

## January 28 - Lala Lajpat Rai's 151st Birth-Anniversary Observed



150th birth anniversary of great freedom fighter Lala Lajpat Rai, also known as Punjab Kesri is being celebrated 28th January 2016.

- Rai, popularly known as Punjab Kesari was part of the 'Lal Bal Pal' trio.
- He was one of the three extremist members of the Indian National Congress who gave their life for the independence of India along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal.
- He was part of the Lal Bal Pal trio of assertive nationalists that included Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal from 1905 to 1918.
- Lal Bal Pal trio had advocated the Swadeshi movement involving the boycott of all imported items and the use of Indian-made goods in 1907 during the anti-Partition agitation in Bengal which began in 1905.
- Rai was born on January 28, 1865 and died on November 17, 1928.

## Vijay P Bhatkar Appointed Chancellor of Nalanda University



Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar, a technocrat who is considered the father of the Indian Supercomputer, has been appointed the new Vice-Chancellor of Nalanda University, Rajgir, in Bihar.

- President Pranab Mukherjee, in his capacity as Visitor to Nalanda University, named Bhatkar for the post with effect from January 25.
- He will hold the office for a three-year period from the date of his appointment as per the Nalanda University Act, Sec 11(3).
- Bhatkar, 70, replaces Gopa Sabharwal who resigned on November 24 last year, followed by the resignation of Chancellor George Yeo, after the dissolution of the Mentor Group which functioned as the governing body of the university.
- Born on October 11, 1946 in Pune, Bhatkar was educated at IIT, Delhi, Sir Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology, Nagpur and MS University, Vadodara.

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- He is known as the architect of India's initiative in supercomputing, the Centre of Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in Pune founded in 1988, leading to the development of the first indigenous supercomputer Param 8,000 in 1991, followed by Param 10,000 in 1998.

## Morocco to rejoin African Union After 33 Years



After leaving the pan African organisation three decades ago, Morocco is set to rejoin the African Union during its 28th African summit scheduled for January 30-31 in Addis Ababa.

- Morocco in 1984 decided to withdraw from the Organisation of African Unity, which later became the AU, in protest against the admission of Western Sahara, which seeks independence for a chunk of territory the country claims as its own.
- Morocco has since then refused to be part of the organisation, but recently it changed its policy, making the re-admission to the AU on the top of its agenda.
- Two months after the king's message to the African leaders, the North African kingdom in September formally submitted a request to re-join the continental body.
- The request was submitted after it received the support of a group of 28 AU member states, representing more than the majority of the 54 African Union member states required for admission.

## English Actor John Hurt Passes Away



Actor John Hurt, the gravelly voiced British actor who garnered Oscar nominations for his roles in "Midnight Express" and "The Elephant Man," has died at the age of 77, publicist Charles McDonald said Friday.

- Hurt always stayed busy, working more than six decades in television, movies and voice work in England and the United States. He recently played a priest who counsels Jacqueline Kennedy in last year's biopic "Jackie," according to IMDb.
- Hurt was born in Shirebrook, a coal mining village in Derbyshire, England, the son of an an engineer and one-time actress and an Anglican clergyman and

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mathematician, IMDb said.

- He trained to become a painter but, after being accepted into the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, worked on the stage in the early 1960s.
- His first film role came in the "angry young man" drama "Young and Willing" in 1962 and his first major role in "A Man for All Seasons" in 1966, IMDb said.

## India's Inter-Service Military Exercise TROPEX 17 Starts



Aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya backed by nuclear submarine INS Chakra besides fighting assets of the Indian Navy and Coast Guard have come together in the country's biggest inter-service 'Tropex' exercise along the western seaboard. The navy's annual Theatre Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX) got underway on January 24.

- The month-long exercise will have ships and aircraft of both the Western and Eastern Naval Commands, as also assets from the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard exercising together.
- The last edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2015.
- Tropex has grown in scale and complexity over the years and will see participation of major surface combatants and air assets of the Indian Navy including INS Vikramaditya, INS Chakra, Landing Platform Dock (LPD) Jalashwa, the recently commissioned destroyer INS Chennai, P-8I long range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft operating alongside SU-30 MKI, Jaguars, AWACS, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft of the Indian Air Force and infantry units of the Indian Army.
- Tropex-17 assumes special significance in the backdrop of the current security scenario, a statement by the navy said.

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## Report on National MSME Policy Submitted



The committee tasked with drafting a comprehensive policy for the country's micro, small and medium enterprises today submitted its report.

- The one-member panel of former Cabinet Secretary Dr Prabhat Kumar submitted the report on formulation of a National MSME Policy to Union MSME Minister Kalraj Mishra here.

- The country does not have an

MSME policy till date.

- Mishra appreciated the efforts made by Kumar in meeting various stakeholders in different parts of ..
- At the moment, there is no integrated approach for the development of MSMEs despite the fact that the sector accounts for 40 per cent of India's manufacturing and 45 per cent of exports.

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## Water Level of 91 Major Reservoirs of the Country Reduced by 2%



According to data released by the ministry of water resources on 2 December, water storage available in 91 large reservoirs of the country for the week ending 1 December 2016 was 102.841 billion cu. metre (BCM), which is 65% of the total storage capacity of these reservoirs.

- This was 126% in the corresponding period last year and averaged at 98% over the last ten

years.

- States having lesser storage than last year for corresponding period are Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.
- The report states that current storage is 67 per cent of the storage of corresponding period of last year and 77 per cent of storage of average of last ten years.
- Experts attribute the depleting water levels in reservoirs to two years of poor rainfall in the country.
- On Tuesday, Indian meteorological department announced that monsoon in

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2016 was likely to be 'above normal', which may increase the water levels.

- States having better storage than last year for corresponding period are Punjab, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Karnataka, among others.

## I&B Secretary Launches Film Condition Assessment Project



“Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is committed to safeguarding the country’s filmic and non-filmic heritage and is taking all necessary steps to preserve films and non-filmic material for posterity as per global standards,” said Shri Ajay Mittal, Secretary, Information and Broadcasting Ministry.

- He was speaking on the occasion of the launch of Film Condition Assessment, which is the first phase of implementation of National Film Heritage Mission, NFHM here today at Pune.
- Elaborating further, Shri Mittal said, “This is a one-of-its-kind project in the world, wherein the Government is spending huge amount of money towards the aspect of film preservation, in order to make rich filmic heritage available for the future generations to come.
- The condition of about 1,32,000 film reels at NFAI would be assessed and necessary measures would be taken to prolong their life. Each film reel will be tracked and monitored through RFID tagging, during the first phase”.
- On the sidelines of the occasion, Shri Mittal also launched NFAI’s initiative of digitization of non-filmic material. Secretary said, “this is a step in the direction of Government’s Digital India initiative, wherein non-filmic heritage of the country would be digitized, restored and made available to the people at large”.
- NFAI has been the custodian of a large number of film ancillary material like posters, photos, song booklets, pamphlets, press clippings, slides / transparencies, glass negatives etc, which would be digitized and restored during the process.

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### On This Day



On 28 January 1933, the name Pakistan was coined by Choudhary Rahmat Ali, a Pakistan Movement activist, who published it in his pamphlet *Now or Never*, using it as an acronym ("thirty million Muslim brethren who live in PAKSTAN") referring to the names of the five northern regions of the British

Raj: Punjab, Afghania, Kashmir, Sindh, and Baluchistan. The name Pakistan literally means "land of the pure" in Urdu and Persian.

**ON THIS DAY**