

News 1 - India joins Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation



India has joined The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) by notifying the HCoC Central Contact in Vienna through diplomatic channels.

The HCoC was formed in November 2002 with 137 members. China, Pakistan, Israel and Iran have not yet joined the voluntary regime. India will now have to provide pre-launch notifications on ballistic missiles, space launch vehicle launches and test flights. India will also need to submit an annual declaration of policy on satellite launch vehicles and ballistic missiles.

News 2 - PM Modi jointly inaugurates Afghan–India Friendship Dam



Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani jointly inaugurated the Afghan–India Friendship Dam (Salma Dam) at Chist-e-Sharif in Herat province of Western Afghanistan. The Salma Dam is a landmark infrastructure project undertaken by the Government of India on river Hari Rud and is a Multipurpose project planned for generating 42 MW of power, irrigating 75000 hectares of land, water supply and other benefits to the people of Afghanistan.

The Rs. 1775 crore project was executed and implemented by WAPCOS Ltd., a Government of India Undertaking under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.

News 3 - The IISS Shangri–La Dialogue: The 15th Asia Security Summit inaugurated in Singapore



The 15th Asia Security Summit opened in Singapore with a keynote speech by Thailand's Prime Minister, Retired General Prayut Chan-ocha. The three-day annual summit, Shangri–La Dialogue is run by the London-based International Institute

for Strategic Studies think tank. This forum gets its name from the Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore where it has been held since year 2002.

The 2016 discussions are expected to be dominated by the issues like Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea, Military Provocations of North Korea and Islamist extremism, Migration, Counterterrorism, Military Competition and Cybersecurity.

News 4 - IMF Executive Board approves US\$1.5 Billion Extended Arrangement for Sri Lanka



The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a 36-month extended arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with Sri Lanka for an amount equivalent to SDR 1.1 billion (about US\$1.5 billion) to support the country's economic reform agenda. An additional US \$650 million is expected to be catalyzed in other multilateral and bilateral loans, bringing the total support to about \$2.2 billion.

Sri Lanka has an IMF quota of 578.8 million SDR.

News 5 - EU Court directs for no detention of illegal migrants under 2008 Return Directive



The European Court of Justice has given directions to not detain the non-EU migrants who have illegally crossed borders inside the visa-free Schengen area. The court ruled that, instead of putting them into jail, migrants staying illegally in the Schengen area should face procedures under Europe's 2008 Return Directive and thereafter returned to the country from which they came.

The ruling was triggered by the case of a Ghanaian migrant, Selina Affum, who was placed in police custody on grounds of illegal entry into French territory. The 2008 Return Directive takes into consideration the best interests of children, as well as the family life and the health, of any illegal migrant.

News 6 - Thailand becomes the first Asian Country to eliminate mother to child HIV and SYPHILIS





Thailand became the first country in Asia and the Pacific region to have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. Thailand received the validation from the World Health Organization (WHO).

The number of babies contracting HIV dropped from more than 3,000 in the late 1990s to 86 in 2015. Cuba became the first country to reach the goal in 2015. Belarus also successfully eliminated the mother-to-child spread of HIV and syphilis, Armenia did for HIV and Moldova did for syphilis.

News 7 - NATO Allies Launch their biggest ever Joint Military Exercise Anaconda-16 in Poland



More than 20 NATO and partner countries have started a large-scale military training exercise in Poland. Some 31,000 Polish, US and other troops are participating in the land, sea and air exercises called Anaconda-16. The exercises are intended to test Nato's ability to respond to threats.

The exercise involves manoeuvres such as a night time helicopter assault and the dropping of US paratroopers to build a temporary bridge over the Vistula river.

News 8 - WHO Validates four countries to have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Syphilis



The World Health Organization has validated that Thailand and Belarus have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of both HIV and syphilis. Similarly, Armenia and the Republic of Moldova have eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and syphilis, respectively. WHO Director General Dr. Margaret Chan congratulated the four nations.

Eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Syphilis is key to the global effort to combat sexually transmitted infections and to end AIDS by the year 2030.

News 9 - Pakistan tops in 2016 Malware Infection Index



A study by Microsoft has placed Pakistan on the top of the list of countries figuring in the Malware Infection Index 2016. India has been ranked 8th in the list. At least four out of ten computers in Asia-Pacific countries are likely to be infected with malware. The index has also identified the top three most encountered malware – Gamarue, Skeeyah and Peals.

Out of the top five locations across the globe most at risk of infection, a total of four are from the Asia Pacific – Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nepal.

News 10 - UN appoints Per Gustaf Lodin of Sweden as Head of the Mission, United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan



The United Nations has appointed Major General Per Lodin of Sweden as Chief Military Observer and Head of Mission for the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP). He will succeed Major General Delali Johnson Sakyi of Ghana, who will complete his two-year assignment on 2 July 2016.

Major General Lodin most recently held the position of Director of Procurement and Logistics for the Swedish Armed Forces. Previous to this he was the Deputy Director of the National Armaments for Sweden (2012-2014).

News 11 - Pedro Pablo Kuczynski wins the Peru Presidential Election



Pedro Pablo Kuczynski won the Presidency Elections of Peru after opponent Keiko Fujimori conceding defeat. Kuczynski took 50.122% of the vote. While Fujimori, the daughter of disgraced former President Alberto Fujimori, took 49.878%. This has been the tightest fought election in Peru in five decades. He will take over from the current President Ollanta Humala.

Kuczynski is a former World Bank executive and former Prime Minister of Peru. He has also served as the finance and energy minister previously.

News 12 - Petroleum Minister represented India at St Petersburg International Economic Forum



Dharmendra Pradhan, the Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas attended St Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF) to represent India. SPIEF is the leading economic event of Russia, drawing participation of important political leaders and some of the largest companies and global business leaders. The hallmark of the visit was the signing of a Sales Purchase Agreement for acquisition of 23.9 per cent stake in Vankor oil block by an Indian Consortium of Oil India Ltd., Indian Oil and Bharat Petro Resources Ltd. (Subsidiary of BPCL) with ROSNEFT.

At the SPIEF, Mr. Pradhan participated in the Panel discussion on 'New Global Petroleum Market Realities' along with Russian and Venezuelan Energy Minister. Petroleum minister invited Rosneft, Gazprom and other Russian companies to invest in Indian hydrocarbon sector, including in the recently launched auction of Small Discovered Fields.

News 13 - Six Indian WWI warriors included in Digital Archive of the United Kingdom



Britain's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has launched a new digital archive telling the inspiring stories of war heroes. It is a part of the UK government's centenary celebrations to mark World War I. The new digital archive can be accessed through the UK government's official gov.uk portal.

The new Digital Archive included 6 Indians - Risaldar Badlu Singh from Punjab, Sepoy Chatta Singh from UP, Naik Darwan Singh Negi and Rifleman Gabar Sing Negi from modern day Uttarakhand, Lance – Daffadar Gobind Singh from Rajasthan, and Lance Naik Lala from Himachal Pradesh.

News 14 - Famed Pakistani Qawwal Amjad Sabri shot dead in Karachi

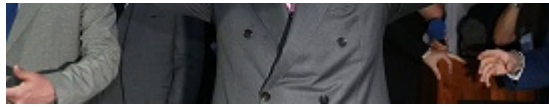


Renowned Pakistani Qawwal, Amjad Sabri, was gunned down by unidentified motorcycle-borne gunmen in Karachi when was travelling with an associate in a car in Karachi's Liguatabad area.

He was one of Pakistan's finest qawwals and was the son of renowned Qawwal, Ghulam Farid Sabri of 'Bhar Do Jholi Meri' fame. The Sabri family is famous in the subcontinent for their contribution to this sufi art and mystic poetry.

News 15 - UK votes to leave European Union in an historic referendum





UK has voted to leave the European Union in a historic referendum on 24 June 2016. The people of Britain voted 51.9% votes in favor compared to 48.1% in against. More than 17.4 million people voted in the referendum to sever ties with the European Union, and about 16.1 million to remain in the bloc. Referendum turnout was higher than at 2015 general election.

After the result, the pound fell to its lowest level since 1985 and David Cameron resigned as Prime Minister of this country.

News 16 - Colombia Government and FARC rebels sign a historic ceasefire deal



The Colombian government and FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) guerrillas, Colombia's largest guerrilla group, signed a ceasefire agreement in Havana, Cuba to end more than 50 years of bloodshed. The agreement was signed by the Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC chief Timoleón "Timochenko" Jiménez.

Peace talks started in Havana in November 2012, but both parties have yet to negotiate a number of issues before signing a final agreement.

News 17 - Mahashangarh declared as the SARRC cultural capital for 2016– 17



Mahasthangarh, one of the earliest urban archaeological sites so far discovered in Bogra, Bangladesh, has been declared as the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SARRC) cultural capital for the year 2016-17. The 3rd century BC archaeological site was in use till the 18th century AD.

As a SARRC cultural capital, the historic place will host festivals on literature, films, food and dances from October 2016 to September 2017. Besides, the year 2016-17 has also been declared as the SAARC Year of Cultural Heritage.

News 18 - SCO summit 2016 began in Tashkent, Uzbekistan





The 2016 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) annual summit started in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The 2-day summit (June 23-24) is being conducted under the presidency of Uzbekistan where leaders will discuss the issues related to regional security and cooperation. This 16th summit may also see India and Pakistan join the group's six present full members.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a Eurasian political, economic, and military Organisation which was founded in 2001. It is headquartered in Beijing, China. The current members are China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

News 19 - Bangladesh becomes one of the 1st countries to secure loan from China-led AIIB



Bangladesh has become one of the first nations to have secured a loan from the China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. It will get \$165 million as loan for a power distribution system upgrade and expansion project. The board of the bank approved its first 4 loans totaling \$509 million to 4 countries within 6 months of its establishment. The other 3 countries are Pakistan, Indonesia and Tajikistan.

The AIIB has set a target to lend \$1.2 billion in 2016. Germany, South Korea and Britain are among its 57 members.

News 20 - The World's longest and deepest rail tunnel opens in Switzerland



The world's longest and deepest rail tunnel has officially opened in Switzerland. The tunnel has been constructed at the cost of 12 billion dollars and completed after almost two decades of construction work.

The 57-kilometer (35-mile) twin-bore Gotthard base tunnel will provide a high-speed rail link under the Swiss Alps between Northern and Southern Europe. About 260 freight trains and 65 passenger trains will pass through the tunnel each day in a journey taking as little as 17 minutes. The tunnel has overtaken Japan's 53.9-kilometre Seikan rail tunnel as the longest in the world and pushed the 50.5-kilometre Channel Tunnel linking the UK and France into third place.

News 21 - Israel Elected as the Chair of Permanent UN Committee for The First Time Ever





The United Nations General Assembly, for the first time, has elected Israel to chair its Legal Committee which is also known as the Sixth Committee. In the secret ballot election in the 193-member world body, Israel received 109 “yes” votes. The Legal Committee oversees issues related to international law. Israel U.N. Ambassador Danny Danon will represent his country.

The General Assembly has six standing committees: Disarmament, Economic and Financial issues, Human Rights, Decolonization, the U.N. Budget, and Legal Issues.

News 22 - UNGA elected Peter Thomson as the President of 71st session



Fijian diplomat Peter Thomson has been elected as the President of its upcoming 71st session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) replacing Andreas Mavroyiannis of Cyprus by a secret-ballot vote. Thomson will start his tenure in September 2016 at the beginning of the 71st General Assembly session.

The selection of the President of the General Assembly follows a geographical rotation system, with respective regional groups putting forward a consensus candidate every year. If a group cannot reach consensus on a nominee, a vote by secret ballot will take place. Mr. Thomson thrown light on the fact that his election marked the first time that a representative of a Pacific small island developing State will serve as Assembly President. He added that as a representative of such a State, he decided to be vocal on the issue of climate change.

News 23: Martian Crater named after Nepal Quake hit Village



A 9.8 kms (six mile) wide crater on Mars has been named after Langtang, one of the villages in Nepal, worst hit by the earthquake in 2015. Langtang was a popular trekking site and at least 215 people were killed when the quake-triggered avalanche submerged the village.

The International Astronomical Union Working Group for Planetary System Nomenclature approved the name. Dr Tjalling de Haas, the researcher behind the move, said it was "a tribute" to the Nepali village.

News 24: Nepal bars its citizens from working in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya





The Nepal Government has banned its citizens from working in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Libya until further notice. A cabinet meeting decided to suspend issuing labour permits to Nepalese nationals for these countries after 13 Nepali Security Guards were killed in a Taliban suicide bombing in Kabul.

The Government also evacuated 24 other Nepalese nationals who were working as security guards in the Canadian Embassy in Kabul following the terror attack.

News 25: Sri Lankan Parliament passes Right to Information bill with minor amendments



Sri Lanka's parliament unanimously passed the Right to Information (RTI) bill with some minor amendments. The RTI bill had failed to get approval for several years. The bill seeks to restore transparency and good governance in the country. Subject to the provisions of section 5 of this Act, every citizen shall have a right of access to information which is in the possession, custody or control of a public authority.

A five-member Right to Information Commission will be formed to monitor and ensure compliance.

News 26: Sweden Inaugurates the World's First Electric Road



Sweden has become one of the first countries in the world to conduct tests with electric power for heavy transports on public roads. The test will be conducted on parts of road E16, and involves a current collector on the roof of the truck cab feeding the current down to a hybrid electric motor in the truck.

The tests will continue up through 2018. Three Government agencies, Swedish Transport Administration, Swedish Energy Agency, and the country's innovation agency Vinnova, are partially funding the project, while the participants are paying for the rest.

News 27: Gudni Johannesson elected as the first new president of Iceland in 20 years





Gudni Johannesson has won Iceland's presidential election riding a wave of public anti-establishment sentiment in the wake of the Panama Papers scandal. He won 39.1% of the vote. Halla Tomasdottir, a businesswoman without party affiliation, came second with 27.9%. David Oddsson, a former conservative Prime Minister won just 13% of the vote.

Johannesson will replace President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, 73, who has served as Iceland's head of state since 1996.

News 28: IMF clears payment of USD 501 million to Pakistan



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cleared the immediate disbursement of USD 501 million to Pakistan. The total disbursement so far to the country since 2013 is USD 6.1 billion.

The Executive Board of the IMF has completed the eleventh review of Pakistan's Economic Performance under a three-year program supported by an Extended Fund Facility (EFF) arrangement.

News 29: Ethiopia, Bolivia, Sweden, Kazakhstan elected to Security Council



The 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly elected Sweden, Bolivia, Ethiopia and Kazakhstan to serve on the world body's Security Council for a period of two years, starting from 1 January 2017. Now only one non-permanent Council seat remains to be filled with Italy and Netherlands vying for it.

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for international peace and security, with all UN Member States required to comply with Council decisions. The Council's 10 non-permanent seats are allocated according to a rotation pattern.