

CLATGyan

CLATGYAN'S GK COMPENDIUM FOR AUGUST, 2014

1st August 2014

- The Congress has pointed out that the Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill, which envisages raising foreign direct investment in insurance companies from 26 per cent to 49 per cent, is going to have a rough time in the Rajya Sabha. The party is likely to demand that the Bill be referred to the Select Committee, a process that could delay it by months. The UPA government introduced the Bill in 2008, but the BJP, then in the Opposition, continuously blocked its passage. Now, while the BJP-led government is eager to pass the Bill and showcase it as a major reform initiative, the Congress appears in no hurry to oblige.
- The Delhi High Court directed the Delhi State Government to stop battery-operated rickshaws, also known as e-rickshaws, from plying on the Capital's roads after a horrific accident that resulted in the death of a three-year old.
- The Supreme Court dismissed a land-grab case against the former Deputy Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, his son Udhayanidhi and five others, even as the Tamil Nadu government pressed for criminal proceedings arguing that "extortion by a powerful political figure is an offence against society." The case relates to the sale of a property near the Chittaranjan Salai residence of Mr. Stalin in August 2008 during the DMK regime. The property was later leased out to Mr. Udhayanidhi's film unit.
- Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) Nehchal Sandhu resigned. Mr. Sandhu, a former Intelligence Bureau Director, joined the NSA's office in March 2013 on a three-year contract. The current National Security Adviser is Ajit Doval.
- India suggested a midway solution out of the impasse at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks in Geneva. Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley told visiting U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry that the WTO unmistakably state that till it found a permanent way to correct its subsidy rules for agriculture, the interim protection for India's minimum support prices (MSPs) for farmers would last. India wants the WTO caps that its MSPs risk breaching as they are benchmarked to food prices in the 1980s. The WTO Ministers last December agreed in Bali to take up a work programme for a permanent solution, provided an interim peace clause and also agreed to sign a Trade Facilitation Agreement

by July 31. Minimum support price is the price at which the government purchases crops from farmers.

- The Madras High Court directed power utility Tangedco not to finalise a bid/tender for the 2X660 MW Ennore SEZ Supercritical Thermal Power Project till the representations of a consortium were considered by the authorities. Justice M. Sathyanarayanan said the Tangedco authorities were expected to act fairly and reasonably. Tangedco stated that the representations would be considered while finalising the tenders and appropriate orders would be passed strictly as per the tender specifications and the Transparency in Tenders Act. The judge said the Tangedco, being a State agency, was under obligation to do so.
- Gen. Dalbir Singh, 59, took over as the Chief of the Army Staff. Gen. Singh assumed charge after his predecessor, Gen Bikram Singh, handed over to him the baton.
- Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that Israel will destroy the Hamas tunnel network in the Gaza Strip “with or without a cease-fire,” as the military called up another 16,000 reservists to pursue its campaign in the densely-populated territory. Mr. Netanyahu’s vow came as international efforts to end the 23-day-old conflict seemed to sputter despite concern over the mounting death toll, with more than 1,300 Palestinians, mostly civilians, and more than 50 Israelis, almost all of them soldiers, killed since July 8. Israel says that most of the 32 tunnels it has uncovered have now been demolished and that getting rid of the remainder will take no more than a few days.
- West Africa’s ebola-hit nations imposed stringent new rules to tackle the world’s worst-ever outbreak of the tropical virus and agreed to launch a \$100 million response plan at an emergency regional summit.
- State-owned banks are likely to hit the capital markets in November in a bid to meet Basel III capital adequacy norms, for which the requirement has been estimated at Rs.2.40 lakh crore over a five-year period. Government shareholding in various banks varies between 56.26 per cent and 88.63 per cent.
- India won two gold medals through Yogeshwar (men’s 65kg) and Babita Kumari in the women’s 55kg class, a silver medal courtesy Geetika Jakhar in the women’s 63kg category and a bronze medal through Pawan Kumar in the men’s 86kg category to end the tournament with a haul of five golds, six silvers and two bronzes in the 20th Commonwealth Games being held at Glasgow, Scotland.

2nd August 2014

- The first batch of 25 women personnel from the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), who recently completed a close-quarter combat training, demonstrated their newly acquired skills during a valedictory session here. The batch is among the 800 women CISF deployed at various stations of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on security duties. The network enjoys a daily ridership of over 2.5 million commuters on an average. As a large number of these passengers are women, officials from both the CISF and DMRC said such initiatives would help to improve their safety. The three-month-long training programme, Pekiti-Tirsia Kali, has its origins in Philippines and armed forces across 30 countries have used it, said trainers.
- Dick Smith, the ‘Godfather of make-up’ who amused, fascinated and terrified moviegoers by devising unforgettable transformations, for Marlon Brando in *The Godfather* (in picture) and Linda Blair in *The Exorcist*, among many others, has died. He was 92. Smith was the first make-up artist to win an Oscar for lifetime achievement.
- In a major breakthrough, scientists have transformed a mouse into a “see-through” creature that can give them a clearer view of the body tissues for research. With the technique called CLARITY, the body of the mouse has been rendered transparent. The method involves a water-based gel and detergents and can reveal all of an animal’s organs — from its brain to its kidneys — while keeping them intact.
- Barring a last-minute unseen hurdle, the Nepal government would sign the much-delayed project development agreement (PDA) for the 900MW Upper Karnali hydropower project with the Indian multinational, GMR, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit. Prime Minister of Nepal: Sushil Koirala
- The Delhi High Court issued notice to BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, on whose complaint a trial court had recently summoned Congress president Sonia Gandhi, party vice-president Rahul Gandhi and others in a case of alleged cheating and misappropriated of funds. The matter relates to transfer of assets, worth crores of rupees, of Associated Journal Limited (AJL), publisher of the now defunct English daily National Herald to another company, Young Indian. Dr. Swamy had alleged that the rent generated by properties belonging to AJL was dishonestly misappropriated by the Young India Directors enjoying control over the assets.
- For the first time in its 900-year-old history, non-Brahmin men and women priests performed the puja in the famous Vitthal Rukmini temple in Pandharpur, Maharashtra. The temple, a favourite of the Warkari sect in Maharashtra, attracts over two crore

devotees a year. During the Hindu month of Ashaadh, lakhs of Warkaris and other pilgrims from across the State walk to the temple.

- A four-year project with an investment of £300 million in genome research that promises to transform the way cancer and other rare genetic diseases will be diagnosed and treated was announced by Prime Minister David Cameron. The project is the result of a partnership between Genomics England and the California-based firm Illumina, which will deliver the equipment and infrastructure under a £162 million investment plan.
- Myanmar's army has freed 91 children and young people from its armed forces, the United Nations said, in the country's latest move towards ending the use of child soldiers. The reformist government of the formerly junta-run nation committed to ending the recruitment and use of children in its "tatmadaw" army in a June 2012 pact with the U.N. A total of 364 children and young people have been released since then as the military has slowed — but not yet halted — its use of children.
- Uganda's constitutional court overturned a tough new anti-gay law that had been branded draconian by rights groups, saying they had been wrongly passed by parliament. The law is "null and void," the presiding judge told the court, saying the process had contravened the constitution, as it has been passed in parliament in December without the necessary quorum of lawmakers.
- Senior IRS officer K. V. Chowdary has been appointed as the new Chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the top policy making body of the Income Tax Department.

3rd August 2014

- Syndicate Bank Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) S.K. Jain was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation, along with his brother-in-law and four others, for allegedly receiving a bribe of Rs. 50 lakh to grant credit extension to two private firms embroiled in the coal block allocations scam.
- Joshna Chinappa and Dipika Pallikal won India its maiden Commonwealth Games squash gold medal in Glasgow, Scotland. The duo beat the English pair of Jenny Duncalf and Laura Massaro in the women's doubles final.
- With the Valley observing a shutdown on his call, Hurriyat hardliner Syed Ali Shah Geelani asked the Omar Abdullah government to terminate the Kousar Nag yatra from the Reasi side of Jammu also or face consequences. He asserted that the government had granted permission to the yatra and launched a group of pilgrims on August 1. But it was

forced to withdraw under the pressure of protest and shut-down by residents of Shopian and Kulgam districts.

- Country's first multi-sensor moored observatory IndARC was successfully deployed in Kongsfjorden Fjord of the Arctic roughly halfway between North Pole and Norway on July 23. This observatory, designed and developed by ESSO-NIOT and ESSO-NCAOR with ESSO-Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Hyderabad, was deployed from the Norwegian Polar Institute's research vessel R.V. Lance. Team led by Dr.Venkatesan deployed the same during its annual cruise to the Kongsfjorden area and the mission was guided by Atmanand — Director of ESSO-NIOT and Rajan – Director of ESSO — NCAOR.
- Some 157 asylum-seekers who were detained at sea for weeks by Australia have been sent to the Pacific island of Nauru after rejecting a return to India, officials said. The group, thought to be mostly ethnic Tamils from Sri Lanka and including 50 children, left the Indian port of Pondicherry in June but were intercepted by Australian authorities and held on a Customs ship for weeks. They were eventually brought to the Australian mainland so they could be interviewed by Indian consular officials with a view to returning them to that country.
- P.V. Sindhu took the bronze medal defeating Jing Yi Ting (Malaysia) 23-21, 21-9 in the losers' final in the badminton events here. Gurusaidutt too was able to land the bronze medal as he overcame a fighting Rajiv Ouseph in a tough three-set thriller. The Indian won the tie that last a little over an hour at 21-15, 14-21, 21-19.

4th August 2014

- The Supreme Court has directed the State governments to provide up-to-date data on steps taken to curb female foeticide. The recent order by a Bench headed by Justice Dipak Misra came on an application filed on August 6, 2013 by Dr. Sabu Mathew George, a member of the National Inspection and Monitoring Committee (NIMC) set up under the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994 to inspect medical clinics suspected of indulging in the illegal practice. Conviction under the PCPNDT Act attracts a punishment of three to five years of imprisonment.
- The Union Government will introduce Real Estate Development Regulatory Bill in the winter session of Parliament to reign-in the unscrupulous builders who escape responsibility of providing promised facilities to property buyers. This was stated by Union Minister for Urban Development and Parliamentary Affairs M. Venkaiah Naidu.

- Finding the University Grants Commission (UGC) ill-equipped to address the challenges posed by the manifold increase in the number of universities — particularly private universities and deemed-to-be-universities — the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry has set up a committee to restructure the apex regulatory body for higher education in the country. The four-member committee will be headed by former UGC chairman Hari Gautam and will have as its members C.M. Jariwala (former head and dean of law at Banaras Hindu University), Kapil Kapoor (former pro vice-chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University) and the Joint Secretary in the Higher Education in the ministry as its members.

5th August 2014

- In a bid to end the agitation against the Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT), the Union government said the English comprehension skills component of Paper II in the Civil Services preliminary examination should not be included for gradation or merit. Also, an additional attempt should be given to those who took CSAT in 2011 in the Civil Services Examination, 2015.
- An expert committee constituted by Karnataka State Higher Education Council to revamp undergraduate courses to make them attractive has recommended a four-year degree course. The four-member committee is headed by K. Chidananda Gowda, former Vice-Chancellor, Kuvempu University. It has recommended that on completing the first, second, third and fourth years, students could be allotted diploma, advanced diploma, degree and degree with honours, respectively. It will enable students exit the course at different stages, if they find employment.
- Google, the world's most popular search engine, marked late Indian cinema legend Kishore Kumar's 85th birthday with a colourful doodle. The versatile star, holds the record for claiming eight Filmfare Awards for Best Male Playback Singer, the most won by anybody in the category.
- Artist Jogen Chowdhury has been invited by the Rashtrapati Bhavan to be its first artist in residence. It said several of Mr. Chowdhury's paintings already form part of the Rashtrapati Bhavan's art collection. Mr. Chowdhury will stay at Rashtrapati Bhavan for 14 days. The in-residence scheme was launched by President Pranab Mukherjee in December last year.
- At least 398 people were killed and 1,800 injured in a 6.5-magnitude earthquake that struck a remote corner of south-western China, officials said as the Chinese Army

deployed 5,000 soldiers in the mountainous region in a desperate search for survivors. The earthquake, which has affected more than one million people in Yunnan's northeast, left more than 80,000 houses collapsed and 124,000 buildings damaged. Rescue work has been hampered by difficult access to the remote region, with the main highway connected to Ludian county – where the epicentre was located – hit by landslides and opening for traffic almost a day after the quake struck.

- As the day ends August 4, the whole of Britain will be plunged in darkness for an hour in a Lights Out initiative to mark the centenary of the country's entry into World War I. Homes, offices, private and public buildings, and even iconic structures like Tower Bridge, Buckingham Palace and Windsor castle, will turn off their illumination from 10 p.m. for an hour.
- Over 100 people have gone missing after a launch carrying over 200 passengers capsized in the Padma river at Munshiganj, near Dhaka. The rescuers recovered two bodies and rescued 50 passengers so far, but the sunken launch was yet to be spotted, said officials of the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority. They said the overloaded launch, Pinak 6, capsized at around 11 a.m.
- More than 150 members of Libya's newly elected Parliament held their first official meeting in the eastern city of Tobruk as militias continued to battle over the oil-rich nation's largest cities. The 200-member Parliament was elected at the end of June and will take over from the previous assembly which was dominated by Islamist groups including the Muslim Brotherhood.
- The government proposes to set up Telecom Finance Corporation (TFC) in the XII Plan, which will be registered as non-banking and non-deposit infrastructure finance company, Communications and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

6th August

- India has put on hold all procurements from Italian defence group Finmeccannica and its affiliate companies, a move that will hit hard acquisitions for the Armed Forces as it is taking part in projects worth over Rs. 30,000 crore. Finmeccannica is the parent firm of AgustaWestland, which was accused of paying kickbacks to the tune of over Rs. 360 crore in the Rs 3,600 crore deal for supplying 12 VVIP choppers to the air force and the deal has since been scrapped.

- The government is planning to decriminalise attempt to commit suicide by repealing Section 309 of IPC which makes the act punishable with a jail term of up to one year and a fine.
- Australia's G20 Sherpa, Heather Smith, has expressed regret at India's refusal to ratify the Trade Facilitation Agreement of the World Trade Organisation, saying the development would hinder international trading system.
- Doordarshan programmes will soon be available across Asia, Europe, North Africa and Australia, courtesy a memorandum of understanding signed by Prasar Bharati with German public service broadcaster Deutsche Welle. Doordarshan will be available as a free-to-air basic package on a DTH platform. Jawahar Sircar, Chief Executive Officer of Prasar Bharati, said the content for this Doordarshan platform, named India Channel, would be created in consultation with various stakeholders and tailored to the demand of the target audience.
- Scientists, including one of Indian-origin, have designed a system that uses radio signals as a power source to low-power devices and existing wi-fi infrastructure to provide Internet connectivity to these devices. Called wi-fi backscatter, the technology developed by University of Washington engineers.
- A poem from Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's masterpiece Gitanjali was recited by Indian Ambassador to the UN Asoke Kumar Mukerji as part of a commemorative ceremony held here marking 100 years of the outbreak of the World War I.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), to make its proposed REIT (Real Estate Investment Trusts) norms more attractive, has agreed to incorporate industry suggestions to reduce the minimum asset size to Rs.500 crore and to allow foreign investors at IPO and later stages. SEBI Chairperson: UK Sinhaw
- The Reserve Bank of India, said it had initiated inspection of the book of accounts of Syndicate Bank whose Chairman and Managing Director S. K. Jain was recently arrested by the CBI for allegedly taking a bribe of Rs.50 lakh.

7th August

- President Pranab Mukherjee rejected the mercy petition of Rajendra Pralhadrao Wasnik who raped and killed a three-year-old girl in Maharashtra's Amrawati district on March 2, 2007.
- The two-day 18th BASIC countries (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) Ministerial Meeting will get under way in New Delhi to discuss important issues relating to the

current United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations specially on matters pertaining to the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform.

- Creator of the iconic character, Pran Kumar Sharma, popularly known as Pran, breathed his last at the age of 75, leaving behind an unmatched legacy. Pran was approached by Gulshan Rai of Diamond Comics in 1981 and under this banner, Pran published over 500 titles and more than 25,000 comic features in 10 languages.
- Facebook India Online Services Pvt. Ltd. has been inducted as an associate member of Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), the mobile communications association representing the largest mobile service operators and the majority of telecom equipment manufacturers.
- The crucial SEBI Bill, aimed at tackling the ponzi menace, was approved by the Lok Sabha. The Securities Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2014, has been brought in the backdrop of lakhs of small investors being duped by fraudulent investment schemes, like in the alleged Saradha scam. The new law will empower SEBI investigators to conduct searches and seek information from suspected entities, both within and outside the country. However, as a safeguard, any search operation can be conducted only after approval of a designated court in Mumbai, where SEBI headquarters is based.

8th August

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), issued draft guidelines for the implementation of Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS). The draft guidelines outline the requirement and the basic tenets of operating the BBPS, and prescribe the eligibility criteria, standards for settlement model and customer grievance redressal, roles and responsibilities and scope for entities seeking to be part of BBPS. The BBPS will function as a tiered structure for operating the bill payment system in the country with a single brand image providing convenience of 'anytime anywhere' bill payment to customers.

9th August

- The U.S. and India agreed to take forward the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative and renew the India-U.S. defence framework agreement well before it expired in July 2015. The decision was taken during delegation-level talks between Defence Minister Arun Jaitley and U.S. Secretary of State Chuck Hagel.
- The Supreme Court has appointed the former Union Law Minister, Salman Khurshid, to suggest ways to end the practice of high capitation fee charged by medical and engineering colleges for admission. A Bench of Justices Ibrahim Kalifulla and Shiva Kirti

Singh, in its order passed on a batch of cases, said the issue was already covered by the 11-judge Bench decision in the TMA Pai Foundation and Islamic Academy cases. However, they took judicial notice of the hard reality that charging of very high capitation fee is very much prevalent in spite of the said specific observations/directions issued by this court.

- A Delhi court convicted Sher Singh Rana for the murder of Phoolan Devi in 2001. The former dacoit and Samajwadi Party MP was shot five times outside her official residence on 44 Ashoka Road. Rana was held guilty of murder, attempt to murder but acquitted of the charge of conspiracy and those under the Arms Act.
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), imposed a penalty of Rs.13 crore on Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) for non-disclosure of a key earnings ratio. The order follows a probe by the regulator in about seven-year-old case alleging irregularities in issuance of 12 crore warrants by the company to its promoters entitling its holders to subscribe to equivalent number of equity shares of RIL.
- Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has appointed H. Kumar as Managing Director of Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. (MRPL)
- Didier Drogba has announced his retirement from international football after playing 12 years for the Ivory Coast.

10th August

- Wikipedia can be read for free by 350 million mobile phone subscribers in the developing world— a result of partnerships with mobile phone operators which began in Malaysia in 2012. Wikipedia Zero was inspired by Facebook Zero, an ambition by the social network to colonise new, mobile-centric audiences around the world. Wikipedia Zero allows mobile subscribers to access Wikipedia for free, with no data charges, the programme now stretches to Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Jordan and Bangladesh, and this year also added Kosovo, Nepal and Kyrgyzstan.
- Chaired by Reserve Bank Governor Raghuram G. Rajan the Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) reviewed the domestic macro economy and potential risks facing the financial system. The FSDC is an apex body the government constituted after a committee in 2008 headed by Dr. Rajan recommended an autonomous super regulatory authority for overseeing the financial sector. It was set up in 2010 for strengthening and institutionalising the mechanism of maintaining financial and

macroeconomic stability and coordination amongst various regulators in the financial sector.

- An Egyptian court ordered the dissolution of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), the political wing of the already banned Muslim Brotherhood movement. The decision follows the designation of the Brotherhood as a “terrorist organisation” in December, after the military overthrew Islamist president Mohamed Morsy. The FJP came out on top in every election in Egypt between its creation in the wake of the country’s Arab Spring uprising in 2011 and Mr. Morsy’s removal in July 2013.

11th August

- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) expressed surprise at the Union Cabinet approving the draft proposal to bring amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act. The Commission had taken up with the Ministry of Women and Child Development the issue of lowering the age of a juvenile from 18 to 16.

12th August

- An integrated environment and waste management company will install reverse vending machines designed to collect and recycle domestic light bulbs and batteries across the UAE, making the Gulf country the second nation in the world, after the UK to adapt this technology.
- Cracking the whip on ‘dahi handi’ celebrations in Maharashtra, the Bombay High Court banned children below 18 years from participating in the formation of human pyramids. It also barred organisation of human tiers above 20 feet.
- The killing of an unarmed African-American teenager, Michael Brown (18), by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri, sparked off a wave of protests that gave way to rioting. Mr. Brown was shot multiple times — some said he had at least 10 bullet wounds — on the streets of Ferguson during an altercation with a police officers. Although Jon Belmar, Chief of the St. Louis County Police Department, said “a physical confrontation” was the reason behind the shooting, specifically that the concerned police officer was “physically assaulted” as he attempted to exit his vehicle, this account appeared in stark contrast with eyewitness reports.

13th August

- The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has appointed a three member commission to probe possible war crimes during a month long conflict in Gaza. It will be

headed by William Schabas, a Canadian working at the Middlesex University in London and the other members are Amal Alamuddin of UK and Doudou Diebe of Senegal.

- President Pranab Mukherjee has conferred the Outstanding Parliamentarian Awards on Arun Jaitley (2010), Karan Singh (2011) and Sharad Yadav (2012). These awards are given for invaluable contribution of members in discharge of their parliamentary duties. The awards were given at the Balyogi Auditorium in Parliament Library, New Delhi.
- Legendary exponent of Burra katha, Daroji Ermma passed away in Bellary, Karnataka. Burra Katha is the folk art form of storytelling based on mythological and social themes and is performed in the regions of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- The selection committee headed by Kapil Dev gave no nominations for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2014 as it did not find anyone suitable for the country's highest sports award.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) sanctioned the use of experimental drug ZMapp to fight against Ebola as death toll increased.
- The Tamil Nadu assembly passed Tamil Nadu Entry into Public Places (Removal of Restrictions on Dress) Bill, 2014 making the ban on entry of people wearing dhotis in public places a punishable offence with a jail term.
- The Union Government has decided to appoint former RBI governor Bimal Jalan as the head of the Expenditure Management Commission to suggest ways for managing public finances by reducing food, fertiliser and oil subsidies to include fiscal deficit.

14th August

- Indian origin mathematician Manjul Bhargava was awarded the prestigious Fields Medal at the International Mathematical Union's (IMU) International Congress of Mathematicians in Seoul, Korea. He was awarded the medal for developing powerful new methods in geometry of numbers.
- M. Thambidurai, leader of AIADMK in Lok Sabha was unanimously elected as Lok Sabha Deputy Speaker and has become the first person to occupy the post twice, the earlier term being 1985-1989.
- The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to make Vijayawada as its ad hoc capital.
- Radar Imager for Mars' Subsurface Exploration (RIMFAX) is among the seven selected payloads that will be sent to Mars with the Mars 2020 rover mission to study centimetre-scale resolution of the geologic structure of the subsurface on Mars.

- Maryam Mirzakhani, an Iranian born mathematician became the first woman to win the coveted Fields Medal in Seoul, South Korea. It was awarded in recognition of her contributions to the field of geometry particularly in studying the symmetry of curved surfaces such as spheres.

15th August

- The world-famous La Tomatina festival in the Spanish town of Bunol has expressed solidarity with a cause that will brighten the lives of underprivileged Indian women. Owing to overcrowding in the Valencian town during the festival, authorities have decided to limit attendance to 20,000 ticket holders. The move led to Bunol town hall making an announcement that profits from ticket sales this year will be donated to a social project to help Dalit women in India. The Sahell association, which works with the charity organisation Lokpanchayat, maintains safe houses for Dalit women who have either been abandoned and mistreated or are suffering social exclusion.
- The Supreme Court suspended a Bombay High Court order restricting the height of human pyramids formed for the “Dahi Handi” sport on Janmashtami in Maharashtra to 20 feet, and allowed children aged above 12 to participate in it.
- Rajni Razdan has been appointed Union Public Service Commission chairman. And she will be replacing Professor D.P. Agrawal.
- The government is planning to revive the defunct Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) with additional funds and capacity and link it to e-governance for transparency, said Union Minister for Rural Development Nitin Gadkari. CAPART was mired in corruption after funds were spent without accountability and there were cases filed against NGOs. Mr. Gadkari said funds through CAPART would help handlooms, handicrafts and weavers.
- The Gujarat government had filed a curative petition before the Supreme Court to prevent the translocation of lions from the Gir National Park but the SC dismissed the petition that was against shifting the lions to Kuno Palpur wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh. The Centre had proposed Kuno as an alternative home for the Asiatic lions as a conservation measure, in view of the risk of epidemics, since the lions are spread over a limited area in Gujarat.
- The Reserve Bank of India said its board has approved HR (human resources) restructuring by creating an additional post of Chief Operating Officer (COO) in the rank of Deputy Governor, and will approach the government for required legislative changes.

- Chennai-based BeWo (short for Better World) Technologies, a start-up in the financial inclusion and social impact space, has developed a 7-inch rugged Android tablet-based field device. The field device, it is claimed, meets the government's micro ATM standard and has features such as biometrics, Aadhaar-compliant fingerprint scanner, smartcard readers, thermal printer, regional language capability and point-of-sale. It is also 2G and 3G-enabled.

16th August

- French energy giant Total has shown interest in steering the cash-strapped Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project, despite grave security concerns that have so far dashed hopes of forging energy linkages between Central and South Asia. However, Total has now shown an inclination to lead a consortium, with the backing of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which would play a key advisory and facilitating role to help get the project off the ground.
- Nuri al-Maliki resigned as the Prime Minister of Iraq and made way for Dr. Haider al-Abadi who was nominated by the Iraqi President, Fouad Masoum to form a new government.

17th August

- The first ever smartphone — a \$900 clunky IBM Simon mobile phone — turned 20. The phone, with a battery life of one hour, was developed by IBM and the American cellular company BelSelf and went on sale in 1994. At around 23 cm long and weighing half a kg, it was about half the size of a house brick.
- The Union government, through a notification said the section on English Language Comprehension Skills would not count for gradation or merit in the Civil Services preliminary examination.

18th August

- Salman Rushdie has received the Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award, Denmark's most important literature accolade. The literature prize, which includes 500,000 Danish kronor (€67,000), is awarded every two years to commemorate Hans Christian Andersen, the prolific 19th-century writer of plays, travelogues, novels and poems. Other writers to have received the accolade include J.K. Rowling and Paulo Coelho.
- Iraqi Kurdish *peshmerga* forces backed by U.S. air strikes retook the country's largest dam from jihadist militants who seized it the previous week. The dam on the Tigris river,

north of Iraq's second city provides electricity and irrigation water for farming to much of the region.

19th August

- The CBI arrested Chief Executive Officer of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) Rakesh Kumar in a bribery case. He was already under the agency's scanner after an authorised agent of the Censor Certification registered a bribery complaint against another agent.
- After being delayed by a year due to the June 2013 deluge, the 20-day Nanda Devi Raj Yatra, also called the 'Himalayan Kumbh,' began amid religious customs and traditions from Nauti village in Chamoli district. The yatra, which is dedicated to the Nanda Devi — the reigning deity of Uttarakhand — takes place once in 12 years, and involves a 280-kilometre trek.
- Eduardo Campos, the Brazilian presidential candidate, died on 13th August after his private jet crashed in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

20th August

- An Indian neuroscientist in the U.S. has been awarded a prestigious grant under President Barack Obama's initiative to map the human brain. The grant will help him to develop a "virtual neuroanatomist," an artificial-intelligence system that can identify cell types and neural structures in microscopic images of brain slices. The two researchers at the National Science Foundation, Partha Mitra and Florin Albeanu, have been awarded Early Concept Grants for Exploratory Research (EAGER) under President Barack Obama's multi-year Brain Initiative, a statement released by the laboratory said.
- Simin Behbahani, the Lioness of Iran died, Iran and was a champion of women's rights. Her famous works include *The Broken Lute*, *Footprint*, *Chandelier*.
- India and Czech Republic signed a MoU on technical cooperation in railway sector.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has dedicated India's indigenously designed warship INS Kolkata (D63) to the nation. It was commissioned in Indian Navy at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- India would be the first launch-pad for Amazon's plan to deliver packages using drones or unmanned aerial vehicles. The e-retailer will start its drone delivery services from Mumbai and Bangalore.
- Pakistani Squash legend Hashim Khan passes away.

- The ICICI Bank launched EMI (equated monthly instalments) facility on debit cards. With this, the bank became the first bank in India to provide such facility on debit card.
- World-renowned yoga guru B.K.S. Iyengar died of renal failure at a Pune hospital. He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2014.
- World Humanitarian Day was observed across the world on 19th August, 2014 and the theme for this year is The World Needs More Humanitarian Heroes.
- Max Verstappen of Netherlands will become the youngest F1 driver in F1 history when he completes the 2015 season. He will be 17 years and a few months old.

21st August

- Noted filmmaker and poet Muzaffar Ali was conferred the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana award. The award is instituted by the All-India Congress Committee.
- Congress leader K.V. Thomas took over as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament. He will be the 94th PAC Chairman. The chairmanship is for a year, but one person can hold the office for successive terms. In the 15th Lok Sabha, BJP leader Murli Manohar Joshi was the PAC Chairman for four consecutive terms.
- Sakari Momoi, a 111-year-old Japanese citizen, was officially recognised in Tokyo as the oldest man in the world by the Guinness World Records award committee. He bags the title after the death in early June of previous record holder, U.S. citizen Alexander Imich, who was just one day older than the Japanese. The world's oldest person is Misao Okawa, a 116-year-old Japanese woman who was born on March 5, 1898.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the Nagpur Metro Rail Project. It will be funded on equal sharing basis between the Maharashtra Government and the Union Government.
- The National Human Rights Commission has issued notice to the Himachal Pradesh government to give report on the state of sex ratio in the State as it has gone down to 500 female infants born against 1000 males in the past two years.
- The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh has launched a Plan Scheme of Mainstreaming Civil Defence in Disaster Risk Reduction and the aim of the scheme is to enhance the capacity of States to respond to all natural and man-made disasters.

22nd August

- Thailand coup leader Prayuth Chan-ocha who is also the Army Chief has been elected as the Prime Minister of Thailand. He had seized the power from the elected government in a coup in June 2014 after Yingluck Shinawatra was dismissed as the Prime Minister after a controversial court ruling.

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated online the 765 KV Ranchi-Dharmjaygarh-Sipat Transmission Line (Powergrid) at Prabhat Tara, Dhurwa in Ranchi.
- Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd has unveiled a new anti-cancer drug called GBR 1302 and it is the first clinical development candidate in the antibody based cancer therapy group.
- Renowned agriculturist M.S. Swaminathan was conferred an honorary degree of the Doctor of Science by the University of Agriculture in Faisalabad, Pakistan.
- Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry withheld the release of Punjabi film Kaum de Heere or Diamonds of the Community that depicts and glorifies the act of two Sikh bodyguards Beant Singh and Satwant Singh who assassinated former Indian PM Indira Gandhi in 1984.
- Hockey India added Hockey Madhya Pradesh as its 23rd associate member.
- Guru Hanuman Akhara, a Delhi-based wrestling academy has been chosen for the 2014 Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar. It is the oldest wrestling school of India existing till now and has produced National and International wrestlers for India like Dara Singh, Guru Satpal, Sushil Kumar and Yogendra Kumar.
- Afghanistan celebrated its 95th Independence Day to mark the signing of the 1919 Anglo-Afghan treaty which gave the country complete independence from the British Empire.
- TM Bhasin has been elected as Chairman of Indian Banks Association for the term of 2014-15. He is the chairman and MD of Indian Bank.

23rd August

- UR Ananthamurthy, an eminent Kannada writer died due to kidney failure in Bangalore. He was nominated for the 2013 Man Booker International Prize.
- Weightlifter Ragala Venkat Rahul bagged Silver Medal making it India's first medal of the 2nd Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing, China.
- INS Kamorta is India's first indigenously-built stealth Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) and has been commissioned in the Indian Navy at naval dockyard in Vishakhapatnam.
- PM Narendra Modi has announced Pradhan Mantri Krishi Seenchayi Yojana. It seeks to meet the irrigation needs of all farmers across the country and a sum of 1000 crore rupees has been allocated for implementation of the scheme.
- The Delhi Chess Association presented a cheque of Rs. 1 lakh to Grandmaster Parimarjan Negi for his performance in India's bronze-winning effort in the Chess Olympiad in Norway.

24th August

- The Indian Army has discovered a tunnel in the Pallanwalla sector along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir that led to Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)
- The Indian team, comprising Kamal Chawla, Faisal Khan and Dharminder Lilly, won the second Asian team snooker championship, defeating Pakistan in the final at Karachi.

25th August

- NASA scientists developed Soil Moisture Active Passive (SMAP) satellite that can predict the severity of droughts worldwide and help farmers maximise the crop yield.
- Richard Attenborough, the Oscar-winning British filmmaker and actor died in London. He was renowned for his critically acclaimed biopic on Mahatma Gandhi.
- Union Transport Minister has launched ethanol-run environment-friendly public buses in Nagpur. These buses have been launched as India's first pilot "The Green Bus project" to test ethanol-run buses.
- Katie Ledecky, an American distance swimmer created a World Record in Women's 1500 Meter Freestyle at the 2014 Pan Pac Championships on the Gold Coast, Australia. She swam the distance in 15 minutes 28.36 seconds.
- World's oldest metal object, a cone-shaped copper awl was discovered by archaeologists at the Middle Chalcolithic burial site in Tel Tsaf, an archaeological site in Israel/Palestine's Jordan Valley.

26th August

- Ahmet Davutoglu will replace Recep Tayyip Erdogan as the new prime minister of Turkey. He was the Finance Minister earlier. His nomination was done by the congress of the Justice and Development Party (AKP)
- The 20th edition of annual Delhi Book Fair began on 23rd August, 2014 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. The theme of the fair is Literature in Cinema.
- The bilateral talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nepal Prime Minister Sushil Koirala during the former's recent Nepal visit included an agreement to restart work on the 5,600 MW Pancheshwar multipurpose project. This has aroused strong resistance from environmentalists and anti-dam activists. Geographical issues regarding the project have also have been questioned over the years. In India, the project lies within the state of Uttarakhand, which shares international border with Nepal.
- Union Textiles Ministry signed MoU with Flipkart to provide online marketing platform to handloom weavers. The deal was signed in New Delhi to boost the sector and to

empower the weavers and boost manufacturing in the country. The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Textiles is Santosh Kumar Gangwar.

- First commercial seaplane service in Maharashtra was launched from Mumbai to Lonavala from Juhu aerodrome. It touched down on the waters of the Pawana Dam in Pune district. The service was launched by the Maritime Energy Heil Air Services Pvt. Ltd. (MEHAIR) in collaboration with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC).
- Indian-origin Seema Malhotra was appointed as Shadow Minister in U.K. and is the first MP from any party to be shadow Minister. A shadow minister is a member of the main opposition party in Parliament who would hold ministerial office if their party were in power.
- Google will be building Knowledge Vault to store world's information. It is the largest information storage in human history. Google's knowledge base is called Knowledge Graph which relies on crowd sourcing to expand its information.
- Border Security Force (BSF) personnel set a LIMCA Book of Record by planting saplings at all BSF locations in a special tree plantation drive carried out under Green Mission. Around 2 lakh saplings were planted in 30 minutes.
- PM Narendra Modi announced the launching of Energy Highway for Eastern India which is a pipeline project which will connect Eastern India with the national gas grid. GAIL will be implementing the project. The Energy Highway is a 2050 km Jagdishpur-Phulpur-Haldia natural gas pipeline.
- The former Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Vinod Rai authored a book titled "Not Just an Accountant" which is to be released in October 2014.

27th August

- The Jewish centre, Chabad House, also known as Nariman House, in Mumbai was reopened nearly 6 years after the 26/11 terror attacks in 2008.
- Indian Air Force (IAF) and Russian Federation Air Force started the Indo-Russian Air Force Exercise, Avia Indra-2014 at Astrakhan region near the Caspian Sea in Russia. It is the first Indo-Russia aerial exercise that involves the air forces of the two countries.
- President Pranab Mukherjee has appointed Governors for four states in accordance with the Article 155 of the Constitution:

Rajasthan- Kalyan Singh

Karnataka- Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala

Maharashtra- Ch. Vidyasagar Rao

Goa- Mridula Sinha

- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (HUPA) has proposed rolling out a loan assistance scheme that will for the first time help transgenders and economically weaker sections to secure home loans in urban areas. The Ministry has tweaked the existing Rajiv Rinn Yojna (RRY), which was launched as an instrument to aid the EWS (economically weaker sections) and LIG (lower income group) segments in urban areas, through enhanced credit flow and replaced it with a new scheme that will make it easier for the economically weaker sections and minority groups to own homes. The Ministry has now not only given it a new name — HOMES (Home Owners Mortgage Equity Subvention Scheme) but has also made it more attractive by enhancing the loan amount and increasing the interest subsidy from 5 per cent to 5.5 per cent on loans granted to construct houses or extend the existing ones.
- Atul Verma won India its first Olympic archery medal — a bronze — at the Youth Olympic Games at Nanjing.
- NASA probe, New Horizons, passed Neptune's orbit, nearly 25 years after Voyager 2 spacecraft executed the first-ever flyby of faraway Neptune and its icy moon Triton. New Horizons is scheduled to pass through the Pluto system on July 14, 2015. New Horizons will map the dwarf planet and its five known moons, determine the composition of Pluto's surface and atmosphere, search for undiscovered moons and a ring system.
- The U.S. Army destroyed Falcon Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 during a test launch at its remote Kodiak Launch Complex in Alaska. The termination was done to ensure public safety.

28th August

- The Kerala state cabinet ratified a new liquor policy which contemplates to shut down bars attached to hotels below the five-star category.
- The Union Government launched a new domain, Dot Bharat in Devanagari script in New Delhi. It has been created with the aim of connecting people with social media and provide contents in regional languages. The domain was launched by the Union Communication and Information Technology Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- The Supreme Court of India has directed the real estate developer DLF Ltd to pay a fine of 630 crore rupees that was imposed on it by the Competition Commission of India for alleged unfair business practices.

- The World Health Organisation (WHO) called for a range of tough regulations that restricts the use of e-cigarettes.
- PM Narendra Modi has set up a Ramanujam committee to identify obsolete laws which hamper governance. The committee will be chaired by R. Ramanujam, Secretary in the PMO.
- The Union Minister for Tourism Shripad Naik launched the comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) for Accommodation, Tour Operators and Beaches, Backwaters, Lakes & Rivers Sectors. The objective is to build sustainable tourism industry.
- Tata Value Homes tied up with e-commerce major Snapdeal to sell houses online through the online marketplace model with 1000 apartments across Mumbai, Talegaon, Pune, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai and Kolkata.
- Shah Rukh Khan became the Ambassador of Turn Back Crime campaign of Interpol. He is the first Indian to become the ambassador of Interpol.
- Recep Tayyip Erdogan was sworn in as the 12th President of Turkey. It was the first ever presidential election. He belongs to Justice and Development Party and had been serving as the Prime Minister of Turkey since 2003.

29th August

- Vinod Kumar Duggal resigned as Manipur Governor.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the swapping of Save Our Soul (SOS) village land in Borjhar, Assam with the Airport Authority of India's (AII) airport land.
- Sivaramakrishnan Committee constituted by the Union Government to suggest the place to build the capital city of Andhra Pradesh submitted its report to the Home Minister Rajnath Singh. The committee however did not zero in on any particular place for the capital. It only mentioned availability of lands and other factors.
- PM Narendra Modi launched the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana which is a mega financial inclusion plan. Under the yojana, bank accounts and RuPay debit cards with inbuilt insurance cover of 1 lakh rupees will be provided to crores of persons with no access to formal banking facilities.
- The Union Government notified the Securities Laws Amendment Act, 2014.

- Maharashtra Government has included 10 sub-caste of Lingayat community in the Other Backward Category (OBC). Besides, it also agreed to recommend to the Union that the Lingayat community be given minority status.
- French President Francois Hollande named the new French government under Prime Minister Manuel Valls.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the continuation of production of urea from 3 plants by using existing feedstock Naphtha for three months.
- The Maharashtra State Cabinet approved the formation of Transgender Welfare Board. After Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra became the second state to announce the formation of the board.
- National Sports Day was celebrated on 29th August throughout the country. It is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of hockey legend Dhyan Chand.
- The SC advised the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers to not to include charge-sheeted persons into their cabinet. Though the Constitution of India does not put any limitation or on any MP or MLA to be included in the Cabinet, yet the SC said that the PM acts as the head of the cabinet and trustee of the constitution and is expected to act in accordance with constitutional propriety and not appoint unwarranted persons as Ministers..
- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) set up a four-member high-level committee to scrutinize the retrospective tax amendments. It will be headed by Joint Secretary of the Foreign Tax and Tax Research-I unit of the CBDT.
- The Union Government has appointed chairman of Joint Intelligence Committee RN Ravi as Naga interlocutor. The Nagaland issue is a century old issue that pertains to establishment of greater Nagaland called Nagalim unifying all the areas inhabited by the Naga people in Northeast India and Burma.

30th August

- Pranab Mukherjee presented the National Sports Awards to eminent sportspersons at Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. No person was selected for Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award in 2014.
- India signed a loan agreement with World Bank for Mizoram State Roads Project (MSRP II). As per the agreement, soft loan window of World Bank, International Development Agency will provide assistance of 107 million US dollars for the Project.
- ONGC announced to invest 5219 crore rupees for the production of Daman gas fields in the Arabian Sea.

- US actor and singer Harry Belafonte was named for the honorary Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Oscar Award.
- Adani Enterprises agreed to pay 145 million US dollars to Singapore-listed Linc Energy to buy the royalty rights of the Australian firm Carmichael coal project.
- Baba Kalyani was re-nominated as the Co-Chairman of the India-Japan Business Leader's Forum (IJBLF). He is the Chairman and MD of Bharat Forge Ltd.
- Noted historian Bipan Chandra died in Gurgaon after prolonged illness.

31st August

- An Egyptian court commuted a death sentence against the Muslim Brotherhood's Supreme Guide Mohamed Badie to life in prison, in one of many trials of Islamists since their removal from power.
- Lesotho Prime Minister Tom Thabane claimed he fled in fear of his life after soldiers seized power in a coup, despite the military denying it overthrew the government.
- P.V. Sindhu had to settle for a second consecutive bronze medal at the World badminton championship, after succumbing to Carolina Marin of Spain in straight games at the semifinals.

