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IN THE NEWS

Ratan Tata

- Former TATA Group Chairman Ratan Tata on 21 June 2014 received an honorary doctor of laws degree from York University in Toronto, Canada. The award was given for his achievements in promoting innovations, exemplary leadership and corporate social responsibility.
- The honour was conferred at the 2014 spring convocation of York University's Schulich School of Business by Chancellor of the varsity Gregory Sorbara. Tata was among the 12 recipients of honorary doctorate from York University.

Sanjay Rajaram

- India-born Mexican plant scientist, Sanjaya Rajaram will be honoured with the World Food Prize for the year 2014. It was announced by the World Food Prize Foundation. The award will be presented to Rajaram in Des Moines, Iowa in October 2014.
- He won the prize for his outstanding work in the improvement of wheat crop. He is credited with increasing world wheat production by more than 200 million tons during the 25-year-period known as the golden years of wheat – building upon the successes of the Green Revolution. It had a far-reaching impact in alleviating world hunger.

Abhijit Guha

- Lieutenant General (retired) Abhijit Guha of Indian Army was on 5 June 2014 appointed as member of a UN Expert Panel on Technology and Innovation in UN peacekeeping. Abhijit Guha is a member of the five-member expert panel.
- The five-member Expert Panel was appointed by Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping Operations and for Field Support Herve Ladsous and Ameerah Haq.
- The panel is headed by Ms. Jane Holl Lute (United States) who is currently the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Relocation of Camp Hurriya Residents Outside of Iraq. The other members of the panel are Major General Michael Fryer of South Africa, Major General Ib Johannes Bager of Denmark and Walter Dorn of Canada.

V K Rajah

- Indian-origin judge V K Rajah on 25 June 2014 was appointed as 8th Attorney-General of Singapore. President of Singapore Tony Tan Keng Yam presided at the swearing-in of Justice V K Rajah.
- He will succeed Steven Chong. Steven Chong will return to the Supreme Court. VK Rajah was also appointed as a member of the Presidential Council for Minority Rights for a three-year term. 17-member council reports on matters, including Bills or other legislation.

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Sujit Choudhry

- Sujit Choudhry became the first Indian-American dean of the Berkeley Law School, University of California. He is the 12th dean of the famed Law school and he will serve the institution for five years starting from 1 July 2014.
- He relieved Interim Dean Gillian Lester, and replaces Christopher Edley, who stepped down in December 2013 after nearly ten years as dean.
- He is a noted expert in comparative constitutional law and his core work addresses basic methodological questions in comparative constitutional law. He also studied constitutional design as a way for states to transition from civil war to peaceful democracies, especially in ethnically divided societies.

Sumitra Mahajan

- Eight-term member Sumitra Mahajan was unanimously elected Speaker of the 16th Lok Sabha, becoming the second woman presiding officer of the Lower House after her predecessor Meira Kumar.
- 71-year-old Mahajan, the longest-serving woman MP, was elected after a motion moved by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and seconded by BJP veteran L K Advani was adopted by voice vote called by Protem Speaker Kamal Nath.

K Chandrashekhar Rao

- Telangana Rashtriya Samiti (TRS) chief K Chandrashekhar Rao was sworn in as the first Chief Minister of Telangana, which became the 29th state of India.

Prince Zeid al Hussein

- U.N. secretary-general Ban Ki-moon has announced that Prince Zeid al Hussein, a long-time diplomat and former U.N. peacekeeper, has been nominated as as

the new high commissioner for human rights.

Virat Kohli

- India's top batsman Virat Kohli has won the Ceat International Cricketer of the Year award while off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, the fastest player from the country to pick 100 Test wickets, bagged the Indian Player of the Year award for 2013-14.

Juan Carlos Varela

- Vice-President Juan Carlos Varela was declared the victor of Panama's presidential election, thwarting an attempt by former ally President Ricardo Martinelli to extend his grip on power by electing a handpicked successor.
- With 60 per cent of ballots counted, officials said Mr. Varela led with 39 per cent of the votes, compared to 32 per cent for former Housing Minister Jose Domingo Arias, the preferred choice of Mr. Martinelli. Juan Carlos Navarro, a former mayor of the capital, was in third in the seven-candidate field with 27 per cent.
- The incumbent party has still never won re-election to Panama's presidency since the United States' 1989 overthrow of military strongman Manuel Noriega.

Lalit Modi

- Following the election of Lalit Modi as president of Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA), the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) hits back by 'indefinitely' suspending the association. The cricket board also appointed an ad-hoc body to run RCA's cricket affairs.
- Modi was elected President of RCA, setting the stage for yet another round of legal tussle between him and the Board, which had threatened to ban the state

association in anticipation of this result.

- The RCA elections were held in December last year but the results were sealed following a Supreme Court directive. And it was opened recently by a court-appointed observer with the former Indian Premier League commissioner defeating his opponent, Rampal Sharma. Out of the 33 votes, Modi got 24, while Sharma got five.
- The BCCI had asked the RCA to dissociate itself from Modi, or face action after the latter was banned for life for financial irregularities in the IPL in September 2013.
- However, Modi - riding on the Rajasthan Sports Act 2005, contested the election for the post of president. The former Commissioner of the IPL was seeking to return to cricket administration.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

- Mr Garcia Marquez, widely considered one of the greatest Spanish-language authors of all time was eulogized in the dramatic art deco lobby by the presidents of both Mexico and Colombia, two countries linked by the writer through his birth, life, heritage and career.
- 'He will live on in his books and writings. But more than anything he will live forever in the hopes of humanity' according to his admirers.
- Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto said the death was 'a great loss not only for literature but for humanity. Various generations found answers to the questions of life in his stories and tales.'
- At the end, attendees tossed up a flurry of yellow paper butterflies, one of Garcia Marquez's most famous literary images from One Hundred Years of Solitude, and his favorite color.

ND Tiwari

- After a six-year legal battle, the Delhi High Court today declared veteran Congress leader ND Tiwari as the biological father of Rohit Shekhar.
- Justice Rajiv Sahai Endlaw also enjoined Mr Tiwari from denying in public that Mr Shekhar is not his natural born son.
- The court passed the order after taking into account newspaper reports in which Mr Tiwari had admitted that Mr Shekhar is his natural born son.
- Rohit Shekhar, in 2008, had filed the paternity suit, claiming the veteran Congress leader and 67-year-old Ujjwala Sharma were his biological parents.
- Earlier, the court had rejected the plea of Mr Tiwari that he be allowed to "explore" the possibilities of an "amicable" out-of-court settlement of the 2008 paternity suit, saying that the other parties were not agreeing to the proposal.
- However, the counsel for Mr Tiwari had reiterated that he was still willing to go for mediation.
- The court had also closed the right of Mr Tiwari to lead evidence as he failed to appear and testify in the case.
- The court had on July 27, 2012 read out that the DNA report in the case according to which Mr Tiwari was shown as Rohit's biological father.
- Mr Tiwari had given blood sample for the DNA test on May 29 last year at his residence in Dehradun following the apex court's order in the case, after repeatedly contesting against undergoing the test on various grounds.

Ahmed Matiq

- Libya's Parliament has sworn in a new Prime Minister despite a disputed vote.
- A Libyan television station and

lawmakers said the country's interim Parliament swore in 42-year-old businessman Ahmed Matiq .

- Initially, only 113 lawmakers voted for Mr. Matiq, falling short of the 120 votes necessary to secure his win. After the session was adjourned, Al-Ahrrar reported that voting resumed and Mr. Matiq secured eight new votes.

Jawahar Kaliani

- An Indian-American has been appointed to a key post in the U.S. Department of Treasury.
- Jawahar Kaliani has been appointed as the Deputy Chief Information Officer for Application Services Delivery (ASD) at the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Department of Treasury.
- Mr. Kaliani will lead the development and implementation of complex applications to deliver secure business solutions that meet organisational priorities and support the agency's mission of ensuring the safety and soundness of national banks and federal savings associations.

Rajeev Suri

- Yet another India-born business leader has climbed the ranks. Finnish firm Nokia, which recently sold its mobile unit to Microsoft, has appointed Rajeev Suri as the company's new CEO and President.
- Mr. Suri joined Nokia in 1995 and has held a wide range of leadership positions in the company. Since October of 2009, he has served as CEO of NSN, the former joint venture between Nokia and Siemens that is now fully owned by Nokia.
- During his tenure as CEO, that business went through a radical transformation to become one of the leaders in the telecommunications infrastructure industry.

- Risto Siilasmaa, who has been serving as the interim CEO, will now return to his role as Chairman of Nokia's Board.

Nabam Tuki

- Veteran Congress leader Nabam Tuki was sworn in as Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh for the second consecutive term at the Raj Bhavan in Itanagar.
- Governor Lt. Gen. (Retd) Nirbhay Sharma administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Tuki in an impressive function held at Darbar Hall of Raj Bhavan in Itanagar.

Silvio Berlusconi

- ♦ A Milan court has ruled that Silvio Berlusconi will perform a year of community service for his tax fraud conviction at a centre for the elderly.
- ♦ The assignment curtails Berlusconi's ability to participate in the upcoming European election campaign a point of contention among his political allies. The 77-year-old, three-time former premier cannot run due to the conviction, the first against him ever confirmed by Italy's high court, but remains a political force as head of Forza Italia.
- ♦ Berlusconi was sentenced to four years for tax fraud, reduced to one year for a general amnesty.

Amit Shah

- ♦ In a major relief to Narendra Modi's close aide Amit Shah, the Election Commission (EC) has lifted its ban on his participation in Lok Sabha poll campaign in Uttar Pradesh after he assured the poll body that he would not disturb the public tranquillity and law and order.
- ♦ The Commission allowed Mr. Shah to hold public meetings, public rallies and roadshows and take out public

processions in U.P.

- ◆ The EC had “censured” Mr. Shah for his controversial “revenge” remarks. On April 11, it had ordered the U.P. government to ban Mr. Shah and U.P. minister Azam Khan from campaigning in the state following their controversial remarks.
- ◆ Mr. Shah had landed in a major controversy for his remarks that the general election was an opportunity to seek “revenge for the insult” inflicted during the riots in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh last year.
- ◆ The Commission also noted that Mr. Shah had pledged that he will in no manner give cause to be accused as having indulged in any act of commission or omission which has the effect of prejudicially affecting the public tranquillity and law & order.

Ramdev

- ◆ An FIR has been lodged against Yoga guru Ramdev for alleged violation of the model code of conduct and prohibitory orders by holding a press meet without the permission of the administration.
- ◆ Ramdev addressed a press conference at the residence of a yoga centre coordinator after participating in a ‘yoga diksha’ programme recently.
- ◆ He said the administration’s permission was not taken to hold the press conference due to which a case has been lodged against Ramdev and the coordinator.
- ◆ The information has been sent to the Election Commission.

Mamata Banerjee

- ◆ Recently, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee threatened to defy an Election Commission of India (EC) order of transferring eight officials and dared

the poll watchdog to take action against her for not complying, her administration had to eat humble pie as EC held its ground and asked her government to implement its order.

- ◆ But Banerjee accused deputy election commissioner Vinod Zutshi of playing into the hands of Congress and BJP and sought his removal from the poll panel.
- ◆ She accused him of being a tainted official with criminal cases pending against him. She also alleged that Zutshi was misleading the EC.
- ◆ Of the eight officials that EC wanted transferred, it said seven were found to have favoured the ruling Trinamool Congress party in the run-up to the general election. EC barred these officials from taking any poll-related responsibility.

Narendra Modi

- ◆ Amid much fanfare and grand show of support, Bharatiya Janata Party prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi filed his nomination papers from the Vadodara Lok Sabha constituency and invoked the legacy of education and good governance of the Gaekwad dynasty.
- ◆ Mr. Modi, who is representing Vadodara for the first time, sought to underscore his ties with the region known for its royal family.
- ◆ Calling Vadodara his “karmabhoomi”, Mr Modi thanked his party for giving him the opportunity to represent the constituency.

Mulayam Singh Yadav

- ◆ BJP strongly condemned the statement made by Yadav on women, on rape-related matter and on his suggestion that if by chance he becomes part of the government in 2014, he would make sure

that the rape law would be amended.

- ◆ In a controversial statement, the SP leader had yesterday questioned the death penalty for rape, saying “mistakes” by boys happen sometime.

Nawaz Sharif

- ◆ Fifty five per cent of the people surveyed in a poll by Gallup Pakistan have given the Nawaz Sharif government a favourable rating. The current government gets a Green Card and the favourable views exceed unfavourable views in the overall running of the government. The Net Performance Ratings for political leaders rated Nawaz Sharif (PML-N) at the top with a rating of a favourable 18 per cent while Imran Khan (PTI) was rated as minus 5 per cent unfavourable.
- ◆ Gallup Pakistan in its Annual Public Pulse Report 2014 said that the survey has revealed that the present PML-N government’s Performance Ratings are a huge improvement over the PPP-Zardari-led government a year ago.
- ◆ For the six key indicators including Economy, Pak-India Relations, Overall Foreign Policy, Terrorism control, Corruption control and Inflation control, the present PML-N government received positive comparative net performance ratings. The economy recorded a positive 48 per cent comparative net performance, Pak India Relations 22 per cent, Foreign Policy 33 per cent, Terrorism control 31 per cent, Corruption control 36 per cent and Inflation control recorded a positive 20 per cent net change.

Arjun Bahadur Thapa

- ◆ Nepal’s former Foreign Secretary Arjun Bahadur Thapa has assumed charge as the Secretary General of the South Asian

Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

- ◆ Thapa, who succeeds Ahmed Saleem of Maldives, is the 12th Secretary General of the regional grouping.
- ◆ This is the second time Nepal assumed the top post of the regional body since its establishment in 1985.
- ◆ Former Foreign Secretary Yadav Kanta Silwal held the post from January 1994 to December 1995.
- ◆ The members of the SAARC are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.
- ◆ Thapa, 58, was appointed to the position by the 30th Session of the SAARC Council of Ministers held in the Maldives on February 20.
- ◆ Kathmandu will host the 18th SAARC Summit in November this year.

Sheila Dikshit

- ◆ Sheila Dikshit, the Congress leader who served three terms as Chief Minister of Delhi, has been appointed the Governor of Kerala.
- ◆ The decision taken by the union government, which is led by Ms Dikshit’s party, has ignited criticism from other political groups especially Arvind Kejriwal’s Aam Aadmi Party or AAP.
- ◆ As Kerala Governor, Ms Dikshit, who is 75, replaced Nikhil Kumar, a former police commissioner of Delhi who is likely to run for parliament from Bihar.

Virat Kohli

- ◆ India’s Virat Kohli has reclaimed the No. 1 position in the latest ICC Player Rankings for ODI batsmen, which were released recently after the conclusion of the Asia Cup.
- ◆ Kohli had entered the Asia Cup, trailing

No. 1 ranked South African batsman AB de Villiers by two ratings points.

- ◆ Kohli's tournament aggregate of 189 runs in three innings with 136 against Bangladesh as his series best earned him 12 ratings points, which has put him ahead of South Africa's ODI captain by nine ratings points.g
- ◆ Kohli was last ranked No. 1 just before the ODI series against New Zealand in January.

Jaswant Singh

- ◆ The BJP has announced the expulsion of senior leader Jaswant Singh and Subhash Mahariya for six years.
- ◆ The decision comes in the wake of Mr. Singh's decision to contest as an Independent from Barmer and Mr. Mahariya's announcement to do the same from Sikar in Rajasthan.
- ◆ This is the second time the party has taken such action Mr. Singh. He was earlier expelled in 2009 for praising Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father.
- ◆ According to sources in the BJP, the party's constitution allows it to expel members if they contest against its official candidates in elections, or if they drag the party to court over an internal issue.
- ◆ Mr. Singh has refused to accept the party's decision to field Col. Sonaram from Barmer and, despite hectic parleys, has not agreed to withdraw his nomination.

Jude Felix

- ◆ Former India captain Jude Felix replaced his contemporary Vasudevan Baskaran as the coach of the national hockey team.
- ◆ Felix will work under chief coach Terry Walsh and has been appointed initially for a period of three months. Hockey India's high performance director Roelant Oltmans said they'll assess Felix's

performance after the World Cup in June and decide if his contract will be extended beyond that period.

Shikhar Dhawan

- ◆ India opening batsman Shikhar Dhawan was named captain of Indian Premier League (IPL) side Sunrisers Hyderabad for the seventh edition of the cash-rich Twenty20 event beginning on April 16.
- ◆ West Indies' Darren Sammy will be the vice-captain of the side.
- ◆ Shikhar Dhawan with his significant contribution as a batsman in the previous season has retained his position in the team not just as a crucial opener in the batting order but as the appropriate choice to extend his captaincy role in Champions League to the upcoming IPL as well.

Shigeru Ban

- ◆ Shigeru Ban is a Japanese architect known for his creative and inexpensive designs for disaster relief shelters, has won the 2014 Pritzker Architecture Prize.
- ◆ The annual award, considered the most prestigious prize in the world of architecture, is given to designers who have "significantly contributed to humanity" and for "excellence in built work."
- ◆ In a significant departure this year, the prize has recognised for the first time an architect for his contribution to the critical, but often overlooked, area of housing disaster victims. Architectural awards in general favour designers who construct monumental, novel and expensive buildings.

Parupalli Kashyap

- ◆ India's Parupalli Kashyap arrested his slide in the latest Badminton World Federation rankings, by rising a place to

No.24 in men's singles.

- ◆ Kashyap, who reached a career high of World No.6 last year, had been out of form for quite some time until his semifinal performance last week at the Swiss Open which helped him gain vital points.
- ◆ Meanwhile, first round exits at both All England Open and Swiss Open have led Kidambi Srikanth to drop two places to 22nd.
- ◆ Saina Nehwal and P.V. Sindhu, however, have retained 8th and 9th positions in the women's singles rankings.
- ◆ No Indian figures in the top-25 of men's, women's and mixed doubles rankings.

Aamir Khan

- ◆ The Election Commission has signed up leading Bollywood actor Aamir Khan as its 'national icon' in the run-up to 2014 Lok Sabha polls.
- ◆ Aamir will be part of the EC's voter awareness initiatives.
- ◆ His main task would be to encourage more and more people to vote in the General Elections.
- ◆ Aamir joins the league of four other 'national icons' – Indian cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni, boxer MC Mary Kom, badminton ace Saina Nehwal and former president APJ Abdul Kalam.

Adnan Randhawa

- ◆ Adnan Randhawa, 34 Pakistani former bureaucrat in foreign services turned politician was in news as he started Aam Admi Party of Pakistan.
- ◆ For the second time, Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party has found an echo in Pakistan. First it was Arsalan ul Mulik from Gujranwala whose Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) was registered by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

- ◆ Mr. Randhawa applied to the ECP for a formal registration for his Aam Aadmi of Pakistan Party (AAPP). He was formerly with the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI), a party which has often been likened to the AAP in India.

Devinderpal Singh Bhullar

- ◆ The Supreme Court asked the Centre to take a decision on Khalistani terrorist Devinderpal Singh Bhullar's fresh mercy plea by March 27 or else it will decide on the issue of commuting his death sentence to life imprisonment on the ground of his mental condition.
- ◆ A bench headed by Chief Justice P Sathasivam adjourned the case for hearing after the Centre contended that the mercy plea is still under consideration.
- ◆ The court was hearing a curative petition filed by Bhullar's wife Navneet Kaur seeking commuting of death sentence owing to his mental condition and because of delay on the part of the government in deciding his earlier mercy plea.

Suresh Raina

- ◆ Left-handed batsman Suresh Raina is the lone Indian in the short list of four players from all countries to have scored a century in the ICC World T20 Championship's brief history whose fifth edition is set to commence in Bangladesh.
- ◆ The other three century makers in the shortest form of the game are Chris Gayle (West Indies, 117 v South Africa at Johannesburg in September, 2007), Mahela Jayawardene (Sri Lanka, 100 v Zimbabwe at Providence in May, 2010) and Brendon McCullum (New Zealand, 123 v Bangladesh at Pallekele in September, 2012).

Tatyana McFadden

- ◆ Tatyana McFadden collected a first Winter Paralympics medal to join the 10 won across the past three Summer Paralympics.
- ◆ And she's still only 24.
- ◆ McFadden, who won three titles at the 2012 London Paralympics in wheelchair racing alone, claimed silver in the cross-country one-kilometre sprint sitting event at the Sochi Games.



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