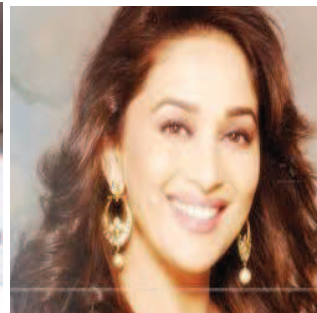




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Current Affairs







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SECTION – I [AWARDS/HONOURS]

UN award for govt's Mobile Seva initiative

An initiative conceptualised by Indian government's Department of Electronics and Information Technology to enable delivery of public services electronically through the mobile platform has been awarded a United Nations public service award.

Mobile Seva, a nationwide initiative conceptualised, funded and implemented by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY), is among the second-place winners of the 2014 UN Public Service



Awards, along with Bahrain, Brazil, Cameroon, Republic of Korea and Spain.

The vision of Mobile Seva is to mainstream mobile governance in India as a new paradigm for e-delivery of public services through mobile devices. It leverages the massive penetration of mobile phones in India to substantially enhance access to electronic services, especially in the rural areas.

The main objectives of the initiative are to be a one-stop solution for all mobile-based public service delivery needs through mobile-based channels, including SMS, voice/Integrated Voice Response System and mobile applications.

The first place winners are Austria, Bahrain, Brazil, Morocco, Oman, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Uruguay. Winners from 14 countries will be honoured for their innovative projects in fighting poverty and promoting sustainable development at a ceremony on June 26 in Seoul.

Rushdie wins Pen Pinter 2014

Indian-born Booker Prize winning author Salman Rushdie was named as the winner of this year's prestigious Pen Pinter prize for his outstanding literary output and support for freedom of expression. The award was established in 2009 by writers' charity English Pen in memory of famous British playwright and Nobel laureate Harold Pinter.

Maureen Freely, chair of the judging panel, said, "This prize is English Pen's way of thanking Salman Rushdie not just for his books and his many years of speaking out for freedom of expression, but also for his countless private acts of kindness. Mr. Rushdie, 67, said it was moving to win an award named after his friend (Harold Pinter).



Rushdie said that, the work of Pen, both in promoting the best of world literature and in opposing abuses of freedom, continues to be vitally important, and proud to have been a part of that effort in England as well as the United States.

The New York-based author will be presented with this prize at a ceremony at the British Library in London on October 7 and will deliver an address at the event. His prize will be shared with an “International Writer of Courage”, selected by him in association with English Pen’s Writers at Risk committee.

Rushdie is best known for his acclaimed novel ‘Midnight’s Children’, for which he won the Booker followed by the one-off Best of Booker in 2008, and the controversial ‘The Satanic Verses’ -- for which he went into hiding in 1989 after it sparked widespread protests by Muslims and a fatwa from Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini. The author was knighted in 2007 for services to literature.

Jnanpith Award 2013

Noted Hindi poet Kedarnath Singh was chosen for the prestigious Jnanpith award for 2013. He is the 10th Hindi writer to receive the honour and is the 49th recipient of Jnanpith award. Kedarnath Singh (80-year-old) was born in Balia of Uttar Pradesh and is known for his work Abhi bilkul abhi and Yahan se dekho. With this he joined the league of noted Hindi writers who have won Jnanpith award

- Sumitra Nandan Pant
- Ramdhari Singh Dinkar
- Sachidananda Vatsyayan
- Mahadevi Varma
- Naresh Mehta
- Niirmal Verma
- Kunwar Narayan
- Amar Kant
- Sri Lal Sukla

About Kedarnath Singh

- He became famous with a book entitled teesra saptak edited by Sachchidananda Hirananda Vatsyayan whose pen name was Agyeya
- He was born in 1934 in Chakiya village of Balia district of Uttar Pradesh
- He completed his MA and PhD from Banaras Hindu University in 1956 and 1964
- He has been a professor and Head of Department of Hindi department of Jawaharlal Nehru University (Delhi)



Major works of Kedarnath Singh

- Poem Collection: Abhi Bilkul Abhi, Zameen pak Rahi Hai, Yahan se Dekho, Akaal mein Saaras, Baagh, Tolstoy aur cycle
- Essay and Stories: Mere Samay ke Shabd, Kalpana aur chhayavad, Hindi kavita mein bimb vidhan, Kabristan mein Panchayat
- Others: Taana Baana

About Jnanpith Award: Jnanpith award is one of the prestigious literary awards in India and was instituted in 1961. The award is given to any Indian citizen who writes in any official languages of India mentioned in VIII Schedule of Constitution of India. It is presented by Bharatiya Jnanpith, a trust founded by the Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain family. The award includes 11 lakh rupees and a citation. The name of award is taken from Sanskrit words Jnana and Pitha (knowledge-seat).

Tang Prize 2014

Tang Prize Foundation announced the inaugural Tang Prizes for 2014. The Prize will be given in four categories of Sustainable Development, Sinology, Biopharmaceutical Science and The Rule of Law.

Tang Prize 2014 winners

- Sustainable Development - Gro Harlem Brundtland former Premier of Norway

She was awarded for her innovation, leadership and implementation of sustainable development that laid out the scientific and technical challenges.

- Sinology – Chinese American, Historian Yu Ying-shih

He was awarded for his mastery of and insight into Chinese intellectual, political, and cultural history with an emphasis on his profound research into the history of public intellectuals in China.

- Biopharmaceutical Science - James P Allison of US and Tasuku Honjo of Japan

They were awarded for their discoveries of CTLA-4 and PD-1 as immune inhibitory molecules, revealing ways to harness our incredibly powerful immune system to fight cancer and marking the beginning of the immunotherapy revolution.

- The Rule of Law - Albie Sachs, former justice of the Constitutional Court of South Africa

He was awarded for his contributions to human rights and justice around the world. He is a lawyer and human rights activist who spent his lifetime fighting apartheid, helped write the new Constitution of South Africa.

About Tang Prize: Taiwanese Business Magnate, Samuel Yin founded Tang Prize Foundation in December 2012. The Tang prize is the first international academic award to be based in Taiwan and commenced its inaugural year in 2014.



The prize is awarded biennially. Each category conferred carries a cash prize of 40 million New Taiwan dollar (NT\$) and a research grant of 10 million New Taiwan dollar. The aim of the prize is to continue to innovate while cultivating and nurturing new talent in their respective fields.

The prize encourages a more holistic and cross-disciplinary approach to reflect the new challenges humanity faces in modern complicated world. The Prize covers the categories which are not included in the Nobel Prize.

Pratishtha Khanna

India-born Pratishtha Khanna was honoured with Champions of Change by the White House. She is one of 10 local Champions of Change honoured for their exemplary leadership in their communities. The other Champions of Change were Hector of Mexico, Steven of Mexico, Sarahi of United States, Kamal of Morocco, Esther of Taiwan, Dayana Elvira Torres of Colombia, Rhustie of Philippines, Ana Zaragoza of Mexico and Anahi Mendoza of Mexico. Every week all ten Champions of Change will be invited to the White House to share their ideas to win the future.

All the 10 locals honoured with Champions of Change were beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) programme. It was initiated by the President Barack Obama in 2012.

About Pratishtha Khanna

- Pratishtha was born in Delhi and she migrated to the United States at the age of 10.
- She is currently a senior at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) and will graduate with a BS in Biology in May 2015.
- She is also a member of Dreamers for DREAMers student organization at UMBC.

World Food Prize – 2014

Sanjaya Rajaram, veteran plant scientist, has been chosen for this year's World Food Prize for his "scientific research that led to a prodigious increase in world wheat production." M.S. Swaminathan, founder of the M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) and chairman, global jury for selection of the Food Prize Laureate, told reporters that Dr Rajaram, now settled in Mexico, was selected for his "outstanding work in the improvement of wheat crop and wheat production in the world."

Describing Dr. Rajaram as a "worthy successor" to the legacy of Norman Borlaug who was instrumental in instituting the Prize,





Dr. Swaminathan said the plant scientist, hailing from rural background in the Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh, was known for his “genuine concern for farming and farmers,” especially small and marginal farmers. He was still keeping contact with his roots.

Dr. Swaminathan, the first recipient of the Prize in 1987, said the selection of Dr. Rajaram was significant as this year marked the centenary year of Dr. Borlaug as well as the international year of family farming.

Regarded as the most prestigious award in the area of food and agriculture, the Prize, carrying a cash prize of \$ 250,000, would be presented during the U.N. World Food Day on October 16.

About Sanjaya Rajaram

- Sanjaya Rajaram was born in 1943 in Uttar Pradesh and is a citizen of Mexico.
- Rajaram was successful in cross breeding winter and spring wheat varieties which were distinct gene pools that had been isolated from one another for hundreds of years, led to developing of plants that have higher yields and a broad genetic base.
- He bred more than 480 high-yielding wheat varieties that have been released in 51 countries on six continents. Those varieties are adopted by small and large scale farmers alike.
- Rajaram followed Borlaug at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT), leading its Wheat Programme from 1976 to 2001.
- An important contribution was his development of aluminum-tolerant wheat that was able to grow successfully in the acidic soils of Brazil.

About the World Food Prize: The World Food Prize is an international award recognizing the achievements of individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity, or availability of food in the world. It is notably sponsored by agricultural biotechnology companies. Since 1987, the prize has been awarded annually to recognize contributions in any field involved in the world food supply: food and agriculture science and technology, manufacturing, marketing, nutrition, economics, poverty alleviation, political leadership, and the social sciences. The World Food Prize Foundation is currently run by Kenneth M. Quinn, former U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia.

Year	Laureates	Nationality	Achievement
2014	Sanjaya Rajaram	Indian in Mexico	For his “scientific research that led to a prodigious increase in world wheat production.”
2013	Dr. Mary-Dell Chilton	USA	Developed science of modern plant biotechnology supporting improved sustainability and global food security
	Dr. Robert Fraley	USA	
	Dr. March Van Montagu	Belgium	



2012	Dr. Daniel Hillel	Israel	Conceiving and implementing micro-irrigation in arid and dry land regions
2011	John Agyekum Kufuor	Ghana	Creating and implementing government policies to alleviate hunger and poverty in their countries
	Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva	Brazil	
2010	David Beckmann Jo Luck	USA	Building Bread for the World and Heifer International into two of the world's foremost grassroots organizations leading the charge to end hunger and poverty around the globe.
2009	Gebisa Ejeta	Ethiopia	Developing Africa's first sorghum hybrids resistant to drought and the parasitic witchweed.
2008	Bob Dole	USA	Leading and encouraging a global commitment to school feeding, which has enhanced school attendance and nutrition for millions of the world's poorest children, especially young women and girls.
	George McGovern	USA	
2007	Dr. Philip E. Nelson	USA	Revolutionizing food processing, packaging, transportation, and distribution by perfecting bulk aseptic packaging technology and spreading the technology worldwide.
2006	Edson Lobato	Brazil	Pioneering work in soil science and policy implementation that opened the vast Cerrado region of Brazil to agricultural and food production.
	Alysson Paolinelli	Brazil	
	Colin McClung	USA	
2005	Modadugu Vijay Gupta	India	Development and dissemination of low-cost techniques for freshwater fish farming (using tilapia species) by the rural poor.
2004	Yuan Longping	China	Development of Hybrid varieties
	Monty Jones	Sierra Leone	Development of New Rice for Africa (NERICA), with the potential to increase rice yields in Africa.
2003	Catherine Bertinie	USA	Transforming the World Food Programme from a development assistance

Dear Aspirants,

Further Pages

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