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10 BBC director general George Entwistle resigns

Nov **World > BBC**

BBC director general George Entwistle has resigned owning moral responsibility for the News night child abuse broadcast bungle up. He took the ultimate responsibility for unacceptable journalistic standards at the recent BBC broadcast on Friday, Nov 2 alleging child abuse by an unnamed Conservative politician which was later proven to be unfounded.

With his resignation, Entwistle becomes the shortest-serving BBC director general, having served for only 54 days. BBC has been mired with controversy over handling of child sex-abuse cases. It reportedly covered-up for one of its erstwhile star hosts, the late Jimmy Savile. It was accused for not airing allegations of child sex abuse committed by Savile, during his career as a broadcaster.

BBC instead aired a tribute praising Savile, who had been active in numerous charities. A bigger blunder occurred when BBC broadcast an expose on Friday, Nov 2 alleging child abuse by an unnamed Conservative politician, later identified as Alistair McAlpine on the internet.

The claim went unsubstantiated and BBC later apologized for the goof-up. This has raised questions on the corporation and its credibility as a dominant position holder in the UK news market. The corporation has now started a disciplinary action against unidentified news personnel linked to a scandal.

11 Kejriwal agrees to forgo the name of IAC

Nov **India > Arvind Kejriwal**

Former India Against Corruption (IAC) activist, Arvind Kejriwal has agreed to forgo the name of his former organisation and not use it as the name of his political outfit.

India Against Corruption (IAC) is a movement in India formed to demand the enactment of a Jan Lokpal Bill. The movement has gained momentum since 5 April 2011, when anti-corruption activist Anna Hazare, began a hunger strike at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi.

In the second year of the movement, Team Anna's members Arvind Kejriwal and Prashant Bhushan deflected from the movement and announced the formation of a political party which intended to contest the elections. The name of the party has not been announced yet. While Anna Hazare has kept himself out of Kejriwal's path, there has been a lot of discontent on Kejriwal's trying to cash on the goodwill of IAC.

Activist Kiran Bedi, member of the reconstituted Coordination Committee of IAC insisted that since Kejriwal had left IAC, Hazare had a valid claim to the name and Kejriwal has agreed to do so.

12 Majlis parts ways with Congress

Nov **Government and Politics > MIM**

The Majlise Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) has withdrawn its support to the UPA government. It parted ways with Congress, its ally for the last 14 years citing the 'communal behaviour' of the Kiran Reddy government of Andhra Pradesh.

The party's relations with Congress came under the hammer during the recent Bakri Id festivities in Hydreabad. A series of skirmishes, with communal undertones, took place in the city over the alleged expansion of the Bhagya Lakshmi temple adjacent to the historic Charminar.

The arrest of seven MIM legislators on Sunday precipitated the severing of ties with Congress. However, this puts the Kiran Reddy government in a tight spot as apart from one independent MLA it has 155 MLAs in the 294-member state legislative assembly. The magical figure that assures survival is 148.

12 Lukewarm response to the 2G auction

Nov **Government and Politics > 2G Spectrum Auction**

The Supreme Court-ordered 2G spectrum auction failed to generate any excitement on day 1 and 2. Day 1 could not get a bidder for a pan-India licence for which the base price fixed by the government is Rs. 14,000 crore. This price was Rs. 4,000 crore less than originally recommended by telecom regulator TRAI. Day 1 saw no bidders in the Delhi, Mumbai, Rajasthan and Karnataka circles. Only 18 of the 22 telecom circles received a bid.

There were seven rounds of bidding on day 1 and demand for 98 out of 176 blocks of spectrum for auction was witnessed. The value of 98 blocks stood at Rs 9,224.75 crore at the end of day.

Day 2 saw active bidding in the Bihar telecom circle. Eight blocks of spectrum having 1.25 megahertz airwaves frequencies are being auctioned in each circle.

Bharti Airtel, Vodafone, Telenor-promoted Telewings, Videocon and Idea Cellular are amongst the operators who had applied for participating in the auctions.

New companies, whose telecom permits were impacted by a Supreme Court judgement that cancelled 122 licenses, are required to bid for minimum of four blocks. However, the existing players can bid for maximum of two blocks.

13 Global carbon dioxide emissions hit a new record: China still the largest greenhouse gas producer in the world

Nov

Environment > CO₂ Emissions

Latest statistics released by Germany's Renewable Energy Industry Institute (IWR) show that global carbon emissions rose by 2.5% last year, i.e. 800 million tonnes more than what it was in 2010, setting a new record high.

China is still the largest greenhouse gas producer in the world accounting for 8.9 billion tonnes, followed by US with 6.0 billion tonnes. India came in third with 1.8 billion tonnes followed by Russia with 1.7 billion, Japan with 1.3 billion and Germany with 804 million. The United States, Russia and Germany were the only three among the top 10 countries with reduced emissions in 2011 compared to the previous year.

The study, which based the figures on data on global consumption of fossil fuels made available by British energy giant BP, found that the upward trajectory in carbon emissions had resumed after a brief dip in 2009 due to the global economic crisis. IWR predicted that with the current trend global carbon emissions will rise another 20 % by the year 2020 to reach 40 billion tonnes.

The reports precede annual negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), slated to take place this year in Doha, Qatar, from November 26 to December 7. The key issue will be renewing commitments under the Kyoto Protocol after the first round of cuts in CO₂ emissions that expires on December 31.

14 Bhupathi and Bopanna lose ATP Tour final: Split as a pair

Nov

Sports > Mahesh Bhupathi / Rohan Bopanna

Mahesh Bhupathi and Rohan Bopanna have decided to split after the ATP Tour final loss. The pair were defeated by Spaniards Marcel Granollers and Marc Lopez 7-5,3-6,10-3 in the title match of Barclays ATP Tour final. History slipped through their fingers as till now no Indian pair has ever won the year-end finale.

Bopanna and Bhupathi had a successful year 2012 which included two titles at Dubai and Paris and runner-up finish at the just-concluded London Masters.

Bopanna, who attained his career's best ranking of eight in March this year, will now pair with long-time friend Rajeev Ram on the ATP circuit next year. Given their complementary styles of play and strong service games, the pair is looking to recapture the magic they had displayed as a team at the Australian Open in 2008. As an unseeded combination, they had defeated higher ranked teams and gained entry into the pre-quarters.

Meanwhile, Bhupathi announced that he will be partnering Canadian Daniel Nestor. Nestor, in his career so far has won 80 men's doubles titles, including a gold medal at the 2000 Summer Olympics, 4 ATP World Tour Finals, and 8 Grand Slam men's doubles titles.

14 Nov NASSCOM takes a reality bite: Lowers growth expectations

Corporate > NASSCOM

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) stated that the export growth in dollar terms is expected to be at the lower end of the 11-14% of its revised February forecast, thus lowering its growth expectations for the industry this financial year.

NASSCOM is a trade association of the Indian IT and BPO industry. It is a global trade body with over 1200 members, from over 250 global companies. The organization normally reviews its forecast in the middle of the year based on available data and expectations of companies. It bases its estimates on analysis of domestic and MNC companies in software services, business process management, engineering, R&D and products.

Amongst the big companies, Cognizant is perhaps the only one which might stand up to the NASSCOM's early forecast for this financial year. Its growth was 21% and 18% in the first two quarters of the year. TCS (13% in both quarters) and HCL (with 12% and 11% in the first and the second quarter) showed growth in both the quarters and within the NASSCOM's range. Infosys and Wipro are possible reasons for the lowered estimates. Wipro grew by 8% and 4.6% and Infosys grew by 4.8% and 2.9% in the first two quarters of the year.

14 Nov Myanmar's opposition leader Suu Kyi arrives in India on a week-long visit

India > Aung San Suu Kyi

Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi commenced her week-long visit to India by meeting the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. This is Suu Kyi's first visit to India in 25 years.

The Nobel peace prize winner, Suu Kyi will deliver the Nehru Memorial Lecture on November 15. She is here on the invitation from Sonia Gandhi in her capacity as Chairperson of Nehru Memorial Fund.

Suu Kyi, has spent most of the last two decades under military house arrest. At one point, India supported Suu Kyi. However, in the in the mid-1990s it sought engagement with the Burmese junta in view of Burma's natural resources and business opportunities. This invite is being seen as an attempt by Singh's government to repair a damaged relationship with her.

During the four-day trip, Suu Kyi will visit her alma mater - Lady Shri Ram College in New Delhi. She will also visit the parliament and inspect rural development projects. She will visit Bangalore's Indian Institute of Science and the Infosys Campus as well as rural areas in Andhra Pradesh to get an overview of women's empowerment programmes being undertaken in India.

Others

09 Nov DTN: Interplanetary internet used to control robot on Earth

Nov **Science and Technology > DTN**

Disruption-Tolerant Networking (DTN) protocol is being touted to be the way to communicate with astronauts on Mars in the near future.

The technology, similar to the internet is more adaptable with the delays and disruptions that are likely to occur when data is shuttling between planets, satellites, space stations and distant spacecrafts.

A laptop with DTN software was successfully used by Sunita Williams, commander of ISS Expedition 33 to control a rover in Germany. The experiment was conducted by the European Space Agency (ESA) and NASA.

13 Nov France recognises the National Syrian Coalition

Nov **World > Syria**

France has recognised the National Syrian Coalition as the sole legitimate representative of the Syrian people. It has become the first western country to recognise Syria's newly formed opposition coalition.

Since the civil war got more violent in Syria, various Syrian opposition groups have been under intense international pressure to form a united group that is a representative of the country's disparate factions fighting to topple President Bashar Assad. Former Muslim preacher Mouaz al-Khatib will head the coalition.

13 Nov Head of Microsoft's Windows division Steven Sinofsky steps down

Nov **Corporate > Microsoft**

Steven Sinofsky, the head of Microsoft's Windows division resigned from his position, paving way for Julie Larson-Green, who will now lead the Windows hardware and software division. The resignation comes only days after Sinofsky launched the Windows 8 operating system and presented 'Surface tablet', the first computer made by Microsoft.

The business of Windows will be taken care after Tami Reller, who will remain chief financial officer and chief marketing officer.

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Nov **Obama consults Nooyi****World > Barack Obama**

Recently re-elected United States President Barack Obama has invited at least three Indian-Americans for consultation on the current economic crisis. Chief amongst them are: Indra Nooyi, PepsiCo CEO; Neera Tandon, president of the Center for American Progress; and Deepak Bhargava from the Center for Community Change.

Obama is expected to meet these dignitaries by the end of the week. This is a part of his plan of action entailing wider consultations with leaders from business, labour, civic community and Congress to find a balanced approach to reduce deficit.

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Nov **European Union Workers strike against rising unemployment and austerity measures****World > European Union**

A series of protests and strikes were organized by the workers across the European Union to rally against the mounting unemployment and austerity measures. These were co-ordinated amongst approximately 40 groups from 23 countries and were scheduled at midnight to protest against austerity measures that have combined tax rises with cuts in salaries, pensions, benefits and social services.

Transport, businesses and schools were affected in Spain and Portugal due to these strikes. Hundreds of flights have been cancelled in Spain and Portugal. There also have been some reports of clashes between the police and protesters in Madrid.

Other countries like Greece, Italy and Belgium witnessed strikes and rallies on a smaller scale.

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Nov **Micromax, Pantel and Wish Tel cry foul over the Aakash 2 tablet's cost advantage****Corporate > Datawind**

Rs. 1,300-crore government order for low-cost Aakash-2 tablets has sparked off a debate between price and performance amongst various manufacturers and low-cost rivals like Micromax, Pantel and Wish Tel.

Aakash-2 tablets have been sold to the government at a price of Rs 2,263 per piece. This is about Rs 1,500 cheaper than the base manufacturing cost quoted by the rival companies. In the coming months, the government will assess these tablets and place a follow-up order of 5.86 million tablets, expected in early 2013.

Currently, Datawind enjoys a 6% excise duty on the final product and 12.5% customs duty on imported components. These two waivers help to keep the manufacturing cost low, leaving the other manufacturing companies crying foul and hinting a trade-off between price and performance.