

News 1 - Government inked a credit agreement of USD 50 million with the World Bank under IDA for Nai Manzil Scheme.



01-Jan – The World Bank has signed a Financing Agreement for IDA credit of US\$ 50 million (equivalent) for the "Nai Manzil - Education and Skills Training for Minorities". The project size is 100 Million USD. The balance amount of USD 50 Million will be funded from the Union Budget. Minority BPL (below poverty line) youth in the age group of 17-35 years will be the main beneficiaries of the project. This project takes an integrated and all-inclusive approach towards education and skill development of the minority youth, to address the high dropout and unemployment rate among them.

News 2 - Ex-post facto approval for signing of MoU among BRICS countries on BRICS Network University.



01-Jan – The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its ex-post facto approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among BRICS countries on BRICS Network University. The MoU will help in developing pro-active cooperation among the BRICS nations for the purpose of enhancement of scientific research, higher education, information exchange, analysis and implementation of best practices, joint research programs.

News 3 - Kamlesh Chandra panel constituted by the Government to study wage structure of Gramin Dak Sevaks.



02-Jan – A one-man panel comprising of Kamlesh Chandra, Retired Member of the Postal Services Board, was formed by the Government. This committee was constituted to examine the wage structure and service conditions of Gramin Dak Sevaks in the Department of Posts (DoP). The Gramin Dak sSvak Committee will be assisted by T.Q. Mohammad, who will act as Secretary to the Committee. This committee will review the existing facilities, the service discharge benefit scheme and other social security benefits of Gramin Dak Sevaks. Apart from that, it will also examine and suggest any changes in the method of minimum qualification for engagement as GDS considering the proposed induction of technology in the Rural Post Offices.

News 4 - Eight states to implement DBT in kerosene from April 1.



02-Jan – After the successful implementation of DBT in LPG, the government is going to roll out DBT in kerosene in 26 districts across eight states — Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. This scheme will be implemented from April 1, 2016. Under this scheme, the users will buy the cooking fuel at the market rate and get the subsidy money directly in their bank accounts. The amount of cash subsidy that would be paid to the consumer directly into their account will be the difference between the current public distribution system (PDS) price of about Rs 12 and the market rate of Rs 43 per liter. This move will help curtail subsidy outgo for kerosene, which in 2014-15 was Rs 24,799 crores. The Centre has allocated 8.6 million kiloliters of PDS kerosene to states for FY16. These states will be given 75% of subsidy savings during the first two years, 50% in the third year and 25% in the fourth year.

News 5 - Fifteen states agreed to join Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY).



03-Jan – Mr. Piyush Goyal, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Power, Coal and New & Renewable Energy said that Fifteen States, which include Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, Punjab and Maharashtra, have agreed to join the UDAY Scheme. As per this scheme, the state governments are to take over 75% of the short-term liabilities of their respective discoms and issue bonds against them.

News 6 - NABARD, NRSC signed MoU for monitoring Watershed Projects.



03-Jan – The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC). The MOU was signed for web-based monitoring of Indo-German Watershed Development projects. This web-based monitoring of Indo-German Watershed Development projects will happen in three states – Gujarat, Rajasthan and Telangana. As per the MOU, NRSC will create a separate page for NABARD on Bhuvan web-portal. NRSC will develop customized software tool and mobile application for real time monitoring, online comparison and visualization with respect to activities implemented in the projects.

News 7 - First power project under TBCB incentive regime commissioned by Sterlite Grid.



03-Jan – The transmission project of Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (RAPP) has been commissioned ahead of schedule, since the implementation of tariff-based competitive bidding (TBCB) scheme. RAPP is constructed by Sterlite Grid. RAPP Transmission Project was completed at an estimated cost of 275 crore rupees. It will benefit the states of Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana.

News 8 - IRB Infra gets Rs 10,050 crore rupees' project to construct Zojila Pass tunnel project.



04-Jan – IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd will build the Rs 10,050 crore Zojila Pass tunnel road project in Jammu and Kashmir, making it the country's biggest road project by cost. Once completed, the tunnel will also be the longest, 14.08 km, in South East Asia. Presently, Chenani-Nashri tunnel at 9 km is the country's longest road tunnel. It will provide all-weather connectivity between the Jammu and Kashmir regions with Leh Ladakh. Zojila is situated at an altitude of 11000 ft.

News 9 - PM Narendra Modi inaugurates the 103rd Indian Science Congress in Mysuru.



04-Jan – Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 103rd Indian Science Congress (ISC) at University of Mysore campus in Karnataka on 3rd of January, 2016. The theme of this five-day event this year was "Science & Technology for

Indigenous Development in India". The Prime Minister also presented 28 awards, including six gold medals to Nobel Laureates, ISCA Best Oral Presenter, ISCA Best Poster, ISCA Young Scientists, C V Raman Birth Centenary Award. Science and Technology and Earth Sciences Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan unveiled the Indian Science Congress Mega Expo "Pride of India-Frontier Science and Technologies".

News 10 - Central Government set to launch River Information System for Inland Waterways.



04-Jan – The Union Ministry of Shipping is planning to launch the River Information System for Inland Waterways in the country, which will help improve navigation for Inland Waterways. The government is set to expand the network across the country through the National Waterways Bill, 2015. The bill is already passed by the Lok Sabha and currently pending with the Rajya Sabha. The Inland Waterway Authority of India (IWAI), a statutory body under the aegis of Union Ministry of Shipping is implementing the RIS in India. The first phase of the program will cover 145-km stretch of National Waterways 1 (Phase I- Haldia to Farakka) on the Ganges River.

News 11 - Gujarat government asked to make Gujarat State Cooperative Tribunal serviceable by the SC.



05-Jan – The Supreme Court (SC) bench headed by the Chief Justice of India, TS Thakur asked the Gujarat government to make the Gujarat State Cooperative Tribunal functional by hiring people against the vacant posts. As per the directions of the Supreme Court, the tribunal cannot be allowed to remain non-functional.

News 12 - India-Nepal Bus Service resumes after a gap of 27 years.



05-Jan – Friendship bus service between India and Nepal resumed after it was suspended 27 years ago in the wake of the Indo-Nepal Trade and Transit Treaty much to the delight of the people on either side of the border. The bus service runs between Kanchanpur in Nepal to Anand Vihar ISBT in New Delhi. Kanchanpur borders Banbasa in Champavat district of Uttarakhand.

News 13 - Cabinet approves MOU between India-Singapore on civil aviation.



06-Jan – The Union Cabinet has approved a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed between India and Singapore to establish mutual co-operation in the field of civil aviation. Master-planning and design. Traffic and Commercial development

The salient features of this MoU include:

- Cargo handling and Management
- Training
- Maintenance, repair and overhaul
- Service quality improvement
- Operation and management and any other areas with mutual consent.

News 14 - Union Cabinet approves Stand Up India Scheme.



06-Jan – The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the "Stand Up India Scheme" to promote entrepreneurship among SC/ST and Women entrepreneurs. The Scheme is intended to facilitate at least two such projects per bank branch. It is expected to benefit at least 2.5 lakh borrowers. The expected date of reaching the target of at least 2.5 lakh approvals is 36 months from the launch of the Scheme. It provides for refinance window through Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) with an initial amount of 10000 crore rupees. The scheme facilitates bank loans repayable up to 7 years and between 10 lakh rupees – 100 lakh rupees for greenfield enterprises in nonfarm sector set up by such SC, ST and Women borrowers. It will create credit guarantee mechanism through the National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company (NCGTC).

News 15 - Women to constitute 33% of constables in Para-Military Force.



06-Jan – The Government has approved 33% reservation for women at the constable rank in two major central paramilitary forces CRPF and CISF and also setting a 15% quota in the border forces BSF, SSB and ITBP effective immediately. Out of 9 lakh troops in all these forces combined, women constitute a mere 20,000.

News 16 - Cabinet approves creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund for MUDRA loans.





06-Jan – The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the creation of a Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) loans and to convert MUDRA Ltd. into MUDRA Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) Bank as a wholly owned subsidiary of SIDBI. The Fund is expected to guarantee more than Rs 1,00,000 crores worth loans to micro and small units in the first instance. The Credit Guarantee Fund for MUDRA Units (CGFMU) has been established for guaranteeing loans sanctioned under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana with effect from 8 April 2015. The RBI has allocated Rs 20,000 crores and the first tranche of Rs 5000 crores has been received by MUDRA as refinance.

News 17 - "Watan Ko Jano", An initiative which aims to connect youth from J&K with Rest of India.



07-Jan – Watan Ko Jano is an initiative carried out by the Ministry of Home Affairs along with the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Government. It came in highlight after more than 240 youth from J&K in the age-group of 15 to 24 met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. It is a Youth Exchange Program that aims at exposing the youth of Jammu and Kashmir to the vibrant development and vitality of the culture and people residing in other states. A similar group of 250 such youngsters had participated in the Watan Ko Jano tour and met Home Minister Rajnath Singh on 29th December, 2015.

News 18 - Cabinet okays 'Sampoorna Arogya Keralam' medical care project.



07-Jan – The Kerala State Cabinet has approved plans to implement the 'Sampoorna Arogya Keralam' project announced in the 2015-16 State budget. With this, 42 lakh families with an annual income of less than Rs. 3 lakhs will be the beneficiaries. Sampoorna Arogya Kerala Trust, headed by the Chief minister, will monitor and implement the project. The corpus fund set up is Rs 20 crores. The beneficiaries will get up to Rs 2 Lakhs through a Smart Card.

News 19 - Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry merged with MEA.



प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्रालय
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

07-Jan – The government has merged the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) with the Ministry of External Affairs. The merger of the two ministries was done in order to avoid duplication of work and to improve efficiency. The merger is expected to increase efficiency in MEA's emergency work abroad.

News 20 - Atal Mission Plans for Punjab and Uttarakhand for 2015-16 approved by the Union Government.



07-Jan – The Union Government approved the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) for Punjab and Uttarakhand for the year 2015-16. Punjab Government will invest 720 crore rupees in improving basic urban infrastructure in 16 cities, whereas Uttarakhand will spend 267 crore rupees in 6 cities under the action plan. With this, the government has approved city level Service Level Improvement Plans (SLIPs) for 469 cities and towns in 20 States with a total project expenditure of 20137 crore rupees out of which central assistance will be about 10000 crore rupees.

News 21 - Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurates implementation of E-enabled Track Management System.



07-Jan – Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu on 11 January 2016 inaugurated. Implementation of E-enabled Track Management System (TMS). Mobile Application of TMS on Indian Railways.

With the implementation of E-enabled Track Management System (TMS), various activities of Track Inspection, Monitoring and Maintenance came on IT platform. The TMS Mobile Application is developed to use the Track Management System on mobiles and tablets and thus it is very useful for senior management and for officials on the move.

News 22 - Parliament suggested to enact a separate law by the Supreme Court for Child Rape.



07-Jan – Supreme Court advised the Parliament to enact a separate law in order to deal with child rape cases. The suggestion was given in response to a writ petition filed by the Supreme Court Women Lawyers Association (SCWLA). The bench was headed by Justice Dipak Misra.

News 23 - Asian Development Bank gives loan worth \$840-Million towards corridor between Vizag, Chennai.



07-Jan – Teresa Kho, Country Director – India, ADB said that the Asian Development Bank will grant a \$625 million loan to the proposed \$840 million Visakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor.

The industrial corridor will have four nodes – Visakhapatnam, Kakinada, Gannavaram-Kankipadu, and Yerpedu-Srikalahasti.

News 24 - 20th National Youth Festival inaugurated by Nitin Gadkari in Naya Raipur.



12-Jan – The 20th National Youth Festival was inaugurated by the Union Minister Nitin Gadkari at Rajyostav Sthal in Naya Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The festival was celebrated to mark the National Youth Day. Chhattisgarh was chosen as the partner state for the 20th National Youth Festival, with the theme India Youth for Skill, Development and Harmony.

News 25 - Union Cabinet approves MoU between India and Maldives for co-operation in Health Sector.



13-Jan – The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Maldives on co-operation in the field of Health. Management of healthcare sector and public health services.

Highlights of the MoU are:

- Assistance in development of human resources.
- Assistance in setting up of health care facilities.
- Procurement of generic and essential drugs.
- Medical and health research development.
- Health promotion and disease prevention.
- Telemedicine

News 26 - NHAI signed MoU with ISRO and NECTAR to monitor National Highways.



13-Jan – NHAI has signed Memorandum of Understanding with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) under Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and North East Centre for Technology Application and Research (NECTAR) for use of spatial technology for monitoring and managing National Highways.

News 27 - 2nd Liquid Chemical Berth of Mumbai Port Trust inaugurated.



13-Jan – Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Mumbai Port Trust's second liquid chemical berth at Pir Pau, Mumbai. Now, the cargo handling capacity of the Port will increase by 2.5 MMT (Million Metric Tonnes) per annum. The project is built at an expense of 127 crore rupees and is designed to handle 55000 DWT (deadweight tonnes) vessels carrying liquid bulk chemicals and POL products.

News 28 - Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana approved by the Union Cabinet to boost the farming sector.



13-Jan – The Union Cabinet approved ‘Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme)’ to boost the farming sector. The Scheme is in line with One Nation – One Scheme theme. Farmers will have to pay a uniform premium of 2% for all kharif crops and 1.5% for all rabi crops.

Key benefits under this new Scheme:

- For annual commercial and horticultural crops, farmers will have to pay a premium of 5%.
- The remaining share of the premium will continue to be borne equally by the Centre and the respective state governments.
- There will be no upper limit on government subsidy and even if balance premium is 90%, it will be borne by the government.

News 29 - Draft for the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2015 released.



14-Jan – The Union Government released The Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2015, which recommends reservation benefits for transgenders. The Draft Bill was prepared by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Highlights of the Bill:

- Creation of welfare boards at the Centre and State level for the community.
- Transgender Rights Courts.
- Two per cent reservation in government jobs.
- Prohibits discrimination in employment.
- Provisions for pensions and unemployment allowances for members of the community.
- Transgender students will be able to avail scholarship, entitlements, fee-waiver, free textbooks, free hostel accommodation and other facilities at subsidized rates.

News 30 - Government Launches Mobile Health Services to Support Public Health Infrastructure.



15-Jan – The Union Government announced the launch of four mobile health (m-Health) services - Kilkari, Mobile Academy, M-Cessation and TB Missed Call initiative. Kilkari is an audio-based mobile service that delivers weekly audio messages to families about pregnancy, child birth and child care. Mobile Academy is a mobile-based application aimed at providing training services to 9 million ASHAs.

- M-Cessation is an IT-enabled tool to help tobacco users to quit tobacco.

- TB Missed Call initiative is a dedicated toll free number 1800-11-6666. It will provide round the clock counselling and treatment support services for TB patients.

News 31 - India's Grid-linked solar generation capacity crosses 5,000 MW mark.



15-Jan – India's grid-connected solar power generation capacity has reached the 5,129.81 MW mark, with Rajasthan on top (1,264.35 MW) followed by Gujarat (1,024.15 MW) and Madhya Pradesh (678.58 MW). The Government has an aspiring plan to have 175 GW of power generation capacity from renewable sources which includes 100 GW from solar and 60 GW from wind, by 2022.

News 32 - First 'Mahila Squad' Commissioned for High-Altitude Posts of India-China Border.



15-Jan – The first "Mahila" squad commissioned into the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in Panchkula deployed in high-altitude posts along the India-China border. The squad consists of freshly-trained contingent of 500 women, in the rank of a constable. These 'Mahila' contingents would be posted by March 2016 at about 20 forward locations of the ITBP. The force led by Director General Krishna Chaudhary plans to have women personnel make up at least 40% of its strength at these forward posts.

News 33 - Start-up India initiative launched by PM Narendra Modi.



16-Jan – Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Start-up India initiative to boost startup biome in the nation in New Delhi. The Prime Minister also declared the Start-up India, Stand-up India Action Plan. The plan highlighted the initiatives and schemes being undertaken by the Government to address various aspects relating to developing a conducive Start-up ecosystem in the country.

The main highlights of Start-up India, Stand-up India Action Plan:

- A separate fund of 10000 crore rupees' corpus (2500 crore rupees a year for four years) will be created for

development and growth of innovation driven enterprises.

- The Atal Innovation Mission was declared under which, 35 new incubators, 7 new research parks, 31 innovation centers would be set up.
- 500 sector specific incubators, including 5 new Bio clusters will be established across the country.
- An innovation program to be started in 5 lakh schools throughout the country to foster innovation among 10 lakh children.
- The first three years would be tax-free for the Start-Ups including a moratorium on labor inspections for as many years.

News 34 - NITI Aayog teams up with IDFC for Enterprise Survey of Manufacturing Firms.



16-Jan – The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog declared that it is joining hands with the IDFC Bank Ltd to conduct an enterprise survey of manufacturing firms. The primary objective of this Survey is to assess the **Business Regulatory Environment** in each State and UT and identify policy and regulatory hurdles faced by businesses in the States/UTs. The Survey will bring out a comprehensive analysis and report on State-level performance.

News 35 - Government to introduce new category of award – Most Film Friendly State/UT under National Film Awards.



17-Jan – As part of the Government's effort to promote the Indian film industry and India's "Soft Power" it has been decided to institute a new award category under the National Film Awards titled "The Most Film Friendly State/UT". This award will be conferred for the first time at the 63rd National Film Awards to be held on 3rd May 2016. The award will be conferred by the Hon'ble President of India. The government also decided to establish a Film Facilitation Office to provide single window clearance to film makers and promote India as a Filming Destination.

News 36 - Ministry of Shipping initiates Project Green Port under Swachh Bharat Mission.

19-Jan – Ministry of Shipping has started ‘Project Green Ports’, which will help in making the Major Ports across India cleaner and greener. ‘Project Green Ports’ will have two verticals - one is ‘Green Ports Initiatives’ related to environmental issues and second is ‘Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan’. The Green Port Initiatives includes twelve initiatives, while the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan has 20 activities with certain time-line to promote cleanliness at the port premises.

News 37 - India signs Financing Agreement with World Bank for Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project.



20-Jan – The Financing Agreement for World Bank (IDA) assistance of US\$ 250 million for Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project was signed between Government of India and the World Bank. Improving Flood Risk Management.

This project has five components, which include:

- Enhancing Agricultural Productivity and Competitiveness
- Augmenting Connectivity
- Contingent Emergency Response
- Implementation Support

It is a loan for an implementation period of 5 years. Government of Bihar is the implementing agency.

News 38 - Government clears Policy on Promotion of City Compost.



20-Jan – The Union Cabinet has given its approval for a Policy on Promotion of City Compost. Under this policy, a provision has been made for Market development assistance of Rs 1500 per tonne of city compost for scaling up production and consumption of the product. Market development assistance would lower MRP of city compost for farmers. Compost from city garbage would not only provide carbon and primary/secondary nutrients to soil, but also help in keeping the city clean. Eco-Mark standard for City Compost would ensure that environment friendly quality product reaches the farmers.

News 39 - CCEA approves setting up of over 5000 MW of Grid-connected Solar PV Power Projects.





20-Jan – The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) gave its nod for setting up over 5000 MW of Grid-Connected Solar PV Power Projects on build, own and operate basis. The work will be implemented by Solar Power Developers (SPDs) with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) under Batch-IV of Phase-II of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM). The total investments expected under this scheme is about Rs 30,000 crores.

News 40 - Infrastructure Status granted to Shipyard Industry by the Union Government.



20-Jan – The Central Government approved Infrastructure Status to the Shipyard Industry. It will help to ease the financial stress of the industry, since they would now be eligible to avail flexible long-term funding at lower costs equivalent to the economic life of their assets. More benefits such as relaxed ECB norms, issuance of infrastructure bonds, benefits under Income Tax Act, 1961 etc., would also be available.

News 41 - Government approved six-lanes for NH-2 in Bihar and Jharkhand.



20-Jan – The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for development of the six lanes for the Aurangabad – Bihar/Jharkhand Border – BarwaAdda section on National Highway-2 in Bihar and Jharkhand. The work will be under the National Highways Development Project (NHDP) Phase-V. The approval is in BOT (Toll) mode on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (BOT/DBFOT) basis. The cost is estimated to be Rs.4918.48 crores including the cost of land acquisition, resettlement and rehabilitation and other pre-construction activities. The total length of this road will be approximately 222 KM.

News 42 - Cabinet approves amendments in Power Tariff Policy.



20-Jan – The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Power for amendments in the Tariff Policy. The amendments are also aimed at achieving the objectives of Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) with the focus on 4 Es: Electricity for all, Efficiency to ensure affordable tariffs, Environment for a sustainable future, Ease of doing business to attract investments and ensure financial viability.

The key amendments include:

- 24X7 supply will be ensured to all consumers and State Governments and regulators will devise a power supply trajectory to achieve this.
- Reduce power cost to consumers through expansion of existing power plants.
- Swachh Bharat Mission to get a big boost with procurement of 100% power produced from Waste-to-Energy plants.

News 43 - Indian Bureau of Mines signs MOU with National Remote Sensing Center.



21-Jan – Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM) has inked a MoU with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) for monitoring mining activity through satellite technology. NRSC is expected to carry out a pilot project to demonstrate the use of satellite imagery in monitoring mining activity changes over a period of time in select mine groups at two IBM locations. The latest project, named Sudoor Drishti, is part of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's digital India drive.

News 44 - ONGC gets environmental permission for 53000 crore rupees KG basin project.



22-Jan – The Ministry of Environment and Forests Oil gave Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) clearance for drilling 45 developed wells in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin in Andhra Pradesh. The total cost of the project is estimated at 53000 crore rupees. The proposed development drilling and further, development of fields will help produce of 51.33 billion

cubic meters of gas over a period of 16 years and 26.71 million cubic meters of oil in 12 years. However, the ministry has asked ONGC to obtain Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) clearance and approval from Directorate General of Shipping for commencement of drilling.

News 45 - India Submits its first Biennial Update Report to UNFCCC.



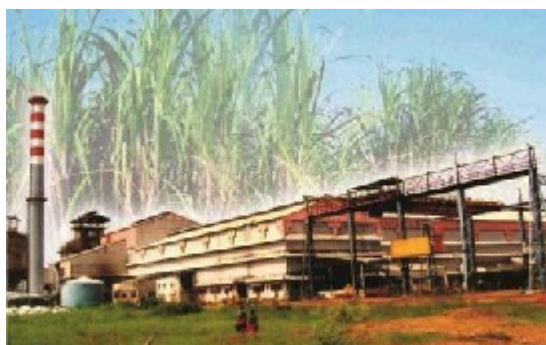
22-Jan – India submitted its first Biennial Update Report (BUR) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), towards fulfillment of the reporting obligation under the Convention. As per this report, India emitted 2,136.84 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent greenhouse gases in 2010. About 12% of emissions were offset by carbon sink action of forests and croplands, considering which the national GHG emissions are arrived at a total of 1,884.31 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. As on 13th January 2016, 23 countries other than India have submitted their BURs. China is yet to submit its BUR.

News 46 - MSDE, DoT sign MoU to develop and implement National Action Plan for Skill Development in Telecom Sector



22-Jan – The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Telecommunication (DoT) to develop and implement National Action Plan for Skill Development in Telecom Sector. MSDE and DoT together have agreed to make concerted joint efforts towards skill development by facilitating mobilization of financial support for various activities. PSUs under DOT will be advised to utilize at least 20 percent of their CSR funds for skilling purposes. As per the Skill Gap Study, the Telecommunications Sector in India is expected to show a strong growth of around 15% between 2013-17.

News 47 - Environment Ministry notified stricter standards for Sugar Industry.



22-Jan – The Government has notified stricter environment standards for sugar industries so as to minimize water pollution. The revised standards will lead to improved operational performance of sugar industries through implementation of wastewater discharge standards and waste water conservation and pollution control management protocol. The standards have been recommended by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) after consultations with industries and other stakeholders, as well as seeking comments from general public. Wastewater has now been limited to 200 liters per tonne of cane crushed against the earlier limit of 400 liters. The final treated effluent discharge has been restricted to 100 liters per tonne of cane crushed.

News 48 - India-France signed 16 agreements.



24-Jan – India and France signed 16 agreements at the India-France Business Summit in Chandigarh that covered urban development, water and waste treatment, urban transport and solar energy. 9 different French companies signed MOUs with Engineering Projects India for urban sector development.

The highlights of the agreements include:

- MoU with French Development Agency and the respective state governments for development of smart city in Nagpur, Chandigarh and Puducherry.
- An agreement was signed between Airbus Group and Mahindra to manufacture helicopters under the 'Make in India' initiative.

News 49 - Union Government has announced Sahaj Scheme for online reservation of LPG cylinders.



25-Jan – The Central Government launched Sahaj Scheme for booking of LPG cylinders online. The booking can be done through the incorporated web portal www.mylpg.in which is available in 13 languages. The government has an ambitious target to add 10 crore new LPG connections by December 2018 to the existing 16.5 crore connections. With the help of the new facility, people will be able to book the cylinder around the clock. Earlier in January 2016, the Government dedicated the year 2016 as the "Year of the Consumers".

News 50 - Union Cabinet gave approval to increase in Authorized Share Capital of NSFDC.



27-Jan – The Union Cabinet gave its approval for enhancement of Authorized Share Capital of the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) working under the aegis of the Union Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment from Rs. 1000 crores to Rs. 1200 crores. This enhancement of share capital would expand the ambit of NSFDC coverage and increase disbursement of funds to larger sections of the economically deprived scheduled caste population. The target of NSFDC for the year 2015-16 is to cover 63,000 beneficiaries.

News 51 - Hybrid Annuity model for implementing highway projects: CCEA.



27-Jan – The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the Hybrid Annuity Model as one of the modes of delivery for implementing the Highway Projects. The main object of this approval is to revive highway projects in the country by making one more mode of delivery of highway projects. An important feature of the Hybrid Annuity Model for highways development is the rational approach adopted for allocation of risks between the PPP partners.

News 52 - Government declared 1st batch of 20 smart cities from 11 States and Delhi.



28-Jan – The Government announced the 20 winners of the Smart City Challenge competition for financing during this financial year. Smart City Mission is based on the ‘bottom up’ approach with the involvement of citizens. 3 cities from Madhya Pradesh, two each from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan and one each from the remaining five made it to the winning list. 20 winning cities and towns have proposed a total investment of Rs. 50,802 crores over five years with all the cities proposing Public-Private-Partnership.

The List of 20 smart cities is as follows:

| Rank | City | State |
|------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | Bhubaneswar | Odisha |
| 2 | Pune | Maharashtra |

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 3 | Jaipur | Rajasthan |
| 4 | Surat | Gujarat |
| 5 | Kochi | Kerala |
| 6 | Ahmedabad | Gujarat |
| 7 | Jabalpur | Madhya Pradesh |
| 8 | Visakhapatnam | Andhra Pradesh |
| 9 | Solapur | Maharashtra |
| 10 | Davanagere | Karnataka |
| 11 | Indore | Madhya Pradesh |
| 12 | New Delhi Municipal Council | Delhi |
| 13 | Combattore | Tamil Nadu |
| 14 | Kakinada | Andhra Pradesh |
| 15 | Belagavi | Karnataka |
| 16 | Udaipur | Rajasthan |
| 17 | Guwahati | Assam |
| 18 | Chennai | Tamil Nadu |
| 19 | Ludhiana | Punjab |
| 20 | Bhopal | Madhya Pradesh |