

CURRENT AFFAIRS – 2014

Month - April

INTERNATIONAL

Karim Massimov Named as new Prime-Minister of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev named his chief of staff Karim Massimov as the new prime minister on 2 April. His appointment came following the resignation of Serik Akhmetov from the post, which was accepted by the President as per the Constitutional provision.

Viktor Orban Re-elected As Prime Minister of Hungary

Viktor Orban was re-elected to a third term as Prime Minister of Hungary .The results of general elections were announced on 8 April 2014. The General parliamentary elections were held on 6 April 2014.Out of the total votes casted, Orban’s Fidesz party won 133 of 199 parliament seats.

China Recruits ‘Guardian Angels’ To Protect Embattled Doctors

China’s capital Beijing is on 9 April taking a novel approach to protecting doctors from growing levels of violence from angry patients: volunteer “Guardian Angels”.The campaign will recruit students, medical workers and other patients to act as middlemen between doctors and those in their care to defuse disagreements and smooth over tensions.

Sale of HIV Self-Testing Kits Legalized In the UK

A new law legalizing sale of self-testing kits for HIV came into force in United Kingdom (UK) on 6 April 2014. The new law allows individuals to buy the self-testing kits available on shops and self-diagnose for HIV at home itself.

INDIA & WORLD

Bangladesh To Provide Transit Facility For Indian Power Line

Bangladesh on 3 April agreed to provide transit facility for a 6000 megawatt Indian power transmission line. This decision was taken in a joint steering committee meeting on India-Bangladesh power sector cooperation.

Canada Suspends Voluntary Commonwealth Funds Over Sri Lanka Issue

The Government of Canada on 14 April announced that the country will suspend its voluntary funds to the Commonwealth Secretariat and reallocate the funds for the next two years. The Commonwealth of Nations is an intergovernmental organisation of 53 member states that were mostly territories of the former British Empire. The most populous Commonwealth country is India, with nearly 1.1 billion people.

India and Bhutan Signed Agreement For Developing Hydropower Projects

India and Bhutan on 22 April signed an agreement for the development of joint hydropower projects in a bid to further strengthen their bilateral strategic partnership. The framework Inter-Governmental Agreement between Bhutan and India for the development of Joint Venture Hydropower Projects through the Public Sector Undertakings of the two governments was signed in Thimphu, capital of Bhutan.

Indian-Americans Form 3rd Largest Asian Population In US

According to the report on demographics of the Asian-American population released on 24 April by the Center for American Progress, Indian-Americans numbering 3.34 million is the third largest Asian community in the United States, after China and Philippines. The Indian-American population shot up 76 per cent in the first 12 years of the 21st century. While the Chinese-Americans form the largest group of Asian-American population with 4.

NATIONAL

Women To Be Inducted As Officers In SSB for First Time

The Union Home Ministry on 13 April for the first time approved the recruitment of young women as combat officers in Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Young women under and up to the age of 25 years will be recruited as direct entry officers in the rank of assistant commandants (ACs). SSB is the second largest border guarding force.

IMA appeals Doctors To Give 25 per cent Discount On Fees For Voters

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) has on 11 April appealed to its 2.75 lac doctor-members across India to give 25 per cent discount in doctor's fees for one week to all patients who visit them with their fingers bearing the voting ink mark.

India Supreme Court Recognizes Transgender As Third Gender

India's Supreme Court in a landmark judgment on 15 April 2014, created the "third gender" status for transgenders. In its judgment the Apex Court claimed transgenders as socially and economically backward. The court also directed union & states government to adopt measures for bringing the community into the mainstream by providing adequate healthcare, education and employment.

Election Commission Launched Online Media Channel

The Election Commission has launched on 17 April its own internet-based media arm called 'Voter Education Channel' for voter awareness. Numerous video clips featuring iconic personalities urging citizens to vote have been uploaded on the channel and can be viewed on social media platform 'YouTube'. This is the official channel of the Election Commission of India.

STATES

Shompens of A & N islands Casted Votes For The First Time For Lok Sabha

Shompens of Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) islands for the first time casted their votes in Great Nicobar on 10 April. Shompens – one of the stone-age tribes – casted the votes for the Lok Sabha constituency of Bay Islands for Lok Sabha election 2014.

Mizoram Government Refused To Repatriate Bru Refugees Within 3 Months

Mizoram Government on 12 April refused to repatriate all the Bru refugees lodged in six Tripura relief camps within three months. Earlier on 8 April 2014, the state government had agreed to the demand of the NGO Coordination Committee to repatriate the Bru refugees within three month. It agreed that they would repatriate all the Bru refugees after the end of the ongoing election process. The Bru Refugees also called Reang refugees are the original inhabitants of Mammit Sub-Division of Aizawl District of Mizoram. They started arriving in North Tripura's Kanchanpur sub division since 29 October 1997.

High Content of Manganese Detected In Selaulim Reservoir of Goa

High content of manganese was detected by the State Public Works Department (PWD) in Selaulim reservoir of Goa on 19 April. The level of manganese detected in the reservoir was 0.1 mg. This is less than the level of manganese content detected earlier and is within safe limit. The reservoir has production capacity of 214 MLD of water, which is supplied to entire South Goa and some parts of North district.

Supreme Court Lifts Mining Ban In Goa

The Supreme Court (SC) on 21 April lifted a 19 month old ban on mining in Goa. The iron ore mining will be restricted to 20 million tonnes annually. The ban was imposed in September 2012 as part of a drive to curb illegal mining in Goa.

CONFERENCES

World Green Economy Summit-2014 Held In Dubai

The World Green Economy Summit (WGES) -2014 was held in Dubai from 15th and 16th of April 2014. The theme of the summit was "Global Partnership, Sustainable Future". The World Green Economy Summit ("WGES"), the first Summit focused on green business in the region, concluded on 16 April, with a closing session which provided a platform for determining the way for Dubai to become capital of the world's green economy in line with the goals of the UAE's Vision 2021.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Veteran Film Lyricist and Director Gulzar Selected For Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2013

Veteran film lyricist, director, screen writer, producer and poet Gulzar has been conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2013. He is the 45th Dada Saheb Phalke Award Winner. The ministry of information and broadcasting announced on 12 April. The Dadasaheb Phalke award is India's highest award for an individual for their contribution towards Indian cinema. It is annually given by the Government of India. He was born in 1934 in Punjab in pre-independence India. Sampooran Singh Kalra was his original name and he took the pen name of 'Gulzar Deenvi' after becoming an author.

61st National Film Awards

The 61st National Film Awards for 2013 was announced in New Delhi on 16 April by the Directorate of Film Festivals. 'Ship of Theseus' directed by Anand Gandhi has won the Golden Lotus for Best Feature Film. The Best Actor award is shared between Shahid star Rajkummar Rao and Malayalam actor Suraj Venjaramodu. Geetanjali Thapa won Best Actress for Liar's Dice.

Following is the listing of Winners for important Categories :-

- Best Feature Film – 'Ship of Theseus' (Anand Gandhi)
- Best Director – Hansal Mehta for 'Shahid'
- Best Actor – Raj Kumar for 'Shahid' in hindi and Suraj Venjaramoodu for 'Perariyathavar' in Malyalam
- Best Actress – Geetanjali Thapa for Hindi film 'Liar's Dice'
- Best Non Feature Film – 'Rangbhoomi' (Hindi film by Kamal Swaroop)
- Best Film on Social Issues – 'Tuhya Dharma Koncha' (Marathi)
- Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration – 'Thalaimuraigal' (Tamil)
- Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film – Nagraj Manjule for 'Fandry' (Marathi)
- Best Non Feature Film on Social Issues – 'Gulabi Gang'
- Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment – "Bhaag Milka Bhaag" (Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra)

Indian-American Rajendra Singh Named White House's Solar Champions Of Change

Indian-American professor Rajendra Singh was on 18 April named by the White House as the 'Solar Champions of Change' in recognition of his immense contribution towards developing alternate source of energy and promoting solar deployment in residential, commercial and industrial sectors.

Indian Activist Honoured with Goldman Environmental Prize – 2014

Indian environment activist Ramesh Agrawal has on 28 April won the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize 2014 for helping villagers fight coal mining in Chhattisgarh and success in shutting down one of the largest planned coal mines in the area.

SPORTS & GAMES

MS Dhoni Won United Kingdom's 2014 Asian Award

Indian Cricket Captain MS Dhoni has won United Kingdom's 2014 Asian award for outstanding achievement in sports. The award was announced on 4 April at London's at The Grosvenor House Hotel. Dhoni is widely regarded as one of the greatest finishers in limited over cricket tournament and in 2013 he emerged as the first captain to win all three ICC trophies.

Punjab Won Junior National Hockey Title 2014

Punjab won the 4th Hockey India Junior Men National Championship 2014 (Division A) by defeating Hockey Odisha 6-2 in the finals on 6 April at Chennai, Tamil Nadu. With this win, Punjab had retained the championship title.

Sri Lanka Won ICC Twenty20 World Cup – 2014

Sri Lanka won the fifth edition of the ICC Twenty20 World Cup 2014 title after defeated India by six wickets in the finals on 6 April at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Dhaka. Earlier, Sri Lanka last won the first world title in the World Cup (50-over tournament) in 1996.

Andrea Petkovic Won Family Circle Cup Title

Andrea Petkovic of Germany won the Family Circle Cup tennis tournament title. She defeated Jana Cepelova (Slovakia) in the final on 6 April in Charleston, United States. It was her first WTA title in last three years. Overall, this is the third WTA title for Petkovic and first since her come back from the string of injuries in recent years. Petkovic last won in Strasbourg in 2011 and her first title came in 2009 in Bad Gastein.

Nour El Sherbini Won Texas Open Squash Title

India's Dipika Pallikal was defeated by Egyptian Nour El Sherbini in the title clash of the Women's Champion Fiberlass Texas Open squash tournament on 14 April at Houston, United States.

ECONOMY

Election Commission Allows RBI to Issue new Bank Licences

The Election Commission (EC) on 1 April allowed the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to issue licences for setting up new banks. The approval came after the RBI missed the March-end deadline for issuing the first bank licence in almost a decade. The RBI on 12 March 2014 approached the Election Commission (EC) seeking its approval for granting bank licences as the model code of conduct had come in place after the general elections announcement on 5 March 2014.

RBI's First Bi-monthly Monetary Policy Statement 2014-15

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 1 April released its first Bi-monthly Monetary Policy statement 2014-15. According to the statement, RBI has kept the policy repo rate unchanged at 8.0%. Other policy instruments such as cash reserve ratio (CRR) also remain unchanged at 4%.

RBI grants in-principle Approval To IDFC, Bandhan For Bank Licences

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 2 April granted in-principle approvals to IDFC Ltd and Bandhan Financial Services Pvt. Ltd to start new banks in India. These approvals have been granted under the guidelines on licensing of new banks in the private sector. The two have been granted the permission to set-up banks from a field of 25 aspirants.

Dilip Shanghvi Among Asia's Top 10 Richest Self-made Billionaires

The 'Wealth-X' Asia's top ten wealthiest self-made billionaires list released on 30 April. According to the list, Dilip Shanghvi, founder and managing director of Sun Pharmaceuticals Industries, has been named in the list, topped by Hong Kong business tycoon Li Ka-Shing. Shanghvi, ranked seventh, is the only Indian on the list with a net worth of \$13.5 billion, while Li Ka-Shing topped the chart with a fortune of \$29.4 billion.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO's PSLV-C24 Successfully Launched India's Second Navigation Satellite IRNSS-1B

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched India's second navigation satellite, Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System – 1B (IRNSS-1B), into the space. The satellite was launched through ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C24 (PSLV-C24) rocket from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on 4 April 2014. PSLV-C24 injected the IRNSS-1B into a preliminary orbit.

Scientists Discovered Gene Behind Brain Development

Key gene for the development of human brain has been discovered by Scientists from the University of Adelaide on 6 April. The study shows how mutations in the gene called "USP9X" are linked to intellectual disability.

Solar Impulse 2 Plane Unveiled In Switzerland

The upgraded solar-powered plane Solar Impulse 2 was unveiled on 13 April at Payerne Air Force Base of Switzerland. The solar plane can fly around the world for five consecutive days without using any fuel. Swiss pilots Andre Borschberg and Bertrand Piccard have developed the solar powered aircraft.

Unique Pair of Super-Massive Black Holes Found

Scientists have discovered on 23 April the first pair of super-massive black holes in orbit around one another in a non-active galaxy. The European Space Agency's X-ray Multi Mirror Mission, XMM Newton had discovered these black holes.

PERSONS IN NEWS

A) APPOINTMENTS

N B Singh Assumes Charge As BDL director

Air Vice Marshal N B Singh, AVSM, VSM (retd) on 1 April assumed charge as Director (technical) of Bharat Dynamics Limited, a Hyderabad-based Mini-ratna category-1 company under the Ministry of Defence. Prior to this appointment, AVM Singh served as Assistant Chief of Air Staff (communication) in the Indian Air Force.

Justice RM Lodha Sworn In As 41st Chief Justice of India

Justice Rajendra Mal Lodha was on 27 April sworn in as the 41st Chief Justice of India (CJI) on 27 April. He was administered the oath of office by President Pranab Mukherjee. Chief Justice Lodha succeeds Chief Justice P Sathasivam who demitted office on completion of his term on 26 April 2014. Justice Lodha will have a brief tenure of five months as the Chief Justice as he will retire on 27 September 2014.

Former IAF chief Appointed India's Ambassador To Norway

Former Indian Air Force (IAF) chief Norman Anil Kumar Browne has been appointed India's next Ambassador to Norway on 29 April. He will succeed R. K. Tyagi as India's envoy in Norway. Browne had served as IAF chief between 31 July 2011 and 31 December 2013.

B) RESIGNS

Kazakhstan Prime-Minister Serik Akhmetov Resigned

Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov, has announced his resignation on 2 April, a development that will lead to the dissolution of the government. The resignation was accepted by the President as per the Constitutional provision. Akhmetov was appointed as the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan in September 2012.

C) DEATHS

Renowned Cinematographer VK Murthy Died

Renowned cinematographer and Dada Saheb Phalke awardee V K Murthy, died on 7 April in Shankarapuram. He was 91 and was famous for his camera work in Guru Dutt's classics like Pyaasa and Sahib, Bibi Aur Ghulam. He was the first cinematographer to be chosen for the prestigious Dada Saheb Phalke award for 2008. He received the honor on 19 January 2010. For his contribution to Indian cinema, he received the International Indian Film Academy Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. In 1959; he won the Filmfare Best Cinematographer award.

D) VISITORS

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden Visited Ukraine

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden visited Ukraine on 21 – 22 April 2014. In the most high-level visit of a U.S. official since crisis erupted in Ukraine, Biden met privately with acting Ukrainian Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and acting Ukrainian President Oleksandr Turchynov, as well as with democracy activists. In the visit, Biden also announced the United States will provide an

additional \$50 million to help Ukraine's beleaguered government with political and economic reforms.

E) MISCELLANEOUS

Koyal Rana Won Miss India 2014 Title

Koyal Rana was crowned as the new Miss India in the 51st Femina Miss India 2014 contest on 5 April at Mumbai. The winner will represent India at Miss World 2014 while 19 year old Jhataleka Malhotra was first runner up who will represent India at Miss Earth and second runner up Gail Nicole Da Silva at Miss Supranational.

PLACES IN NEWS

Google Launches 360 Degree Online View Of Angkor Wat In Cambodia

Google on 3 April launched 360 degree online view of Angkor Wat in Cambodia under Streetview project. The Angkor Wat project was developed with the help of the Apsara Authority of the Kingdom of Cambodia. APSARA National Authority is an organisation created for the protection and maintenance of Angkor. In Angkor Wat, arguably the largest temple complex in the world, Streetview has been used to patch together over 90,000 high resolution 360-degree images of the monument.

ABBREVIATIONS

- IABF — Indian Amateur Boxing Federation
- NATO — North Atlantic Treaty Organization
- BSF — Border Security Force
- IMF — International Monetary Fund
- IRNSS — Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System
- CITU — Centre of Indian Trade Unions

BOOKS IN NEWS

'The Accidental Prime Minister – The Making and Unmaking Of Manmohan Singh ' Book Released

A book entitled 'The Accidental Prime Minister – The Making and Unmaking of Manmohan Singh 'written by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's former media advisor Sanjaya Baru was released on 11 April.

COMMITTEES

Anand Sinha Committee Recommends Benchmark For Floating Interest Rate

A Reserve Bank of India (RBI) committee headed by former RBI Deputy Governor Anand Sinha suggested a benchmark floating interest rate, especially for home loans, to bring greater transparency in the pricing of credit. The committee on 10 April released Draft Report on 'Working Group on Pricing of Credit'. As per the report, the Indian Banks Association (IBA) may develop a new benchmark for floating interest rate products, namely, the Indian Banks Base Rate (IBBR), which may be collated and published by IBA on a periodic basis.