

## **February 6<sup>th</sup> news:**

### **International:**

#### **Maldives Chief Justice Arrested As President Abdulla Yameen Declares State Of Emergency**

Maldives President Abdulla Yameen on 5<sup>th</sup> February declared a state of emergency, ordered security forces into the Supreme Court and arrested a former president, in moves the opposition called a "purge" in the Indian Ocean island nation.

Maldives police also arrested Chief Justice Abdulla Saeed and another Supreme Court judge, dramatically escalating the legal battle with the archipelago's top court.

The president has defied a Supreme Court ruling handed down last week, which revoked terrorism charges against nine leading opposition figures including the country's first democratically elected president, Mohamed Nasheed, who is now in exile.

The court ordered the opposition figures, six of whom are being held in the country's main jail on a sparsely inhabited island, to be freed.

Police arrested another former president, Maumoon Abdul Gayoom -- who is also Yameen's half-brother -- at his residence along with his son-in-law. Gayoom ruled the country for 30 years until 2008, and is now in the opposition. Gayoom's son Faris is one of the jailed opposition figures ordered freed by the court. Yameen, who has held his position since 2013, faces mounting pressure at home and from the United States and India to obey the court's order.

The Maldives is made up of 26 coral atolls and 1,192 islands. Politics centres on the tiny but densely populated capital Male.

China, the United States and India issued travel advisories for the Maldives, a country of 400,000 people best known as a beach paradise for the tourists that provide most of its foreign currency revenue.

The tumult comes during the peak tourism season. Tourism brought in \$2.7 billion of revenue for the Maldives in 2016.

Amnesty International said that the 15-day emergency declaration must not become a licence for further repression.

The Maldives has experienced political unrest since Nasheed, the island's first democratically elected leader, was forced to quit amid a mutiny by police in 2012.

The following year, Yameen defeated Nasheed in an election that Nasheed's supporters say was rigged. Nasheed was jailed on terrorism charges but was allowed to go to Britain for medical treatment in January 2016. He has lived in exile since and is currently in Sri Lanka.

### **Persons in news:**

**Amitabh Kant:** Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant was given an extension till June 30, 2019. Kant, a 1980 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, was appointed the Chief Executive Officer of NITI Aayog on February 17, 2016 for a two-year term. His extension order was issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)