

Dear Readers,

After the capsule which covered the news from January to help you all to score well in General Awareness Section, we have made the Tonic of January 2016, which includes the news from 25th January to 31st January 2016

Do read it as we have compiled all the important news from the entire topics.



GA TONIC (From 25 JAN 2016 to 31 JAN 2016)**Banking News**

- ✓ The Dharwad-headquartered Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB) has set up a separate cell for monitoring progress under all the government-sponsored schemes, according to Ashok Reddy, Chairman of the bank.

Indian Economy in News

- ✓ Ministry of Culture on 28 January 2016 released a **commemorative coin of 150 rupees** and a **circulation coin of 10 rupees** on **Lala Lajpat Rai**. The coin was released by Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of state (Independent charge) Minister of Tourism & Culture at New Delhi on the occasion of 150th birth anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai.
- ✓ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a **\$80-million loan agreement** with the Centre to help continue improving infrastructure in the two North-Eastern cities of Agartala and Aizawl. The loan is the third tranche of \$200-million financing facility under the North Eastern Region Capital Cities Development Investment Program.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet on 27 January 2016 approved increase in the Authorized Share Capital of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC). With this, the Authorized Share Capital of NSFDC is increased from 1000 crore rupees to 1200 crore rupees.

Business News

- ✓ United States (US) based software services exporter **Cognizant Technology Solutions (CTS)** has acquired cloud-based computing firm **KBACE Technologies**. This acquisition will help Cognizant to strength and expands its digital capabilities from its critical business applications to cloud-based IT infrastructures.
- ✓ Three major Indian IT companies — **Infosys, Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro** — have joined US President Barack Obama's ambitious '**computer science for All**' initiative as part of a public-private collaboration, pledging thousands of dollars in grants. Obama announced his '**Computer Sciences for All**' plan in his weekly address on Saturday as he emphasized on the need for teaching the subject as a "basic skill" to all children across schools in the country in a changing economy.
- ✓ Japanese automaker **Toyota Motor Corp.** has topped in global vehicle sales in 2015 by selling

10.151 million vehicles, beating Volkswagen and General Motors.

- ✓ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on 27 January 2016 implemented the long-pending **2010 Quota and Governance Reforms**. The reforms represent a major step towards the increasing role of dynamic emerging market and developing countries. The entry into force of these reforms will reinforce the credibility, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the IMF. India's voting rights increased to 2.6 percent from the current 2.3 percent and China's voting rights increased to six percent from 3.8.

National News

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with the President of France François Hollande, on 25 January 2016 laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) headquarters in National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurgaon. They also inaugurated the interim Secretariat of the ISA at the same place.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot on 27 January 2016 launched the National level Job portal www.disabilityjobs.gov.in for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). The Ministry aims to carry out skill training programme for 5 lakh Persons with Disabilities in next 3 years.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved proposal of raising of 17 Indian Reserve Battalions (IRBs) in Jammu & Kashmir and 4 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected states. Decision in this regard was taken by Union Cabinet Meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.
- ✓ India has overtaken Thailand as the world's largest rice exporter in the year 2015 by shipping (exporting) 10.23 million tonnes of rice. It was announced by the Bangkok based Thai Rice Exporters Association Chairman Charoen Laodhammatas.
- ✓ President Pranab Mukherjee on 26 January 2016 approved the Union Cabinet's recommendation for the imposition of President's rule on Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Urban Development on 28 January 2016 announced the 1st batch of 20 smart cities from 11 States and Union Territory of Delhi under the Smart Cities Mission. The 20 cities were selected through the Smart City Challenge competition that saw the participation of 1.52 crore citizens from 97 cities and towns.
- ✓ Union government on 25 January 2016 approved fitting of roof top solar energy panels over 10000

houses belonging to Economically Weaker Sections in Tamil Nadu at a cost of 253 crore rupees. This is first of its kind under Prime Minister's Awas Yojana (PMAY)(Urban).

International News


- ✓ Cabinet of **Somalia** on 28 January 2016 agreed on Election Model outlined by the Mogadishu Declaration. The declaration, which was adopted in December 2015, calls for the electoral process in Somalia to establish a new, bicameral Federal Parliament in 2016, based on inclusivity and representation.
- ✓ **Eritrea's** Department of Religious Affairs in the fourth week of January 2016 issued a law that makes it mandatory for men of the nation to marry at least two wives. Failing to adhere by the orders will lead to life imprisonment with hard labour. The law also says that women who attempt to prevent their husbands from exercising the law would spend the rest of their lives in jail.


States in News

- ✓ The Andhra Pradesh Government on 22 January 2016 launched **Giriputrika Kalyana Pathakam Scheme** to support the tribal women in their quest for livelihood. The scheme was launched by Andhra Pradesh Minister for Social Welfare Ravela Kishore Babu. The scheme seeks to reduce rampant infant mortality and child marriages among tribal people.
- ✓ **Manipal Hospitals Bangalore** becomes the first centre in Karnataka for conducting the MRCP practical assessment of examination skills (PACES) mock exam in collaboration with UK-based Royal College of Physicians Federation. This is the final qualifying exam for getting MRCP UK degree thus providing an opportunity for students to directly practice in the UK, the company said in a statement.
- ✓ **Rajasthan Government** along with its power distribution companies (DISCOMS) has signed a MoU to join UDAY (Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana) Scheme.
- ✓ **Uttar Pradesh** became the fourth state to join the Centre's scheme to revive state electricity distribution utilities on Saturday. The state government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd, the holding company of the various electricity distribution utilities in the state.
- ✓ Lt Governor of Puducherry AK Singh on 28 January 2016 launched the **MITRA mobile application** to

ensure safety and security of women in the Union Territory.

- ✓ Goa Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar today launched **Goa e-Suvidha Portal**, an online project tracking mechanism to fast track projects. It aims at resolving a variety of issues in setting up infrastructure and other large projects, both in the public and private sectors, with targeted investment between Rs. 50 crore and Rs. 5,000 crore.
- ✓ Maharashtra's first Solar Power operated Mini-Water Supply Plant was commissioned on 24 January 2016 in Hingna village of Mouda Taluka in Nagpur district.
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on 27 January 2016 directed officials to impose ban on polythene in entire state from January 2017.


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National Appointments

- ✓ **Alice Vaidyan:** Alice Vaidyan has been appointed Chairman and Managing Director of General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re), the National Reinsurer. She will hold office till July 31, 2019.
- ✓ **KK Jalan:** In a bureaucratic reshuffle, the government has transferred Central Provident Fund Commissioner KK Jalan as Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- ✓ **KK Jalan:** Amid the high-decibel debate around Net neutrality, call drops and the upcoming mega spectrum auction, Telecom Secretary Rakesh Garg on Friday was moved to the low-profile Minority Affairs Ministry, as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle.
- ✓ **Justice Sanjay Mishra:** was on 28 January 2016 appointed as Lokayukta of Uttar Pradesh. His appointment was approved by the Supreme Court.
- ✓ **Gurdeep Singh:** on 28 January 2016 was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of NTPC Ltd. Singh will be the first person to be appointed to the top job at a Maharatna company through a search committee route.

- ✓ **Muktesh Kumar Pardeshi:** Senior IFS officer Muktesh Kumar Pardeshi was on 29 January 2016 appointed as India's Ambassador to Mexico.
- ✓ **Kamlesh Kumar Pandey:** on 28 January 2016 was appointed as the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) for a period of three years. Before joining the post of CCPD, Pandey was associated with **Saksham**, an NGO working in the field of disability.
- ✓ **Datta Padsalgikar:** Senior IPS officer Datta Padsalgikar was on 30 January 2016 appointed as the Commissioner of Police of Mumbai with effect from 31 January 2016. He succeeds Ahmed Javed, who was appointed as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

International Appointments

- ✓ **Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa:** on 24 January 2016 won the Presidential election of Portugal. Sousa, a centre-right Social Democrats candidate and a former journalist, won the election by securing 52 percent of votes.
- ✓ **Leslie Berland:** was on 26 January 2016 appointed as the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of Twitter Inc, an online social networking site. Before Berland's appointment, the marketing operations were overseen by the Twitter's CFO Anthony Noto.

Awards and Recognition

- ✓ President Pranab Mukherjee has conferred the country's highest peacetime gallantry award **Ashok Chakra** to **Lance Naik Mohan Nath Goswami** posthumously. On the eve of 67th Republic Day celebrations President has approved 365 Gallantry awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others. It includes one Ashoka Chakra, 4 Kirti Chakras and 11 Shaurya Chakras. Awardees are

Ashok Chakra:

Lance Naik Mohan Nath Goswami (Posthumous). He belonged to 9 PARA (Special Force) and laid down his life while fighting LeT militants in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kirti Chakra:

1. Subedar Mahendra Singh of 9 PARA (Special Force).
2. Sepoy Jagdish Chand (Posthumous) of 546 DSC Platoon.

Shaurya Chakra:

1. Colonel Santosh Mahadik (Posthumous) of 41 Rashtriya Rifle (PARA).

2. Major Praphul Kumar Bhardwaj of 12 PARA (Special Force).
3. Major Sandip Yadav of 55 Rashtriya Rifle (Armed).
4. Major Anurag Kumar of 9 PARA (Special Force).
5. Lieutenant Harjinder Singh of 3 KUMAON.
6. Naik Satish Kumar (Posthumous) of 21 Rashtriya Rifle (Guards).
7. Naik Kheem Singh Mehra of 21 KUMAON.
8. Sepoy Dharma Ram (Posthumous) of 1 Rashtriya Rifle (MAHAR).

Kirti Chakra is the second highest peace time gallantry award i.e. awarded for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle. Shaurya Chakra is third highest peace time gallantry award generally awarded for counterinsurgency operations and actions against the enemy during peace-time.

- ✓ **Yash Chopra Memorial Award:** Veteran Bollywood actress Rekha on 25 January 2016 was honoured with the third Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai.
- ✓ **Highest civilian honour, the Order of Australia:** A Kerala dentist Sajeev Koshy settled in Melbourne on 26 January 2016 was honoured with the highest civilian honour, the Order of Australia. Koshy was given the award for his service to dentistry in Victoria, Australia.
- ✓ **Chennupati Jagadish and Jay Chandra, Indian-origin persons,** were on 26 January 2016 honoured with the Order of Australia, highest civilian honour of Australia on the occasion of the Australia Day. They were awarded for their contribution in the fields of physics, engineering and medicine. Chennupati Jagadish is an eminent professor at Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra. He was conferred with the award for his eminent service to physics and engineering, particularly in the field of nanotechnology.
- ✓ **Hockey Stars awards:** The International Hockey Federation (FIH) on 26 January 2016 announced the winners of its Hockey Stars awards for 2015. The Netherlands' Robert Van der Horst and Lidewij Welten won the men's and women's FIH Player of the Year awards, respectively, for their performances in 2015.
 1. Goalkeeper of the year (Women) - Joyce Sombroek (The Netherlands)
 2. Goalkeeper of the year (Men) - David Harte (Ireland)
 3. Rising Star of the Year (Women) - Lily Owsley (Great Britain)
 4. Rising Star of the Year (Men) - Christopher Rühr (Germany)

- ✓ **Aparna Kumar**, IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, became India's first civil servant to scale Mount Vinson Massif, the highest peak in the Antarctica. She hoisted the Tricolour and the flag of the Uttar Pradesh Police Service on Mount Vinson Massif.
- ✓ **Human Rights Award:** lawyer and human rights defender **Henri Tiphagne** on 26 January 2016 was selected for the 8th Human Rights Award by Amnesty International Germany. The award is a recognition of Tiphagne's exceptional commitment to human rights. He will be conferred with the award at an official ceremony on 25 April 2016 at the Maxim Gorki Theatre in Berlin, Germany.
- ✓ **Allan Border Medal for 2016:** Australian batsman David Warner on 27 January 2016 defeated captain Steve Smith for the prestigious Allan Border Medal for 2016.
- ✓ **Prince Mahidol Award 2015:** was conferred upon Professor Morton Mower and Sir Michael Marmot for outstanding achievements in medicine and public health worldwide. The award was presented on 29 January 2016 at the Grand Palace in Bangkok by the Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn on behalf of the King of Thailand Bhumibol Adulyadej, who couldn't attend the ceremony due to ill health.
- ✓ **William E. Colby Award:** Nisid Hajari on 28 January 2016 won the 2016 William E. Colby Award for his book, **Midnight's Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition**. Hajari will be presented with the award and honorarium at Norwich University, the USA in April 2016.
- ✓ **K Veeramani Award for Social Justice 2015:** Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on 29 January 2016 was selected for the prestigious K Veeramani Award for Social Justice 2015. Kumar is chosen for the award for his contribution towards social justice as Chief Minister. The award is given away by Periyar International, a Chicago-based voluntary organization.
- ✓ **the V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award:** Veteran wildlife filmmaker Naresh Bedi on 28 January 2016 was honoured with the V Shantaram Lifetime Achievement Award at the 14th edition of the Mumbai International Festival for Documentary, Short and Animation Films (MIFF 2016). Bedi was honoured for his outstanding contribution to wildlife filmmaking
- ✓ **Morton Mower (US), Sir Michael Marmot (UK)** have won the prestigious 2015 Prince Mahidol Award for their outstanding achievements in the international healthcare sector.

Summits and Conferences

- ✓ Kerala will host a three-day '**Nypunyam International Skill Summit and Skill Fiesta 2016**' next month with a view to bridging the gap between the job market requirement and the skill level of available workforce.

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Sports News

- ✓ **Japan's Izumo Takuto** and **Hong Kong's Zhu Chengzhu** on 24 January 2016 became champions in the boys' and girls' categories, respectively, in the 11Even Sports 2015 ITTF World Junior Circuit Finals at the Abhay Prashal Stadium, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ India on 24 January 2016 won the **first T20 Asia cup cricket for Blind**. In the final clash played at Jawaharlal Nehru stadium of Kochi, **India defeated Pakistan** by 44 runs.
- ✓ The West Indies batsman **Shivnarine Chanderpaul** on 22 January 2016 announced his retirement from international cricket almost 22 years after making his debut. Chanderpaul had not played for West Indies since May 2015. The West Indies selectors dropped him after a weak performance during the three-Test series at home against England.
- ✓ **Angelique Kerber** became the first German to win a Grand Slam title since her childhood idol Steffi Graf in 1999 when she upset world number one Serena Williams 6-4 3-6 6-4 to clinch the Australian Open on Saturday.
- ✓ **Sania Mirza and her Swiss partner Martina Hingis** on 29 January 2016 won the 2016 Australian Open title of tennis in the **women's doubles category**. To win the title, the top seeded Indo-Swiss pair defeated seventh seeded Czech duo Andrea

Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka 7-6, 6-3 at the Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne, Australia.

- ✓ **Punjab's Navneet Kaur** on 28 January 2016 won two gold medals in the **34th Senior National Rowing Championship at Hussainsagar Lake, Hyderabad**. It was her maiden gold at the country's highest level in the senior category. In the men single scull, Nasik's **Santosh Kadale** won his maiden national gold.
- ✓ Brazilian racing driver **Pietro Fittipaldi** on 31 January 2016 clinched the 2015-16 MRF Challenge Formula 2000 at Madras Motor Racing Track in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The International Swimming Federation (FINA) on 31 January 2016 announced that the Japanese city of Fukuoka will host the **2021 World Aquatics Championships**. On the other hand, the Qatari capital Doha will host the 2023 event. The decision was made after a vote of the FINA executive committee in Budapest. The FINA World Championships or World Aquatics Championships are the World Championships for aquatics sports: Swimming, Diving, High Diving, Open Water Swimming, Synchronized Swimming and Water Polo.
- ✓ **Aditya Mehta** on 31 January 2016 won the 83rd Senior **National Snooker Championship in Indore, Madhya Pradesh**. To win the title, he defeated Manan Chandra 6-3 in the final that was held as part of the National Billiards & Snooker Championship 2016.
- ✓ **Ace Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth** on 31 January 2016 won the Men's Singles title of the **Syed Modi International Badminton Championships 2016**. In the final played at Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium in Lucknow, Srikanth defeated China's Huang Yuxiang, 21-13, 14-21, 21-14.
- ✓ **World Number One Novak Djokovic** on 31 January 2016 won the Australian Open Men's Singles title. In the final played at Melbourne, the Serbian defeated Andy Murray of Britain in straight sets 6-1, 7-5, 7-6.
- ✓ **Ace Indian Shuttler Pusarla Venkata Sindhu** (World No.12) has won the 2016 Malaysia Masters Grand Prix Gold Badminton title. In the final match played at Penang she defeated Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour (World No.20) by 21-15, 21-9 score.
- ✓ Pakistan Opener **Imran Farhat** on 27 January 2016 retired from international cricket.
- ✓ **Matthew Mitcham**, the Australian Olympic diving gold medalist, announced his retirement from the sport on 28 January 2016.
- ✓ 14-year old **Ishika Shah** on 26 January 2016 won the 12th Sub-Junior National Snooker championship title in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. To win the title, she

defeated **Anushi Seth** by 50-2, 50-33 in the final match.

- ✓ South African **Graham Xavier Ford** on 29 January 2016 was named as the chief coach of the Sri Lankan cricket team for his second stint. At the time of his appointment, he was the head coach of the Surrey County Cricket Club.

Trade and Agreements

- ✓ India and France on 24 January 2016 inked **16** agreements at the **India-France Business Summit in Chandigarh**. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) covered a wide range of sectors like urban development, urban transport, water and waste treatment and solar energy. The agreements were signed in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Francois Hollande, who began his three-day visit to India. **Hollande is the Chief Guest at the 67th India's Republic Day (26 January 2016) celebrations**. He is the fifth French leader to be a chief guest at India's Republic Day celebrations, maximum number from any country so far.
- ✓ India and France inked **14 Agreements/MoUs in Delhi**. The agreements including MoU on purchase of 36 Rafale Aircrafts were signed during the State Visit of President Francois Hollande of France to India.
 1. MoU on purchase of 36 Rafale Aircrafts
 2. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Centre National D'études Spatiales (CNES) Implementation Arrangement on hosting Argos-4 Payload onboard India's Oceansat-3 satellite
 3. ISRO and CNES Implementation Arrangement on a future joint Thermal Infrared earth observation mission
 4. Letter of Intent on CNES, France participation in ISRO's next Mars Mission
 5. Shareholding Agreement on JV between Alstom and Indian Railways for production of 800 electric locomotives in Madhepura Bihar
 6. Agreement between Indian Railways and SNCF, French Railways for joint feasibility study for the renovation of Ludhiana and Ambala railway stations .
 7. MOU between Food Safety & Standards Authority of India and Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation (ANSES) in food safety.
 8. Partnership Agreement on Cooperation in Public Administration between Ministry of Personnel & Public Grievances and French.

9. Declaration of Intent for conducting next round of Namaste France (Indian festival) in 2016 and Bonjour India (French festival) 2017.
 10. Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2016-2018.
 11. Arrangement for establishment of an Indo-French Ministerial level Joint Committee on Science & Technology.
 12. MoU for Industry Sponsored PhD Fellowship between IIT Mumbai and Thales Systemes Aeroportes
 13. Cooperation Agreement between IISER, Pune and ENS de Lyon (France) for joint research, teaching, exchange of personnel etc.
 14. Agreement of Cooperation between CNRS, TB, UBO, UBS, ENSTA Bretagne, ENIB (French Universities) and IIT Mumbai in the field of Higher Education & Research.
- ✓ **Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In)** has signed cybersecurity agreement with its counterparts in Malaysia, Singapore and Japan.
 - ✓ **India and Armenia** has signed a Protocol to amend the existing **Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC)** to curb instances of tax evasion. The Protocol amends the Article on Exchange of Information for tax in the bilateral **DTAC signed between India and Armenia and has been in existence since September 2004.**
 - ✓ **Iran and Airbus** on 28 January 2016 signed two agreements covering new aircraft orders and a comprehensive civil aviation co-operation package. The agreement includes purchase of 118 new Airbus aircrafts.
 - ✓ India and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) entered into a partnership in January 2016 to explore the environment of Ladakh under NASA's Spaceward Bound programme. Under the partnership, a team of scientists from NASA, the Mars society Australia and the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeobotany, Lucknow will undertake an expedition to Ladakh in August 2016. During their 10-day expedition, the scientists will study the similarities of certain parts of the region's topography and microbial life to the surroundings of Mars.
 - ✓ The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on 29 January 2016 signed **two bilateral Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) with United Kingdom.** With this signing, CBDT has concluded three bilateral APAs the first one being a bilateral APA signed with Japan in December 2014. This is a significant step towards providing a stable and predictable tax regime. With this signing, CBDT has so far signed 41

APAs out of which 38 are unilateral and 3 are bilateral.

- ✓ 31 countries on 27 January 2016 signed the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement (MCAA) to boost **transparency in the functioning of multinational enterprises (MNEs)** by allowing automatic exchange of Country-by-Country reports by tax administrators. The signing of the agreement marks an important milestone towards implementation of the OECD/G20 Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) project.



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Books and Authors

- ✓ The book titled **Nathuram Godse - The Story of an Assassin** authored by **Anup Ashok Sardesai** was released on 30 January 2016. The book narrates the story of Nathuram Vinayakrao Godse who died an untimely death and his brother suffered a life of immense mental torture. It also speaks of the family of Godse who faced countless abuses and humiliations.
- ✓ The second volume of memoirs of President Pranab Mukherjee titled **The Turbulent Years - 1980-1996** was released on 28 January 2016 by Vice President Hamid Ansari in function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. In this book, he reminisced about crucial events of his political life including Indira Gandhi's assassination, Babri Masjid demolition, operation Blue Star and his ouster from Rajiv Gandhi's Cabinet.

Science & Technology

- ✓ Astronomers have discovered the largest known solar system in the form of gas giant located one

trillion kilometres away. This solar system has large planet known as 2MASS J2126-8140 that takes nearly a million years to orbit its star.

- ✓ Intelsat S.A. (NYSE: I), the world's leading provider of satellite services, announced that **Intelsat 29e**, the first of the Intelsat EpicNG high throughput satellites, is scheduled to launch on January 27, 2016, aboard an Arianespace Ariane 5 ECA launch vehicle from the Guiana Space Center in Kourou, French Guiana.

Committees

- ✓ Tennis's governing bodies on 27 January 2016 constituted the **Adam Lewis** headed Independent Review Panel (IRP) to safeguard integrity in tennis.

Defence News

- ✓ India on 28 January 2016 test fired its indigenously-built **surface-to-air (SAM) Akash (The Sky) missile** from complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipuri in Odisha. It is developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India under the integrated guided-missile development programme (IGMDP).
- ✓ Japan on 28 January 2016 unveiled country's first stealth fighter aircraft **X-2**. The domestically-built fighter aircraft seeks to augment defence capabilities of the country that is surrounded by **China and Russia** that already have radar-evading aircraft technology.

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Obituaries

- ✓ **Pandit Shankar Ghosh:** Eminent Tabla player Pandit Shankar Ghosh passed away on 22 January 2016 in Kolkata following a prolonged illness.
- ✓ **Kalpana:** Malayalam actor Kalpana passes away in Hyderabad. National award-winning actress Kalpana, who appeared in 300 films including recent superhit "Charlie".
- ✓ **Marvin Minsky,** the pioneer of artificial intelligence, died at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital due to cerebral hemorrhage. The mathematician and the computer scientist died at the age of 88.
- ✓ **Actor Abe Vigoda,** known for his work in The Godfather and on the television series Barney Miller, passed away on 26 January 2016 in New Jersey following natural causes.
- ✓ **Kotikalapudi Venkata Krishna Rao:** Former Army Chief General Kotikalapudi Venkata Krishna Rao passed away on 30 January 2016 in New Delhi following a cardiac arrest. He was 92. He was the 14th Chief of the Army Staff of Indian Army.
- ✓ **Ranbir Chopra:** The captain of the champion Indian basketball team in the first Asian Games in 1951, Ranbir Chopra, died on 25 January 2016 in Kapurthala, Punjab. He was 86.
- ✓ **Maheswar Baug:** Former minister and freedom fighter Maheswar Baug died on 28 January 2016 at the district headquarter hospital in Balasore, Odisha. He was 85.

Important Days

- ✓ **25 January:** 6th National Voters' Day (NVD) was observed across the country on 25 January 2016 by the Election Commission of India. The **theme** for the 6th National Voters' Day is '**Inclusive and Qualitative Participation**'. On the occasion, the Chief Election Commissioner Dr. Nasim Zaidi also released a book titled, 'Belief in the Ballot' and presented it's the first copy to the President. 25 January is the foundation day of the Commission, which came into being on this day in 1950.
- ✓ **26 January:** Republic Day 2016 was celebrated on 26 January 2016 across the nation. This was the 67th Republic Day of India. President of France Francois Hollande was the Chief Guest at 67th Republic Day parade. First Republic Day was celebrated on 26 January 1950 when India became a Republic with Constitution of India coming into force on this day replacing the Government of India Act (1935) as the governing document of India. For the first time since 1950, a foreign army contingent marched down the Rajpath during the Republic Day parade. For the first time, the tableau of ex-servicemen of Army veterans was also showcased in the parade.

- ✓ **27 January:** International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust was observed on 27 January 2016 across the world. The day was proclaimed so by the United Nations General Assembly. The theme for the Holocaust remembrance and education activities in the year 2016 including the Holocaust Memorial Ceremony is **The Holocaust and Human Dignity**.
- ✓ **30 January:** Anti-Leprosy Day was observed on 30 January 2016 nationwide to focus attention on the disease which is also known as the Hansen's disease.

Miscellaneous

- ✓ Now, LPG users can pay online for their cylinder refills on the website **www.mylpg.in** soon after booking their refill for delivery. This is the latest part of the online refill booking facilities that the three public sector oil marketing companies have introduced in the past two years.
- ✓ 150th birth anniversary of great freedom fighter Lala Lajpat Rai, also known as Punjab Kesri is being celebrated 28th January 2016. To celebrate this occasion a state level function has been organised in Punjab and special event will be held at village Dhudi Ke, the birth place of Lala Lajpat Rai in Moga district.
- ✓ The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act, 2015 came into force on 26 January 2016. The act was made to ensure more stringent provisions for prevention of Atrocities against Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
- ✓ Transparency International on 27 January 2016 released the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2015. The Index measured the perceived levels of public sector corruption in 168 countries and

territories across the world. While **Denmark, with rank 1**, was adjudged as the most corruption-free country among the surveyed countries, India **was placed at the 76th place** with 38 points. India was at the 85th position among the 175 countries surveyed in the CPI 2014.

- ✓ The term **Human Rights up Front: An initiative to strengthen United Nations preventive work** was in news on 28 January 2016 as Deputy Secretary general in his address to UN General Assembly called the Member states, the Security Council along with ECOSOC (UN Economic and Social Council) to play important role in promoting the approaches and changes, which the initiative seeks to achieve. The initiative was launched by Secretary General Ban-Ki moon in December 2013 to prevent and respond to serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law.

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