

National News

Kachhabali Becomes 1st Liquor-free village in Rajasthan

- **Rajasthan Excise Act, 1975**, that provides for the **closure of a country liquor shop**, was invoked.
 - Polling was carried out by the excise department of the state
 - **94% of the voters** demanded that they want a **complete ban on the sale of alcohol in the village**
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Mumbai to get its first Arbitration Centre

- India's **first arbitration center** for dealing the financial disputes.
 - **Financial disputes of India** were dealt in the **Singapore Arbitration center** until now.
 - Out of the **259 cases** registered at **Singapore arbitration** center in 2013, **85 were from Indian companies**
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New building bye laws in New Delhi

- **combines the rules and regulations of various departments** in obtaining permission for constructing a building
 - by-laws have been amended after a **gap of 33 years**
 - permissions to be obtained has been **reduced to 14 from 40**
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250 Mw unit at Nabinagar plant in Bihar

- **250 MW** coal-based thermal power plant in Bihar commissioned by BHEL.
 - The **first 250 MW unit** to be commissioned in the plant located at Nabinagar in Aurangabad district of Bihar.
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Stay on floor test in Uttarakhand

- Center had approached the court **questioning the permission for voting while the state is under President's Rule**
 - **Opposition parties** had approached the court questioning the rights of **nine disqualified MLAs** to participate in the ballot.
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Budget sets priorities for government spending

- New system divides **Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS)** into **three categories**:
 - **Core of the Core.**
 - **Core**
 - **Optional Schemes.**
 - New system has accorded the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme** the **highest priority** by deeming it 'Core of the Core'.
 - Core of the Core schemes will **retain their expenditure allocation framework.**
 - Core schemes will have a **60:40 formula**, while the **Optional schemes will have a 50:50 formula**
 - **States having the flexibility to decide** whether to invest in these or not.
 - **Eight schemes** will be classified as **Core of the Core**. Including **MGNREGA and all the umbrella schemes for the upliftment of minorities, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes.**
 - Core schemes include schemes like **Krishi Unnati Yojana**, the **Smart Cities programme**, and the **modernisation of the police force.**
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PM for simultaneous LS, Assembly elections

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in **favor of simultaneous polls for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.**
 - Due the **administrative issues arising out of frequent and successive elections in various states.**
 - With the **Model Code of Conduct coming into force in one State or the other and even for the Centre in some cases**, this leads to **administrative lethargy and issues.**
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British Medical Journal calls for revamp of MCI

- Radical revamp of the Medical Council of India (MCI) in order to **eliminate corruption and lack of ethics in healthcare.**
- BMJ has also said that the MCI has **failed to create a rigorous transparent system for accrediting medical colleges**, leading to **geographical**

maldistribution and creation of 'ghost faculties' in private medical colleges.

- Pointed out the MCI's **failure to oversee quality and integrity in health services in the country.**
 - Committee had criticized the MCI for **being a biased organization, acting against larger public health goals.**
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Taxes from disinvestment help government receipts increase

- In one day, the center has raised **Rs 4,500 crore** by participating in a **shares buyback offer of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL).**
 - Government has also raised **Rs 980 crore** through the taxes it generated in these **two disinvestment transactions.**
 - **In this financial year** the Government has raised a total of **Rs 25,000 crore.**
 - In 2014-15, the Centre had raised **Rs 24,348.71 crore**, the maximum in a single year through disinvestment.
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India opts not to join global terror database

- **Unhindered access to the Americans** to the **database of terror suspects in India**, which includes their **biometric details**
 - **Opposed** by both the **Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)** and the **Intelligence Bureau (IB).**
 - Indian security agencies are apprehensive of giving unhindered access to the U.S. on sensitive data related to terrorists.
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National anthem mandatory in UP primary schools

- National anthem must be sung by the students every day in the primary schools of Uttar Pradesh
 - **Every Wednesday**, schools will have to **observe swachhata diwas - Cleanliness Day.**
 - **Sports period** has also been made **mandatory** for the first four working days
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International

Ebola threat ends in West Africa

- The viral disease which was threatening the world nations for **20 months killing more than 11,300 people** is finally **under control**
 - **Proposal to lift the trade and travel restrictions** imposed in the **Ebola affected Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea**
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France operation 'Sangaris' comes to an end in CAR

- France will end its **three year-long military operation 'Sangaris' in Central African Republic**
 - The operation came into force after **communal violence in 2013** when **Muslim rebels ousted the Christian president Francois** from power
 - **2500 troops** were deployed in the security operation **assisting the UN peacekeeping force**
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Nuclear Security Summit in Washington DC

- Will be attended by the **leaders of more than 50 countries**
 - Goal of the NSS is to **address concerns about fissile material falling into the wrong hands** at a head-of-state level
 - Includes **minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium (HEU)**, bolstering **security at nuclear facilities** through enhanced national regulations and implementation of best practices
 - The twin goals for the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit are:
 - **Advancing tangible improvements in nuclear security behavior.**
 - **Strengthening the global nuclear security architecture.**
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Business and Economy

SEBI raises FPI investment limit

- Proposed the hike in two tranches one in April and the other in July
 - This will help in **attracting more foreign inflow into the nation.**
 - It also allows **increase in State Development Loans**
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Japan commits loan worth 14251 crores

- **Transmission System Strengthening Project in Madhya Pradesh -JPY 15.45 billion**
 - **Odisha Integrated Sanitation Improvement Project -JPY 25.7 billion**
 - **Dedicated Freight Corridor Project (Phase 1) -JPY 103.6 billion or Rs 6,170 crore**
 - **North East Road Network Connectivity Improvement Project- JPY 67.1 billion**
 - **Jharkhand Horticulture Intensification by Micro Drip Irrigation Project -JPY 4.65 billion**
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Adani Aero Defense ties up with Elbit, Alpha for unmanned aircraft systems

- Pact reflects the realization of **Make in India** for global requirements objective.
 - Subsidiary of **Adani group Alpha Design Technologies Pvt Ltd** has tied up with the **Israeli company Elbit Systems** for **Unmanned Aircraft Systems**.
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SC approves Centre's guidelines to protect Good Samaritans

- Supreme Court approved the central government's guidelines to **protect people who help victims of road**
 - Directed the Centre to give wide publicity to the guidelines, which clearly stipulate **that people who help victims of road accidents or other calamities are not harassed in any way.**
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Russia approved OVL deal to acquire 15% stake in Vankor oil field for \$1.3 billion

- New deal enables **OVL's stake in Vankor will raise to 26% from 15%**
 - Will give it **about 3.5 million metric tons of oil** a year
 - **Vankor is Russia's second biggest oil field** with capacity of **total 500 million tons recoverable reserves barrels.**
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Sun Pharma buys Novartis' 14 brands for \$ 293 mn in Japan

- Will acquire **14 well-known prescription brands**, having **combined annual revenues of approximately \$160 million**, from **Novartis**
- **Acquired brands will be distributed under the Sun Pharma label**

- **Sun pharmaceutical industry** has become the **third largest producer in the world in terms of volumes.**
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Science and Technology

Asia's Biggest telescope Aries to be launched in Nainital

- Combined effort of **Indian, Russian and Belgian scientists** to develop a **telescope to study the structure of stars**
 - Contract undertaken by the **Aries and Belgian company- Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems** in **March, 2007**
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Govt launches e-CGHS cards, GIS-enabled HMIS application

- To provide **easy access to health services to the public** to **strengthen the public health systems**
 - Providing **user-friendly health services.**
 - Services provided are:
 - **GIS-enabled HMIS application**
 - **The self-printing of e-CGHS card**
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Vidyut PRAVAH app launched

- App is aimed at **empowering common people** to **demand 24X7 power** from the states
 - Expected to take transparency to the next level and make **state governments more accountable.**
 - The mobile application provides **highlights of the power availability** in India **on real time basis.**
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Walk on Mars with Buzz Aldrin

- **Guided tour of Mars** using the **HoloLens headset technology**
- Technology will offer people a **virtual tour of an area of Mars** with **astronaut Buzz Aldrin** in an interactive exhibit using the **Microsoft HoloLens mixed reality headset.**
- **Aldrin, an Apollo 11 astronaut** who **walked on the moon in 1969**, will serve as the “holographic tour guide”

- Guests will “visit” several sites on Mars, **reconstructed using real images from NASA’s Curiosity Mars Rover**
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Environment and Ecology

Sand-eating Micrixalidae tadpoles species found in Western Ghats

- Were discovered from the **deep recesses of streambeds**,
 - These tadpoles **lack teeth** but have **well-serrated jaw sheaths** which helps them avoid large sand grains while feeding.
 - **Have skin-covered eyes**, which helps them to burrow through gravel beds.
 - **Lives in total darkness** that they are of fossorial nature and comes out after fully developing into a young frog.
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People in News

Faustin-Archange Touadera sworn in as President of Central Africa

- **Central African Republic** has been at **political unrest since 2013** due to the **communal violence between Christians and Muslims**.
 - **France** sent its troops and established ‘**Sangaris**’ operation to restore **peace**.
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Jitendra Jagota Appointed As the Chairman of IDSA

- He was the **Director Legal and Government Affairs, Avon Beauty Products India Pvt. Ltd**
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Wipro appoints Patrick Dupuis as its Board member

- Patrick Dupuis was the **Senior Vice President of Paypal Holdings**
 - His role was **vital in separating Paypal from e-bay** and in the **listing of Paypal in NASDAQ**
 - He **joined Paypal in 2010 as CFO**.
 - Been a part of **BJC healthcare** and **functioned as the CFO of Sitel**, one of the largest customer care company
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First female speaker for Vietnam Parliament

- **Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan** is the **first female speaker of Vietnam Parliament**

- Got **472 votes out of the total 481 votes**
 - Earlier she served as the **Vice Chairperson of the National Assembly**
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Sharmila acquitted in 2006 suicide bid case

- **Manipuri civil rights activist Iron Sharmila** was acquitted in a case of attempted suicide registered in 2006
 - Sharmila launched her **fast-unto-death in October 2006** demanding the **repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act.**
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