

CURRENT AFFAIRS – 2014

Month - June

INTERNATIONAL

US President Proposed 1 billion dollar Plan For Eastern Europe

The US President Barack Obama on 3 June proposed a 1 billion US dollar (about 730 million Euros) US security plan for Eastern Europe to finance extra US troop and military deployments to new allies in Eastern Europe.

Reuven Rivlin Is Elected Israel's 10th President

Reuven (Ruby) Rivlin, Knesset member of Likud Party, was on 10 June 2014 elected as 10th president of Israel. Reuven Rivlin has defeated a long-time MP Meir Sheerit by 63 to 53 in a secret run-off ballot. He will succeed Shimon Peres. Rivlin will sworn-in on 24 July 2014.

Russia Cuts Off Gas Supplies To Ukraine

Russia on 16 June cut off all gas supplies to Ukraine over the due payment. Energy Minister of Ukraine Yuri Prodan confirmed that the Gas supplies to Ukraine have been reduced to zero. After a while, both Gazprom and Naftogaz filed lawsuits against each other at the International Council Commercial Arbitration (ICCA) in Stockholm.

Sri Lanka and Seychelles Signed Six Agreements

Sri Lanka and Seychelles on 28 June signed six Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with a view of further integrating and deepening the existing relationship between the two countries. The six agreements were signed between Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa and President of Seychelles, James Michael in the capital, Victoria.

INDIA & WORLD

EU lifts Drug Export Ban From Ranbaxy's Toansa Plant

The European health regulator, on 5 June, lifted the suspension imposed on export of drugs produced at the Ranbaxy's Toansa plant to the EU, stating medicines produced at the site posed no risk to public health despite having a number of manufacturing deficiencies. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) announced that assessment of reported non-compliance with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) at Ranbaxy Laboratories at Toansa, India has been finalised by the European regulatory authorities.

India Becomes Permanent Signatory To Washington Accord

India has on 13 June become a permanent Signatory to Washington Accord (WA), which will enable global recognition of Indian degrees in engineering and technical education. With India becoming the permanent signatory, India joined a select group of 17 countries who are permanent signatories of the Washington Accord (WA).

India and Russia Bilateral Talks

In the first high-level interaction between India and Russia after Narendra Modi Government took over at the Centre, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry O Rogozin on 18 June discussed crucial bilateral issues, including matters related to trade and energy security. Besides issues related to economic cooperation and energy security, the deal for the third and fourth reactors of Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KNPP) also figured in the talks.

India Relaxes Visa Norms For Bangladeshi Nationals

India has relaxed visa rules for a category of Bangladeshi nationals planning to cross into its borders. This was decided in a meeting between India's external affairs minister Sushma Swaraj and her Bangladeshi counterpart Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali in Dhaka on 26 June 2014.

NATIONAL

Narendra Modi Scrapped Four Standing Committees of Cabinet

Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India on 10 June decided to discontinue four Standing Committees of the Cabinet. The discontinued standing committees included Cabinet Committee on Management of Natural Calamities, Cabinet Committee on Prices, Cabinet Committee on World Trade Organisation Matters and Cabinet Committee on Unique Identification Authority of India related issues.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana To Be Launched

To boost agricultural yield, the Union Agriculture Ministry is going to launch 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana' in the country. The statement was announced by Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh on 14 June. The motive of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sinchai Yojana will be to take irrigation water to each and every agricultural field in the country.

Union Government Reconstituted Six Cabinet Committees

Union Government on 19 June reconstituted six important Cabinet Committees of these four will be headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and remaining two by Home Minister Rajnath Singh. The six Cabinet Committees include Security, Political Affairs, Parliamentary Affairs, Economic Affairs, Accommodation and Appointments.

India To Be ' Land Degradation Neutral ' By 2030

Government of India on 17 June announced an ambitious programme to combat the challenge and make the country " Land Degradation Neutral " by 2030. Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar explained that the objective of the land degradation neutrality is to maintain or improve the condition of land resources through the sustainable management of soil, water and biodiversity.

STATES

Telangana Becomes India's 29th State

Telangana became the 29th State of India with Hyderabad as its capital on 2 June 2014. With this formation, ten districts of the then Andhra Pradesh will now become a part of the Telangana.

Retirement Age of J&K Govt. Employees Raised To 60

The Jammu & Kashmir government on 3 June enhanced the retirement age of government employees from 58 to 60 years. The cabinet also raised the upper age limit for youths to obtain government jobs from 37 to 40 years.

Tamilnadu Chief Minister Launched Amma Salt

Jayalalithaa, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 11 June launched Amma Salt, a product of Tamil Nadu Salt Corporation limited (TNSC) under the State Industries Department.

Gujarat CM Announces 33 Percent Quota For Women In Police Force

Gujarat Chief Minister Anandiben Patel on 24 June announced 33 percent reservation for women in the police force. With this announcement, the women of the state can enjoy 33 percent reservation in new recruitment in the police force.

CONFERENCES

G77 plus China Summit Held In Bolivia

The Group of 77 (G77) plus China summit was held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, on 15 June 2014. More than 100 delegations of the G77 block attended the summit, presided over by Bolivian President Evo Morales. The summit concluded with the adoption of a declaration calling for a new world order that is equitable, stable and peaceful. With the theme of “New World Order for Living Well,” the two-day summit also marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the G77, which has grown into a coalition of 133 UN developing member states. The G77, the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries, is aimed at promoting collective economic interests and gaining leverage within the international community.

AWARDS & HONOURS

RGIA gets ACI award

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), operated and managed by GMR Group, has become the first Indian airport to be awarded the ‘ACI Director General’s Roll of Excellence’ accolade. The award recognises the airport’s ranking among the world’s top three airports for five consecutive years in the ACI Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey.

IGI Named World’s Second Best Airport For Service Quality

Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) of Delhi was ranked as second best airport in the world in service quality among airports that handle 25 to 40 million passengers per annum (MPPA). For this achievement, IGI received Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Award by Airport Council International (ACI) in South Korea. IGI received the ASQ award for third time in row. Apart from this, IGI was placed at sixth position among the best airport in the world against fourth in 2013.

Indian-Origin Physicist Tejinder Virdee Awarded Honorary Knighthood

Indian-origin physicist Tejinder Virdee has been awarded with an honorary knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II on 14 June. He was awarded for his work on the Higgs Boson theory. Professor Virdee is one of the creators of the Compact Muon Solenoid (CMS) Experiment. The CMS experiment is a part of the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Geneva.

Noted Hindi Poet Kedar Nath Singh Selected For Jnanpith Award – 2013

Noted Hindi poet Kedarnath Singh on 20 June 2014 was chosen for the prestigious Jnanpith award for 2013. He is the 10th Hindi writer to receive the honour and joins the likes of Sumitra Nandan Pant, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar among others. He will be the recipient of 49th Jnanpith award.

SPORTS & GAMES

Kolkata Knight Riders Won IPL 2014 Title

The Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on 1 June 2014 won the seventh edition of Indian Premier League (IPL) 2014 by defeating Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) by three wickets in the final played at Chinnaswamy Stadium, Bangalore. This is the second title triumph for KKR after their maiden win back in 2012. Chennai Super Kings' Mohit Sharma won the Purple Cap while KXIP's Akshar Patel took the Emerging Player honour.

French Open Tennis Tournament Winners – 2014

Women's Singles :- Maria Sharapova of Russia won women's singles title of French Open 2014. She defeated Romania's Simona Halep in the final at Roland Garros, Paris on 7 June 2014. This was Sharapova's second French Open singles title and fifth grand slam singles title.

Men's Singles :- Spain's Rafael Nadal won the men's singles title of 2014 French Open on 8 June 2014 by defeating Serbia's Novak Djokovic in the final. This was Nadal's 9th singles title win at the French Open .

Daniel Ricciardo Won The Canadian Formula One Grand Prix

Red Bull Racing driver Daniel Ricciardo of Australia won the Canadian Grand Prix on 8 June in Montreal. This was the first GP win for Daniel Ricciardo of Australia and Mercedes was beaten for the first time in this season.

Netherlands Won Women's Hockey World Cup – 2014

Netherlands won the 2014 edition of Women's Hockey World Cup after defeating Australia 2-0 in the final at the Kyocera Stadium in The Hague (Netherlands) on 14 June. This is Netherlands seventh title.

Pankaj Advani Won IBSF 6-Red World Snooker Championship

Indian player Pankaj Advani created history by becoming the first player in the world to win world titles in the long and shorter formats of both billiards and snooker by pocketing the IBSF World 6-Red snooker Championship on 29 June in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Advani defeated Poland's Kacper Flilpiak in the final to win his first 6-Red World title and ninth overall.

ECONOMY

RBI Announced Second Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced second Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy Statement on 3 June. RBI in its second bi-monthly monetary policy statement has kept the policy rates unchanged. RBI Governor Raghuram G Rajan announced that the apex bank has kept the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 8.0 per cent. The cash reserve ratio (CRR) of scheduled banks unchanged at 4.0 percent of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL). The reverse repo rate under the LAF remained unchanged at 7.0 percent and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 9.0 percent.

India Ranks 15th with 175,000 Millionaire Households

The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) latest report titled '14th Annual Study of the Global Wealth-Management Industry' was released on 10 June 2014. According to the report, India had 1.75 lakh millionaire households in 2013 which ranks it as the 15th in the world in terms of countries with highest number of millionaire households.

World Bank Lowered Growth Forecast For Developing World To 4.8 percent

The World Bank on 11 June released Global Economic Prospects (GEP) report and revised down the economic growth forecast for developing world in 2014 to 4.8 percent from 5.3 percent estimated in January 2014. It also highlighted that the growth in 2015 and 2016 at 5.4 and 5.5 percent, respectively.

India Became Home To 1.56 lakh Millionaires In 2013

According to the World Wealth Report 2014, released by Capgemini and RBC Wealth Management on 20 June, India became home to 1.56 lakh millionaires with 3,000 more joining the elite club in 2013, making the country 16th most populous in terms of population of super-rich people worldwide.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Astronomers Discovered New Planet 'Mega-Earth'

US Astronomers from Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics (CFA) have discovered a new type of rocky planet beyond the solar system that weighs more than 17 times as much as Earth while being just over twice the size. The so-called "mega-Earth" circles a very old star called Kepler-10, which is located about 560 light-years away from Earth in the constellation Draco.

Two New Planets Orbiting Ancient Star Discovered

Scientists have discovered two new planets orbiting an ancient star near our Sun and one of them may have liquid water on its surface, a key ingredient to support life. Researchers explained one of the planets, called Kapteyn b, is orbiting the star at the right distance to allow liquid water to exist on its surface. The second planet, Kapteyn c is a more massive super-Earth in comparison. Kapteyn's Star is the 25th nearest star to the Sun – only 13 light years away from Earth.

PM Narendra Modi Dedicates INS Vikramaditya To The Nation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14 June dedicated India's largest warship aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya to the nation. During his visit to warship INS Vikramaditya off Goa coast in Arabian Sea, the Prime Minister was given a ceremonial guard of honour by the Navy and was briefed about the warship.

ISRO Successfully Launches PSLV-C23 Rocket carrying Five Foreign Satellites

ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation)'s Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)-C23 was launched on 30 June 2014 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The PSLV C23 carried five satellites belonging to four countries namely France, Germany, Canada and Singapore. All these five satellites were launched under commercial arrangements that ANTRIX (ISRO's commercial arm) has entered with the respective foreign agencies.

PERSONS IN NEWS

A) APPOINTMENTS

Sumitra Mahajan Elected As Speaker Of 16th Lok Sabha

Veteran BJP leader Sumitra Mahajan was 6 June unanimously elected Speaker of the 16th Lok Sabha, becoming the second woman to occupy the prestigious position after her predecessor Meira Kumar.

Ranjit Kumar Takes Charge As Solicitor General of India

Senior Supreme Court advocate Ranjit Kumar took charge as Solicitor-General of India on 9 June. He replaced senior advocate Mohan Parasaran, who had tendered his resignation in May 2014 after the formation of a new government at the Centre.

Mukul Rohatgi Is New Attorney General of India

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi on 19 June took charge as the new Attorney General (AG) of India and will have a tenure of three years. Rohatgi had also served as an Additional Solicitor General during previous NDA regime.

B)RESIGNS

Uttar Pradesh Governor BL Joshi Resigned

Uttar Pradesh Governor BL Joshi was resigned from his post on 17 June. Joshi who was serving the state as its Governor for second term sent his resignation to Pranab Mukherjee, the President of India. BL Joshi a retired Indian Police Service (IPS) officer was serving Uttar Pradesh as governor since 2009.

C)DEATHS

Union Rural Development Minister Gopinath Munde Died

Union Rural Development Minister, Gopinath Munde died in a road accident in Delhi. Munde was sworn-in as the Cabinet Minister for Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Sanitation and Rural Development on 26 May 2014.

D)VISITORS

China Foreign Minister Wang Yi Visited India

China Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited India from 8 – 9 June 2014. During his two day visit, he met Union External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj in New Delhi and discussed a wide range of issues related to trade, economy, border and people to people exchanges. In the visit Wang also met President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9 June 2014. This was the first contact between the two governments after the Indian general election and after the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance government assumed office.

E) MISCELLANEOUS

Dhoni Only Indian In Forbes List Of World's 100 Highest Paid Athletes

Indian cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni is the lone Indian sportsman to figure on Forbes' list of world's 100 highest paid athletes. The list is being topped by American boxer Floyd Mayweather and includes golfer Tiger Woods and tennis stars Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. Dhoni is ranked 22nd on the list with total earnings of USD 30 million and endorsements worth USD 26 million. His salary and winnings total USD four million as of June 2014.

PLACES IN NEWS

Mumbai Is Noisiest City In The World

Mumbai is hostage to air and water pollution at dangerous levels, and is probably the noisiest city in the world, ahead of Delhi and Kolkata. Maharashtra's economic survey, released a day before World Environment Day (On June 5 2014), paints a grim picture for the rest of the state as well.

ABBREVIATIONS

FIFA — Federation International de Football Association

RGIA — Rajiv Gandhi International Airport

UNEP — United Nations Environment Programme

KNPP — Kundankulam Nuclear Power Plant

TRAI — Telecom Regulatory Authority of India

BOOKS IN NEWS

Prime Minister Modi Launches Book Titled "Getting India Back on Track – An Action Agenda For Reform"

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8 June released a book titled " Getting India Back on Track – An Action Agenda For Reform" edited by Bibek Debroy, Ashley J. Tellis & Reece Trevor .

COMMITTEES

Saimitra Chaudhuri Committee Suggest Cess Levy On Petrol and Diesel

A Government panel headed by former Planning Commission member Saimitra Chaudhuri has suggested levying cess amounting to 75 paise a litre on petrol and diesel in order to cover the cost of upgrading refineries across the country to produce higher grade of auto fuel for the future – in other words achieve Bharat Stage (BS) V level norms by the year 2020 – which comes to around Rs 80,000 crore. The Chaudhuri panel had recently submitted its report titled “Auto Fuel Vision and Policy 2025” to the MoPNG.