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Dr. Sanjay

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M Tyra

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Umakant Shukla

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**GRAPHICS, LASER
TYPESETTING &
COVER DESIGN**

Abhyanand Sinha

Pankaj Narang

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Editor: **Dr. Sanjay****Think A While**

Donald John Trump has been sworn in as the 45th President of the United States of America. The man is a clear contrast to his predecessor, Barack Obama, who was the epitome of balance and sophistication. Trump may pay lip respect to the people of America but seems more intent on promoting his brand.

As Trump evolved from real-estate developer to reality television star, he turned his name into a brand. Licensed Trump products have included board games, steaks, cologne, vodka, furniture and menswear. He has portrayed himself in cameo appearances in movies and on television, including Zoolander, Sex and the City and Home Alone 2: Lost in New York.

Even his presidential campaign succeeded primarily on brand promotion. Now that he has become the President, he needs to think for the country. But old habits die hard. Trump still seems to be in the election mode and is pushing his brand through various means. Says Philip Mudd, former Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA): "We have a president who has to talk about how many times he's been on the Time magazine cover in comparison to a football player. He's got to talk about how many people showed up at his inauguration. He's got to talk about how many people in the CIA enjoyed his speech."

Trump is obsessed with the slogan "Make America Great Again". The slogan was first used by Ronald Reagan when he was running against Jimmy Carter. It is good to make your nation great but the methods of doing so also need to be spelt out.

One of Trump's first moves seems to be to erect a wall along the Mexican border. I am not going into whether the move is appropriate. What intrigues me is the symbolism of the move. Are we seeing the rise of a Walled Country? Can a nation become great by walling itself from the rest of the world?

President Trump has begun with the undo button. He has initiated the repealing of the Affordable Care Act and revived the controversial Keystone XL pipeline. But the shape of things to come is still far from clear.

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India, Singapore sign protocol

India and Singapore have signed the 3rd protocol for amending **Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA)**. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the revisiting of this treaty was important as it would help in govt's efforts to eliminate black money. Earlier India had amended the DTAA with Mauritius and Cyprus. The year 2016 has been historic as these double taxation avoidance agreements will block the routes to evade taxations. The Minister said from 2019, Switzerland will start giving India real-time information on investments by Indian entities in that country in 2018.

China, Nepal to conduct joint military drill

Nepal and China will hold their first ever joint military exercise early 2017. Although Nepal has been holding joint military exercises with other countries, including India and the United States, this is the first time the Nepali military would be holding such an exercise with China. The military drill named '**Pratihar-I**' will be focused on counter-terrorism and disaster management. To be held in Feb 2017, it will focus on training Nepali soldiers in dealing with hostage scenarios involving international terror groups.

India, Bhutan sign MoU

India has signed an agreement with Bhutan for assistance in green and sustainable construction of infrastructure in the Himalayan kingdom. An MoU was signed between Central Public Works Department (CPWD) under India's Ministry of Urban Development and the Department of Engineering Services, under Bhutan's Ministry of Works and Human Settlements for the purpose in Thimpu.

US defence bill

The US President Barack Obama signed a **\$618-bn** defence policy bill which, when in place, will enhance security cooperation with India. The **National Defence Authorization Act (NDAA)**,

which was passed by both the House and the Senate with veto-proof majorities, was signed by Obama in Honolulu, Hawaii. The highlights of the bill released by Arizona Senator and Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee John McCain said it enhanced security cooperation between the United States and India, under the 'Supporting Allies and Partners' section.

Pakistan test-fires Babur-3

Pakistan on 9 Jan successfully test-fired its **first Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile** capable of carrying a nuclear warhead up to 450km from an undisclosed location in the Indian Ocean, giving the country a "credible" second-strike capability. The missile, Babur-3, was fired from an underwater, mobile platform and hit its target with precise accuracy. Babur-3, which has a range of **450km**, is a sea-based variant of Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) Babur-2, which was successfully tested earlier in Dec 2016.

McDonald's sell China operation

The US fast-food giant McDonald's has announced to sell its businesses in mainland China and Hong Kong for \$2.08 bn to **Citic**, a state-owned conglomerate, and the **Carlyle Group**, a private equity firm.

Pakistan's landmark Hindu marriage bill

The Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights unanimously approved the much-awaited Hindu Marriages Bill, paving the way to its presentation in the Senate. The Senate committee under the chair of Muttahida Qaumi Movement Senator **Nasreen Jalil** took up the bill for discussion and later approved it. Considered as a comprehensive and widely-acceptable family law for Hindus living in Pakistan, the bill will enable the Hindu community to get their marriages registered and to appeal in courts of law in cases of separation. There are penalties for violating the provisions of the bill, which allows Hindus to finally have a proof of marriage

document called the **shadiparat**, similar to the **nikahnama** for Muslims. The bill also allows separated Hindu persons to remarry.

China builds world's highest altitude telescopes

China is setting up the world's highest altitude gravitational wave telescopes in a Tibet prefecture close to the Line of Actual Control with India with a budget of \$18.8 mn to detect faintest echoes resonating from the universe which may reveal more about the Big Bang theory. Construction has started for the first telescope, codenamed **Ngari No 1**, 30 km south of Shiquanhe Town in Ngari Prefecture. The telescope, located **5,250 metres** above sea level, will detect and gather precise data on primordial gravitational waves in the Northern Hemisphere. It is expected to be operational by 2021.

Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

The United Nations' 70th General Assembly has recognised the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. This recognises the importance of international tourism and particularly of the designation of an international year of sustainable tourism for development, in fostering better understanding among peoples everywhere, in leading to a greater awareness of the rich heritage of various civilisations and in bringing about a better appreciation of the inherent values of different cultures, thereby contributing to the strengthening of peace in the world.

India, Mauritius sign MoU

India and Mauritius on 16 Jan signed an MoU for cooperation in the field of cooperatives and related areas. The MoU was signed between Agriculture Minister **Radha Mohan Singh**, and the Indian Ocean island country's Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives Minister **Soomilduth Bholah**. The MoU will enable the two countries to collaborate in this vital sector and can significantly benefit thousands of Mauritians. India offered to exchange its expertise and technology with Mauritius in agro industry, fisheries and dairy sector.

India slips on global talent competitiveness

India has slipped three places to **92nd** rank on the global index of talent competitiveness that measures how countries grow, attract and retain talent, a

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