

1. Institute for urban studies coming up in Bangalore

Touted as the country's first university, dedicated exclusively to Urban Studies, the Indian Institute of Human Settlements (IIHS) is setting up its 58-acre campus in south-west Bangalore. Funded by "multiple private sources," the institute will have an initial capital investment of approximately Rs.250 crore, which will be scaled up to Rs.400 crore over the next five years. Currently offering week-long courses, the IIHS hopes to be formalised under the proposed Innovation Universities Bill. Leading entrepreneurs and professionals, including Nandan Nilekani, Shirish Patel, Rakesh Mohan, Deepak Parekh, Vijay Kelkar and Jamshyd Godrej, Xerxes Desai and Renana Jebvala, will be working with the institute.

2. Songs in four more languages to be played at Sabarimala

With a view to upholding the cosmopolitan nature of the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple, the Travancore Devaswom Board has decided to play devotional songs of Lord Ayyappa in four more languages other than Malayalam and Sanskrit at the temple. Usually the temple opens in the morning with the Sanskrit 'Suprabhatham,' 'Vande Vigneswaram...' rendered by K.J. Yesudas and in the evening with the Malayalam song 'Sree kovil nada thurannu...' rendered by Jayan of the Jaya-Vijayan duo. The temple closes with 'Harivarasanam...' sung by Yesudas. Henceforth, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Hindi songs will be played along with the Malayalam and Sanskrit songs while opening the temple in the morning and the evening, but 'Harivarasanam...' alone will be played at night as usual.

3. New DG for Naval Medical Services

Surgeon Vice-Admiral K.M. Suryanarayana has taken over as the Director General Medical Services (Navy). An alumnus of the Government Medical College in Mysore, the Flag Officer is a post-graduate in medicine and super-specialist in endocrinology.

4. Plans to upgrade Afghanistan in SCO of interest to India

Amid the self-congratulatory homilies by leaders of the six Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) members in Astana, India will find discussions on Afghanistan the most important. The SCO was once considered by the South Block to be China-dominated. India, however, shed its apprehensions three summits back, when Observers were given rights and privileges considered unprecedented in many other regional bodies. A closer involvement of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan will lead to the strengthening of the proposed CASAREM (Central Asia Regional Energy Market), under which hydel energy surplus States such as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are planning to get together to provide an energy market to their neighbors. India's second major area of interest would be a closer involvement with the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorism Center (RATC) based at Tashkent, venue of the 10th summit.

5. Deified Mao spawns a thriving "Red tourism" industry

Yang Yang traveled halfway across China with a singular purpose: to pay her respects to Mao Zedong. In China's hinterland, small towns like Yan'an that were once associated with the Communist revolution have spawned a thriving "Red tourism" industry, driven by affluent young Chinese like Ms. Yang, who are looking to learn more about their country's past. Yet, for them, Mao is more cultural curiosity than political role model, a far away figure, who inspires passion, though little is known about his life or ideas.

6. Erdogan remains at the helm in Turkey

Turkey's ruling Justice and Development party led by Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan won Sunday's parliamentary election by a wide margin but fell short of a "super majority" that would have allowed it to rewrite the Constitution.

7. Vietnam live fire drill amid China tensions

Vietnam put on a show of military strength in the tense South China Sea risking the ire of Beijing in the face of a deepening maritime rift with its powerful neighbour. Relations between the Communist nations have sunk to their lowest point in years following recent sea confrontations, which reignited a long-standing dispute over sovereignty of two potentially oil-rich archipelagos. A successful first barrage of naval artillery, lasting about four hours, took place about 40 kilometres off Quang Nam province in central Vietnam. Vietnam's Foreign Ministry described it as routine annual training. The drills are inside the area Vietnam claims as its economic zone. Hanoi last month accused Chinese surveillance vessels of cutting the exploration cables of an oil survey ship inside the area. Beijing countered by warning Vietnam to halt all activities that it says violates China's sovereignty in the disputed area.

8. New Global Head for Wipro BPO

Wipro Technologies has announced the appointment of Manish Dugar as Senior Vice-President and Global Head of Wipro BPO. Jatin Dalal was named new Chief Financial Officer for the IT business.

9. Apparel maker VF to acquire Timberland in \$2 b deal

Branded apparel maker VF Corporation will snap up The Timberland Company in an all-cash deal worth \$2 billion, a move that would create a \$10 billion apparel and footwear group. Both companies have presence in India. In India, VF markets well known Wrangler, Lee, Nautica, JanSport and Kipling products through VF Arvind Brands Private Ltd. Timberland has a partnership with Reliance Brands, which is part of Mukesh Ambani-led.

10. Button wins rain-delayed Canadian GP

Jenson Button celebrated his greatest victory after overtaking Red Bull's Formula One World champion Sebastian Vettel on the last lap of a rain-delayed Canadian Grand Prix thriller.