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G.K Roundup (1 to 7 January) 2016

NATIONAL

India, Pakistan exchange list of nuclear facilities

- India and Pakistan exchanged the list of their nuclear installations under a bilateral agreement that bars them from attacking each other's atomic facilities.
- This is the 25th consecutive exchange of such list between the two countries.
- The agreement, which was signed on December 31, 1988 and entered into force on January 27, 1991, provides, inter alia, that the two countries inform each other of nuclear installations and facilities to be covered under the agreement on the first of January of every calendar year.
- The two countries also exchanged the lists of prisoners under the Consular Access Agreement between the two nations.

India-Nepal bus service resumes after 27 years

- The friendship bus service between India and Nepal via Champawat in Uttarakhand resumed after a gap of 27 years to the delight of people on either side of the border.
- The bus runs between Kanchanpur in Nepal close to Banbasa border in Champawat district of Uttarakhand and Anand Vihar, Delhi.
- The service was suspended 27 years back in the wake of the Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty.
- The air conditioned buses with Indian and Nepalese flags painted on their bodies will enter the Nepalese district of Kanchanpur at 6 AM every day and start for Delhi from there at 6 PM every evening. No special documents are required to travel in these buses.

PM Modi inaugurates 103rd Indian Science Congress

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the 103rd edition of the Indian Science Congress (ISC) in Mysuru, Karnataka.
- The theme for the event was 'Science and Technology for Indigenous Development in India'.
- The event was held at the University of Mysore from 3rd to 7th January.
- He asked people to focus on five Es - Economy, Environment, Energy, Empathy, and Equity.

- Noble laureates Arthur B McDonald of USA; Dan Schetman of Israel; John Gurdan of UK; Serge Haroche of France; David J Gross of USA and Fields Medalist Manjul Bhargava were the key speakers for discussion on the topic "Science and Technology: Present and Future".

Union Cabinet gives nod to Civil Aviation MoU between India and Singapore

- The Union Cabinet headed by the PM Narendra Modi, have given its ex-post facto approval for signing a MoU between India and Singapore on cooperation in the field of civil aviation.
- The MoU was signed in November, 2015 between Airports Authority of India and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise during Prime Minister's visit to Singapore.
- It will establish mutual cooperation in the field of civil aviation, which will cover, to begin with, the airports of Jaipur and Ahmedabad.
- The MoU include collaboration in Civil Aviation Sector in the areas of (a) Master-planning and design (b) Traffic development (c) Commercial development (d) Service quality improvement (e) Training and development (f) Cargo handling and Management (g) Maintenance, repair and overhaul (h) Operation and management and (i) any other areas with mutual consent.

Union Cabinet approves Stand Up India Scheme for women and SC/ST

- The Union Cabinet approved the "Stand Up India Scheme" to promote entrepreneurship among SC/ST and Women entrepreneurs.
- The Scheme aims to facilitate at least two such projects per bank branch, on an average one for each category of entrepreneur. It is likely to prove beneficiary for at least 2.5 lakh borrowers.
- The Stand Up India Scheme provides for:
 1. Refinance window through Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) with an initial amount of Rs. 10,000 crore.
 2. Creation of a credit guarantees mechanism through the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC).

3. Provide handholding support for borrowers both at the pre loan stage and during operations.
- The "Start up India Stand up India" initiative was announced by the Prime Minister in his address to the nation on 15th August, 2015.

Union Cabinet approves creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund for MUDRA loans

- The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) loans.
- The Fund is expected to guarantee more than Rs 100,000 crore worth of loans to micro and small units in the first instance.
- Credit Guarantee Fund for MUDRA Units (CGFMU) will guarantee loans sanctioned under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana with the objective to reduce the credit risk to Banks/NBFCs/MFIs/other financial intermediaries, who are Member Lending Institutions (MLIs).
- The MUDRA (SIDBI) Bank will undertake refinance operations and provide support services with focus on portal management; data analysis etc. apart from any other activity entrusted/ advised by Government of India.
- MUDRA Bank and Credit Guarantee Fund was proposed to be set up with a refinance corpus of Rs. 20,000 crore and a corpus of Rs.3,000 crore respectively as per the Budget Speech for 2015-16.

INTERNATIONAL

Sri Lanka, Pakistan agree to expand FTA

- Sri Lanka and Pakistan have settled on the inclusion of services and investment in the bilateral free trade agreement.
- This agreement will help companies of the two nations to form joint ventures for exports to other nations.
- The MoUs cover a number of areas, including trade promotion and curbing money laundering and terrorism financing.
- Both nations also signed 8 agreements in the fields of science and technology, education, agriculture, healthcare, tourism, cultural exchanges, sporting contacts, people-to-people contacts and combating money laundering and terror financing.

SPORTS

Apurvi Chandela set world record in 10m air rifle at Swedish Cup Grand Prix

- Indian shooter Apurvi Chandela broke the world record on way to winning gold in the women's 10 metre air rifle event at the Swedish Cup Grand Prix.

- Chandela shot 211.2 in the event held to surpass the feat of Chinese Olympic gold medalist Yi Siling, who held the record with 211.
- Swedish shooters Astrid Steffensen (207.6) and World No.11 Stine Nielsen (185.0) won silver and bronze respectively.
- She has already won an Olympic quota place for India after winning a bronze in the ISSF World Cup in Changwon, Korea.

Pranav Dhanawade hits world record by scoring 1009 runs at school level tournament

- 15-year-old Pranav Dhanawade made headlines after becoming the first batsman to score 1,000 runs in an innings in an officially recorded match.
- Pranav Dhanawade, the son of a Mumbai rickshaw driver, finished his innings on 1,009 not out, with his side, KC Gandhi School, declaring on 1,465 for three.
- He smashed 59 sixes and 127 fours in his 395 minutes long innings.
- Dhanawade's 652 runs in 199 balls in first day of match has broken a 116-old cricketing record of unbeaten 628 made by AEJ Collins in 1899 for Clark House against North Town House in UK.

India won 2015 SAFF football championships

- India defeated Afghanistan 2-1 in the final match on 3rd January in Thiruvananthapuram to lift the SAFF Cup for the seventh time.
- Indian Captain Sunil Chetri scored at the 101st-minute to snatch an unlikely win for India in the final.
- India has previously won the SAFF Football Championship in year 1993, 1997, 1999, 2005, 2009 and 2011.
- Indian football team moved up three ranks to occupy 163rd spot in the FIFA rankings after the SAFF Cup title triumph.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Kate Atkinson wins 2015 Costa Novel Award

- Kate Atkinson has won the Costa Novel Award for the second time in three years for her ninth novel, "A God in Ruins", the companion novel to "Life After Life", which had won the prize in 2013.
- Historian and writer Andrea Wulf won the biography award for The Invention of Nature: The Adventures of Alexander Von Humboldt, The Lost Hero of Science.
- Young adult fiction and children's writer Frances Hardinge won the children's book award with The Lie Tree, a Victorian murder mystery.

- Scottish poet Don Paterson won the poetry category for a second time for his "tour de force" collection titled 40 Sonnets.
 - The Costa First Novel Award was awarded to Andrew Michael Hurley for 'The Loney'.
 - Each winner will receive £5,000. These five books will now compete for the Costa Book of the Year Award, which will be judged by a panel chaired by historical novelist James Heneage. The winner will be announced at an awards ceremony on 26 January, and will receive an additional prize of £30,000.
- Syed Kirmani conferred with 2015 Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award**
- Syed Kirmani was bestowed with the prestigious Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award for his contribution to Indian cricket.
 - The former India cricketer and member of the 1983 World Cup-winning squad was presented the award by BCCI president Shashank Manohar.
 - Indian Test captain Virat Kohli bagged the Polly Umrigar Trophy for Cricketer of the Year.
 - Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award was instituted by BCCI to celebrate the birth centenary of Col. Cottari Kanakaiya Nayudu, country's first Test captain. The award consists of a trophy, citation and cheque for 25 lakh rupees.

