

SNIPPETS

November 1-10

- Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi expanded his cabinet with the induction of six new Ministers of State. Noticeable among the new ministers are Jayesh Radadiya, son of former Congress MP Vithal Radadiya who switched over to the BJP during the run up to the state assembly polls last year. Others who have been inducted as MoS are Vasan Ahir, Jaydrathsinh Parmar, Dilip Thakore, Jaswantsinh Bhabhor and Chhatrasinh Mori.
- The World Health Organization has approved a new vaccine for a strain of encephalitis that kills thousands of children and leaves many survivors with permanent brain damage. The disease, called Japanese encephalitis or brain fever, is caused by a mosquito-transmitted virus that can live in pigs, birds and humans. Less than 1 percent of those infected get seriously ill, but it kills up to 15,000 children a year and disables many more. Up to four billion people, from southern Russia to the Pacific islands, are at risk; it is more prevalent near rice paddies. The low-cost vaccine is the first authorized by the agency for children and the first Chinese-made vaccine it has approved. It is made by China National Biotec Group.
- Border trade between India and China, carried on via the Lipulekh Pass, concluded for the year after the route was closed for winter.
- India won a bilateral series (cricket) against Australia after a gap of 27 years. The last series win was in 1986-87. India's victory by 57 runs was their 40th in 115 matches against Australia (Lost 66 and No Result 9) -- which is a success rate of 37.73 percentage. Rohit Sharma became the third player in men's cricket to record a double century in ODIs. Sachin Tendulkar (200 not out vs South Africa at Gwalior on February 24, 2010) was the first to accomplish the feat followed by Virender Sehwag (219 vs West Indies at Indore on December 8, 2011).
- One of the most unpopular immigration proposals of the Conservative-led coalition government in the United Kingdom, which envisaged subjecting visitors from six "high-risk" Commonwealth countries to pay a surety of £3000 for a visa to the U.K., has been withdrawn. The scheme would have made it mandatory for persons on visitors' visa from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nigeria and Ghana to pay the deposit, which would be forfeited if they did not return home.
- Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) appointed 'Asmatullah Shaheen Bhattani' as an interim leader to head the group temporarily after the death of commander Hakimullah Mehsud in a US drone strike.
- BlackBerry Ltd abandoned its plan to sell itself and said its CEO is stepping down, sparking a 16 percent dive in its share price and raising fears the struggling smartphone maker is running out of options.
- Pakistan conducted a successful test fire of Short Range Surface to Surface Missile Hatf IX (NASR).
- Delivering verdict in the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) munity case, a special court in Dhaka awarded death sentence to 152 persons and life imprisonment to 161 others for their involvement in the February 2009 carnage at Pilkhana, headquarters of the paramilitary Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB).
- India flawlessly launched its first ever mission to Mars (Nov. 5) to begin a history making ten month long interplanetary voyage to the Red Planet that's aimed at studying the Martian atmosphere and searching for methane after achieving orbit. The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) thundered to space atop the nation's four stage Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the Indian Space Research Organization's (ISRO) Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota, off India's east coast.

- Indian Navy inducted the fourth generation advanced jet trainer aircraft 'Hawk 132', which has led to a jump in the operational versatility. 'Hawk 132' is equipped with advanced and reliable navigation systems and has the capability to deploy an impressive array of weaponry including air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground rockets, bombs and guns.
- Britain announced a passport pass-back pilot scheme in southern India, which would allow applicants keep their passports while their visa is being processed. Officials said this would allow applicants travel or apply for another visa simultaneously and reduce the time to get two visas.
- Pakistan formally freed former ruler Pervez Musharraf from house arrest after a court granted him bail in the last criminal case against him. But the retired general remains under heavy guard in his villa on the edge of Islamabad because of serious threats to his life.
- An Egyptian court has upheld a ruling that banned the Muslim Brotherhood and ordered its assets confiscated. The Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's oldest and most influential Islamist group, was banned in September last year after President Mohamed Morsi was toppled by the army following mass protests against his government on July 3, 2013.
- The Archaeological Survey of India has unearthed rare pieces of pottery dating back to the Kushan and Gupta periods in the excavation at the dilapidated fort of Raja Ram Baksh Singh at Unnao in Uttar Pradesh.
- A rocket carrying the Olympic torch successfully blasted off from Earth on its way to the International Space Station and its first spacewalk in history. Starting a spectacular leg of the relay counting down to the Sochi 2014 Winter Games, NASA Live TV showed the rocket emblazoned with the pale blue Sochi logo launching from the Russian-operated Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.
- Central Election Commission (CEC) of Tajikistan declared that Imomali Rakhmon was re-elected as the President of Tajikistan. Imomali Rakhmon belongs to People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT). The President of Tajikistan is elected by popular vote. The term of the office is 7 years. The term of the President of Tajikistan is limited to not more than two terms. However, a constitutional amendment passed in 2003 allows President Imomali Rakhmon to run for a third term which, if he prevails, would keep him in office until 2020.
- India and Kuwait signed several agreements, including one on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, at the end of delegation level talks between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his visiting Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. After the agreement on transfer of sentenced persons, the convicts of both countries can serve their remaining sentences of imprisonment or any other form of punishment in their own country. Besides, an MoU was signed between the Foreign Service Institute(FSI), Ministry of External Affairs and the Saudi N Al-Sabah Kuwait Diplomatic Institute (KDI), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kuwait for promoting cooperation between the FSI and KDI, including exchange of information on structure and content of training programmes, exchange of trainees, students, faculty members, experts and researchers. In addition to these, two MoUs were signed for cooperation in the field of sports, cultural and educational exchange.
- The strongest typhoon in the world last year and possibly the most powerful ever to hit land (typhoon HAIYAN) smashed into the Philippines, forcing more than a million people to flee, flooding villages and raising fears of widespread casualties.
- India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable Agni-I ballistic missile with a strike range of 700km from a test range off Odisha coast as part of a user trial by the Army.

- UNESCO has suspended the voting rights of the United States and Israel, two years after both countries stopped paying dues to the U.N.'s cultural arm in protest over its granting full membership to the Palestinians. The U.S. decision to cancel its funding in October 2011 was blamed on U.S. laws that prohibit funding to any U.N. agency that implies recognition of the Palestinians' demands for their own state. Israel also pulled its funding, objecting to what it called unilateral attempts by the Palestinians to gain recognition of statehood.
- India's Ravichandran Ashwin has achieved the number-one position in the ICC Player Rankings for Test all-rounders after a stellar performance in the Kolkata Test, which India won by an innings and 51 runs with more than two days to spare. For this performance, he not only improved his batting and bowling rankings but also leapfrogged Shakib Al Hasan and Jacques Kallis into the number-one spot in the all-rounders' list.
- For the seventh time in Miss Universe history, Venezuela took the crown as 25-year-old Gabriela Isler was given the title of most beautiful woman in the universe in Moscow.

November 11- November 20

- Bangladesh's cabinet ministers tendered their resignations to pave the way for an all-party government to oversee general elections, with the BNP-led opposition adamant on the demand for a neutral non-party government amid a violent political standoff.
- Russia and Vietnam concluded several military deals during a one-day visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to the Southeast Asian country. Russia agreed to loan Vietnam \$8 billion to build its first nuclear power plant. Communist Vietnam is one of Russia's closest Asian allies -- some 90 Russian firms are operating in the country.
- India declared itself free from the highly contagious avian influenza or bird flu that may augur well for the country's poultry sector, promising boost to exports.
- Paving the way for closure of long- pending Jet-Etihad deal, fair trade regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI), approved the proposed acquisition of 24 per cent stake in the Naresh Goyal-led carrier by the Abu Dhabi-based airline. Etihad is acquiring this stake for Rs.2,058 crore in a deal that was announced in April 2013.
- The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) has expelled the Maldives from its disciplinary panel over the delay in presidential polls caused by the political chaos in the country. CMAG said that the Maldives cannot be a member of this panel, until it remains on the agenda of CMAG. The Commonwealth has the authority to recommend the expulsion of countries from the 53-member bloc.
- British Prime Minister David Cameron visits India.
- The 18 International Children's Film Festival of India got off to a colourful start at Hyderabad, with Union Minister of Information & Broadcasting Manish Tewari describing cinema as a powerful tool to forge better relations between nations.
- The 5.1 km stretch of Rapid Metro Rail Gurgaon Limited (RMGL), India's first fully privately funded Metro Rail system, was opened to the public in Gurgaon.
- Gambian President Yahya Jammeh announced the breaking of diplomatic ties with Taiwan. The Gambia-Taiwan relations refers to the current and historical relationship between the Republic of the Gambia and Republic of China (ROC). Gambia officially recognized Taiwan in 1996 and the People's Republic of China ended recognition for Gambia.

- Turkey's parliament has lifted a ban on women lawmakers wearing trousers in the assembly, in a further liberalisation of dress rules following a landmark decision to allow female deputies to wear the Islamic headscarf.
- China announced that it would ease its deeply unpopular one-child policy, a high-profile move by new leaders to limit a program that has prevented millions of births but helped create an aging population that could constrict economic growth.
- The Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting opened in Colombo, capital of Sri Lanka, as Sri Lanka formally assumed the Chair of the 53-member group. Britain's Prince Charles presided over the opening ceremony.
- With surplus domestic sugar production, the government relaxed a condition for exports of the sweetener by doubling the limit on overseas shipments that sellers can register.
- Egypt's government announced the end of its 3-month-old state of emergency in a step that might help restore a sense of normalcy missing since the ouster of former President Mohamed Morsi.
- Sachin Tendulkar, one of cricket's greatest heroes, and top scientist C.N.R. Rao were named for the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award. They join the galaxy of 41 eminent personalities who have been honoured in "recognition of exceptional service or performance of the highest order in any field of human endeavour." The Bharat Ratna was instituted in 1954 and the last recipient was Hindustani classical music doyen Bhimsen Joshi, in 2009.
- The much-awaited USD 2.3 billion aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya was inducted into the Indian Navy. The warship, acquired from Russia, will add a new dimension to Indian Navy's operational capabilities.
- Abdulla Yameen was sworn in as the new president of the Maldives after a shock run-off victory over favourite Mohamed Nasheed, ending nearly two years of political turmoil that plagued the nascent democracy and raised international concerns over the country's future. Yameen, the half-brother of former autocratic ruler Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, was sworn in as the 6th president of the Maldives.
- President Pranab Mukherjee presented the Jamnalal Bajaj Awards at a function in Mumbai. The Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation gives four awards annually, of which, the fourth award is an international award. This year the recipient of the Award for Outstanding Contribution in the field of Constructive Work is G.V. Subba Rao, the Award for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development was given to Snehlata Nath, the Award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children to Vidhya Das and the recipient of the International Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India went to Jean -Marie Muller.
- German Chancellor Angela Merkel will be awarded the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2013. The announcement was made by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust, which said the award was being given to 59-year-old Merkel for her exemplary leadership in Europe and the world during the financial crisis and her stewardship of German economic growth. Merkel, who became the first woman to be elected chancellor of Germany, has been a strong supporter of close relations with India.
- The 44th International Film Festival of India was inaugurated in Panaji, Goa in a glittering ceremony that celebrated the 100 years of Indian cinema. Amid standing ovation lifetime achievement awards were conferred on Indian actress Waheeda Rehman for Indian Film Personality of the Year and Czech filmmaker Jiri Menzel.

November 21 onwards

- The police arrested suspended Trinamool Congress' Rajya Sabha MP Kunal Ghosh in the multi-crore Saradha chitfund scam.
- Salt-to-software conglomerate Tata group's combined turnover slipped below \$100-billion mark due to a fall in rupee, despite an over ten per cent growth in total revenue when measured in Indian currency. Tatas have, however, emerged as the country's first business house to record an annual turnover of more than Rs. five lakh crore in rupee terms, while its headcount rose by nearly 88,000 persons to over 5.4 lakh employees in 2012-13.
- Iran and six world powers clinched a deal curbing the Iranian nuclear programme in exchange for initial sanctions relief, signalling the start of a game-changing rapprochement that could ease the risk of a wider Middle East war. Aimed at ending a long-festering standoff, the interim pact between Iran and the United States, France, Germany, Britain, China and Russia won the critical endorsement of Iran's top cleric and supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. US President Barack Obama said the deal struck after marathon, tortuous and politically charged negotiations cut off Tehran's potential path to a nuclear weapon. But Israel, Iran's arch-enemy, denounced the agreement as an "historic mistake".
- Dentist couple Rajesh and Nupur Talwar were held guilty of the murder of their teenaged daughter Aarushi and domestic help Hemraj in May 2008. The sessions court in Ghaziabad sentenced the dentist to life imprisonment.
- Bangladesh will hold its national election on January 5, the Election Commission said, enraging the opposition, which took to the streets in protest and called for a blockade of roads, waterways and railways across the country.
- Madhya Pradesh recorded the highest-ever voter turnout of over 70 per cent and Mizoram of over 81 per cent in an assembly poll.
- Former Pakistan Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz was declared a fugitive along with two others by an anti-terrorism court in Quetta in connection with the 2006 murder of Baloch nationalist leader Akbar Khan Bugti.
- The Supreme Court on issued notice to all states on a batch of petitions seeking that the Aadhaar scheme be declared as unconstitutional.
- General Raheel Sharif took over as the head of Pakistan's army, the most powerful position in the troubled military-dominated nation which is battling a home-grown Taliban insurgency. Pakistan has seen three coups and been ruled for more than half its 66-year history by the military. The armed forces still retain a powerful influence.
- Valdis Dombrovskis resigned as Latvia's prime minister, taking "full responsibility" for the supermarket roof collapse in Riga that killed 54 people.
- Recently-retired batting legend Sachin Tendulkar became UNICEF's first brand ambassador for South Asia and is all set to work in promoting hygiene and sanitation in the region.
- A UN rights committee passed a "right to privacy" resolution drafted by Germany and Brazil, which have led international criticism of reported US spying of their leaders.
- In a change of strategy, Tarun Tejpal, accused of sexual assault against a woman colleague, withdrew his bail plea in the Delhi High Court, saying he will "approach appropriate court for appropriate remedy". Mr. Tejpal had stepped down as *Tehelka* Editor-in-Chief for six months in the wake of the sexual assault case against him. Fearing arrest by Goa police in connection with the case, Mr. Tejpal had approached the High Court seeking either anticipatory or transit bail.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Abdulla Abdulla Yameen

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Ajit Prakash Shah

Justice Ajit Prakash Shah has taken over as the new Chairman of the 20th Law Commission of India. The post of the Chairman, 20th Law Commission, had fallen vacant due to the resignation of Shri Justice D. K. Jain, who had taken over as the President, National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. He started practice at Solapur district Court and shifted to the Bombay High Court in the year 1977. He was Chief Justice of the High Court of Delhi from May 2008 till his retirement in February 2010. He is known for his bold judgments, especially concerning social issues, including the world-headliner July 2009 ruling that found India's 150-year-old statute prohibiting homosexual acts (Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code) as discriminatory and, therefore, a "violation of fundamental rights".

AK Mital

AK Mital has been appointed as member staff, railway board and ex-officio secretary to the government. The post had been kept vacant after the suspension of former Western Railway general manager Mahesh Kumar, who had been arrested by Central Bureau of Investigation in railway bribery case.

Arup Raha

Air Marshal Arup Raha, an ace fighter pilot, will be the next Air Force chief succeeding incumbent Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne who is retiring on December 31. Raha is expected to have a tenure of three years as the Chief of Air Staff.

Diane Disney Miller

Diane Disney Miller, philanthropist and daughter of cartoon and theme park pioneer Walt Disney, died in California. She was 79.

Doris Lessing

Doris Lessing, the Nobel Laureate author of *The Golden Notebook* and *The Grass is Singing*, died aged 94. Largely self-educated and from a modest British-colonial upbringing, Lessing went on to become one of the greatest British writers of the last century. Beginning with a selection of short stories published in 1948 and ending with her final book *Alfred and Emily* (2008), Lessing wrote on the defence of freedom, the developing world, women's rights and countless other themes across more than 50 works of fiction, nonfiction and poetry.

Emomali Rakhmon

Emomali Tajikistan's President Emomali Rakhmon won another seven-year term in office. The president, who has been in power for two decades, faced five challengers but the only genuine opposition candidate was barred from standing. In a statement the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) said that the campaign lacked the political debate necessary for a competitive campaign environment. The authoritarian leader has been in office for more than 20 years in the impoverished former Soviet republic. The EU and the US have not recognised a single election in the Central Asian country as free and fair.

Frederick Sanger

Frederick Sanger, a British biochemist whose discoveries about the chemistry of life led to the decoding of the human genome and to the development of new drugs like human growth hormone, earning him two Nobel Prizes, a distinction held by only three other scientists, died in Cambridge, England. He was 95. Other scientists who have received two Nobels are John Bardeen for physics (1956 and 1972), Marie Curie for physics (1903) and chemistry (1911), and Linus Pauling for chemistry (1954) and peace (1962).

Gerard de Villiers

French writer Gerard de Villiers, whose thrillers sold more than 100m copies around the world, has died aged 83. He was the creator of the popular SAS series, with an Austrian hero often seen as France's literary James Bond.

Giorgi Margvelashvili

A loyalist of Georgia's billionaire Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, Giorgi Margvelashvili, scored a landslide win in the presidential poll to replace reformer Mikheil Saakashvili.

Gopal Krishna Pillai

MCX-SX, promoted by Financial Technologies India Ltd (FTIL), has appointed former Union Home Secretary Gopal Krishna Pillai as its chairman.

P S Raghavan

P S Raghavan, currently Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed India's next ambassador to Russia. A 1979-batch IFS officer, Raghavan will succeed Ajai Malhotra, who will retire on November 30.

Raheel Sharif

Lieutenant General Raheel Sharif was appointed as the new Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) and Lieutenant General Rashad Mehmood was appointed as the new Chairman of Joint Chief of Staff Committee (JCSC). The change of command comes with the country facing a daunting array of challenges – a homegrown Taliban insurgency that has claimed thousands of lives, vexed relations with India and the winding-down of the 12-year NATO mission in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Rajendra Yadav

Famed Hindi author Rajendra Yadav, whose novel "Saara Akash" was turned into a Bollywood movie, died at 84.

Reshma

Renowned Pakistani folk singer Reshma, who was suffering from throat cancer for a long time, died in Lahore. Born in Bikaner in India's Rajasthan state to a Banjara family around 1947, her tribe migrated to Karachi shortly after partition. Reshma has been one of the most popular folk singers of Pakistan, appearing on television in the 1960s and recording songs for both the Pakistani as well as the Indian film industry.

Vijaydan Detha

Vijaydan Detha, 88-year-old celebrated author of Rajasthani folk tales, died at his native village Borunda in Jodhpur. He was nominated for Nobel prize for literature in 2006, though the prize ultimately went to Swedish poet Thomas Transtromer, Detha, better known as 'Bijji' in the literary world, had always kept his life simple and confined himself to his native village Borunda.

William C. Lowe

William C. Lowe, the IBM executive who supervised the creation of the company's first personal computer, has died.

AWARDS & HONOURS

Bharat Ratna

Cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar and top scientist CNR Rao will be awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's biggest civilian award. Sachin, 40, will be the youngest recipient of the award. He is also the first sportsman to be chosen for the honour. Chintamani Nagesa Ramachandra Rao, who serves as the head of the Scientific Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India, also joins the select list of India's 41 Bharat Ratnas. An international authority on solid state and materials chemistry, the 79-year-old scientist has authored about 45 books and 1500 research papers in his career spanning over five decades. He is the third man of science after C V Raman and former President APJ Abdul Kalam to be given the Bharat Ratna. The award is given in recognition of exceptional service of the highest order. It was instituted in 1954. The last Bharat Ratna was conferred upon Hindustani music doyen Bhimsen Joshi in 2009.

Dayawati Modi Award

Noted contemporary artist Anjolie Ela Menon has been honoured with the Dayawati Modi Award for her outstanding genius and significant contributions to Indian art and culture. The annual award given by Dayawati Modi Foundation for Art, Culture and Education and comprising a cash prize of Rs 2.51 lakh, a silver shield and a scroll of honour.

Honorary Oscar

Angelina Jolie kicked off the movie award season late on Nov. 16 as she accepted an honorary Oscar for her humanitarian work at the Governors Awards ceremony in Hollywood. Veteran actress Angela Lansbury, comedian Steve Martin and Italian costume designer Pietro Tosi also received awards at the annual ceremony held by the Board of Governors of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace 2013

German Chancellor Angela Merkel will be the recipient of Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2013. The 59-year-old Merkel will be given the prestigious award for her leadership during the trying financial crisis and her stewardship of German economic growth. The award will be given by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust lauding her commitment to universal peace and disarmament and her leadership role in strengthening productive. An international jury headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh selected Merkel for the coveted award. Merkel, who became the first woman to be elected as Chancellor of Germany, has been a strong supporter of close relations with India.

Infosys Prize

Seven scientists and social scientists have bagged the Infosys Prize for 2013, in recognition of their "outstanding contributions to research" in fields ranging from theoretical linguistics and archaeology to algebraic geometry and nanoscale electronics. Ramgopal Rao, Institute Chair Professor, Department of Electrical Engineering and Chief Investigator, Centre of Excellence in Nanoelectronics, Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai was awarded the prize for Engineering and Computer Science. The Humanities award was shared by Nayanjot Lahiri, Professor, Department of History, University of Delhi, New Delhi (for Archaeology) and Ayesha Kidwai, Professor, Centre for Linguistics, School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi (for Linguistics). The prize for Life Sciences was awarded to Rajesh Gokhale, Director, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, New Delhi, and the prize for Mathematical Sciences given to Rahul Pandharipande, Professor, Department of Mathematics, Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule, Zürich (ETH Zurich). Shiraz Naval Minwalla, Professor, Department of Theoretical Physics, Tata

Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai received the award in the Physical Sciences category, while Aninhalli R. Vasavi, Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi received the prize for Social Sciences.

International Indian Award

Leading NRI industrialist and educationist, Lord Swraj Paul was presented with the 'International Indian of the Decade' award for his outstanding achievements in the fields of industry, education and philanthropy. According to the citation, the UK-based steel and engineering multinational company Caparo founded by Lord Paul now employs some 10,000 people worldwide principally in the UK, USA and India. Lord Paul, who was made a Life Peer, that is a member of the House of Lords in 1996, donated 1 million pounds to prevent the London Zoo from closure in 1994, the citation said. Lord Paul was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the government of India in 1983 and granted the Freedom of the City of London in 1998.

Japan Honours Sreedharan

The Government of Japan conferred the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star on the metro man E Sreedharan for his contribution in strengthening Japan's presence in India and promoting friendly relations between Japan and India through the Delhi Metro Project, which he conceived, structured and implemented. Sreedharan who is now serving as the principal adviser to the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) received the insignia and certificate from Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo- Abe at a ceremony that was held at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Jamnalal Bajaj Awards-2013

At the 35th Jamnalal Bajaj Foundation Awards, Jaywant Mathkar received the award for Outstanding Contribution in the field for Constructive Work. The award for Development and Welfare of Women and Children was given to Nighat Shafi, chairperson of the Human Effort for Love and Peace (HELP) foundation. The oldest recipient of the award was 83-year-old Glenn Paige, founder of the Center for Global Non-killing, Hawaii. Paige, awarded for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India, was unable to make it for the event and Dr S N Subbarao accepted the award on his behalf. The award for Application of Science and Technology for Rural Development was given to Kalyan Paul, executive director of the Himalayan Grassroots Development Foundation.

Lok Shahir Vitthal Umap Mrudgandh Puraskar

Slain anti-superstition activist Narendra Dabholkar was awarded "*Lok Shahir Vitthal Umap Mrudgandh Puraskar*". The award is instituted by Vatsala Foundation. Dr. Dabholkar (65) was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Pune in August 2013. While veteran actor Ramesh Deo was conferred upon the lifetime achievement award, senior Marathi actress Madhu Kambikar, director Sachin Pilgaonkar, composer duo Ajay-Atul were also bestowed the honour. The award included a citation. Among other recipients of the award are authors Gangaram Ghavankar and Pramanand Gajbhye, Raju Shaikh for folk arts, Padmaja Fenani-Joglekar for singing and Shital Talpade

Oscar

Indian director Shubhashish Bhutiani's short film "Kush" has been selected by the Academy in the short-list of 10 live-action shorts that will advance in the Oscar race. Three or five films out of these 10 films will be selected for Oscar nomination by the Short Films and Feature Animation Branch members. "Kush", a 25 minute film, stars Sonika Chopra, Shayaan Sameer and Anil Sharma. It has been produced by Shubhashish's father Sanjay Bhutiani through their Red Carpet Moving Pictures banner.

Miss Asia Pacific World 2013

India's Srishti Rana has been crowned Miss Asia Pacific World 2013 by last year's winner Himangini Singh Yadu at a glittering ceremony. This is India's second win in a row at the Miss Asia Pacific World pageant. The 21-year-old



from Faridabad saw off competition from 49 contestants from different countries, which includes first runner up from Egypt- Meriam George and Kazakhstan's Evgenia Klishina, who was the second runner up. Srishti's peacock-inspired gown also won her the Best National costume award, for depicting the national bird of India. Yesteryear actress Zeenat Aman was the first Indian to win the title of Miss Asia Pacific back in 1970, while model Tara Anne Fonseca was crowned winner in 1973. Bollywood actress-procucer Dia Mirza won the title in 2000. Actress Namrata Shirodkar was named the first runner-up of the 1993 edition of the competition.

Miss Universe-2013

Miss Universe 2012 Olivia Culpo, from the US, placed the crown on Miss Venezuela Gabriela Isler during the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow on November 9.

Thinkers50 List

Seven Indian-origin academics figure among Thinkers50, described as the Oscars of management thinking published every two years with Indian-born thinker Vijay Govindarajan, ranked fifth. Pankaj Ghemawat (11), Nirmalya Kumar (20), Nitin Nohria (21), Subir Chowdhury (40), Anil K. Gupta (44) and Rakesh Khurana (46) are the six other Indian-origin management gurus figuring in the rankings.

Business & Economy

BlackBerry Ltd is abandoning a plan to sell itself and instead will replace its chief executive officer and raise about \$1 billion from institutional investors, including its largest shareholder. Shares of BlackBerry dropped 19 percent to \$6.33 in premarket trading. The company will raise the money with a private placement of convertible debentures. BlackBerry's largest shareholder, Fairfax Financial Holdings Ltd, will take up \$250 million of the debentures.

Abu Dhabi-based **Etihad Airways** closed the transaction for picking up 24% equity in India's Jet Airways.. Etihad president and CEO James Hogan and CFO James Rigney have been appointed to the Jet Airways board. The two airlines will immediately start rolling out strategic collaboration aimed at bringing value to both carriers.

Foreign direct investment inflows into the services sector declined by 47.5 per cent to \$1.19 billion during the April-August period. The services sector, which includes banking, insurance, outsourcing, R&D, courier and technology testing, had received FDI (foreign direct investment) worth \$2.28 billion in the same period last year, according to the data of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

Britain has made its biggest pitch to turn London into a leading destination for Islamic finance with the London Stock Exchange launching an **Islamic Market Index**. The index will help investors comply with Islamic principles around finance, such as bans on investing in alcohol, tobacco and gambling. Prime Minister David Cameron also announced Britain will be the first country outside the Muslim world to issue its own Islamic bond, known as sukuk.

A government-appointed expert panel- **Kirit Parekh panel**- has recommended to "immediately" hike prices of diesel by Rs 5 a litre, kerosene by Rs 4 per litre and cooking gas by Rs 250 per cylinder, reduce annual entitlement of subsidized cooking gas cylinder from six from nine and phase out diesel subsidy in one year. The recommendations are unlikely to be implemented "immediately" because the government fear popular backlash in assembly elections of five states and the general election next year, government officials said requesting anonymity.

Sunita Sharma has taken over as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of **LIC Housing Finance Ltd**. She is the first woman MD & CEO of the company since its inception in 1989. Prior to this, Ms. Sharma was Executive Director of Investments in LIC of India, looking after equity research and risk management.

Multi Commodity Exchange of India Ltd. (MCX) signed an agreement with China-based Dalian Commodity Exchange (DCE) to boost strategic co-operation.

Jignesh Shah, the founder and vice chairman of **Multi Commodity Exchange** (MCX), has resigned from the board of the exchange he built from a startup in 2003 into India's biggest commodities bourse. He said he wanted to avoid any harm to shareholder and investor interests from the "mud slinging" over allegations concerning the National Spot Exchange Ltd (NSEL), which his Financial Technologies (India) Ltd also owns.

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) Chairman Yogesh Agarwal resigned following the government's decision to keep him out of the selection panel for members of the regulator. Following his resignation, the Finance Ministry has appointed Joint Secretary Anup Wadhawan as Chairman of the PFRDA.

Spicejet appointed Sanjiv Kapoor, a former leader of the airline practice at Bain & Co and director at Temasek Holdings, to head the budget airline at a time when it's on the lookout for a strategic investor and ways to shore up its finances. India's second-biggest low-fare carrier by market share has appointed Kapoor as its chief operating officer. He is likely to be elevated to the position of chief executive officer shortly or act as de-facto CEO.

A Silicon Valley jury has ordered **Samsung Electronics** to pay Apple \$290 million for copying vital iPhone and iPad features. The verdict covers 13 older Samsung devices that a previous jury found were among 26 Samsung products that infringed Apple patents. The two companies are locked in legal battles around the globe for supremacy in the more than \$300 billion smartphone market.

The **State Bank of India** has set up an internal committee comprising two managing directors to investigate allegations that Shyamal Acharya, deputy managing director of the bank, took bribe for sanctioning loans to World's Window group, promoted by Piyooosh Goyal.

The **Tata Group** called off plans to set up a bank and withdrew its licence application, implying that the Reserve Bank of India's conditions were restrictive and conforming with them would affect its other businesses besides having to ensure that more than 1,000 units were compliant with requirements. This follows the finance arm of another big industrial group, Mahindra & Mahindra, having dropped its plans for a licence even before the application deadline. Of India's biggest corporate houses, only the Aditya Birla Group and the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group now remain in the reckoning.

Uninor, Norwegian telecom giant Telenor's India unit, said its Chief Executive Officer Yogesh Malik has quit the company due to personal reasons. In the interim, Sigve Brekke, who currently heads Telenor Group's Asia operations, has been named as the acting CEO of Uninor.

India won a crucial election to the **UN Board of Auditors** with its nominee Shashi Kant Sharma, the Comptroller and Auditor General, garnering the largest number of votes. Having obtained the required majority and the largest number of votes, Sharma will be appointed to the UN Board of Auditors for a six year term beginning July 1, 2014. The General Assembly had established the UN Board of Auditors to audit of the accounts of the United Nations organisation and its funds and programmes and to report its findings and recommendations to the Assembly through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The Auditors-Generals of UN member states are elected to the Board. India had last sat on the board in 1993 for six years.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. named the head of its international division, Doug McMillon, to replace Chief Executive Mike Duke, who will retire on January 31 after five years at the helm of the world's largest retailer.