

CURRENT AFFAIRS OF APRIL 2015

Awards

The Malayalam poet and lyricist who has been awarded the Swaralaya-Kairali-Yesudas Legendary award for his lyrical contributions to Malayalam cinema and theatre – **O.N.V. Kurup**

The cinematographer in the Hindi and Marathi film industries and veteran actress who have been conferred the V. Shantaram and Raj Kapoor Life Time Achievement Awards respectively by the Maharashtra government – **Suryakant Lavande and Shashikala**

The former Finance Minister and External Affairs Minister who has been conferred the Officer of the Legion of Honour by the French Government – **Yashwant Sinha**

The Srinagar-born novelist who has won the 2015 Commonwealth Short Story Prize for Asia region for "Umbrella Man" – **Siddhartha Gigoo**

The Indian origin scientist at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who has been awarded \$2,50,000 Heinz award for her work in tissue engineering and disease detection – **Sangeeta Bhatia**

The co-founder of anti-trafficking organisation Prajwala who has been chosen for the 24th Yudhvir Foundation Memorial Award recognising her extraordinary achievement in the rescue, restoration and rehabilitation of victims of trafficking and her exemplary care and support of persons with HIV – **Dr. Sunitha Krishnan**

The Hindi film actor who along with Marathi actor Dilip Prabhavalkar has been awarded the prestigious Pandit Deenanath Mangeshkar Award 2015 – **Anil Kapoor**

The Chinese President who has been conferred Pakistan's top civilian award 'Nishan-e-Pakistan' for his outstanding contribution in promotion of relationship between the two countries. (President Mamnoon Hussain conferred the award.) – **Xi Jinping**

The Indian-origin CEO of Microsoft who has been chosen to be honoured with Champions of Change award by the US Government – **Satya Nadella**

The co-creator of super heavy element 117 and professor at Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata, who has been awarded the Hevesy Medal Award 2015 – **Susanta Lahiri**

The airport which has been chosen for the prestigious Golden Peacock National Quality Award for the year 2015 – **Delhi International Airport**

The Syrian-Lebanese Arab poet who has been chosen for this year's Kumaran Asan World Prize for poetry, instituted by the Kumaran Asan Memorial Association to honour poets of international stature and introduce them to Indian readers – **Adonis**

Banking and Finance

The public sector bank which has become the first in the country to roll out Sukanya Samridhi Scheme accounts – **Punjab National Bank**

The private sector bank which has launched 'Tap-n-Pay' payment service based on the near-field communications (NFC) technology in collaboration with Tech Mahindra (It can be used by merely tapping an NFC-enabled mobile phone or a tag on the counter) – **ICICI Bank**

The amount above which the Reserve Bank of India has allowed banks to offer differential rates of interest with or without the option of premature withdrawal (It has also specified that all deposits below the amount should have premature withdrawal facility) – **Rs. 15 lakhs**

The denomination in which the Reserve Bank of India has decided to launch commemorative coins marking centenary of Gandhiji's return from South Africa – **Rs. 10**

The portion of EPFO's (Employees Provident Fund Organisation) corpus which the Government allowed to be invested in exchange traded funds (ETF) – **5 per cent**

Defence

The sail training ship of the Indian Navy which was flagged off from Kochi on an eight month voyage through Europe to participate in the annual Tall Ship Races and other events (During the mission named Lokayan 2015, the ship will visit 17 ports in 14 countries and travel 17000 miles. The theme of Lokayan 2015 is TACKING FOR A BROADER BEACH) – **INS Tarangini**

The regiment of the Indian Army which completed 200 years of its raising (raised by Sir Robert Colquhoun on April 24, 1815) – **Gorkha Rifles**

The 14th edition of 10-day Indo-French joint naval exercise being conducted in the Arabian Sea, off the coast of Goa is named – **Varuna**

The operation launched by Saudi Arabia against Houthi rebels in Yemen, which has been reportedly called off was named – **Operation Decisive Storm**

The annual joint military exercise being conducted by Philippines and the United States in the South China Sea is named – **Balikatan**

The first stealth destroyer of Project 15B class which was launched by the Indian Navy at the Mazagaon Docks, Mumbai – **INS Visakhapatnam**

The Indianised version of Swedish 155mm Bofors howitzer artillery gun developed by the Ordnance Factory Board have been named – **Dhanush**

The first of Scorpene class submarine built by Mazagaon Dock Limited in collaboration with DCNS of France which was undocked at Mumbai is named – **INS Kalvari**

Space

The NASA spacecraft launched on August 3, 2004, to study the planet Mercury, which crashed into the planet after exhaustion of its fuel on 30 April 2015 – **Messenger**

The project launched by NASA to search for signs of life beyond our solar system using the expertise of 10 universities, 3 NASA centres and 2 research institutes is named – **Nexus for Exoplanet System Science (NExSS)**

The NASA spacecraft which has completed 1000 orbits of the planet Mars four months after entering the first orbit in Nov 2014 – **MAVEN**

The Indian chess wizard after whom a minor planet discovered in 1988 has been named – **Vishwanathan Anand** (Planet has been named Vishyanand)

The youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner and girls' education campaigner after whom an asteroid has been named by NASA astronomer Amy Mainzer – **Malala Yousafzai**

Sports

The new prize money for the Wimbledon Singles Champions of 2015 after an announcement of 7% increase in the prize money – **£ 1.88 million**

The right arm pace bowler who has become the highest test-wicket taker of England overtaking Ian Botham's record of 383 test wickets while playing against West Indies – **James Anderson**

The country which has won the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Cup 2015 defeating Australia in the finals – **New Zealand**

The team India defeated to win the bronze medal at the Azlan Shah Hockey tournament in Ipoh, Malaysia – **South Korea**

The tournament which Indian tennis player Sania Mirza along with Martina Hingis won to become the first Indian player to be ranked World No. 1 in doubles – **WTA Family Circle Cup**

The President of International Cricket Council who has announced his resignation to protest the "denial" by the governing body to let him give away the trophy to the champions in the World Cup – **A.H.M. Mustafa Kamal**

The former Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Planning who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Governing Council of the Indian Premier League – **Rajeev Shukla**

Persons

The Indian industrialist who has acquired a stake in the Chinese smartphone maker Xiaomi, becoming the first Indian to do so – **Ratan Tata**

The rights activist from Pakistan and the director of The Second Floor (T2F) cafe, who was shot dead by unknown gunmen in Karachi – **Sabeen Mahmud**

The 37-year old Indian-American doctor who has been sworn in as the United States 19th Surgeon General, becoming the youngest-ever in the position – **Dr. Vivek Murthy**

The former Chief Minister of Odisha (and also former Governor of Assam) who passed away on 21 April 2015 – **J.B. Patnaik**

The new Chief Election Commissioner of India who has taken over from outgoing CEC Shri H.S. Brahma – **Nasim Zaidi**

The woman from Telangana and former driver with Azad Foundation's Sakha cabs who has been appointed as the first woman driver by Delhi Transport Corporation – **Venkadarath Saritha**

The Russian President who has been announced the winner of 2015 TIME 100 reader's poll with 6.95 per cent of the votes in the final tally – **Vladimir Putin**

The former Prime Minister of Nepal for five terms who passed away on April 15 at the age of 87 – **Surya Bahadur Thapa**

The person who has been chosen to be the Chairperson of the Task Force on Inter-linking of Rivers constituted by the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation – **BN Navalawala**

The German novelist, poet, playwright and recipient of 1999 Nobel Prize in Literature who passed away on 13 April 15 (His popular works include The Tin Drum, Cat and Mouse and Dog Years) – **Gunter Grass**

The Brand Ambassador for promotion of yoga and ayurveda in Haryana, who has been given status equivalent to that of a Cabinet Minister (The status was later declined by him.) – **Baba Ramdev**

Tree of Life, the painting presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to French President Francois Hollande was painted by – **Bhaskar Mahapatra**

The former Australian cricket all-rounder and highly regarded commentator who passed away on 10 April 2015 – **Richie Benaud**

The well-known Tamil writer and recipient of Jnanpith and Sahitya Akademi Awards who passed away on 08 April 2015 – **Jayakanthan**

The fastest seven summit climber from India and the first person from Andhra Pradesh to scale Mt. Everest who died during an expedition in the Andes mountains in Chile – **Malli Mastan Babu**

Places – India

The place in Odisha where Indian Oil Corporation's 11th oil refinery has started crude processing from Atmospheric and Vacuum Unit (AVU) resulting in production of LPG, naphtha, kerosene, gas oil and reduced crude oil – **Paradip**

The place in Gujarat where an ONGC gas well caught fire during an operation injuring several persons in the accident – **Olpad in Surat**

The city in Maharashtra which has been declared National Earth Hour Capital of India for 2015 – **Thane**

The state in which India's first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) became operational (IFSC allows companies incorporated outside India to raise money in foreign currencies by issuance and listing of their equity shares on stock exchanges within the IFSC, where individual and institutional investors from India and abroad, including NRIs, would be allowed to trade.) – **Gujarat** (GIFT city near Gandhinagar)

The state after which a newly found species of spider of Thomisidae family has been named – **Telangana** (Thomisus telanganensis)

The state which has banned the harvesting of wheat at night in order to ensure that the crop remains clean and dry – **Punjab**

The historically significant town in Andhra Pradesh which has been approved by its cabinet to be its capital city – **Amaravathi**

Places - International

Calbuco volcano which erupted for the first time in 42 years billowing huge ash in the neighbourhood is located in – **Chile**

The country to which Indian embassy in Yemen's capital Sana'a has been shifted in view of the worsening situation in Yemen – **Djibouti**

The German city in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi and also presented a Madhubani painting by award winning artist Baua Devi to its Lord Mayor – **Hannover**

The Asian country which has banned hospitals from providing medical assistance and diagnoses online to prevent people unqualified in medicine from posing as doctors – **China**

Hagia Sophia, the museum (it once served as a church and a mosque) which witnessed the recital of Quoran for the first time in 85 years is located in – **Istanbul, Turkey**

The Indonesian city which has been declared the Most Loveable City at the Earth Hour City Challenge in Seoul – **Balikpapan**

The Asian city which has been declared the Global Earth Hour Capital by a 11-member international jury at the Earth Hour City Challenge in Seoul – **Seoul**

The south-east Asian country which has a controversial anti-terror in order to tackle threats from extremist organisations – **Malaysia**

The nation which has formally become the 123rd member of the International Criminal Court 90 days after lodging a declaration accepting the jurisdiction of the court over alleged crimes – **Palestine**

Technology

The new web browser wrapped under secretive Project Spartan which was unveiled by Microsoft to replace the Internet Explorer is named – **Microsoft Edge**

The mobile application launched by Indian Railways for paperless unreserved ticketing for commuters in Egmore and Tambaram suburban sections in Chennai under Southern Railway zone is named – **utsonmobile**

The new speed record set by Japanese maglev (magnetic levitation) train (which is the fastest train in the world) beating its own 2003 record of 583 kmph – **603 kmph**

Corporate

The online retailer which has partnered with the Dabbawalas of Mumbai in a move to strengthen the last-mile delivery of goods to consumers – **Flipkart**

The online marketplace which has acquired the e-commerce website Freecharge in what is being referred to as the biggest take over in Indian e-commerce sector so far – **Snapdeal**

The direct-to-home service provider which has become the first Indian media company to be listed on NASDAQ (It is also currently the most valued Indian company on NASDAQ) – **Videocon d2h**

Days and Themes

The theme of International Mother Earth Day observed on 22 April 2015 – **It is our turn to lead**

The slogan of World Health Day observed on 07 April 2015 – **From farm to plate, make food safe**

Miscellaneous

The viral disease which has been reported to have been eliminated from the Americas (North and South America) since no endemic transmission of the disease has been reported in the past three years – **Rubella**

The Indian Army led rescue and relief mission in Nepal which was hit by an earthquake on 25 April 2015 is named – **Operation Maitri**

The replica of 18th century ship which set sail from Ile d'Aix in France (The ship had been used by French General Lafayette in 1780 to sail to America during its struggle for independence) – **Hermione**

The High Court whose centenary celebrations were inaugurated by the President Shri Pranab Mukherjee (Lord Hardinge had inaugurated the court on February 3, 1916) – **Patna High Court**

The country which has returned an 800-year-old Indian sandstone Khajuraho sculpture "Parrot Lady" under the 1970 UNESCO Convention – **Canada**

The TV channel which has been taken off the air by the I & B Ministry because of its violating the programme code by showing wrong maps of India on repeated occasions – **Al-Jazeera**

The popular service of All India Radio which has been launched on FM format by the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Arun Jaitley – **Vividh Bharati**

The NGO engaged in environmental activities whose accounts have been frozen following allegations of financial irregularities by the Govt of India – **Greenpeace India**

Mekedatu Dam, the construction of which has become the bone of contention between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, will be located on the river – **Kaveri**

The institution in which the Maharashtra government has decided to set up a memorial to cartoonist R.K. Laxman – **J.J. School of Arts**

The scheme launched by the Union Government with an aim to boost sales of eco-friendly vehicles in the country is named – **Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric vehicles (FAME)-India Scheme**

RedInk Journalism Awards 2015

Instituted by - **Press Club, Mumbai**

News Start-up of the Year - **Scroll.in** founded by Naresh Fernandes

Journalist of the Year - **Sreenivasan Jain** of NDTV

2015 Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in journalism – **Dr Prannoy Roy** (NDTV's founder)

TIME magazine's 100 most influential people - Indians in the list

Titans : Chanda Kochhar (MD and CEO of ICICI Bank)

Titans : Satya Nadella (CEO of Microsoft)

Pioneers : Vikram Patel (Renowned psychiatrist)

Leaders : Narendra Modi (Indian Prime Minister)

Laureus World Sports Awards 2015

Sportsman of the Year – **Novak Djokovic** (Serbian Tennis player)

Sportswoman of the Year – **Genzebe Dibaba** (Jamaican athlete)

Team of the Year – **Germany Men's Football team**

Academy Exceptional Achievement – **Li Na** (Chinese Tennis player)

Inducted into the World Sports Academy - **Sachin Tendulkar** (India), **Tegla Loroupe** (Kenya) and **Yao Ming, Yang Yang** and **Li Xiaopeng** (all China).

Note: Sachin Tendulkar is the third Indian after Kapil Dev and Rahul Dravid to be inducted into the cademy.

e-Panchayat Puraskar - 2014

Given on - April 24, 2015 – National Panchayati Raj Day

First Position - Category 1 – **Maharashtra**

Second Position - Category 1 – **West Bengal and Chhattisgarh**

Third Position - Category 1 – **Tamil Nadu and Bihar**

First position in Category 2 – **Assam**

Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar for 2014-15 – **Uttar Pradesh**

Asian Banker Awards - 2015

Technology Awards

The Best Core Banking Implementation Project for Mid-Sized Bank – **ING Vysya Bank & its technology partner FIS**

The Best Corporate Payment Project – **Axis Bank and Arteria Technologies**

The Best CRM Implementation Project – **IndusInd Bank and Talisma Corporation**

The Best Outsourcing Project (New Bank) – **Bhartiya Mahila Bank and FIS**

The Technology Leadership Achievement Award for the Year – **Amit Sethi**, Chief Information Officer, Axis Bank

The Asian Banker Vendor Satisfaction Survey Gold Award – **Infosys**

Transaction Banking Awards

The Best Trade Finance Bank in India – **Yes Bank**

Risk Management Awards

The Achievement in Market Risk Management – **Reliance Capital**

The Enterprise Risk Technology Implementation of the Year – **Yes Bank**

Financial Market Awards

The Stock Exchange of the Year - **National Stock Exchange of India**

Note: Only Indian Banks recipients of various awards have been listed. Several international and Asian banks operating in Asia have also been given awards in various categories which have not been listed

Abbreviations in news

MUDRA - Micro Units Development Refinance Agency

RERA - Real Estate Regulatory Authority

MESSENGER - MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment, GEochemistry, and Ranging

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