

Died – 18 February 2015

Padma Bhushan – 2012

Dadasaheb Phalke Award – 2009

National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Bengali – Asukh (1999)

Infusion of Rs. 6990 crores by the Govt in 9 PSU banks

Criteria: The banks which are more efficient would be rewarded with extra capital so that they can further strengthen their position.

1. State Bank of India - 2,970 crore, 2. Bank of Baroda - Rs 1,260 crore, 3. Punjab National Bank - Rs 870 crore, 4. Canara Bank - Rs 570 crores

5. Syndicate Bank - Rs 460 crore, 6. Allahabad Bank - Rs 320 crore, 7. Indian Bank - Rs 280 crore, 8. Dena Bank - Rs 140 crore and 9. Andhra Bank - Rs 120 crore.

Transformation Sculpture

The "Transformation" sculpture in Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan, New Delhi was converted into a Memorial in commemoration of those GOI officers/ personnel who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty while serving abroad. The Memorial plaques were unveiled by the Prime Minister on 7 February 2015.

The Memorial sculpture is an array of six installations representing the theme of 'Transformation'. It comprises six sandstone stems of "Bird of Paradise" flower in various stages of unfurling.

The inscription on the Plaque "मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय" (Lead me from death to immortality) is part of a hymn from Brhadaranyaka Upanishad.

The sculpture was designed and constructed for Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan by two renowned artists, Prof. Jatin Bhatt and Shri Prakash Vani.

35th National Games 2015

Held in – Kerala

Held from – 31 Jan 2015 to 14 Feb 2015

Motto of the Games – Get, Set, Play

Mascot – Ammu, the Great Indian Hornbill (State bird of Kerala)

Signature video of National Games – Rhythm of a Nation directed by VK Prakash, Music by Hariharan, Lyrics by Javed Akhtar

Theme Song of National Games – Run Kerala Run, music by N Jayachandran and lyrics by ONV Kurup

Goodwill Ambassador of the Games – Sachin Tendulkar

Opening and Closing ceremony held at – Green field stadium Karyavattam, Trivandrum

Maximum number of medals were won by – Sajjan Prakash of Kerala (Gold - 6, Silver - 2)

Rowing, Canoeing & Kayaking events were held in – Vembanad Lake

Number of disciplines in which competitions were held at the National Games – 33

Raja Bhalendra Singh Trophy – Services Sports Control Board for the 3rd consecutive time.

36th National Games in 2019 will be held in – Goa

National Games 2015 Medals Tally

#	Team	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1.	Services SCB	91	33	35	159
2.	Kerala	54	48	60	162
3.	Haryana	40	40	27	107
4.	Maharashtra	30	43	50	123
5.	Punjab	27	34	32	93

Australian Open 2015

Event	Winner	Nationality	Runner-up	Nationality
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic	Serbia	Andy Murray	Great Britain
Women's Singles	Serena Williams	USA	Maria Sharapova	Russia
Men's Doubles	Simone Bolelli Fabio Fognini	Italy	Pierre-Hugues Herbert Nicolas Mahut	France
Women's Doubles	Bethanie Lynn Mattek-Sands Lucie Šafářová	USA Czech Republic	Yung-jan Zheng Jie	Taiwan China
Mixed Doubles	Martina Hingis Leander Paes	Switzerland India	K Mladenovic D Nestor	France Canada

Filmfare Awards 2015

Best Film – Queen

Best Director – Vikas Bahl for Queen

Best Actor – Shahid Kapoor for Haider

Best Actress – Kangana Ranaut for Queen

Best Music Director – Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy for 2 States

Best Playback Singer – Male – Ankit Tiwari for Galliyani from Ek Villian

Best Playback Singer – Female – Kanika Kapoor for Baby Doll from Ragini MMS2

Lifetime Achievement Award – Kamini Kaushal

Critics Award for Best Film (Best Director) – Ankhon Dekhi (Rajat Kapoor)

Critics Award for Best Actress – Alia Bhatt for Highway

Critics Award for Best Actor – Sanjay Mishra for Ankhon Dekhi

Maximum Nominations & Awards – Queen : 12 nominations and 6 awards

New provisions for selecting sportspersons for Arjuna Awards

1. The selection committee to be headed by a retired Supreme Court or High Court judge.
2. Not more than one sportsperson/coach from a particular discipline to be a member of the panel to avoid any bias towards any particular discipline.
3. A sportsperson of eminence/sports administrator/sports expert belonging to para sports will now be a member of the Arjuna Award selection panel.

Railway Budget - Points to Remember

1. Advance reservation period increased from 60 days to **120** days.
2. Launch of **Operation 5 mins** wherein passengers travelling unreserved can purchase a ticket in 5 minutes.
3. Speed on nine railway corridors to go up from the existing 110 and 130 kmph to 160 and 200 kmph respectively so that inter-metro journeys like Delhi-Kolkata and Delhi-Mumbai can be completed overnight.
4. All India 24/7 helpline for railway passengers – **138** to be launched from March 2015 and toll free No.**182** for security related issues.
5. **Four** Railway Research Centres to be set up in four select universities.
6. A PSU - **Transport Logistics Corporation of India (TRANSLOC)**, proposed to be set up to develop common user facilities with handling and value-added services to provide end-to-end logistics solution at select Railway terminals.
7. An innovation council called "**Kayakalp**" for the purpose of business re-engineering and introducing a spirit of innovation in Railways proposed to be set up.
8. To mark the centenary celebrations of Banaras Hindu University, '**Malaviya Chair**' for Railway Technology at **IIT (BHU)**, Varanasi is proposed to be set up. This Chair will help in development of new materials to be used in all assets of Railways.
9. Coastal Connectivity Program where Railways in partnership with the concerned ports will deliver rail connectivity to Nargol, Chharra, Dighi, Rewas and Tuna is to be launched this year.

Abbreviations in news

SAFAR - System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research

BYOFF - Bring Your Own Film Festival

WISH - World Innovation Summit for Health