Prime Minister’s visit to China, Mongolia and South Korea: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited China, Mongolia and South Korea during May 2015. During the visit India and China signed 24 agreements worth over 10 billion dollars covering education, railways, and scientific research. India also signed trade and economic cooperation deals worth $22bn with China during the PM’s visit. Some of the key agreements include Cooperation in Outer Space, Education Exchange, Cooperation in Ocean Sea, Climate Change, Memorandum of Understanding between ICCR and Fudan University for establishment of Centre for Gandhian Studies; and Establishment of Yoga College in Kumning.

India and Mongolia also signed 14 agreements during the PM’s visit. The agreements signed cover various fields such as Strategic Partnership, Trade, Energy, Taxation etc. It was the first-ever visit to this country by an Indian Prime Minister.

Similarly, India and South Korea signed 7 agreements during Prime Minister’s visit and agreed to upgrade their ties to ‘Special Strategic Partnership’ and deepen cooperation in Defence Sector (Cooperation in Defence Technology and manufacturing of Defence equipment in India). Both the nations agreed to expand cooperation between their armed forces.

India unveiled a virtual memorial wall at the United Nations headquarters: In a fitting tribute to Indian soldiers who had died at UN peacekeeping operations in foreign countries, India on 30th May 2015 unveiled a virtual memorial wall at the UN headquarters as a precursor to building a permanent monument there.

It now has the names and details of 161 Indians who died in peacekeeping operations. Eventually, a UN Peacekeepers’ Memorial Wall is proposed to be built at the headquarters with the names of the heroes engraved on it.

India has been one of the great peacekeeper contributor countries and has contributed over 180,000 troops to 44 UN missions so far. Currently, 8,112 Indian personnel drawn from the military, police and civilian ranks serve in seven UN operations at various places. The Indians who gave their lives for the UN represented more than five percent of all those who died serving the Organisation.

Indian Air Force (IAF) Jet lands on Yamuna Expressway: As part of its trials to use national highways for emergency
purposes, the IAF’s Mirage 2000 successfully landed on Yamuna Expressway near Mathura on 21st May 2015. This was the first time when a stretch of road was used as a runway by the combat jets of the Indian Air Force.

Road runways assume importance if airbases are crippled due to whatsoever reasons.

**Anti-submarine warfare ship launched in Kolkata:** The anti-submarine warfare ship Kavaratti made by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd. (GRSE), Kolkata for the Indian Navy was launched in Kolkata on 19th May 2015. Kavaratti is 90 per cent indigenous.

The 3,300-tonne Kavaratti can reach a speed of over 25 knots. An X-shaped hull, full beam superstructure, inclined ship sides and an Infra-Red Signature Suppression (IRSS) system increase the stealth feature of the ship.

Kavaratti is the last of four Anti-submarine warfare class stealth corvettes being built for the Indian Navy under Project 28.

The Project-28 ships also have Total Atmospheric Control System (TACS), capable of fighting in nuclear, biological and chemical warfare conditions.

**Indian Army inducts surface-to-air Missile Akash:** Indian Army inducted surface-to-air missile Akash on 5th May 2015. Akash missile system is an indigenously developed supersonic short range surface-to-air missile system with the capability to engage a wide variety of aerial threats like aircraft, helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles up to a maximum range of 25 km and up to an altitude of 20 km.

The system is capable of simultaneously engaging multiple targets in all weather conditions and is capable of providing comprehensive short range missile cover to the assets in the field force of the Army.

**Indigenous aircraft carrier to be ready by 2018:** INS Vikrant, a 40,000-tonne Indigenous aircraft carrier designed by the Directorate of Naval Design of the Indian Navy is under construction at the moment and would be ready by 2018.

**India’s first Fast Breeder Reactor to generate power:** India’s first indigenously designed 500 MW prototype fast breeder reactor (PFBR) being setup at Kalpakkam (Tamilnadu) is targeted to generate power during the current fiscal year. The reactor is presently under advanced stage of commissioning.

A breeder reactor is one that breeds more material for a nuclear fission reaction than it consumes.

Two more such fast breeder reactors of 600 MW capacity each will be constructed at Kalpakkam.

**Chandrayaan -2 to take off in 2017:** India’s second lunar probe, Chandrayaan-2, is planned to be launched in 2017. The Chandrayaan-2, India’s second mission to the Moon, has Orbiter, Lander and Rover configuration. It is planned to be launched during 2017-2018 time frame by
Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. Chandrayaan-2 will be an indigenous mission where the ISRO will develop the lunar Lander. The ISRO will also be responsible for the Orbiter and Rover as well as the launch by GSLV. Chandrayaan-2 will be an advanced version of the Chandrayaan-1 mission.

Chandrayaan-1 launched in 2008 was a successful mission where the spacecraft orbited around the Moon at a height of 100 km from the lunar surface for chemical, mineralogical and photo-geological mapping of the Earth’s natural satellite.

India’s first satellite-controlled solar power plant established: India’s first satellite-controlled solar power plant has come up in Lalpur village of Punjab’s Hoshiarpur district. It has been built at a cost of Rs.35 crore and will produce 4.2 MW of electricity.

The plant uses the ‘Single Axis Tracking East West Tilt Technology’, which follows the path of the sun during the day to generate eight percent more units of electricity compared to solar power plants having traditional fixed type structures.

India will launch six more satellites: India has planned to launch six satellites during 2015-16. These are two communication satellites GSAT-6 and GSAT-15, three navigation satellites IRNSS-1E, IRNSS-1F and IRNSS-1G, and one space science satellite ASTROSAT.

In addition to this, India also plans to launch 13 more satellites belonging to four countries using the Indian Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).

As of April 2015, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched 74 satellites. Apart from this, the ISRO has successfully launched 40 foreign satellites belonging to 19 countries and four micro and nano satellites built by students of Indian universities by using PSLV.

India’s GDP Growth to outpace China: As per UN report release in May, India is expected to grow by 7.6% in 2015 and 7.7% in 2016, surpassing the China’s growth.

The latest UN update matches the projections of other international institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund that have also put India’s growth rate as the fastest, and all of whom have also revised the estimates for India upward.

ICICI’s K.V. Kamath appointed head of BRICS Bank:

Mr K.V. Kamath has been appointed head of the BRICS Development Bank. The Bank is being set up by the group of emerging economies formed by Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa and likely to be operationalized within one year.

During the last BRICS summit in Brazil, the leaders had agreed to establish a US$100 billion Development Bank, with its headquarters in Shanghai. As per the agreement, India will preside over the bank’s operations for the first six years, followed by five-year terms for Brazil and then Russia.
International Day of Yoga (IDY): The Embassy as well as Consulate in Dubai will be organizing events on 21st June 2015 to mark the first International Day of Yoga. The Embassy will be organising the event in Abu Dhabi Indian School, Muroor Road, Abu Dhabi. Students from the CBSE schools and members of various Indian Associations will be participating in the event. Similarly, the Consulate in Dubai will be holding its mass yoga session at Al Wasl Football Club, Dubai in which more than 10000 people are expected to participate.

All the Associations & Organisations of Indians as well as Schools are also requested to observe the day by organising the Yoga events in their respective premises.

Upcoming events:

Mass Yoga Session
Location: Zabeel Park, Dubai

Date & Time: 12/6/2015, 0630 PM to 0900 PM
Organisers: Friends of Yoga
Access/participation: free for all

Yoga – Spirit of Unity (Yoga Demo)
Location: Abu Dhabi City Golf Club, Abu Dhabi

Date & Time: 13/06/2015; 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Access/participation by Prior Registration (by e-mail or call) - Tel. No: 0508140855; e-mail: aolauh.idy@gmail.com)