

## National

- The Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in its much-awaited tariff order issued on 30 April 2012, ordained the TV channels to carry a minimum of 100 free-to-air channels on their networks. As per the TRAI order, the basic service tier (BST) will comprise at least 5 channels of news and current affairs, infotainment, sports, kids, music, lifestyle, movies and general entertainment in Hindi, English and regional language of the concerned region.
- The information and broadcasting (I&B) ministry of India on 28 April 2012 notified the much awaited Cable Television Networks Rules, 2012, which paves the way for digitalisation of the sector in four metros.
- The Rajya Sabha on 27 April 2012 passed amendments to the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admissions) Act, 2006, exempting some central institutions from implementing the other backward castes (OBC) quota. The institutions where implementation of the Act exceeds the 50 percent reservation limit fixed by the Supreme Court will fall under the amendment.
- The Rajya Sabha, the upper house of Indian parliament, on 24 April 2012, passed the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill 2010. The amendment seeks to provide the right to receive home-based education to children with severe disabilities.
- The Supreme Court of India on 23 April 2012 dismissed a petition challenging the appointment of Lieutenant General Bikram Singh as the next Army Chief. Bikram Singh is slated to succeed General V.K. Singh as the army chief after the latter completes his tenure in the office on 31 May 2012. In a petition filed on 4 April 2012, the army chief designate Singh was accused of being indulged in a fake encounter in the Kashmir Valley during a counter-insurgency operation.
- Supreme Court of India on 18 April 2012 upheld Election commission's poll symbol rules. It entitled a political party the status of state party and common symbol for its candidates only if it secures not less than 6 percent of the total votes polled in a state and returns at least two members to the assembly.
- The Union Cabinet on 12 April 2012 gave its approval to the introduction of a Bill seeking an amendment in the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969. The aim is to include registration of marriages as well and to maintain necessary records and statistics for registration of marriages.
- The Supreme Court of India on 12 April 2012 upheld the constitutional validity of the Right to Education Act, 2009, which mandates 25 per cent free seats to the poor in government and private unaided schools across the country. However, the act will apply uniformly to government and unaided private schools except unaided private minority schools.
- The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court on 10 April 2012 directed the Union government of India and the Uttar Pradesh government to ensure that there is no reporting on movement of troops by the print or electronic media.
- The Union government on 17 May 2012 cleared a Rs 8500-crore project under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) with an objective to connect 6000 habitations in the 78 naxalite-affected districts of nine states. Under the project money will be utilised for new connectivity and upgradation of habitations, which will be an

addition to the core network, approved in 2002 by the Union Ministry of Rural Development.

- The Supreme Court of India on 8 May 2012 directed the Union Government to eliminate the Haj subsidy completely by reducing it gradually over the next ten years. The court further ruled that the amount of Haj subsidy should be used for the uplift of the community
  - a) **Haj Subsidy:** The Haj subsidy is a subsidy provided to Indian Muslim Hajj pilgrims by the Union Government of India through a heavy concession in airfare. Pilgrims who apply through the Haj Committee of India are entitled to the reduced fare. The Government of India reimburses the subsidy to Air India.
- The Supreme Court of India on 27 April 2012 held that Farmers whose land is acquired for a public purpose are entitled to the highest market value as compensation. The Supreme Court's ruling came following a case of land acquisition in Punjab's Faridkot district where the land owner was awarded a compensation of 1 lakh rupees per acre despite the land was located in commercially important area.