

CURRENT AFFAIRS OF JANUARY 2015

Awards

The Indian poet who has won the inaugural Khushwant Singh Memorial Prize for Poetry for her work **When God is a Traveller**, awarded at Zee Literature Festival in Jaipur – **Arundhati Subramaniam**

The Indian-American author who has won the 2015 DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for her novel **Lowland** – **Jhumpa Lahiri**

The eminent Hindi litterateur who has been selected for the prestigious Vyas Samman for 2014 instituted by KK Birla Foundation, for his book 'Premchand Kee Kahaniyo Kaa Kaalkramanuser' – **Kamal Kishore Goyanka**

The Sanskrit scholar and author of Kanakalochanaha who has been chosen for the Sahitya Akademi Award for Sanskrit 2014 – **Prabhu Nath Dwivedi**

Appointments

The President of Zimbabwe who has become the Chairman of the African Union on rotational basis among the five geographical regions of Africa – **Robert Mugabe**

The Governor of Rajasthan who has been given the additional charge as the Governor of Himachal Pradesh after Urmila Singh, who completed the full five year term as HP Governor retired from her post – **Kalyan Singh**

The eminent singer and theatre director and recipient of Padma Shri in 2015, who has been appointed as the Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi – **Shekhar Sen**

The new Prime Minister of Greece who has been sworn following SYRIZA party's victory in the snap elections – **Alexi Tsipras**

The new Chairman of Central Board of Film Censors appointed to fill the vacancy following the resignation of Ms Leela Samson – **Pahlaj Nihalani**

The new Chief Election Commissioner of India who has been appointed to take over from retiring CEC VS Sampath – **HS Brahma**

The Director of Space Application Centre, Ahmedabad who has been chosen to be the Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation, Space Commission and also the new Secretary of the Department of Space – **A.S. Kiran Kumar**

The new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka who has been appointed to the post by the President Maithripala Sirisena – **Ranil Wickremesinghe**

The Sri Lankan opposition coalition's (New Democratic Front) common candidate who has been sworn in as the country's seventh President succeeding Mahinda Rajapaksha – **Maithripala Sirisena**

The Columbia University Professor and co-author of book "India's Tryst with Destiny" (with Jagdish Bhagwati) who has been appointed the Vice Chairman of newly constituted NITI Aayog – **Arvind Panagariya**

Persons - Obituary

The founder-leader of movement for a separate homeland for the Gorkhas in northern Bengal who passed away on 29 Jan 15 – **Subhash Ghisingh**

The first African-American to be popularly elected to the U.S. Senate who died on 03 January 2015 – **Edward Brooke**

The former chief of Indian Space Research Organisation, also known as Father of Indian Monsoon Model who passed away on 02 January 2015 – **Vasant Gowariker**

Persons in news

The former Chief Justice of India who has been appointed the Chairman of three-member committee to clean up the Board of Control for Cricket in India – **Justice R.M. Lodha**

Paulina Vega, the 22-year old contestant who has been crowned Miss Universe 2014 at the 63rd Miss Universe pageant in Miami, belongs to [Note: Miss Noyonita Lodh from India contested at the event.] – **Columbia**

The Commanding Officer of 42 Rashtriya Rifles, a recipient of Yudh Seva Medal on Republic Day, who was killed in an encounter with militants in Kashmir – **Colonel M.N. Rai**

The 13-year old California eighth grader who has invented a braille printer and started his own company, Braigo Labs – **Shubham Banerjee**

The Indian Air Force Officer who has become the first woman to lead a ceremonial Guard of Honour held on arrival of US President Barack Obama – **Wing Commander Pooja Thakur**

Places – International

The place from which NASA has launched first Earth satellite designed to collect global observations of the vital soil moisture, Soil Moisture Active Passive observatory aboard a Delta 2 rocket – **Vandenberg Air Force base**

The Asian country which has blocked internet calling and messaging services Viber and Tango upon requests of intelligence agencies – **Bangladesh**

The African country which has declared itself to be free of Ebola disease after no new cases were reported for 42 days, the period required for the World Health Organization to declare an outbreak officially over – **Mali**

The US city which is scheduled to host the International Hindi Conference with the theme of "Expanding World of Hindi: Possibilities and Challenges," in April 2015 – **New Jersey**

The European nation which has become the Eurozone's 19th member by adopting Euro as its official currency (its currency earlier was Litas) – **Lithuania**

The country in which Justice SK Sinha has been appointed as the Chief Justice, thus becoming the first Hindu to hold the post in the Muslim majority country – **Bangladesh**

Places – India (States)

The state which has been awarded the National Award for e-Governance 2014–15 for the best district-level initiative in the country by the Department of Administrative Reforms, Ministry of Personnel – **Jammu & Kashmir**

The state which has lifted a 17-year old ban on consumption of liquor with strict punishment for drunken driving and brawls in public places – **Mizoram**

The State which has hosted the 2-day Indo-Russian joint music festival from Jan 24 to Jan 25 – **Goa**

The state which has decided to include Right to Information Act, 2005 in the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) books of classes six to eight – **Uttarakhand**

The state in which the Union Govt has decided to extend the provisions of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 declaring it as a 'disturbed area' for another year – **Assam**

The State which has become the second state in India (after Madhya Pradesh) to have its own intra-state flight service when the inaugural service was launched by its department of civil aviation and operator Maritime Energy Heli Air Services Pvt. Ltd. (Mehair) from Ahmedabad airport to Porbandar – **Gujarat**

Places – India

The place from which canister-based trial of Agni-V was successfully carried out for its full range of more than 5,000 for the first time – **Wheeler Island**

The place at which the 10th Indo Mongolia Joint Training Exercise Nomadic Elephant 2015 began on 23rd January 2015 – **Gwalior**

The place in Harayana from where the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched twin programmes of "Beti bachao, beti padhao" and "Sukanya Samridhi account" in a bid to encourage birth and education of girls and tackle the abysmally low child sex ratio – **Panipat**

The place in Andhra Pradesh where the foundation stone for Indian Institute of Management (IIM) was laid by Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani – **Visakhapatnam**

The venue of two–day international conference titled "Samarth Shiksha, Samarth Bharat" being attended by educationists from 22 states to discuss a new policy framework for education beginning Jan 17 – **Jaipur**

The African nation to which the Govt of India has asked Indians not to travel in view of ongoing conflict and fragile security situation there – **Yemen**

The venue of World Ramayana Conference being conducted by Ramayan Research Foundation from Jan 23 to 25 – **Bengaluru**

The venue of national cultural festival "**Maati ke Rang 2015**" held from Jan 13 to Jan 17 – **Dimapur, Nagaland**

The city in which India's first floating solar power plant has been installed by Vikram Solar in collaboration with Arka Renewable Energy College – **Kolkata**

The district in Kerala where the Union Minister for Communications and IT has commissioned the country's first high-speed rural broadband network, NOFN – **Idukki**

The place in Haryana from where the Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flagged off country's first CNG based trains to Rohtak and Bikaner – **Rewari**

The village in Theni district of Tamil Nadu, where the central govt has approved the setting up of Neutrino observatory – **Pottipuram**

The place in Gujarat at which ICICI Digital Village created by ICICI Bank was dedicated to the nation by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi – **Akodara in Sabarkantha district**

Sports – Cricket

The year in which India is scheduled to host the Twenty20 World Cup as announced by the International Cricket Council – **2016**

The Sri Lanka cricketer who has surpassed Adam Gilchrist's record of most dismissals in one–day internationals by effecting 474 dismissals – **Kumar Sangakkara**

The South African cricketer who has set a new record of making fastest century in 31 balls in one–day internationals while playing against West Indies at Johannesburg – **AB de Villiers**

(Note: 1. He broke the record held by Corey Anderson of New Zealand. 2. He also set a new record for making the fastest half–century in 16 balls)

The South African cricketer who has set a new record of reaching the 5000 run mark in 101 innings in one-day internationals breaking the record held jointly by Vivian Richards and Virat Kohli who reached the mark in 114 innings – **Hashim Amla**

The Sri Lankan batsman who has become the fifth batsman in the history of test-cricket to surpass the 12,000-run mark (the other four being Sachin Tendulkar, Ricky Ponting, JH Kallis and Rahul Dravid)Note: He is the fastest to reach 12000 runs in 224 innings. – **Kumar Sangakkara**

Sports – Other Sports

The winners of Syed Modi International India Masters badminton tournament men's and women's titles respectively – **P Kahsyap and Saina Nehwal**

The snooker player who has won the senior National snooker women's title beating defending champion Vidya Pillay in the finals – **Ameesha Kamani**

The snooker player who has won the senior National snooker men's title for the seventh time beating Varun Madan in the finals (He had earlier won the National Billiards title also for the seventh time) – **Pankaj Advani**

The public sector company which has won the Savio Cup All-India Basketball Tournament defeating Indian Overseas Bank in the men's finals in Mumbai – **ONGC**

The billiards player who has won the Senior National Billiards Championship for the seventh time defeating Dhruv Sitwala in the finals at Kolkata – **Pankaj Advani**

The Indian open swimmer who has set a world record by swimming 1.4 miles in 52 minutes in one degree temperature in the Antarctic Ocean becoming the youngest in the world and the first Asian girl to have achieved this feat – **Bhakti Sharma**

The Portuguese professional footballer who has been chosen for the FIFA Ballon d'Or for the second year in a row and the third time in his career – **Cristiano Ronaldo**

Coach of the Year – Joachim Low (German Coach); Puskas Award for the goal of the year – James Rodriguez (Columbia)

The football team which has won the Federation Cup football tournament 2014–15 defeating Dempo in the final in Margao, Goa – **Bengaluru FC**

The Swiss professional tennis player who has become the 3rd person in history to have won 1000 match titles in tennis (The other two persons are Jimmy Connors and Ivan Lendl) – **Roger Federer**

The Swiss professional tennis player who has won the Chennai Open tennis tournament defeating Aljaz Bedene of Slovenia in the finals for the second consecutive time – **Stanislas Wawrinka**

The country which has won the Hopman Cup tennis tournament for the first time with its team consisting of Agnieszka Radwanska and Jerzy Janowicz to beat the US pairing of Serena Williams and John Isner 2-1 – **Poland**

Banking

The private sector bank which has launched a facility allowing account-holders to transfer funds through Twitter, becoming the first bank in Asia and only second in the world to offer a Twitter-based fund transfer service – **ICICI Bank**

The two banks whose shareholders have approved the proposal to amalgamate with each other which would create the fourth largest private sector bank in India – **ING Vysya & Kotak Mahindra Bank**

The bank which has launched India's first contactless or tap and pay facility on debit and credits cards to enable electronic payments with a mere tap(The facility is based on Near Field Communication and the cards have been introduced in Gurgaon, Hyderabad and Mumbai) – **ICICI Bank**

Technology

The new headset which lets users view and interact with three-dimensional images, unveiled by Microsoft is named – **HoloLens**

The company which has launched its latest flagship devices, Mi Note and Mi Note Pro, to compete with global tech giants like Apple and Samsung – **Xiaomi**

The company which has launched the first mobile phone powered by Tizen operating system in India – **Samsung**

The DTH company which has launched India's first 4K set-top box (STB) offering 4 times the pixel signal to a television, than a full-HD set-top box – **Tata Sky**

The mobile application meant for women's safety launched by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh for Delhi Police is named – **Himmat**

Universities/Institutes

The Indian Institute of Technology which has launched three Mass Open Online Courses (MOOC) in computer programming, thermodynamics, and signals and systems developed in collaboration with edX, a not-for-profit initiative by MIT and Harvard – **IIT, Bombay**

The initiative launched by IIT-Madras to support entrepreneurial interests by providing them a riskfree environment to develop their ideas and shielding them from financial pressures through seed funding – **Nirmaan**

The venue of 102nd Indian Science Congress to be held from 03 to 07 January 2015 – **University of Mumbai**

Miscellaneous

The public sector company in which by selling 10% of its share, the Government of India has raised over Rs. 22,500 crores – **Coal India Limited**

The 11.2 billion old star with five earth sized planets discovered by NASA's Kepler spacecraft, which is 117 light years from earth is named – **Kepler-444**

The tiger reserve which has bagged the National Tiger Conservation Award (NTCA) biennial award for encouraging local public participation in managing the reserve – **Periyar Tiger Reserve**

The British magazine which has named the RBI chief Raghuram Rajan as the “governor of the year” in the Central Banking Awards for 2015 for "his deep understanding of the root causes of economic problems of the country combined with an impressive leadership style." – **Central Banking**

The theme of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2015 held at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar (Gujarat) from 07 to 09 2015 – **Apna Bharat Apna Gaurav**

The lake in Andhra Pradesh in the surroundings of which the annual Flamingo festival is being held – **Pulicat Lake**

The venue of 5-day long 19th National Youth Festival being conducted by Union Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs – **Guwahati**

The new airline of Tata SIA Airlines which commenced commercial operations by making its maiden flight from Delhi to Mumbai – **Vistara**

The headquarters of satirical weekly in Paris which was attacked by terrorists resulting in the death of 12 persons – **Charlie Hebdo**

The Indian industrialist in whose honour the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin (The set of Rs 100 and Rs 5 coins in silver depicting industrialist's bust, has been fabricated by the Kolkata mint of the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India) – **Jamsetji Tata**

The dam in China over Yangtze river which has broken the world record for annual hydroelectric power production by generating 98.8 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity in 2014 (overtaking 2013 production of the Brazilian-Paraguayan Itaipu dam.) – **Three Gorges Dam**

The first-of-its-kind two-day summit of senior banking executives and top officials from the government and the Reserve Bank of India to discuss ways to strengthen the public banking sector held in Pune was named – **Gyan Sangam**

Visitors Award – bestowed by the President of India, being the Visitor of all Universities

Visitor's Award for Best University – University of Hyderabad

Visitor's Award for Innovation – Vijay K. Chaudhary and Amita Gupta of University of Delhi who invented 'TB Confirm', a rapid diagnostic test for tuberculosis.

Visitor's Award for Research – Cosmology and Astrophysics Research Group of Jamia Milia Islamia's Centre for Theoretical Physics, for path-breaking research in the field of astrophysics and cosmology.

Republic Day 2015

Best Marching Contingent among the services – Brigade of Guards and Sikh Regiment (jointly)

Best Marching Contingent among Para-military forces – Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

Best Tableau – Maharashtra Tableau which depicted "Wari to Pandharpur" (the pilgrimage to Pandharpur).

Second Best Tableau – Jharkhand tableau on "Maluti Temples".

Third Best Tableau – Karnataka tableau on "Channapatna Toys".

First position in competitive category of school children items – "Daang Dance" of Gujarat presented by West Zone Cultural Centre, Udaipur (Rajasthan).

Consolation prize – South Central Zone Cultural Centre, Nagpur (Maharashtra) for their portrayal of "Lezim Dance" of Maharashtra.

The Special Prize by the Jury – Tableau of Central Public Works Departments (CPWD) giving a floral depiction of "Gaumukh."

Global Competitiveness Index 2014 released by INSEAD

1. Switzerland
2. Singapore
3. Luxembourg
4. United States
5. Canada
41. China
78. India

R.K. Laxman – Creator of "Common Man" for his cartoon strip "You Said It"

Born – 24 October 1921

Died – 26 January 2015

Padma Bhushan – 1973

Padma Vibhushan – 2005

Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts – 1984

Autobiography – The Tunnel of Time : An Autobiography

Rajni Kothari – Political Scientist, political theorist, academic and writer

Born – 1928

Died – 19 January 2015

Founder of Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in 1963

Founder of Lokayan in 1980

Lokayan was awarded Right Livelihood Award in 1985.

Books – Politics in India, Caste in Indian Politics, Rethinking Democracy

Tiger Census – 2014

State	No of Tigers in 2011	No of Tigers in 2014
Uttarakhand	227	340
Uttar Pradesh	118	117
Bihar	8	28
Total in Shivalik-Gangetic Plains		485
Andhra Pradesh (Including Telengana)	72	68
Chhattisgarh	26	46
Madhya Pradesh	257	308
Maharashtra	169	190
Odisha	32	28
Rajasthan	36	45
Jharkhand	10	3
Total in Central India		688
Karnataka	300	406
Kerala	71	136
Tamil Nadu	163	229
Goa		5
Total in Western Ghats		776
Assam	143	167
Arunachal Pradesh	-	28
Mizoram	5	3
Northern West Bengal	-	3
Total in North East Hills & Brahmaputra plains		201
Sundarbans	70	76
Total	1706	2226

Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon 2015

Men's Winner – Tesfaye Abera of Ethiopia

Women's Winner – Dinknesh Mekash of Ethiopia

Indian Men's Winner – Karan Singh

Indian Women's Winner – O.P. Jaisha and Lalita Babar

72nd Golden Globe Awards

Best Picture (Drama) – Boyhood directed by Richard Linklater

Best Picture (Musical or Comedy) – The Grand Budapest Hotel directed by Wes Anderson

NITI Aayog

Vice-Chairman : Shri Arvind Panagariya

CEO : Smt Sindhushree Khullar

Full time members : Shri Bibek Debroy and Shri V.K. Saraswat

Ex-officio members : Shri Rajnath Singh, Shri Arun Jaitley, Shri Suresh Prabhu, Shri Radha Mohan Singh

Special Invitees : Shri Nitin Gadkari, Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot, Smt Smriti Irani

Abbreviations in news

NITI – National Institution for Transforming India

DELP – Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme

IUCAW – Investigative Units on Crimes Against Women

NOFN – National Optical Fibre Network

www.leadsthecompetition.in