



General Awareness Bullet- March 2015

(Comprehensive summary of general awareness topics across March 2015)

Dear PaGaLGuY readers,

The General Awareness Bullet is a comprehensive summary of important news and events that took place in March 2015.

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RBI in News

- 1. RBI revises regulations for NBFCs:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised regulations for non-banking finance lenders by directing them to get themselves rated by March 2016. In the revised regulatory framework on NBFCs, RBI further said:
 - i.** Those asset finance companies (AFCs) failing to achieve investment grade ratings by the end of March 2016, should not accept fresh public deposits and renewing existing ones.
 - ii.** In such an event, all existing deposits should runoff to maturity and NBFCs should report to the concerned RBI's Regional Offices within 15 days.
 - iii.** The RBI has also tweaked rules in respect of net-owned funds, and pegged the mandatory requirement at 2 crore rupees for all NBFCs and has given time till April 2017 to comply.
- 2.** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) signed a currency swap agreement of \$400 million with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. RBI said that the agreement will allow the Central Bank of Sri Lanka to make withdrawals of US Dollar or Euro in multiple tranches up to a maximum of USD 400 million or its equivalent. The agreement will be valid for a period of three years.
- 3. RBI reduced Repo Rate by 25 basis points:** The Reserve Bank of India on 4th March 2015, reduced the repo rate by 25 basis points from 7.75% to 7.50% with immediate effect ahead of its seventh bi-monthly policy review. The cut in the policy rate by RBI will help in lowering interest rate for individual and corporate borrowers and make home loan and corporate loans cheaper. There has been no change in the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) 4 per cent, and the reverse repo rate under the LAF (Liquidity Adjustment Facility) stands adjusted to 6.50 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate to 8.50 per cent with immediate effect.

Current Rates:

1.Repo Rate	7.50% (changed from 7.75%)
2.Reverse Repo	6.50% (changed from 6.75%)
3.CRR(Cash Reserve ratio)	4% (unchanged)
4.SLR (Statutory Liquidity Ratio)	21.5% (unchanged)
5.MSF (Marginal Standing Facility)	8.50% (changed from 8.75%)
6.Bank Rate	8.50% (changed from 8.75%)

Financial/Banking News

1. IMF raised India's GDP growth forecast to 7.5% in 2015 -16. Earlier in January, IMF projected India's GDP growth forecast to 6.3% for current fiscal.
2. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) projected India's growth rate to 7.8 per cent in 2015-16. It also forecast India's growth rate would be 8.2 percent in 2016-17.
3. **HDFC Bank launches Chillr mobile app:** HDFC Bank partnered with MobME, a Kochi-based technology firm to launch a mobile app "Chillr". It is a first-of-its kind application that is linked directly to the customer's bank account.

Features of "Chillr app":

- i. The mobile app will allow HDFC customer to instantly transfer money to any contact in their phonebook.
- ii. HDFC Bank customers can transfer money to anyone in India, once they download the app and register themselves.
- iii. Customer can make 10 transactions in a day with a maximum limit of ₹5,000.
- iv. The monthly limit for transaction is set at ₹50,000.

Appointments and Personalities-India& Abroad

New Appointments in the Financial Sector

- ✓ New Executive Director of UCO Bank - Mr Charan Singh
- ✓ New Executive Director of Bank of Baroda - K. Venkata Rama Moorthy
- ✓ New Executive Director of Bank of India - R.P. Marathe
- ✓ New Executive Director of Canara Bank - Harideesh Kumar B
- ✓ New Executive Director of Allahabad Bank - N.K. Sahoo
- ✓ New Executive Director of Indian Overseas Bank - Pawan Kumar Bajaj
- ✓ New Executive Director of Syndicate Bank - Ravi Shankar Pandey
- ✓ New Executive Director of Union Bank of India - Kishore Piraji Kharat
- ✓ New Executive Director of Central Bank of India - R.C. Lodha
- ✓ New Executive Director of Andhra Bank - Ajit Kumar Rath

New Appointments in Important Institutions

- ✓ New Chancellor of Viswa Bharati University- Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He replaces former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.
- ✓ New Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court - Justice Sunil Ambwani
- ✓ New CEO of CRISIL – Ashu Suyash to be next Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of CRISIL. He will join as a CEO on June 1, 2015
- ✓ New President & Chief Operating Officer of Wipro - Abid Ali Neemuchwala
- ✓ New Chairman of the Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers on Goods and Services Tax (GST) - **KM Mani**



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- ✓ New Chief Justice of Kerala High Court - Justice Ashok Bhooshan.

New Heads of Countries

- ✓ New PM of Israel – Benjamin Netanyahu returns to power for a fourth term and become the country's longest-serving premier.

Other Appointments

- ✓ Poonam Mahajan elected as the first Woman President of Basketball Federation.
- ✓ New Air Force Chief of Pakistan – Sohail Aman. He replaced Tahir Rafique.



Summits/Conferences around the World:

1. UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan.

Note: India will host the seventh Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) in 2016.

Obituaries

India	
1. Indra Bania	Renowned Assamese actor
2. K Baskaran	Veteran sports journalist
3. Narayan Desai	Noted Gandhian
4. Shahir Krishnarao Sable	Marathi Folk legend
5. Vinod Mehta	Eminent Journalist
6. G Karthikeyan	Speaker of Kerala Assembly
WORLD	
1. Malcolm Fraser	Former Australian Prime Minister
2. Lee Kuan Yew	First Prime Minister of Singapore
3. Florence Arthaud	French sailor who in 1990 broke the record for crossing the North Atlantic alone.
4. Camille Muffat	French swimmer who won three medals at the 2012 Olympics in London.
5. Alexis Vastine	French boxer who won a bronze medal at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

New Books & Authors

1. Book titled “**Food For All**” written by Uma Lele
2. Book titled “**Faces and Places**” written by Prof. Deepak Nayyar.
3. Book titled “**God's Bankers: A History of Money and Power at the Vatican**” authored by Gerald Posner.
4. Book titled “**Indian Parliamentary Diplomacy-Speaker's Perspective**” written by Meira Kumar, former speaker of Lok Sabha.

Person in News

India	
1. Amitabh Bachchan	The government of India has roped in Amitabh Bachchan as the brand ambassador for its drive against hepatitis B, a critical public health problem in India.
2. Dolly Shivani Cherukuri	Dolly Shivani Cherukuri (2 year old) of Vijaywada, Andhra Pradesh achieved a stunning feat by setting a new archery record and entering her name into the India Book of Records. She became the youngest Indian to score 200 points over five and seven-metre distances.
3. Mary Kom	The government of India has appointed world boxing champion Mary Kom as a Brand Ambassador for the North East states. The name of Mary Kom has been selected for the promotion of culture and tourism in the North East states of India.

Awards & Honours

1. **Abel Prize 2015** - Nobel Laureate John F Nash Jr. won the Abel Prize 2015 for his work on partial differential equations.
2. **Gandhi Peace Prize 2014** - India's space agency -- Indian Space Research Organisation (**ISRO**) has been selected for the Gandhi Peace Prize for the year 2014.
3. An Indian - American professor Murty S Kambhampati is among 15 scientists who have been selected for a prestigious US presidential award for excellence in the field of science, mathematics and engineering mentoring. He is a professor of biology at Southern University at New Orleans.
4. **Miss India 2015 title:** Aditi Arya won the Miss India 2015 title at the 52nd edition of the beauty contest held at Yash Raj Studio in Mumbai. The first runner-up was Aafreen Rachel Vaz of Mangaluru, Karnataka and the second runner-up was Vartika Singh of Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
5. **Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2014** - Veteran actor and director Shashi Kapoor has been selected for DadasahebPhalke Award for 2014. He will be the 46th recipient of the award.
6. **International Booker prize 2015** - Amitav Ghosh was shortlisted among 10 finalists for this year's Man Booker International Prize. He was shortlisted for his contribution to the English language writing.
7. **Saraswati Samman 2014** - Former Union Minister and veteran Congress leader Veerappa Moily has been selected for the Saraswati Samman for 2014. He has been selected for his Kannada poem "**Ramayana Mahanveshanam**".
8. **National Award to Rani Mukherjee**, for highlighting the cause of safety, security and protection of the girl child and women in Mardaani film. The award is given by National Institute of Gender Justice (NIGJ). She became the first film personality to be conferred with the award.
9. **Tyler Prize 2015: Indian ecologist, Madhav Gadgil** has been selected for the prestigious 2015 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement. He will share the \$200,000 cash prize with noted American marine ecologist Dr. Jane Lubchenco.
10. **Stockholm Water Prize Laureate 2015** - Rajendra Singh known as the Waterman of India has been selected for the 2015 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate. He was selected for his innovative water restoration efforts, improving water security in rural India.
11. **Bangladesh has won the prestigious Women in Parliaments (WIP) Award** for regional leadership in closing the gender gap in politics. Bangladesh has been placed among the top 10 countries in the world in reducing gender gap by the World Economic Forum. Women in Parliament Awards are given based on World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Reports.
12. **The Folio Prize 2015:** Akhil Sharma an Indian-American author , won The Folio Prize 2015 for his novel "Family Life". His novel "Family Life" was one among the eight books shortlisted from 80 works of fiction and was chosen as the best fiction published in the UK in 2014 by the 235 writers and critics who constitute the Folio Academy.
13. **National Kavi Pradeep award:** Veteran Hindi poet Gopaldas Neeraj awarded with the first National Kavi Pradeep Samman by Madhya Pradesh govt. The award has been instituted by the Madhya Pradesh govt. in the memory of Kavi Pradeep, the renowned poet and songwriter who is best known for his patriotic song 'Aye Mere WatanKe Logo'.
14. **National Media and Advertising Awards:** The sixth edition of the National Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity announced in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

List of Winners in different category

- i. **Laadli Voice of the Century award** – Lata Mangeshkar
- ii. **Best movie award** - Queen
- iii. **Laadli Grand Prix award** - advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather for its advertisement, Titan Raga - tum nahibadle.
- iv. **Laadli extraordinaire award** – Charu Khurana, she won a landmark judgment in the Supreme Court regarding Bollywood's bias against women make-up artistes.

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62nd National Film Awards: The 62nd National Film Awards 2014 were announced by the Chairpersons of the three juries on Feature Films, Non Feature Films and Best Writing on Cinema. Kangana Ranaut won the best actress award for her powerful performance in "Queen" where Bollywood movies "Haider" and "Mary Kom" bagged key honours while Chaitanya Tamhane's "Court" was named the best feature film.

List of the winners are:

Best Actress: Kangana Ranaut for Queen
Best Actor: Vijay for Nanu AvanallaAvalu (Kannada)
Best Direction: Srijit Mukherji for Chotushkone (Bengali)
Best Supporting Actress: Baljinder Kaur for Pagdi The Honour (Haryanavi)
Best Supporting Actor: Bobby Simhaa for Jigarthanda (Tamil)
Best Music Direction: a) Songs - Haider (Hindi); and b) Background Score - Nineteen Eighty Three (Malayalam)

Best Choreography: Bismil for Haider
Best Writing on Cinema: Silent Cinema: (1895-1930)- Pasupuleti Purnachandra Rao
Best Writing on Cinema: G. Dhananjayan for Pride of Tamil Cinema (Special Mention)
Best Costume Designer: Dolly Ahluwalia for Haider
Best Female Playback Singer: Uttara Unnikrishanan for song Azhagu in Saivam (Tamil)
Best Male Playback Singer: Sukhwinder Singh for song Bismil from Haider

Best Films in different languages

Best Hindi Film: Queen
Best Assamese Film: Othello
Best Bengali Film: Nirbashito
Best Kannada Film: Harivu
Best Konkani Film: Nachom - IA Kumpasar
Best Malayalam Film: Ain
Best Marathi Film: Killa

Best Odiya Film: Aadim Vichar
Best Punjabi Film: Punjab 1984
Best Tamil Film: Kuttram Kadithal
Best Telugu Film: Chandamama Kathalu
Best Rabha Film: Orong
Best Haryanvi Film: Pagdi The Honour

Best Films in different categories

Best Educational Film: Komal & Behind the Glass Wall
Best Exploration/Adventure: Film Life Force - India's Western Ghats
Best Investigative Film: Phum Shang
Best Animation Film: Sound of Joy
Best Short Fiction Film: Mitraa
Best Film On Environment Conservation/

Preservation: Ottaal (Malayalam)
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment: Mary Kom
Indira Gandhi Award For Best Debut Film Of A Director: Asha Jaoar Majhe (Bengali)
Best Feature Film: Court (Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati & English)
Best Film Critic: Tanul Thakur

Important News - India - Nation

Important News – India & Abroad

1. Muhammadu Buhari of All Progressives Congress won the Nigeria presidential election. He has become the first opposition candidate to win a presidential election in Nigeria. He defeated incumbent President Goodluck Jonathan by about 2 million votes, according to Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission. He will take oath as President of Nigeria on May 29, 2015.

2. **PM launches PRAGATI platform:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched ambitious multi-purpose and multi-modal platform PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation). PRAGATI is a unique integrating and interactive platform which is aimed at addressing common man's grievances, and simultaneously monitoring and reviewing important programmes and projects of the Government of India as well as projects flagged by state governments. The programme will be tied together by technology, with information on projects being available at a click. The Pragati sessions will take place every fourth Wednesday.
3. **World Bank sanctions Rs 100 cr for development of Sagar Island in WB.** The World Bank has sanctioned 100 crore rupees for all round development of Sagar Island in South 24 Parganas District of West Bengal.
4. The Union Ministry of Finance and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a loan agreement for 300 million US dollars to improve road connectivity along the North Bengal-North Eastern (NB-NE) Region. The funds will be utilized to improve road connectivity and efficiency of the international trade corridors by expanding roads in NB-NE region of the country.
5. **The Delhi high court has become the first court** to set up dedicated commercial divisions within it, in line with recommendation of the Law Commission of India. Chief Justice of Delhi HC G Rohini designated four benches to act as commercial courts. Out of this, two single judge benches with original jurisdiction will deal with the suits involving commercial disputes relating to intellectual property rights, arbitration, insurance, banking, taxation, company cases etc. The other two benches with appellate jurisdiction will hear appeals against the commercial disputes cases.
6. The Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flagged off the first goods train from Lumding to Silchar in Assam.
7. **ISRO launches 4th navigation satellite IRNSS-1D:** India successfully launched its fourth navigation satellite IRNSS-1D from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. The satellite is the fourth in the series of seven navigation satellites that the space agency is planning to launch to put in place the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS).
8. **Kailash Satyarthi features in the Fortune list of 2015 roster of Greatest Leaders:** Fortune Magazine has released the list of 2015 roster of the World's 50 Greatest Leaders and feature Nobel Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi at the 28th rank. The list included Prime Minister of India at 5th rank, which was topped by Apple CEO Tim Cook.
9. **India's first e-ration card Service launched by Delhi Govt.:** Chief Minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal launched India's first e-ration card service in the state, to curb corruption and increase transparency in the system. E-ration card will be linked with Aadhaar cards and it would enable the beneficiaries of Public Distribution System (PDS) to get the cards online from the government's web portal without hassles.
10. India launched Operation Raahat to evacuate 4000 Indian nationals from Yemen.
11. The Ministry of Railways appointed Ajay Shankar head of committee to review the performance of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) cell functioning under the Railway Board. The Committee will recommend measures to make the cell more effective, customer friendly and result oriented.
12. Indian Railways launched its own RuPay pre-paid card in collaboration with the Union Bank of India. The card will enable passengers to book their Rail tickets and do shopping using RuPay pre-paid debit cards. Card can be availed from either the Union Bank or the IRCTC.
13. **Govt. approved 33% women reservation in police forces of all Union Territories:** The government of India has approved 33 percent reservation for women in police forces of all Union territories (UTs) including Delhi police, through direct recruitment in non-gazetted posts like constables to sub-inspectors. The reservation will also cover reserved categories like SCs, STs and OBCs. The reservation would apply to all existing vacancies in police forces of the UTs and any vacancy arising later.
14. **Railway's Kaya Kalp council will be headed by Ratan Tata:** A new innovative council of Indian Railways, called 'Kaya Kalp', formed to turn around the ailing state-run rail network will be headed by noted industrialist Ratan Tata. Along with Ratan Tata, the Kaya Kalp council will also have two railway union leaders Shiv Gopal Mishra and M Raghuviah.



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15. Yahoo has decided to shut down its operations and research center in Beijing, China. Yahoo Inc. is an American multinational Internet corporation headquartered in Sunnyvale, California.
16. **US and Russia remain** world's biggest arms exporters – study - According to the new study of Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI); Russia remains the world's second biggest seller of arms behind the United States, increasing its share by 37 percent in 2010-2014. China has overtaken Germany to become third-biggest arms exporter in the World. **Top 5** world's biggest arms exporters: 1. US 2. Russia 3. China 4. Germany 5. France
17. **India and Saudi Arabia** is the World's biggest arms importers: According to the new study of Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI); India, Saudi Arabia, China, the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan have become the largest importers of weapons in 2010-2014. India made 15 percent, while Saudi Arabia and China accounted for 5 percent each and the UAE and Pakistan for 4 percent.
18. **Supreme Court rejects reservation to jats under OBC quota:** Supreme Court rejects the March 2014 notification of UPA government which included reservation to Jats under OBC quota in nine states of India which includes; Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
19. **LIC to help Indian Railways in development projects:** According to the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, LIC has taken the task of supporting Indian Railways and it is a commercial decision. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) will invest Rs 1.5 Lakh crore in Indian Railways over next 5 years for development of various commercially viable projects. The investment would be done in bonds issued by various railway entities such as Indian Railways Finance Corporation, beginning next fiscal.
20. Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley unveiled the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in London. The nine-foot bronze statue of Gandhi was created by Phillip Jackson, a renowned British sculptor, and will stand in the company of Nelson Mandela, Winston Churchill, and Abraham Lincoln, among others.
21. **Apurva, a new calf cloned by National Dairy Research Institute:** National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) have cloned a female calf using cells (somatic cells) from the buffalo's urine. The calf named Apurva and it is the tenth cloned calf in the NDRI, since the institute produced world's first cloned buffalo calf in 2009. This is probably first case in the world across the species, in which somatic cells has been isolated from urine and cloned calf has been produced.
22. **US embassy in closed in Saudi Arabia:** United States has closed its embassy in Saudi Arabia for indefinite period, due to heightened security concerns at US diplomatic facilities.
23. According to the Mastercard's latest Index of Women's Advancement, India is the lowest among 16 Asia Pacific countries in economic parity for women. Indian women stand even lower than their counterparts from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the survey said. India (44.2), Bangladesh (44.6) and Sri Lanka (46.2) had scores below 50, indicating that much more needs to be done to achieve gender parity. Across the region, New Zealand had the highest overall Index score of 77, followed by Australia (76), the Philippines (72.6) and Singapore (70.5).
24. Zebpay introduces its 'bitcoin' mobile wallet in the country, by which a user can buy, sell and transact in bitcoins which is presently valued at around \$280 per unit. Bitcoins are digital money that are generated and their value is determined based on their demand and supply.
25. **PM launches first indigenous rotavirus vaccine:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the first indigenously developed and manufactured rotavirus vaccine, which will help in diarrhoea cases. The vaccine is developed through a collaboration between India and the United States, is expected to help bring about a significant reduction in the 100,000 infant deaths caused by the rotavirus diarrhoea in India.
26. **Kathmandu-Varanasi bus service launched:** The Government of Nepal and India has launched a direct bus service from Kathmandu and Varanasi. The bus service was launched under the ambit of Motor Vehicle agreement between Nepal and India signed during 18th SAARC summit. This will be the second bus service between Nepal and India, after the one connected between Kathmandu and New Delhi.

Important News - India - States

1. **Mizoram Governor Aziz Qureshi removed:** According to the official statement, President Pranab Mukherjee removed Mizoram Governor Aziz Qureshi removed from his post. Governor of West Bengal Keshri Nath Tripathi will take additional charge of state until further appointment.

2. **NABARD sanctions loan of Rs 112.60 cr to Haryana:** NABARD has sanctioned a loan of Rs 112.60 crore to the Haryana Government under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF). The loan was granted to Haryana by NABARD for construction of College of Dairy Science and Technology under Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences in Hisar district. The project is aimed at giving impetus to animal husbandry sector. Every year around 250 students will pass out of the college with B Tech in Dairy Technology.
3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced to set up the Shaheed Bhagat Singh PG Institute for Horticulture Research and Education at Amritsar, Punjab. The announcement was made on the occasion of 84th Martyrdom Day at the National Martyrs Memorial in Hussainiwala, near Ferozpur in Punjab.
4. The government of India has decided to set up four new agricultural and horticultural universities in the country. New Agricultural universities will be come up in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan and the horticultural universities will be set up in Telangana and Haryana state.
5. **US NGO & MetLife to provide microfinance in UP:** Grameen Foundation India (GFI) has partnered with MetLife Foundation to provide microfinance in Uttar Pradesh. Under the agreement both the foundation will provide savings and other services to at least 40,000 poor and women clients in Uttar Pradesh. Grameen Foundation India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of US based Grameen Foundation.
6. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the two units each of 600 MW of Shree Singaji Thermal Power Plant in the Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh. Shree Singaji Thermal Power Plant is a coal-fired project located in Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh.
7. **First Kisan Call Centre (KCC) of North- East opened in Agartala, Tripura.** The Kisan Call Centre will give immediate solution and real time advisory to farmers if they need expert consultation regarding seed procurement, agro-metric, fertilizer, soil health, pesticides usage and marketing of the produces.
8. **Maharashtra government scraps 5% quota for Muslims:** The Maharashtra government has decided not to give 5% reservations to the Muslim community in both jobs and education. The state govt. has cancelled the earlier resolution of July 24, 2014 brought in by the Congress-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) government that announced the 5% reservation to the Muslim community.



Important Agreement/ Deal: India & Abroad

1. **Japan ties with India in security, defence:** Japan has sought enhanced co-operation with India in defence and security sector including in the field of maritime security. Defence Minister of India Manohar Parrikar, who was on official visit to Japan, held talks with country's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida.
2. **India and Kyrgyzstan signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to strengthen bilateral cooperation on textile and clothing. The MoU seeks to strengthen bilateral cooperation between both nations in the three fields including Textiles and Clothing, Silk and Sericulture and Fashion.
3. **India signed five agreements with Mauritius:** India offered \$500 million concessional Line of Credit to Mauritius for key infrastructure projects. The five agreements signed between the two countries include:
 - i. Ocean economy
 - ii. Improvement in sea
 - iii. Air transportation facilities
 - iv. Import of Indian mangoes;
 - v. Co-operation in the field of traditional system of medicine and homoeopathy.
4. **India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements:** India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements during Narendra Modi's maiden visit to the country, the first bilateral tour by an Indian premier in 28 years. Both the countries has signed four agreements on visa, customs, youth development and building Rabindranath Tagore memorial in Sri Lanka.

Note: Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister and only the second foreign leader after British Premier David Cameron, who visited Jaffna in the war-ravaged Northern province.

5. **India & Norway will work together on climate change:** India has team up with Norway to understand the global climate change, and to study about the Indian monsoon. Both the countries will also help in the study about the linkages between climatic variations in the polar region.
6. **India and Seychelles sign 4 agreements:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Seychelles where both the nations signed four agreements to boost security and maritime partnership.
 - ii. Four pacts signed between two countries which includes; cooperation in hydrography, renewable energy, infrastructure development and sale of navigation charts and electronic navigational charts.
7. **India & Spain inks agreement on Mutual Protection of Classified Information:** India and Spain has signed an agreement on Mutual Protection of Classified Information, to provide the framework for enhanced cooperation in the defence sector.

Important Schemes launched by State/Union Govt. of India

1. **Aahar' scheme for urban poor launched in Odisha:** The Odisha government launched the 'Aahar' cheap meal scheme for providing subsidised food to urban poor. The subsidised meals for people visiting urban areas for various works would be provided at four crowded places each in these five cities from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., to about 25,000 people per day.
2. **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY):** The scheme launched by government of India with an outlay of 1500 crore rupees.

Major Points of the Scheme:

 1. The scheme aims to impart skill training to youth with focus on first time entrants to the labour market and class 10 and class 12 drop outs.
 2. The scheme will be implemented by the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship through the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).
 3. It will cover 24 lakh persons and skill training would be based on the National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) and industry led standards
3. **Atal Pension Yojana (APY):** The scheme is mainly for workers in unorganised sector, to encourage the habit of saving for their retirement. The scheme will be administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and will be launch on 1st June 2015. Atal Pension Yojana (APY) will replace the Swavalamban Yojana NPS Lite scheme which was launched by the UPA government.

Major Points of the scheme:

 1. The subscribers who will joined the scheme would receive the fixed pension of Rs. 1000 per month, Rs. 2000 per month, Rs. 3000 per month, Rs. 4000 per month, Rs. 5000 per month, at the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions.
 2. The minimum age of joining this scheme is 18 years and maximum age is 40 years.
 3. Under the scheme, a subscriber can contribute for minimum period of 20 years or more and pension payment will start at the age of 60 years.
 4. Under the scheme government of India has decided to co-contribute 50% of the subscriber's contribution or Rs. 1000 per annum, whichever is lower, to each eligible subscriber account, for a period of 5 years, i.e., from 2015-16 to 2019-20, who join the NPS before 31st December, 2015 and who are not income tax payers.
 5. All bank account holders under the eligible category may join the scheme with auto-debit facility to accounts, leading to reduction in contribution collection charges.
 6. Subscribers who will join the scheme before December 31, 2015, can availed the benefit of government's co-contribution under the scheme.
 7. Subscribers who are already enrolled in Swavalamban Scheme would be automatically migrated to Atal Pension Yojana, unless they opt out.

4. **Bhagyashree scheme launched in Maharashtra:** Bhagyashree scheme for girl child was launched by Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis in the state.

Major Points of the scheme:

1. Under the scheme, the state government will deposit an amount of 21200 rupees in bank for a girl child born in a Below the Poverty Line (BPL) family.
2. The scheme aims at providing one lakh rupee on maturity after the girl completes 18 years of age.
3. The scheme would be linked to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme of Union Government.
4. Bollywood actress Bhagyashree is the brand ambassador of the scheme.

5. **Aapki BetiHumari Beti girl child scheme launched in Haryana:** The scheme launched by Haryana Chief Minister Manohar LalKhattar in the state.

Major Points of the scheme:

1. The scheme was launched with an aim to combat the problem of declining child sex ratio in the state.
2. The scheme will be implemented in both rural and urban areas of the state.
3. Under this scheme, the first girl child born on or after January 22, 2015, in SC and BPL families will be eligible to receive Rs 21,000.
4. Similarly, all second girl children born on or after January 22, 2015 of all families will also get Rs 21,000.
5. Families, where twin girls or multiple girls are born, will get Rs 21,000 per girl child.

5. **New Urban Rejuvenation Mission to replace JNNRUM:** According to the Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu, government will replace Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, JNNRUM with a new Urban Rejuvenation Mission to bring more areas for development under its ambit. Under the proposed scheme, cities with population of 1 Lakh or above will also be covered. The new mission will focus on modern concept for cities planned using Geographic information system (GIS), best transport facilities and will have solid and liquid waste management system to develop clean cities." JNNRUM had already completed its term, which was launched by previous UPA government.



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Sports Scan

Cricket News

World Cup 2015 – Australia defeated New Zealand by 7 wickets in the final and in Melbourne, Australia. This was the Fifth Cricket World Cup for Australian cricket team. They won previous Cricket World Cup title in the years 1987, 1999, 2003, and 2007.

Major points of the ICC World Cup 2015:

1. The 2015 Cricket World Cup was the 11th edition of the ICC Cricket World Cup. First edition of the Cricket World Cup held in 1975.
2. Australia and New Zealand host the 2015 World Cup.
3. Sachin Tendulkar is the brand ambassador of 2015 Cricket World Cup.
4. Total 14 teams participated in the tournament.
5. James Faulkner was adjudged **man of the match**.
6. Mitchell Starc (Australia) named the **man of the series**. He took 22 wickets in the tournament.
7. Martin Guptill (New Zealand) was the top run scorer of the tournament. He scored total 547 runs.
8. Martin Guptill (New Zealand) scored highest individual runs in the tournament. He scored 237 runs against West Indies.
9. Mitchell Starc (Australia) and Trent Boult (New Zealand) took the highest (22) wickets in the tournament.

10. Australian cricket team created the World Cup record for highest-ever score of 417 for 6 in a match against Afghanistan in Perth. It defeated Afghanistan by 275 runs which was the biggest winning margin in the tournament's history.
11. West Indies cricketer, Chris Gayle creates a history in World Cup by smashing fastest double century against Zimbabwe in 2015 ICC World Cup. He became the first batsman to hit double century in the history of Cricket World Cup. He scored 200 runs in just 138 balls, breaks the previous record of Indian batsmen Virendera Sehwag of 200 runs in 140 balls.
12. South African captain AB de Villiers scored fastest century in one day international match against West Indies. He scored 100 runs in just 31 balls.
13. Kumar Sangakkara created a history in 2015 ICC World Cup tournament by hitting a record fourth consecutive ODI centuries in a row. He became the first batsman in history of One - Day Internationals to score centuries in four consecutive innings. He achieves this feat by scoring 124 runs against Scotland in the Pool A match of the 2015 Cricket World Cup in Hobart, New Zealand.
14. With this win, Australia also became the second host country to win the title. India in 2011 had become the first host country to win the title.

Other Cricket News:

1. AHM Mustafa Kamal President of International Cricket Council resigned from his post.
2. New Zealand left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori has announced his retirement from international cricket.
3. Australia captain Michael Clarke announced retirement from one-day cricket and decided to continue to play in Test cricket only.
4. **Karnataka lifted Ranji Trophy 2015** by defeating Tamil Nadu by an innings and 217 runs. With this win Karnataka won 8th in Ranji title and become the second most successful team after 40-time champions Mumbai. Karnatka also became the second team in the Ranji Trophy to defend the title on more than one occasion. They had retained the title in 1997-98 and 1998-99 in the past.
5. Sri Lankan cricketer Mahela Jayawardene and Kumar Sangakkara has announced their retirement from the One Day International (ODI) format of Cricket. Earlier Kumar Sangakkara had announced his retirement from Test Cricket. He will retire after playing the three-match Test series against India in August 2015
6. Pakistani cricketer Misbah-ul-Haq and Shahid Afridi has announced their retirement from the One Day International (ODI) format of Cricket. Misbah-ul-Haq will continue to play in Test Cricket, while Afridi will feature in Twenty20 cricket.

Football News

1. United Arab Emirates has won the bid to host the 17th edition of Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup in 2019.
2. Services lifted 69th edition of Santosh Trophy 2015 by defeating Punjab by 5-4 in the final. Services have now won the title for the fourth time.

Hockey News -

1. Hockey India conferred Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award on legendary Balbir Singh Senior. Balbir Singh Senior was a member of three Olympic gold medal winning Indian team, viz., London Olympics (1948), Helsinki Olympics (1952) and Melbourne Olympics (1956).
2. India lifted the Women's Hockey World League Round Two competition title by defeating Poland by 3-1 in the final Major Dhyan Chan stadium in New Delhi.

Tennis News

Indian Wells Open Tennis (BNP Paribas Open 2015) -

Title	Winner	Runner up
Men's single	Novak Djokovic	Roger Federer
Women's Singles	Simona Halep	Jelena Jankovic
Women's Double	Sania Mirza & Martina Hingis	Ekaterina Makarova & Elena Vesnina

Badminton News

Indian Open Super Series Badminton Title 2015

Title	Winner	Runner up
Men's single	K. Srikanth	Viktor Axelsen
Women's Singles	Saina Nehwal	Ratchanok Intanon

1. Carolina Marin became the first Spanish player to win the Wimbledon of badminton, All England Championship title. She defeated Saina Nehwal in the final.
2. Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth won Swiss Grand Prix Gold Title by defeating Viktor Axelsen of Denmark by 21-15, 12-21, 21-14 in the final.

Other Sports News

1. Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel won the Malaysian Grand Prix title 2015
2. Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton wins Australia Grand Prix title 2015.

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