

# CURRENT AFFAIRS



January 2017

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## Current Affairs January 2017

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This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and big collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **January 2017**. This guide helps you in preparation for Indian competitive examinations like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade etc.

## Audience

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Aspirants who are preparing for different competitive exams like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade etc.

Even though you are not preparing for any exams but are willing to have news encapsulated in a roll which you can walk through within 30 minutes, then we have put all the major points for the whole month in a precise and interesting way.

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# APPOINTMENTS

## 1. David R Syiemlieh appointed as the new UPSC chairman

Mr. David R Syiemlieh has been appointed as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) with effect from January 4, 2017 till further Order or till completion of his term as member on 21.01.2018, whichever is earlier. Prior to this appointment, he was functioning as a UPSC member from June 25, 2012.

He will take over from Alka Sirohi, a former IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre.



## 2. Justice JS Khehar appointed as the 44<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of India

Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar was sworn-in as the 44<sup>th</sup> Chief Justice of India replacing Justice TS Thakur whose tenure ended recently. Justice Khehar's tenure will last till the 27th of August 2017.

Justice Khehar had led the five-judge constitution bench in the Supreme Court which struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act for appointment of judges. It will be Chief Justice Khehar's duty to resolve the differences of opinions about the draft memorandum of procedure for judicial appointments and transfers with the Government.



## 3. Surekha Marandi appointed as the Executive Director by RBI

The Reserve Bank of India appointed Surekha Marandi as its Executive Director (ED) replacing U S Paliwal, who retired recently. Surekha Marandi to take responsibilities of departments such as Consumer Education and Protection Department, Financial Inclusion and Development Department, and Secretary's Department.

Prior to this appointment, Surekha worked as Principal Chief General Manager and Chief Vigilance Officer in the Reserve Bank. She has working experience on the Boards of United Bank and Bank of Baroda.



#### 4. S Padmanabhan Appointed as the Chairman of Tata Power

Tata Power has appointed Mr. S. Padmanabhan as their Additional Director, effective from December 16, 2016.

Mr. Padmanabhan is currently the Executive Chairman, Tata Business Excellence Group (TBExG) and was recently given the additional responsibility as Head of Group HR for Tata Sons Limited. he joined Tata Consultancy Services Limited (TCS) in 1982. He was also the Executive Director-Operations of Tata Power from 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.



#### 5. Anil Jalali of IBM appointed as the HR Head of Capgemini for India Operations

Capgemini has appointed Anil Jalali as their Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) for its India operations, effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

Prior to joining Capgemini, Anil Jalali was the Executive Director, HR at IBN India. Anil will replace BL Narayan, Vice-President and the former HR Head. BL Narayan joined the Business Services Strategic Business Unit as Head of Solutions & Sales Support. Capgemini is a consulting, technology and outsourcing services company.



#### 6. IBM India appointed Karan Bajwa as their Managing Director

IBM has appointed Karan Bajwa as their Managing Director of IBM India Pvt. Ltd, succeeding Vanitha Narayanan who is appointed as the Chairman of IBM India Pvt. Ltd. Karan will be responsible for all strategic and operational matters related to IBM's sales, marketing, services and delivery operations in the India/SA region.

Karan joined IBM in 2016 as Executive for Strategy and Transformation in the Asia Pacific region. Prior to this he was the Managing Director, Microsoft India.





## 7. Donald Trump named Dan Coats as the new National Intelligence Director

US President-elect Donald Trump has named Dan Coats as his National Intelligence Director. The Indiana ex-senator formerly served on the Senate Intelligence Committee. Mr. Coats will need the Senate to confirm his appointment, replacing James Clapper.



The Director of National Intelligence is the President's Principal Adviser on matters of National Intelligence, overseeing the National Intelligence Program. It also oversees the US Intelligence Community. Mr Coats had earlier served in the US Army in the 1960s and joined the Senate in 1998.

## 8. SBI Pension Funds appointed Kumar Sharadindu as their MD & CEO

Mr. Kumar Sharadindu has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SBI Pension Funds. Prior to this appointment, Sharadindu was a General Manager at SBI Corporate Centre, Mumbai, heading the private equity business.



SBI Pension Funds, a subsidiary of State Bank of India (SBI), is one of the three pension fund managers appointed by Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) to manage the pension corpus of employees enrolled under the National Pension System (NPS) for government employees.

## 9. Flipkart appointed Kalyan Krishnamurthy as its new CEO

India's largest online retailer Flipkart appointed Kalyan Krishnamurthy as its new CEO replacing cofounder Binny Bansal, who has been further appointed as group CEO. Krishnamurthy will be handling Flipkart's profit and losses and marketing front for the Indian startup sector.



Prior to this, Krishnamurthy has served as finance and category management head in Flipkart. He has also worked as managing director of Tiger Global Management. This appointment was a part of management reshuffle that takes place every year.

## 10. Vikram Pawah appointed as the new President of the BMW Group India

Vikram Pawah has been appointed as the President of the BMW Group India, effective March 1, 2017. He will take over from Frank Schloeder. Schloeder will return to BMW Group Headquarters in Germany, where he will assume the position of Head of Business Steering - Luxury Class.



Mr. Pawah has more than 25 years of international experience both in the automotive and non-automotive industry. Most recently, he was the Managing Director of Harley - Davidson India.

## 11. Rajeev Singh appointed as the CEO of Prasar Bharti

Prasar Bharti selected Rajeev Singh as its new CEO. Prior to this, he was Member (Finance) in Prasar Bharati Board. Rajeev Singh will hold duties as the interim CEO of the public broadcaster replacing S C Panda, who will retire in February. SC Panda has been Acting CEO since October 2016, when previous CEO Jawhar Sircar had quit.



Singh's appointment was announced at a time when the public broadcaster is all set to revamp Doordarshan by introducing new prime time programming in February.

## 12. UN Behera takes charge as the new chairman of the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission

Retired IAS officer UN Behera took oath of office and secrecy as the new chairman of Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) in Bhubaneswar.



His duties would be the overall development of the electricity sector in the state and create an environment in which the power generating companies, power transmission companies, distribution companies would function well. Prior to this, he was Additional Chief Secretary to the Chief Minister. He was appointed as the OERC Chairman on the recommendation of the members of the Selection Committee.



### 13. Bharti AXA General appointed Sanjeev Srinivasan as their CEO

Top global insurance brand Bharti AXA General Insurance announced appointment of Sanjeev Srinivasan as CEO and Managing Director. Prior to this, he has been associated with Bharti AXA General Insurance since August 2016 as Chief Commercial and Principal Officer.

He will handle duties to plan market strategy and creating a customer based brand to bring in profitable growth. He has previous work experience with companies such as Fullerton India Credit Limited, ING Life Insurance, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd, Xerox India Limited and DHL Worldwide.



### 14. IPS officer Alok Verma appointed as the new CBI director

Delhi Police Commissioner and Senior IPS officer Alok Kumar Verma will be the new Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation. He will hold the charge of the premier investigating agency for the period of two years.

Mr. Verma, a 1979-batch IPS officer was selected by a three-member committee comprising Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Justice J S Khehar and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge.

The post of CBI Director was lying vacant for over a month following retirement of Anil Sinha.



### 15. Banwarilal Purohit selected as Governor of Meghalaya

President Pranab Mukherjee appointed Banwarilal Purohit as Governor of Meghalaya with additional charge. At present, he is Assam's Governor. The decision came after 80 employees of the Shillong Raj Bhavan wrote to the President and Prime Minister Narendra Modi asking resignation of former governor Shanmuganathan.

Also, two civil society groups Civil Society Women Organisation (CSWO) and Thma u Rangli (TUR) conducted a signature campaign for removal of governor Shanmuganathan. Meghalaya's new Governor is yet to be appointed.



# AWARDS

## 1. Bharatiya Jnanpith announces the Navlekhan Awards 2016

The Bharatiya Jnanpith Navlekhan Award for the year 2016 has been conferred upon Shraddha for her short story, 'Hawa Mein Phadphadati Chitthi' and on Ghyansham Kumar Devansh for his poem 'Akash Mein Deh'.



The award, given to young authors in Hindi for their first creations, consists of a statue of Goddess Saraswati, a citation and a cash prize each. Jnanpith will also publish their work.

## 2. NHPC CMD honoured at the 10<sup>th</sup> ENERTIA Awards 2016

Shri K.M. Singh, Chairman & Managing Director, NHPC Limited has been conferred the Power & Energy Persona's Award for Individual Excellence at the 10<sup>th</sup> ENERTIA Awards 2016, India & South Asia's Awards for Excellence in 'Sustainable Energy & Power'.



The award has recognized the contribution of Shri Singh who has over 37 years of rich and vast experience in the field of hydropower. Shri Singh took over the leadership of NHPC in September 2015.

## 3. British-Indian professor knighted in New Year's honours

Indian-origin British professor, Shankar Balasubramanian, received a Knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for his work as a co-inventor of Next Generation DNA sequencing, known as Solexa sequencing. Shankar is a professor of medicinal chemistry at the University of Cambridge



The New Year's Honours List 2017 also included Olympic stars Andy Murray, Mo Farah and Jessica Ennis- Hill. The other Indian-origin academics in the honours list are Kamaldeep Singh Bhui and Anita Thapar.

#### 4. J&K AACL announces the Best Book Award for year 2015

J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages announced the Best Book Award-2015, carrying a cash prize of 51,000 rupees, a citation, a memento and a shawl each, in various languages spoken in the State.

The winners are:

- **Dogri language** - Narinder Bhasin for Char Dishan Char Dham
- **Kashmiri language** - Prof. Ratan Lal Shant for Kashir Afsana Manzil Te Munaar
- **Urdu language** - Wali Mohammed Aseer Kishtwari for Tarekh-e-Awliya-e-Jammu Wa Kashmir
- **Pahari language** - Mohammed Maqbool Sahil for Parchhanwan
- **Gojri language** - Choudhary Fazal Mushtaq Kohli for Gujjar Gandhi.



#### 5. The 74<sup>th</sup> Golden Globe Awards announced

The 74<sup>th</sup> Golden Globe Awards honoured the best in film and American television of 2016. Meryl Streep was announced as the Cecil B. DeMille Lifetime Achievement Award honouree.

The key winners are:

- Best Motion Picture Drama: Moonlight
- Best Motion Picture Musical/Comedy: La La Land
- Best Director in Motion Picture-Drama: Damien Chazelle for La La Land
- Best Actor in Motion Picture-Drama: Casey Affleck for Manchester by the Sea
- Best Actress in Motion Picture-Drama: Isabelle Huppert for Elle
- Best Actor in Motion Picture or Musical or Comedy: Ryan Gosling for La La Land
- Best Actress in Motion Picture Musical or Comedy: Emma Stone for La La Land
- Best Foreign Language Film: Elle (France)



## 6. Amitabh Bachchan honoured with the US Embassy award

To appreciate actor Amitabh Bachchan's contribution towards US-India partnership and to help in ending tuberculosis in India and the US, the actor was honoured with the US Embassy award. The veteran actor has survived tuberculosis and has been the brand ambassador for this initiative.



The US Ambassador to India Richard R. Verma presented the award to Amitabh Bachchan. The actor has saved and eased the burden of the disease on families, communities, corporations and India as a brand ambassador by supporting the cause.

## 7. Four Indian American scientists nominated for the Presidential Awards

The outgoing US President Barack Obama has nominated four Indian-American scientists among 102 researchers for the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE).

The list includes:

- Pankaj Lal: He is an associate professor in the department of earth and environmental studies at Montclair.
- Kaushik Chowdhury: He directs the Next Generation Networks and Systems (GENESYS) Lab.
- Manish Arora: He is an environmental epidemiologist and exposure biologist.
- Aradhna Tripathi: Her lab at UCLA uses chemistry of natural compounds as well as models as tools to understand how the Earth works.





## 8. Tisca Chopra won the Best Actress Award at the Jio Filmfare Short Film Awards

Tisca Chopra won the Best Actress for Chutney at the Jio Filmfare Short Film Awards. Chutney also bagged Best Film (Fiction) award. The director of "Chutney" is Jyoti Kapur Das.

Tisca Chopra is an Indian film and stage actress known for her works in Hindi cinema, and Television. She has won the People's Choice: Stardust Best Supporting Actress Award for her role in Taare Zameen Par.



## 9. Joe Biden presented with the America's highest honour

US Vice-president, Joe Biden was presented with the highest civilian honour 'Presidential Medal of Freedom' by the US President Barack Obama. It was to honour him for his outstanding career in public service. The medal has been given with distinction, an additional honour that has been reserved in recent administrations for just a handful of recipients in the past, including Pope John Paul II.



Biden has served for more than three decades in the Senate, as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

## 10. The 62<sup>nd</sup> Filmfare Awards announced

The 62<sup>nd</sup> Filmfare Awards were announced at the NSCI Dome, Worli, Mumbai. Veteran Actor 'Shatrughan Sinha' was awarded 'Lifetime Achievement Award'. Top awards were bagged by movies 'Dangal' and 'Uda Punjab'. Ceremony was co-hosted by Kapil Sharma, Karan Johar and Shah Rukh Khan.

The top awards were:

- Best Actor (Male) – Aamir Khan (Dangal)
- Best Actor (Female) – Alia Bhatt (Uda Punjab)
- Best Director- Nitesh Tiwari (Dangal)
- Best Film: Dangal





## 11. Pentavalent Bio Sciences honoured with the Tata Social Enterprise Challenge

The Tata Social Enterprise Challenge 2016-17, a joint initiative of the Tata group and the Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM-C), celebrated India's most promising early-stage social enterprises, which could bring about long-term solutions to India's social needs. Pentavalent Bio Sciences Private from Bangalore emerged as winner for 2016-17 followed by Arogya Medtech from Kolkata as 1st runner-up and Bombay Hemp Company (BOHECO) from Mumbai as 2nd runner-up.



Prize money worth Rs2.5 lakh was given to winner. The ventures were judged on basis of business model, social impact and sustainability.

## 12. Kiran Doshi won The Hindu Prize 2016

Kiran Doshi has won The Hindu Prize 2016 at the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of The Hindu Lit for Life festival 2017 held in Chennai for his third major work of fiction, Jinnah Often Came to Our House.

The book is set against the political turmoil of the subcontinent from the early part of the 20th century, ending with the Partition and Independence.

The award carries a citation and a cash prize of ₹5 lakhs.



### 13. Twenty-five children selected for the National Bravery Awards

Twenty-five children including 13 girls have been selected for the National Bravery Awards 2016. Four of the awards have been given posthumously.

The awards are:

- Bharat Award: Late Kumari Tarh Peju of Arunachal Pradesh. She sacrificed her life while saving two of her friends from drowning.
- Geeta Chopra award: Tejasweeta Pradhan and Shivani Gond of West Bengal
- Sanjay Chopra award: Sumit Mamgain of Uttarakhand



### 14. Padma Awards 2017 announced

Padma Awards are conferred in three categories, namely, Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri. The President of India has approved the conferment of Padma Awards to 89 persons.

The list comprises of 7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri Awardees. Among these, 19 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 5 persons from the category of foreigners, NRIs, PIOs and 6 Posthumous awardees.



Some of Padma Vibhushan awardees are Shri K J Yesudas(artist), Sharad Pawar, Murlidhar Manohar Joshi and Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev.

## 15. Russian President Vladimir Putin honoured with the Hugo Chavez Prize

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro bestowed on Putin the Hugo Chavez Prize for Peace and Sovereignty of the People. It recognized "Putin as a great leader of peace". Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro stated that Putin is fighter for peace, for balance, and a builder of a pluripolar, multicentric world.



The Hugo Chavez Award doesn't give any prize money, instead honours with a smaller version of the Chavez statue. Putin has earlier received Confucius Peace Prize in 2011.

## 16. Ashok Chakra awarded to Havaldar Hangpan Dada

The highest peacetime military decoration award - The Ashok Chakra - was given on the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic day to Havaldar Hangpan Dada posthumously for his selfless service to the nation. The award was received by his wife Chasen Lowang Dada.



Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the three service chiefs paid tributes to soldiers at Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate by laying wreaths. The ceremony culminated with the national anthem and release of balloons, which lit up the cloudy sky with merry colors.

## 17. Three Indian origin persons awarded Australia's highest civilian honour

Three Indian origin persons Purushottam Sawrikar, Makhan Singh and Vijay Kumar were awarded Australia's highest civilian honour for their contributions in the field of medicine and community work. Purushottam Sawrikar, a Sydney-based medical practitioner, received Order of Australia medal for the year 2017. Makhan Singh Khangure from Perth was given the award for his service in the field of neuroradiology.



While, Vijay Kumar, was given the award for his service to medical research in the disciplines of nuclear medicine and biology. Over 950 Australians were named in the Australia Day Honours.

## 18. President announces the Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards 2016

The President of India has approved the conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards – 2016 on 36 persons which includes Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 05, Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak to 08 and Jeevan Raksha Padak to 23 persons; 07 awards are posthumous.

Jeevan Raksha Padak series of awards are given to a person who help in saving the life of a person. The decoration of the award (medal, certificate signed by the Home Minister and demand draft for lumpsum monetary allowance) is presented to the awardee.



## 19. Keshav Krishna honoured with the National Geoscience Award

Famous Scientist Keshav Krishna was honoured with the National Geoscience Award for 2016 by National Geophysical Research Institute in the presence of the Union Minister of Mines. It was to recognize his efforts in the field of geo-environmental studies.

At present, Krishna is working on environmental risk assessment contaminated soil and bioavailability of contaminants. He has working experience of 16 years in Environmental Geochemistry research in soil and environmental pollutants. He always looks forward to curtail the pollution from environment and make it more safe for survival of population.





# BOOKS & AUTHORS

## 1. New Delhi World Book Fair held at Pragati Maidan

The 44<sup>th</sup> edition of the New Delhi World Book Fair was held in New Delhi at Pragati Maidan. The theme of the fair was "Manushi" focusing on writings on and by women.

The 9-day-long fair, organised by National Book Trust in association with India Trade Promotion Organisation aimed to show and project the diversity of writings by women writers.

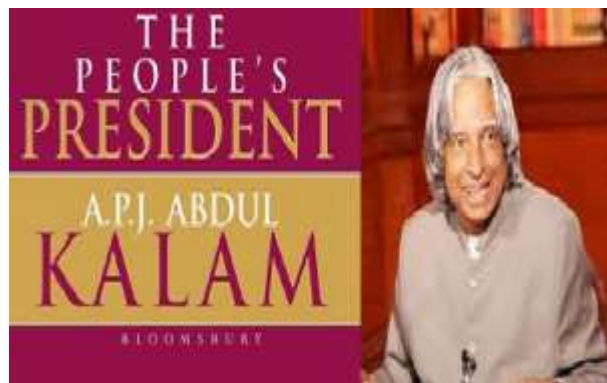


The focus of this Book Fair was on the 'Culture of Reading'.

## 2. Book on Dr. Kalam titled 'The People's President: Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam' released

The book titled "Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam: The People's President", penned by the President's press secretary S M Khan was released in New Delhi. The book has lesser known facts and stories about the great Dr. Kalam.

Abdul Kalam was the 11<sup>th</sup> President of India from 2002 to 2007. He was known as the Missile Man of India for his work on the development of ballistic missile and launch vehicle technology. He was a recipient of several prestigious awards, including the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour.





### 3. Former wrestler Mahavir Singh Phogat's biography released

Former wrestler and coach Mahavir Singh Phogat's Autobiography - Akhada: The Authorized Biography of Mahavir Singh Phogat was released. The book is written by sports journalist Saurabh Duggal.

This book traces Mahavir Phogat's journey with his daughters and nieces winning medals for the country.

Mahavir Singh Phogat was awarded the Dronacharya Award by the Government of India.



The recently released Bollywood film Dangal is also based on Singh's life and his children's journey towards success.

### 4. The 5-day Jaipur Literature festival held in Rajasthan

The Five-day Jaipur literature festival was held in Jaipur where many literature lovers participated. Popular poet Gulzar, spiritual Guru Jaggi Vasudev and Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje inaugurated the festival.

The five-day festival was witnessed with celebrated writers, thinkers, journalists, historians, poets, novelists and musicians where they discussed and shared their experiences with the audiences. Freedom to Dream was organized in the festival where writers discussed about their dreams and dreams of India.



# COMMITTEES

## 1. Government forms a committee to review the country's arbitration mechanism

To review institutionalization of arbitration mechanism in India, law ministry formed a committee under the leadership of Justice B N Srikrishna, to improve India's arbitration mechanism and develop arbitration ecosystem in the country. Justice B N Srikrishna along with its committee check skill gaps of arbitration system.



The committee will have to review, plan and analyze the mechanism, followed by identifying amendments in laws and constituting empanelment of national and international arbitrators. This will also improve research and development impacting the domain.

## 2. A 9-member Government panel to recommend in the National Sports Code

The government has formed a nine-member government panel formed to make recommendations for bringing out a comprehensive National Sports Development Code across all disciplines. The committee, headed by Sports Secretary Injeti Srinivas, will study issues related to sports governance including court judgements and best international practices.

### Members:

- Abhinav Bindra
- Prakash Padukone
- Anju Bobby George
- FIH president Narinder Batra
- Gymnast Dipa Karmakar's coach Bishweshwar Nandi
- Lawyer Nandan Kamath
- Sports journalist Vijay Lokapally



The joint secretary sports (MYAS) will be the ninth member.

### 3. Expert Group on SECC submits report to MoRD Shri Tomar

The Government mounted the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC) with the purpose of ranking households for receiving benefits under government programs. The Socio Economic and Caste Census has been concluded.



An Expert Group under the Chairmanship of former Finance Secretary Shri Sumit Bose was constituted to study the objective criteria for allocation of resources to States. The Expert Group has concluded that the use of SECC data and its TIN Number would enable the government to improve the efficacy of its interventions and will result in improved outcome.

### 4. Reservation for girl students in IITs recommended by Timothy Gonsalves committee

The Timothy Gonsalves committee has recommended reservation for girl students in IITs to address the issue of decrease in number of female students entering these institutes. The reservation for girl students will not affect the number of seats for male candidates.



The committee has suggested creating up to 20% supernumerary seats for girls out of the total number of seats. But only candidates who have already qualified in JEE-Advanced will be considered.

## 5. Negotiation Committee constituted on Mahanadi by Water Resources Ministry

Water Resources Ministry constituted a negotiations committee to assess availability and utilization of waters of Mahanadi and its tributaries. The committee will examine existing water sharing agreements on the river and will consider claims of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Jharkhand regarding availability and utilization of waters of these rivers.

It will be chaired by Member, Central Water Commission and will include representatives from Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Jharkhand. Other members include from Agriculture Ministry, Environment Ministry, Water Resources Ministry, and Met department.



## 6. Sports Minister Vijay Goel reconstituted a committee to identify athletes under the TOP Scheme

Sports Minister Vijay Goel reconstituted TOP committee with the objective of identifying and supporting potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games under the "Target Olympic Podium" scheme. The committee will select elite athletes to provided financial assistance for their customized training at Institutes having world class facilities and other necessary support. The reconstituted committee has 10 members now.



A program, namely TOP (Target Olympic Podium) Scheme was formulated within the overall ambit of National Sports Development Fund. Under the scheme the selected athletes are provided financial assistance for their customized training at Institutes.



# DEATHS

## 1. Nagaland's former NPCC President & Minister passed away

Nagaland's former Minister and former President of Pradesh Congress Committee K V Pusa passed away at the age of 63. Pusa served as the Nagaland Minister for Veterinary and Animal Husbandry from 1998-1999 and Minister for Roads and Bridges from 2000-2003 in S C Jamir led Congress government.

He was also the member of Nagaland Assembly in the opposition bench for two terms from 2003-08 and 2008-2013. Besides being a tall political leader, Pusa had served as leader in student's organization.



## 2. Bambi artist Tyrus Wong passed away

Tyrus Wong, whose works inspired the Disney film Bambi, passed away at the age of 106 years. A Chinese immigrant, Mr Wong's vibrant paintings captured Walt Disney's eye and became the basis of the film's distinct style.

Mr Wong emigrated to the United States from China as a child, with his father - leaving behind his mother and a sister he would never see again. After studying as an artist, he began working with Disney in 1938 as an in-betweenner, drawing hundreds of pictures between poses to create the illusion of motion.



## 3. Karnataka Minister H S Mahadeva Prasad passed away

Karnataka Cooperation and Sugar Minister H S Mahadev Prasad passed away at the age of 58 years. He died of a massive heart attack.

Prasad represented Gundlupete constituency in Chamarajanagar district. he was the minister for food and civil supplies in 2004. He also held the post of Minister for Kannada and Culture in 2007. He was appointed the President of the District Congress Committee Chamarajnagar in 2010.





#### 4. Veteran actor Om Puri passed away

Veteran actor Om Puri passed away at the age of 66 years after suffering a heart attack. He has acted in both Hollywood and Bollywood movies. Some of his best movies are Aakrosh, Arohan and Ardh Satya.

Om Puri was the recipient of the Padma Shri award, the fourth highest civilian award of India. He was awarded an Order of the British Empire as well.

He is also the recipient of two National awards and two Filmfare Awards including a Lifetime Achievement Award.



#### 5. Noted Sitar Player Abdul Halim Jaffer died

Noted sitar player Abdul Halim Jaffer Khan passed away at the age of 88 years. Khan hailed from the Indore Gharana and is credited for innovating the unique music style of 'Jafferkhani Baaj'.

He was conferred with the Padmashri, Padma Bhushan and Sangeet Natak Akademi awards. He played the sitar for various Bollywood films, including "Mughal-E-Azam", "Kohinoor", "Goonj Uthi Shehnai" and "Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baaje", among many others.



#### 6. Renowned Manipur based historian Gangmumei Kamei passed away

Renowned Manipur-based historian, litterateur and scholar Gangmumei Kamei passed away at the age of 77 years. He had served as a professor of History in Manipur University, and was also elected president of the Northeast India History Association (NEIHA) in its Kohima session of 1986.

Kamei was also a member of the Advisory Committee of the Anthropological Survey of India (1984-87), and a member of the ICSSR panel on Tribal Studies.



## 7. Former Portuguese President Mario Soares passed away

Former Portuguese President Mario Soares passed away in Lisbon at the age of 92 years. He is considered as the 'Father of Democracy' in Portugal.

The founder of Portugal's Socialist party, Soares spent decades in politics. He served as Portugal's Prime Minister, twice, and then as President. He served as President from 1986 to 1996 and Prime Minister from 1976 to 1978 and from 1983 to 1985.



He also served as the foreign minister and an MP of the European Parliament.

## 8. Former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani passed away

Former Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani passed away at the age of 82 years. Rafsanjani was a dominant figure in the country's politics since the 1980s.

He served as the President from 1989 to 1997 but lost to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad when he contested for President again in 2005. Mr. Rafsanjani was a close aide of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the leader of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Before his presidency, he was the Speaker of the Iranian Parliament for nine years.



## 9. Former German President Roman Herzog passed away

Roman Herzog, who as the President forced Germany to embrace economic reforms in the 1990s and emphasized the importance of remembering the Nazi Holocaust passed away at the age of 82.

He was a distinctive personality who advocated readiness for reform and at the same time stood for preserving the tried and tested. Herzog won the presidency in 1994, four years after reunification. He was one of the first leaders to address Germany's resistance to reform.



## 10. Veteran British war correspondent Clare Hollingworth passed away

Veteran British war correspondent Clare Hollingworth, who broke the news of the Nazi invasion of Poland, passed away in Hong Kong at the age of 105 years.

Hollingworth, who was born in Leicester in 1911, was the first person to report on the invasion that triggered the outbreak of the World War II. She went on to report from Vietnam, Algeria and the Middle East. Hollingworth was a rookie reporter for the Daily Telegraph when she fell upon the scoop of the century.



## 11. Punjab's former CM Surjit Singh Barnala passed away

Former Punjab Chief Minister Surjit Singh Barnala passed away at the age of 99. He served as the Governor of Tamil Nadu from 1990-91 and 2004-2011, whereas he has also been the Governor of Andhra Pradesh from 2003-2004. He held the post of Union Agriculture Minister in the Janata Party Government of Morarji Desai from 1977-1979. He served as the Chief Minister of Punjab from 1985 to 1987.



Some of his noted decisions were when as Governor of Tamil Nadu, Barnala refused to recommend dismissal of the DMK government in 1991.

## 12. National award-winning filmmaker Deepak Roy passed away

The National award-winning filmmaker Deepak Roy passed away at the age of 67 years. He is known for his movie "Limit to Freedom" which won him a National award in 1996 under the category of best investigative film.

Deepak Roy started his career as a film critic in 1974 and ventured into direction in 1982. He directed and produced more than 90 documentary films. One of his other creation, feature film "Dhanna", also won National award in the best film on other social issues category.



### 13. Veteran film actress Geeta Sen passed away

Veteran film and stage actor Gita Sen, wife of filmmaker Mrinal Sen, passed away in Kolkata at the age of 86 years. She was suffering from old age-related ailments.

Many film and theatre personalities including director Goutam Ghosh visited the residence of Sens and consoled Mrinal Sen (93) who is also ailing and their son.

Gita Sen had acted in several films including 'Kolkata 71' and 'Akaler Sandhane'. She had also been part of the theatre movement.



### 14. Eugene Cernan, last man on the moon, passed away

Eugene A. Cernan, the last astronaut to leave his footprints on the surface of the moon, has passed away at the age of 82 years.

Cernan earned several distinctions in his 13 years with NASA. He was the second American to walk in space and one of three men to have flown twice to the moon. But he's best remembered as commander of Apollo 17, the last mission to the moon in December of 1972.



### 15. Former Chhatisgarh minister Tarun Prasad Chatterjee passed away

Tarun Prasad Chatterjee, Senior Congress leader and former state minister, passed away at the age of 68 years.

He was a four-time MLA from Raipur rural constituency in 1980, 1990, 1993 and 1998 and three-time Mayor of Raipur Municipal Corporation. He was also the Public Works Department (PWD) minister between 2002 and 2003.

Tarun Prasad Chatterjee was the general secretary of Chhattisgarh Pradesh Congress Committee from 2003 to 2013.





### 16. Indian scientist C.V. Vishveshwara passed away

Indian Scientist CV Vishveshwara, first director of the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium passed away at the age of 78. He made a historic discovery in Black Holes research in India. He was famous at communicating science to the public and used Kannada language to make astronomy more interesting for Kannada people.

Prof. Vishveshwara penned several books, including 'Einstein's Enigma, or, Black Holes in My Bubble Bath'. He witnessed synchronized announcement of the first discovery of gravitational waves at IUCAA.



### 17. Veteran poet Naqsh Lyallpuri passed away

Famous Urdu poet and lyricist Jaswant Rai Sharma, known to the world by his penname Naqsh Lyallpuri passed away at the age of 89 years. Some of his famous lyrics were in films like "Chetna", "Aahista Aahista", "Tumhare Liye", ""Gharonda", etc.

Lyallpuri penned two books; "Teri Gali Ki Taref" (collection of non-filmly shayari) and "Angan Angan Barse Geet" (featuring his songs from films, TV serials, and music albums). He was also a founder member of the Indian Performing Rights Society.



### 18. US Emmy award-winning actress Mary Tyler Moore died

Emmy award-winning US actress Mary Tyler Moore died at the aged of 80. She was best known for her television roles in the 1960 sitcoms - 'The Dick Van Dyke Show' and the eponymous The Mary Tyler Moore Show which went on till the 1970s.

She was also nominated for a best actress Oscar in 1980 for the film - Ordinary People. Born in Brooklyn, New York, Moore moved to Los Angeles when she was eight years old and started her career in the show business as a dancer at the age of just 17.





## 19. Alexander M. Kadakin, Russian Ambassador to India passed away

Alexander M. Kadakin, Russian Ambassador to India passed away due to heart attack. He was 67 years old. Alexander Kadakin was known for his strong statements in support of India, especially on the issue of terrorism and skills in Hindi language.

He had served as a junior diplomat in the then USSR Embassy in Delhi in 1971, ambassador to India between 1999 to 2004 and then since 2009. Kadakin had immense support for further improvement in Indo-Russian ties.



# DEFENSE

## 1. India successfully test-fired Agni-IV intercontinental ballistic missile

India successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable strategic ballistic missile Agni-IV from a test range off Odisha coast. It was flight tested from launch complex - 4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Dr. Abdul Kalam Island.

It was the 6<sup>th</sup> trial of the indigenously developed Agni-IV missile. Agni-IV is a surface-to-surface missile and has a range of up to 4,000 kms. It weighs 17 tonnes and is 20 meters long. It is equipped with state-of-the-art Avionics, a 5<sup>th</sup> generation on-board computer and distributed architecture.



## 2. Air Marshal Anil Khosla AVSM VM takes over as the AOC-in-C Eastern Air command, IAF

Air Marshal Anil Khosla AVSM VM took over as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Eastern Air Command from 01 Jan 2017.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, he was commissioned in the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1979. He is a post graduate from Defence Services Staff College and holds two MPhil. degrees in military studies.

He has been awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Vayu Sena Medal and has been commended by the CAS.



### 3. CSL delivers the 20<sup>th</sup> Fast Patrol Vessel to India Coast Guard

Cochin Shipyard Limited entered contract in October 2010 for delivering 20 FPVs. Thus, CSL finished its contract by delivering the 20<sup>th</sup> Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) to the Indian Coast Guard. This 20<sup>th</sup> FPV is called as ICGS AYUSH. ICGS Ayush will be operated from the Coast Guard Station at Krishnapatanam.

CSL has been delivering these vessels every 2 months since 2013. These FPVs have a total length of 50 meters and a beam of 7.6 meters. They are smaller than the previous versions. These FPVs act as a communicating link for fisheries.



### 4. Khanderi, the second Scorpene class submarine, launched

Khanderi, the second Scorpene class submarine was launched from the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited in Mumbai. It has a superior stealth mode and the ability to launch a crippling attack with torpedoes as well as tube-launched anti-ship missiles whilst underwater or on surface. Khanderi is the name for Tiger Shark.

Khanderi is the second of the six submarines being built at MDL in collaboration with M/s DCNS of France, as part of Project 75 of the Indian Navy. The first one, Kalvari, is completing sea trials and will be commissioned shortly into the Indian Navy.



### 5. BSF launched operation 'Sard Hawa' at Rajasthan border

To check the situations of infiltration due to the dense fog in the area, the Border Security Force (BSF) has launched operation 'Sard Hawa' at the western international border of Rajasthan. The operation was carried out daily till the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2017.

BSF Jawans will have the duty to patrol with advanced weapons in the police station areas near to the border. It is a part of strict vigilance considering dense fog on the international border and to motivate Jawans. Deployment of Jawans has also been increased at the border.



## 6. The 4<sup>th</sup> joint Indo-Oman Air Exercise Eastern Bridge IV at Jamnagar

The fourth joint Indo-Oman Air Exercise Eastern Bridge IV was concluded at Air Force Station Jamnagar which commenced on 16 Jan 2017. This was the first time that RAFO F-16s participated in an air exercise outside the Gulf Countries.



The Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO) participated with five F-16 Block 50 Air Defence Fighters belonging to No. 18 Squadron based at Thumrait. IAF participated in the exercise with Su-30 MKI Air Dominance Fighters, MiG-29 Air Superiority Fighters, Jaguar Maritime Strike aircraft and MiG-27 aircraft.

## 7. India's largest warship INS Vikramaditya is the first to have an ATM onboard

INS Vikramaditya, the largest warship and latest aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy, has a strength of over 1500 personnel. The ship has a new acquisition – an ATM machine installed onboard by the nation's largest bank and banking network, the State Bank of India.



The facilities offered by the State Bank of India to the ship include cash withdrawals, generation of mini-statements, access to bank balance details and change of PIN numbers.

Soon, this facility will be upgraded to a recycler machine with a cash deposit facility.

## 8. Newly transformed Pinaka rockets test fired successfully

Since the previous version of the Pinaka Rocket was not a properly guided version, the newly transformed version of this rocket now comes with a better navigation system. It was successfully test fired from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur in Odisha. This latest version of the Pinaka rocket's control kit is developed by the Research Centre, Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad.



The new Pinaka II will have a range of more than 70 kms. New radars, electro-optical systems and telemetry systems at the ITR can track and monitor the rocket all through its flight path.

### 9. Army Chief Gen. Bipin Rawat launched Whatsapp helpline for grievances of the Army personnel

The Chief of Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat launched a Whatsapp helpline to receive grievances of the army personnel. The helpline number is 9643300008. The aggrieved armed personnel will be able to directly communicate with the Army Chief with the help of this helpline.



It comes in the backdrop of complaints being uploaded by some soldiers on the social media platform. Earlier, redressal of individual grievances by serving personnel was carried out through established mechanisms within the Army.

### 10. Navy's Theatre Level Exercise, TROPEX 17, gets underway

The Indian Navy's Annual Theatre Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX) got underway on 24 Jan 17. This month long exercise will have ships and aircraft of both the Western and Eastern Naval Commands. This exercise is being conducted off the Western Seaboard. The last edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2015.



This exercise is aimed at testing combat readiness of the combined fleets of the Indian Navy and the assets of the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard to strengthen inter-operability and joint operations in a complex environment.



## 1. India's Petronet signed an MoU to Setup \$950 Million LNG Project in Bangladesh

India's largest liquefied natural gas (LNG) importer, Petronet, has signed a deal to set up a US Dollars 950 Million LNG import project in Bangladesh.

Petronet signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Petrobangla, the government-owned national oil company of Bangladesh. It will help to setup a 7.5 million tonnes-a-year project. It will receive and regasify LNG on Kutubdia Island in Cox's Bazar and lay a 26-km long pipeline to connect it to the consumption markets.



## 2. The output of country's eight infra industries' grows 4.9% in November 2016

Output of India's eight infrastructure industries grew 4.9 percent in November 2016, helped by a healthy performance of the electricity sector. The eight infrastructure sectors had grown 0.6 percent in November 2015, and 6.6 percent in October 2016.

Refinery output rose 2 percent and cement output rose 0.5 percent in November. But crude oil production declined 5.4 percent and natural gas production contracted 1.7 percent.



### 3. Rs. 23,500 Crores realized via disinvestment this year so far

Government has realized around 23500 crore rupees during the current financial year so far from disinvestment of its stake in the Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). This includes 21432 crore rupees through minority stake sale in 14 CPSEs and around 2096 crore rupees through strategic disinvestment.

The disinvestment target for the current financial year has been set at 56,500 crore rupees. It comprises 36,000 crore rupees from disinvestment of CPSEs and 20,500 crore rupees from strategic disinvestment.



### 4. Centre waived additional charges on e-payments

The Centre asked state governments to ensure that no additional charges are levied on e-payments to urban local bodies and consider rolling out incentives like cashback on utility bills paid through digital means.

Urban local bodies to consider launching incentives like giving one per cent cash back on utility bills paid through various e-platforms. Centre has launched a massive drive to promote payments through cards and digital means which will help the country move towards a less-cash economy.



### 5. Azure Power commissioned a 150 Megawatt Solar Power Project

New Delhi based leading solar power producer Azure Power commissioned a 150-megawatt power project in Punjab. Azure Power entered solar power implementation agreement with Punjab Energy Development Agency. It is done with the aim to supply power to Punjab State Power Corporation Limited for 25 years.

This project will benefit Azure Power in creating discretionary long term cash flow for the company.

The solar power plant will help in electrifying Punjab completely and will create job opportunity in the state.



## 6. Google launched My Business and Digital Unlocked tool

Google India announced the launch of a brand-new tool for the small and medium businesses in India — "My Business". This tool will help small businesses in setting up a website from their mobile devices.

Google also launched "Digital Unlocked". It is an education programme in association with industry body FICCI and Indian School of Business. This program will help in imparting mobile and online courses that will help small businesses in a very big way.



## 7. India's GDP growth estimated at 7.1% this year

As per the advance estimates of the CSO, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is estimated at 7.1% in 2016-17 as compared to the 7.6% in 2015-16. The per capita net national income during 2016-17 is estimated to be Rs. 10307/- showing a rise of 10.4% as compared to Rs. 93290/- during 2015-16 with the growth rate of 7.4%.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector is likely to show a growth of 4.1% during 2016-17. The manufacturing sector is estimated to grow by 7.4% in 2016-17.



## 8. Indian Government imposed anti-dumping duty on Bangladesh, Nepal jute products

The Indian Government imposed an anti-dumping duty ranging from 6.30 US dollars to 351.72 US dollars per tonne on imports of jute and its products from Bangladesh and Nepal.

This anti-dumping duty has been imposed to protect the domestic industry. The duty has been imposed for five years. The import restrictive levy has been imposed on jute yarn, twine, Hessian fabric and jute sacking bags in all forms and specifications.



## 9. Tata Motors and Castrol announces a global strategic partnership

Tata Motors and Castrol announced the signing of a three-year strategic partnership agreement for supply of Commercial Vehicle Oils to Tata Motors globally.

This agreement will cover over 50 markets including SAARC and ASEAN region, Middle East, Africa, Russia and Latin America. Castrol with its established presence in these markets, will support Tata Motors' channel partners with high quality products and services to enhance their market share and profitability.



## 10. World Bank cuts India's growth rate to 7% after demonetization

The World Bank has decelerated India's growth for 2016-17 fiscal to 7% from its previous estimate of 7.6% after considering the impact of demonetization and the fall in private investments.

The World bank has however predicted India to regain momentum in the following years with 7.6 and 7.8% growth with the various reform initiatives expected to unlock domestic supply bottlenecks and raise productivity. As per the report, India maintains the distinction of being the fastest growing emerging market economies of the world, bypassing China.



## 11. BIS revises Indian Standards on Gold Hallmarking

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has revised the Indian Standard on gold hallmarking, which is effective from January 1, 2017. The hallmarked gold jewelry will now be available in three grades of 14 carats, 18 carats and 22 carats.

The caratage will also be marked on jewelry in addition to fineness for convenience of consumers. Hallmark on gold jewelry will now have four marks, like the BIS Mark, the purity in carat and fineness, assaying center's identification mark and jeweler's identification mark.





## 12. Foreign tourist footfall on e-tourist visa rises 56% in December

Over 56% growth has been registered in foreign tourist's arrival on E-Tourist Visa in December 2016 over the same period in last year. A total of over 1,62,000 foreign tourists arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 1,03,000 during the last year.

United Kingdom with 22% continues to occupy top slot followed by USA 16%. The facility of e-Visa has been made available by the government to the citizens of 161 countries.



## 13. World Bank Projected Global Economic Growth at 2.7% in 2017

As per the World Bank's January 2017 Global Economic Prospects report, the global economic growth rate is predicted to accelerate moderately to 2.7% in 2017 compared with the 2.3% seen last year driven mainly by improvements in emerging markets and developing economies.

The growth in advanced economies is expected to edge up to 1.8% in 2017. The bank also predicted the growth in emerging market and developing economies to pick up to 4.2% this year from 3.4% in the previous year.



## 14. Government on course to achieve FY17 disinvestment target

The Government has garnered 23,500 crore rupees by divesting its stakes in the Public-Sector Undertakings so far in the current fiscal and is hopeful of achieving the disinvestment target of 56,500 crores during the current financial year.

Buyback of shares undertaken for the first time by central public sector enterprises has earned 15,000 crore rupees so far in the current fiscal.





### 15. Retail inflation fell to a 3-year low of 3.41% in December from 3.63% in November

Retail inflation fell to a nearly 3-year low of 3.41% in December 2016, from 3.63% in November. Inflation eased mainly because of the falling prices of vegetables and pulses.

As per official data, overall food inflation fell to 1.37% in December last year, from 2.11% in November. Retail inflation in the vegetables category slipped to -14.59% in December. Inflation in pulses and products fell to -1.57%. Retail inflation in cereals and products stood at 5.25%.



### 16. NITI Aayog projected India's GDP at 8%

Based on the Twelfth Five-Year Plan, India's GDP for 2016-17 has been estimated at 8% due to better monsoon and agriculture sector growth. As per the data released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO), manufacturing sector showed improved growth of 9.3 percent while agriculture sector grew at 2.3 percent.

There was not any mention of impact of demonetization. The 12th Plan is the last five-year Plan and from 2017-18, the Centre would adopt a three-year action plan and a fifteen-year vision document.



### 17. Global Employment projected to reach 3.4 million in 2017

The International Labour Organization stated that the global unemployment is expected to reach 3.4 million by 2017 and 3.6 million by 2018. Recently, the World Employment Social Outlook: Trends 2017, estimated that unemployed workers are rising 11 million a year globally.

ILO appreciated India for creating major amount of new jobs in 2016. ILO projected unemployment levels to rise by 450,000 in 2017 in developing countries and 5.5 per cent in 2017 and 2018.



### 18. NTPC signed an MOU with the Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd

A non-bounded MOU was inked between NTPC and Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd and Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd over the Chhabra Thermal Power Plant.

With this MOU, NTPC takes over Chhabra Thermal Power Plant Stage-I (4x 250 MW) and Stage-II (2x660 MW) of Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam. This decision came into action after Cabinet approved to divest equity of four units of thermal power plants in Rajasthan. This was to curtail loses made by Chhabra Thermal Power Plant.



### 19. December WPI inflation at 3.39%

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation for December is pegged at 3.39% as compared to 3.15% in November 2016, due to a rise in prices of manufactured items, even as food articles turned cheaper. Overall wholesale food inflation fell to minus 0.7% in December 2016, from 1.54% in November.

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) is the price of a representative basket of wholesale goods. Some countries use WPI changes as a central measure of inflation. But now India has adopted a new CPI to measure inflation.



### 20. BHEL Commissions a 500 MW Thermal Unit in West Bengal

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has commissioned the second 500 MW set at Sagardighi Thermal Power Station (TPS) Phase II project in Murshidabad district of West Bengal. The first unit of the 1,000 MW project was commissioned earlier by BHEL in December, 2015.

The project has been set up by the state-owned West Bengal Power Development Corporation (WBPDC). Presently, BHEL is also executing 3 units of 40 MW each of Rammam hydroelectric project of NTPC Limited, in West Bengal.



## 21. IMF downgrades India's FY17 growth rate to 6.6% from 7.6%

The World Economic Outlook (WEO) update released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has cut India's growth rate for the fiscal year 2016-17 to 6.6% from its previous estimate of 7.6%.

India's growth rate was cut due to the temporary negative consumption shock of demonetization. For China, the growth forecast for FY 2017 was revised upwards, to 6.5%, 0.3% point above the October 2016 forecast. In 2018, China's growth rate is projected to be 6% against India's 7.7%.



## 22. United Nations WESP 2017 projected India's GDP at 7.7%

The United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2017 report estimated India's GDP growth rate at 7.7% for fiscal 2017 and 7.6% for 2018, due to its strong private consumption and gradual significant domestic reforms. For 2016-17, the deficit is estimated to reach 3.5% of GDP and inflation at 5.7 in 2017.

It has also been revealed in the report that growing NPAs of banks could be a matter of concern regarding strong investment revival in the short term.



## 23. India's forex reserves soar by \$ 932.4 million to \$ 360.775 billion

Rising for the second consecutive week, India's Foreign Exchange Reserves soared by 932.4 million dollars to 360.775 billion dollars in the week ended January 20. As per the RBI, foreign currency assets, which constitute a major chunk of the forex reserves, had gone up by 926.4 million dollars to 338.434 billion dollars. India's forex reserves increased by 687.9 million dollars to 359.843 billion dollars.

India's gold reserves remained unchanged at 18.584 billion dollars. India's reserve position in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) increased by 3.7 million dollars to 2.315 billion dollars.





# ENVIRONMENT

## 1. New Ginger species discovered in Andamans

Scientists of the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have discovered a new species of Ginger from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The species *Zingiber pseudosquarrosus*, belongs to genus *Zingiber*.

The ginger is already in use among the tribals of the Andamans for its medicinal values. The fresh extract (juice) of fleshy tuberous roots of this species is used to treat abdominal pain and anti-helminthic troubles. It is edible and can be propagated vegetatively from the rhizome.



## 2. Scientists reveal a new fault in the Indian Ocean which may trigger earthquakes in future

Scientists, based on the study of seismic data recorded before, during and after the 2012 quakes and sea floor depth analysis, have revealed that a new plate boundary may be forming on the floor of the Indian Ocean in Wharton Basin. The study showed that the plate had broken along a 1,000-km fracture zone that can trigger more quakes in the future.



A Slip-strike earthquake occurs when two plates slide horizontally against one another.

### 3. SC described the effects of Endosulfan use to be devastating

The Supreme Court has described side effects of Endosulfan to be devastating and directed the Kerala government to release the entire Rs. 500 crore compensation to over 5,000 victims. Endosulfan is a highly toxic agrochemical (pesticide).



The major numbers of victims were reported to be affected in Kasargode (Kerala). The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in 2011 added Endosulfan in the list of banned substances and phasing it out as an agrichemical. It is banned in over 80 nations due to its 'high toxicity'.

### 4. Silicon identified as 'missing element' in Earth's core

A team of researchers in Japan have conducted experiments with results that indicate that silicon is likely the missing element in Earth's core. The earth's core is made up of 85% iron, 10% nickel and the remaining 5% could be silicon.



The discovery could help us to better understand how our world formed. The innermost part of Earth is thought to be a solid ball with a radius of about 1,200 kilometres.

### 5. Environment Ministry notified Graded Response Action Plan to combat air pollution in NCR

The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has notified a Graded Response Action Plan to combat air pollution in the NCR Delhi region. MoEFCC amended laws and formally tasked a Supreme Court-appointed panel with implementing a graded action plan for pollution control.



Graded Response Action Plan defines the measures to be taken based on air quality based on the PM 2.5 and PM 10 in the atmosphere. Based on the air quality the grades have been classified as Emergency, Severe, Very Poor and Moderate poor. It will be enforced by Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA).



## 6. Hilsa Fish became the first fish to attain legal protection

West Bengal State Department of fisheries is planning to include provisions under penal codes that will allow the arrest of anyone buying and selling the Hilsa Fish weighing less than 500 gms. It is an attempt to save the endangered Hilsa Fish from getting extinct. With this decision, Hilsa Fish became the first fish to attain legal protection.

Hilsa fish has been in danger due to migration barriers, over-fishing and pollution. Assessment of the production trends of the Hilsa from 1961 to 2013 has declined from 36 tonnes to 0.9 tonnes.



## 7. WEF and UCSB entered an MOU to save the World's Ocean Economy

To meet the ocean sustainable development goal, World Economic Forum and the UCSB's Marine Science Institute have united to improve health of world's oceans and maritime resources.

David and Lucile Packard Foundation will fund the project to advance ocean science, protection and management. As per the World Wildlife Fund, oceans generate goods and services worth an estimated USD 2.5 trillion per year, equivalent to the seventh largest economy in the world. Project will be supported by supported by the Benioff Ocean Initiative, an applied program within the University of California, Santa Barbara.



## 8. ISKCON's eco village becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> village to be honoured with a UN award

United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism honoured ISKCON's Govardhan eco village with UN award for adopting innovative measures of 'sustainable tourism' in country. It has been for the first time that India has won such recognition from the UN in the NGO sector.

The project linked tourism initiatives at the Govardhan Eco village by providing basic needs to the local tribal communities in villages.



## 9. India along with the UK launched a project against Delhi's air pollution

With alarming air pollution levels in Delhi, India partnered with British experts to check the causes of pollution. A project named 'ASAP-Delhi: An Integrated Study of Air Pollutant Sources in the Delhi National Capital Region' has been launched, where Birmingham team involves experts from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, the Indian National Physical Laboratory and the University of Surrey.



Experts will study the airborne particulate matter and analyze how the pollution is being generated. Further, results will be implemented to wider NERC program, thus improving population health.

## 10. IMD plans weather stations in 660 districts

The Indian Meteorological Department has decided to set up weather stations in 660 districts of the country. The plan envisages to cover 660 districts by 2019. In the first phase, the IMD plans to set up the system in 130 districts which have already been shortlisted.



The IMD has also tied up with the Ministry of Agriculture to use the Krishi Vigyan Kendras, under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, ICAR in the districts, to use them as weather forecasting observatories.

# FINANCE

## 1. Twelve PSU banks to raise Rs. 3,000 crores from the market

The Union Government gave approval to 12 proposals of PSBs to raise a sum of Rs. 2,914.038 crores through preferential allotment including that of United Bank of India to raise Rs 200 crore through Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) mode.

The move is aimed to strengthen capital base of public sector banks (PSBs). The government had already infused a sum of Rs. 25,000 crores in 19 PSBs during FY 2015-16.



## 2. PM launched BHIM Mobile App for Aadhaar-based digital payments

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a re-branded mobile application for the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), called Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM). It is a Aadhaar-based mobile payment application.

BHIM is a digital payments solution app based on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). The app would eliminate the fee payments for service providers like card companies such as MasterCard or Visa.



## 3. State Bank of India ties up with Magicbricks.com

State Bank of India, the country's largest bank and magicbricks.com, part of the times group a leading classified real estate portal, have signed a MOU to conduct joint marketing activities.

To kick start the MOU, SBI and Magicbricks are launching the "Seal the Deal" campaign. Under Seal the Deal, SBI and Magicbricks will be hosting a mega online property show for SBI Approved Projects. It will showcase SBI Approved Projects on the Magicbricks platform.



SBI Approved Projects on the Magicbricks platform.

#### 4. Mother Dairy launched Aadhar-enabled payment system at booths

Mother Dairy Fruit & Vegetable Pvt. Ltd introduced Aadhar Enabled Payment System in its Milk & Safal Booths to provide added convenience and to promote cashless transactions amongst its consumers.

It was implemented in more than 1000 Booths in record 3 days. The service was commissioned in association with CSC e-Governance Service India Ltd. under the aegis of Department of Electronics and Information Technology (Deity), Government of India.



#### 5. Twenty-six crore accounts opened under the Jan Dhan Yojana across the country

Over 26 crore accounts have been opened under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana across the country. The Scheme was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August, 2014 with the objective of covering all households with at least one bank account.

Nearly 16 crore accounts are in rural areas and more than 10 crores in urban areas. Over 71,500 crore rupees have been deposited in these accounts and zero balance accounts has come down to nearly 24 per cent. Around 20 crore RuPay Debit cards have also been issued under the scheme.



#### 6. RBI extended the period of enhanced Prepaid Payment Instruments limit

The Reserve Bank has extended the period of enhanced Prepaid Payment Instruments limit of Rs. 20,000 as part of efforts to promote digital payments.

To meet the transactional needs of the public through digital means, RBI had introduced additional measures by way of special dispensation for small merchants. While balance in such PPIs cannot exceed Rs. 20,000 at any point of time, the merchants can transfer funds from such PPIs to their own linked bank accounts up to Rs. 50,000 per month, without any limit per transaction.





## 7. Digi-Dhan Mela began in Mumbai

The Maharashtra state government organised a day-long Digi-Dhan Mela at Fort Campus of Mumbai University where it aided and trained people to use online platforms to conduct transactions.

The Digi-Dhan Mela aimed to generate awareness among citizens and merchants about various digital payment systems available. The initiative plans to enable citizens and merchants to undertake real time digital transactions through the Digi Dhan Mela.



## 8. Digi Dhan Mela organized at Meerut in UP

Digi Dhan Mela was organized at Meerut in Uttar Pradesh to create awareness among masses for the benefits of Digital Payment. Telcos placed their stalls to help public to download and run various E- Wallet Apps which are helpful in making online payments easy and safe.

The most attractive part of the Digi Dhan was Mela was the Lucky Grahak Puruskar Yojna and Digi Vyapar Yojna draws in which 15000 lucky customers were chosen for one thousand Rupee reward.



## 9. EPFO launched 'Enrolment and Establishment coverage campaign 2017'

To enrol EPFO workers who were not registered earlier, EPFO launched 3-month campaign called as 'Enrolment and Establishment coverage campaign 2017'. Employers will get amnesty and pay just Rs. 1 as damages for not registering their employees earlier.

The campaign presented the benefits of Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana and the Pradhan Mantri Paridhan Rojgar Protsahan Yojana. Under the scheme, a three-month window will be provided from January 1 to March 31, 2017. The scheme will increase the enrolment and reduce litigation.



## 10. Paytm gets final nod for payments bank

The RBI gave its final nod to PayTm to open its payments bank to bring financial inclusion to the un-served or unreached Indians. Paytm and 11 other companies applied for a payments bank licence in 2015.

Recently, Airtel launched with its payments bank in a few States. As per the RBI guidelines, it will allow payments banks to accept deposits of up to Rs. 1 lakh and transfer amounts more than Rs. 1 lakh into an account opened for the customer with the scheduled bank.



## 11. Munich Re to set up its reinsurance branch office in Mumbai

Because of the 2015 amendment of the Insurance Bill for foreign reinsurers to open branch in India, Munich Re is all set to open its first branch in Mumbai. Munich Re branch will combine its solution-based global expertise with local underwriting experts of the market. Munich Re deals in life and property casualty reinsurance business.

Munich Re is in tie up with HDFC Ergo for general insurance segment and with Apollo Munich Health for health insurance.



## 12. SIDBI ties up with LIC for capital support to enterprises

The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has tied up with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) for extending capital support to enterprises in the country to give a boost to the venture capital ecosystem for MSMEs.

SIDBI and LIC had signed a Memorandum of Understanding in April 2016 where LIC had earmarked an amount of Rs 200 crore for investment. LIC and SIDBI signed Contribution Agreements with 7 Venture Capital Funds (VCFs), with an aggregate commitment of Rs 99.50 crore from LIC.



### 13. Karnataka Bank launched a group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme named KBL Suraksha

Karnataka Bank has launched Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme under the scheme name "KBL Suraksha" which provides insurance cover for accidental death.

All the Bank's SB account customers between the age group of 18 to 70 years can subscribe to this scheme by paying a nominal annual premium of Rs.100 for Rs.10 lakh & Rs. 50 for Rs. 5 lakh coverage and the policy can be renewed up to the age limit of 75 years. Provision is also available for auto renewal of the policy with appropriate mandate facility.



### 14. Droom, Axis bank tie-up to provide quick loans on new and used cars

Indian online automobile transactional marketplace Droom has collaborated with the India's third largest private sector bank, Axis Bank, to provide quick sanction of loans on both new as well as used cars.

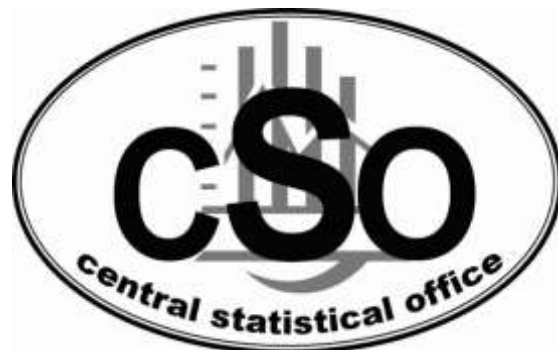
Loans will be provided for up to 85 percent of the value of the car with a tenure of 1-5 years. Customers can avail loans for used cars on vehicles up to the age of ten years at the end of the loan tenure.



### 15. CSO estimates Per capita income of Indians to cross Rs. 1 lakh in FY17

As per the 'First Advance Estimates of National Income, 2016-17' released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO), India's per capita income is estimated to be Rs. 103,007" at current prices in 2016-17, up from Rs. 93,293 in the previous fiscal.

This is higher by 10.4% during 2015-16. At constant prices, the growth rate in per capita income is estimated at 5.6% during 2016-17, as against 6.2% in the previous year.



## 16. India's Forex reserves up by USD 625.5 million to USD 360.296 billion

India's foreign exchange reserves have recorded a rise of USD 625.5 million to reach USD 360.296 billion in the week ended 30th December 2016.

Foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves, increased by USD 612.4 million to USD 336.582 billion. Gold reserves remained steady at USD 19.982 billion. India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund also rose by USD 4.9 million to USD 1.432 billion, while the country's reserve position too increased by USD 8.2 million to USD 2.299 billion.



## 17. RBI to provide rupees 1 billion in Rs. 100 notes to Nepal Rastra Bank

The Reserve Bank of India, RBI, has agreed to provide rupees one billion in Rs. 100 denomination notes to Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) to ease the acute shortage of 100 rupee notes faced by the Himalayan nation.

The NRB's plan to import INR 100 denomination notes was delayed due to the Indian Government's move to demonetize INR 500 and INR 1,000 notes on November 8. NRB is preparing to bring the amount within January.



## 18. General Anti-Avoidance Tax Rule to kick in from April 2017

As per the Central Board for Direct Taxes, the General Anti-Avoidance Rule, GAAR, will kick in from April 1, 2017. GAAR was part of the 2012-13 Budget speech of the then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee to check tax evasion and avoidance.

Its implementation was repeatedly postponed because of the apprehensions expressed by foreign investors as GAAR contains provision allowing the government to retrospectively tax overseas deals involving local assets.





### 19. FPIs net outflow at \$ 3bn in 2016; worst in 8 years

Foreign funds pulled out more than 3 billion dollars, from the Indian capital markets in 2016, making it the worst period in last eight years in terms of foreign investments.



Foreign Portfolio Investors have purchased stocks worth about 20,566 crore rupees, in 2016, but sold bonds to the tune of more than 43,646 crore rupees, resulting in net outflows of 23,080 crore rupees, as per the depositories data. Foreign Portfolio Investors had pulled out a massive 41,215 crore rupees in 2008 in the wake of the global financial crisis.

### 20. HDFC Bank helped TN temples go digital

Five temples in Kanyakumari district in southern Tamil Nadu have introduced digital wallets and PoS to enable their devotees pay donations. These temples have been assisted by HDFC Bank.

These temples include Arulmighu Thanumalaya Swamy Temple, Suchindrum; Arulmighu Bhagavathi Amman Temple, Kanyakumari; Arulmighu Nagaraja Temple, Nagercoil; Arulmighu Bhagavathi Amman Temple, Mondaikadu; and Arulmighu Kumaraswamy Temple, Velimalai. These temples come under the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department.

### 21. Automobile exports from India decline by 5%

Domestic auto sales across categories raised 9.2 percent to nearly 2.2 crore units in 2016. But country's automobile exports across categories fell 5 percent in 2016.



As per the latest data by Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers, overall exports during the year 2016 stood at 34.34 lakh units.

Major markets in Latin America and Africa continued to reel under high inflation and currency devaluation thereby impacting demand for vehicles exported from India.

### 22. Future Group's & SBI Card launch premium co-branded card

Future Group's fashion and lifestyle departmental store Central and SBI Card launched a co-branded credit card, to offer benefits to consumers in the premium lifestyle and fashion space.

The Central SBI SELECT and SELECT+ Cards offer an accelerated reward points structure, where cardholders earn 20 reward points for every Rs 100 spent in Central stores. The Card is the second by SBI Card and Future Group, after FBB SBI StyleUp Card introduced earlier in partnership with Big Bazaar.



### 23. Thirty more countries apply for joining the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank

There are thirty more countries who have applied for joining the China-sponsored Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in which India is the second largest shareholder.

China is the largest shareholder with 26.6 percent voting shares. India is the second largest shareholder with 7.5 percent followed by Russia 5.93 percent and Germany with 4.5 percent.



The US and Japan, however, stayed away from joining the bank.

### 24. A growth of 13.6% in foreign tourist arrivals in December 2016

Foreign tourist arrivals in India surged by 13.6 percent to 10.37 lakh in December on year-on-year basis earning foreign exchange of over 16,800 crore rupees.

As per an official statement, the Foreign Tourist Arrivals was 9.13 lakh during the month of December 2015. United States accounted for the highest share of tourist's arrivals, followed by Bangladesh and the United Kingdom the last month. Foreign Exchange Earnings during 2016 were 1,55,650 crore rupees with a growth of 15.1 percent as compared to 1,35,193 crore rupees in 2015.



### 25. Yes Bank in Association With T-Hub & Anthill Launched “YES FINTECH”

The YES BANK has launched YES FINTECH – a unique business accelerator program in collaboration with T-Hub - India's fastest growing start-up engine. Anthill, LetsTalkPayments, a global platform for financial technology (Fintech) insights is the Knowledge partner.

YES FINTECH will select start-ups from around the world to:

- Support and nurture disruptive solutions in Financial services delivery.
- Create scalable business and deploy innovative technologies within a collaborative framework.



## 26. Yes Bank launched the country's first customizable Savings Account

The YES BANK has launched a unique Customizable Savings Account that gives the customers, the power to choose various features of a Savings Account. Thus, YES BANK has become the first Indian Bank to introduce the customizable version of the traditional Savings Account.

It is a unique feature that gives customers, "Power to choose" usage based features including Debit card variants, ATM access and online banking packages. The Customizable Savings Account will continue to offer the high interest rate of 6% p.a.



## 27. CCEA gave approval for listing of five General Insurance Companies in stock exchanges

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given in-principle approval for listing of five government-owned General Insurance Companies in stock exchanges.

The listing would open way for the companies to raise resources from the capital market to meet their fund requirements. The government is planning to divest the shareholding of these companies from 100% to 75%. The companies are New India Assurance, United India Insurance, Oriental Insurance, National Insurance and General Insurance.



## 28. PNB signed MOU with India Post Payments Bank

The Punjab National Bank and India Post Payments Bank have entered an MOU, whereby PNB will make available technology platform for pilot launch of IPPB as and when it is given regulatory nod from the Reserve Bank of India.



The India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has been recently incorporated as a Public Limited Company under the Department of Posts with 100% GOI equity. IPPB will offer demand deposits such as savings and current accounts up to a balance of Rs. 1 Lac, digitally enabled payments and remittance services.

### 29. IRDAI's nod to Lloyd to open its first branch in India

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority gave its permission to London's grand insurance and reinsurance market Lloyd to inaugurate its 1st branch in India. Its first branch is going to be set up in Mumbai. Lloyd's will bring competition with its strong and variety in reinsurance market.



It has ability to bring new insurance offers as per the Indian market with a focus on agriculture, infrastructure and disaster management. Company would open its first branch office in India before April 2017.

### 30. Kerala Gramin Bank launched a novel program FI@School

Kerala have advanced a lot in financial inclusion, but there is one section which is still largely outside the purview of FI, considering which, Kerala Gramin Bank has come up with a project 'FI@School' to bring financial literacy among school children.



The Bank has directed all its branches to identify one such school in its specific area and conduct programs related to financial literacy such as kids debit card introduction, power kids smart account, etc. The bank has appointed magician Gopinath Muthukad as the brand ambassador for the project.

### 31. Kwalitiy Ltd inked MoU with Bank of Baroda to finance farmers



Dairy firm Kwality inked agreement with Bank of Baroda for providing Rs. 4,000 crore loans to the Kwality's one lakh farmers from whom the company procures milk. Since Kwality has a big network of farmers as its customers, it would cover the remaining farmers in subsequent phases over a period of time.



Loan disbursements made by the bank will be primarily used for purchase of milching animals, smartphone and two wheelers, in the wake of digitization and improve socio economic status of farmers.

### 32. Cabinet approves Short term market borrowing by NABARD

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave its post-facto approval to NABARD to make short term borrowings at prevailing market rate of interest for approximately Rs. 20,000 crores for on-lending to Cooperative Banks at 4.5% rate of interest.



Interest Subvention of about 1.8% and NABARD's administrative cost of 0.2% to be provided as per the scheme of Department of Agriculture, Cooperation. The approval will ensure increased availability of short term crop loans to farmers through Cooperative banks at reduced rate of interest.

### 33. Rescheduled Education Loan not under NPA category

RBI announced that if borrower of education loan is unemployed, rescheduling of payment period will not be treated as restructured accounts for computing NPAs. In other words, banks may allow up to three skip of moratorium (not exceeding 6 months each) during life cycle of education loan, on account of unemployment. This decision was made to boost education loans in the country.



The facility of extended repayment period and increased number of moratorium for repayment may be extended to existing borrowers who make payments regularly.

### 34. BCSBI to organize 'Know Your Rights' program

To teach the BCSBI codes awareness among public and increase the 'Financial Literacy' in the country, Banking Codes and Standards Board of India planned to conduct "know your rights" program in all the states. BCSBI will plan a three-fold approach on the basis of various locations such as Tier II cities, metros and other backward areas.



An educational program through an interactive session will be conducted and demonstration of digital banking, net banking etc. will be presented.

### 35. RBI prohibited direct investment in an overseas entity

Reserve Bank prohibited Indian entities from making direct investments in any overseas entity located in non-co-operative countries and territories. As per instructions under FEMA with the objectives of the FATF, there are certain non-co-operative countries and territories identified.



FATF takes care of the implementation of legal, regulatory and operational ways for controlling money laundering and terrorist financing. In other words, direct investment in an overseas entity acquired abroad directly as joint venture or indirectly has been prohibited.

### 36. Moneygram acquired by Alipay

China's biggest online payment platforms 'Alipay' entered an MOU and bought MoneyGram for USD 880 million, to increase its business in the US after India and Thailand have done so.



This step was also taken to provide financial services to Alipay's users around the world. Alipay is China's largest money market fund, Yu'eobao.

The decision to acquire MoneyGram is under consideration due to approval of MoneyGram's stockholders and regulatory approvals.

# IMPORTANT DAYS

## 1. United Nations declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has approved the adoption of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development recalling the potential of tourism to advance the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The International Year aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable tourism sector than can contribute effectively to the SDGs.



## 2. World Hindi Day observed across the globe

Since 2006, 10th January is observed as World Hindi day every year. Indian Embassy in Cairo and its cultural wing the Maulana Azad Centre for Indian Culture conducted cultural performances at Hanager Theatre in the Cairo Opera House. Hindi language is spoken worldwide by around 258 million people.

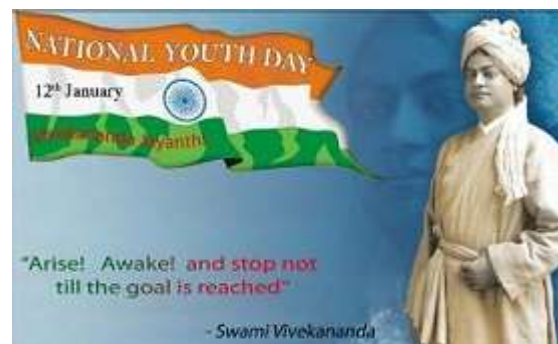


To promote Hindi language at global stage, 10<sup>th</sup> January is observed as World Hindi day. At present Hindi as a language is spoken in more than 20 countries around the world and is being taught in 150 Universities of the world.

## 3. National Youth Day celebrated on the 12<sup>th</sup> of January

The 12<sup>th</sup> of January was observed as the National Youth Day across India. It also marks the 154<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of India's foremost social reformer and philosopher, Swami Vivekananda. He is a role model for the Indian youth.

Every year this day is celebrated as the National Youth Day since the 12th of January, 1985 in recognition of Swami Vivekananda's ideals and teachings. National Youth Festival (India) is an annual gathering of young people associated with National Youth Day.



#### 4. India observed the 69<sup>th</sup> Army Day on the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2017

The 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2017 was observed as the 69<sup>th</sup> Indian Army Day. General Bipin Rawat, Chief of the Army Staff reviewed the Army Day Parade at Delhi and awarded 15 Sena Medals for individual acts of Gallantry and 14 COAS Unit Citations for commendable performance of their respective units.



Every year Indian Army celebrates 15<sup>th</sup> January as 'Army Day' to commemorate the day when General K.M Cariappa took over the command of Army from General Sir F.R.R Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army Post Independence.

#### 5. India observed National Girl Child Day

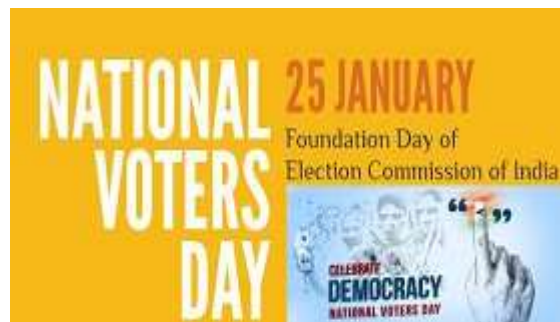
The Ministry of Women & Child Development celebrated the National Girl Child Day at a special function in New Delhi on 24<sup>th</sup> January, based on theme 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'. The National Plan of Action for Children, 2016 was also released. Winners of quiz competition organized across various Kendriya Vidyalaya schools in Delhi on the theme of "Empowerment of Girl Child" were also rewarded.



The event culminated by regional performances in Hindi, Punjabi, Rajasthani and Malayalam languages by professional troupes of Song and Drama Division.

#### 6. Election Commission of India celebrated the 7<sup>th</sup> National Voters' Day

The Election Commission of India celebrated the 7<sup>th</sup> National Voters' Day on the 25<sup>th</sup> January based on the theme – "Empowering Young & Future Voters". NVD aims at increasing enrolment of voters & ensure universal adult franchise for all. NVD is being celebrated since 2011 on 25<sup>th</sup> January, the foundation Day of Election Commission of India (25<sup>th</sup> January, 1950).



The Education Program in the year 2017. On the occasion, the President presented Election Photo Identity Cards to five new young voters and felicitated six future voters.



## 7. India celebrated its 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January

India celebrated its 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day on 26th January. The day honours the date on which the Constitution came into force on 26th January, 1950 replacing the Government of India Act (1935) as the governing document. The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was the Chief Guest of the ceremony.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the three service chiefs paid tributes to soldiers at the Amar Jawan Jyoti. The ceremony culminated with the national anthem and release of balloons, which lit up the cloudy sky with merry colors.

## 8. National Immunization Day observed on the 29<sup>th</sup> January

To observe the National Immunization Day on the 29<sup>th</sup> January, the Indian President Pranab Mukherjee launched the countrywide program for 2017 by administering polio drops to children aged below five years. This program will cover around 17 crore children aged under five years to maintain the country's polio-free status.



The Government also introduced the injectable Inactivated Polio Vaccine into its routine immunization program to provide double protection to the children. Ministry will soon introduce Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine to reduce the burden of diarrhea, pneumonia and meningitis.

### 1. The world's highest bridge inaugurated in China

The Beipanjiang bridge in southern China, world's highest bridge, has opened to traffic. The bridge soars 565 metres (1,854 feet) above a river and connects the two mountainous provinces of Yunnan and Guizhou.

The construction of this bridge was completed in 3 years and cost over 1 billion yuan (\$144 million) to build. It overtook the Si Du River Bridge in the central province of Hubei to become the world's highest bridge.



### 2. Romania's President named Sorin Grindeanu as the new PM

Romanian Prersident, Klaus Iohannis, has named Sorin Grindeanu as the new Prime Minister of the country. Grindeanu is a member of the Social Democratic Party.

Grindeanu graduated from the Faculty of Mathematics of Timisoara West University in 1997. In the period December 2014-November 2015 he served as Minister of Telecommunications and Information Society in Victor Ponta's cabinet. Starting June 2016, he is President of Timis county council.



### 3. Pakistan senate approved Hindu marriage bill

The Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights in Pakistan approved the Hindu Marriage Bill. The bill would become a law after it will be passed by the Senate, the upper house of the Parliament.

The bill will enable the Hindu community members to get their marriages registered and to appeal in courts of law in cases of separation. The Bill also allows Hindus to have a proof of marriage document called the 'Shadiparat'.



#### 4. Amazon won the Patent for Flying Warehouse to Deliver Parcels via Drones

Amazon has won a patent for a giant flying warehouse that acts as a Launchpad for drones to deliver items within minutes. Amazon filed the patent with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).



The "airborne fulfillment center" (AFC) would float at an altitude of around 45,000 ft and will be stocked with lots of products. Once an order is placed by the customer, a drone or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) would fly down and deliver the package.

#### 5. Russia delivered Sukhoi jets to China

Russia has delivered four Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets to China as part of a deal between Moscow and Beijing on delivering a total of 24 aircraft estimated to be worth \$2 billion, in 2015.



The S-35 is a 4++ generation, twin-engine, highly maneuverable multirole fighter jet. It has a maximum speed of 1,553 mph (2,500 kmph). The Su-35 is an advanced version of the Su-30s operated by the Indian Air Force.

#### 6. Third round of talks between India, Lanka on the ETCA began in Colombo

The third round of talks between India and Sri Lanka on proposed Economic and Technical Cooperation Agreement (ETCA) began in Colombo.



The two-day talks were led by Joint Secretary in Ministry of Commerce and Industry from Indian side. The proposed agreement seeks to expand trade in goods to services and investment sector.

Sri Lankan PM Ranil Wickremesinghe had expressed hope that the deal could be concluded by end of 2016.

## 7. Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu quizzed over suspicion of graft

Israeli police have questioned Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for nearly three hours on suspicion of graft after the Attorney General said that the police had gathered enough evidence against him as a possible criminal suspect.

The police investigating team questioned the 67-year-old Netanyahu over suspicion that he and his family members received illicit gifts and other favours from businessmen running into hundreds of thousands of dollars.



## 8. Donald Trump named Lawyer Lighthizer as the US Trade representative

US President-elect Donald Trump nominated Lawyer Robert Lighthizer as the US Trade Representative. Robert Lightizer will be his Chief trade negotiator and responsible for better deals aimed at reducing US trade deficits. He has three decades of experience arguing for punitive tariffs on overseas companies.



Lighthizer served as the Deputy US Trade Representative under President Ronald Reagan. Mr. Trump has also signalled a tough stance on trade with China, including levying a hefty tariff on Chinese imports.

## 9. Indonesia suspended all military co-operation with Australia

Indonesia suspended all military co-operation with Australia. All forms of co-operation with the Australian military, including joint training, have been temporarily withheld due to training material found at an Australian base. The two navies had been expected to take part in multinational training exercises to be held in February 2017.



Cooperation between the Australian and Indonesian militaries had been suspended for “technical reasons that need to be discussed and cooperation would resume once those issues are resolved.



## 10. Nepal organized the 13<sup>th</sup> Chitwan Elephant Festival

A five-day event the '13<sup>th</sup> Chitwan Elephant Festival' was organized in Sauraha, Nepal to promote tourism and exhibit human-wildlife relations. The event began with an elephant walk from the elephant breeding centre to a complete march in the entire village followed by a Tharu cultural show to the Bachauli ground in Sauraha.

Participants witnessed elephant walk, elephant polo, elephant calf football, elephant beauty contest, elephant picnic, and elephant painting at the event. Event witnessed about 20,000 domestic and foreign tourists.



## 11. Finland launched basic income for its 25 to 58 aged unemployed citizens

Finland became the first country in Europe to pay its unemployed citizens a guaranteed monthly sum of €560 (£475). The income will replace their existing social benefits and will be paid even after they find work. This 2 year nationwide pilot scheme kicked off on 1 January and around 2,000 unemployed Finns aged from 25 to 58 were given benefit.

Scheme is aimed at reducing poverty and unemployment. Basic income experiments will take place in several cities like Netherlands, including Utrecht, Tilburg, Nijmegen, Wageningen and Groningen in 2017.



## 12. Jovenel Moise won Presidential elections of Haiti

Haitian businessman Jovenel Moise won the Presidential elections of Haiti with 55.6% votes. Jovenel Moise will take charge of his duties from February. He replaced Jocelerme Privert, who served for nearly a year as interim president after Michel Martelly ended his term without an elected successor.

The final official results revealed that Moise's rival Celestin won 19.57 percent votes. Haiti is poorest in the Americas and has a debt of more than \$2 billion due to lack of public and private investment.



### 13. Tim Barrow named as the UK envoy to the EU

Britain has appointed Sir Tim Barrow as the new Ambassador to the European Union to lead Brexit negotiations. He was appointed after his predecessor, Ivan Rogers, quit due to concerns about the government's muddled strategy over exiting the economic bloc.



Tim Barrow is a senior diplomat known as a tough negotiator. He is a former ambassador to Moscow who has previously served in Brussels. He has held several roles in his 30-year career as a diplomat.

### 14. Rajiv J Shah set to be named as the President of Rockefeller Foundation

Former head of the United States Agency for International Development, USAID, Rajiv J Shah is set to be named as President of the Rockefeller Foundation, one of America's largest and most influential philanthropies.



He will succeed Judith Rodin. Shah will be the youngest person and the first Indian-American to lead the group. The Rockefeller foundation donates 200 million US Dollars each year towards improving health and well-being in Africa.

### 15. Festival of India organized in Cambodia from 10<sup>th</sup> January till 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2017

A Festival of India is being organized in Cambodia from 10th January to 16th February, 2017. The activities of the Festival include Ramayana Performance, Rajasthani Folk Music & Dance Group (Dance Group plus Manganiyar Group), Classical Dance.



A Buddhist Mahotsav – Exhibition titled Dhamma Darshana - to explore the life, teachings and important events connected with Lord Buddha and Photo Exhibition on Buddhist religious/heritage sites in India will also be organized. The Festival events are being showcased in three cities of Phnom Penh, Siem Reap and Battambang in Cambodia.

## 16. China launched the longest high-speed train service

China launched its longest bullet train “Shangri-la of the World” from Kunming, capital of south-west China’s Yunnan Province to Beijing. The train’s name highlights the world famous resort in Shangri-la of Yunnan.



China's high speed train network has thus expanded to about 20,000 kms connecting almost all provinces. The line is also the longest east-west high-speed railway in China. According to the government’s plan, the mileage will increase to 45,000 km by 2030.

## 17. China to set up world’s highest altitude telescopes in Tibet

China is setting up the world's highest altitude gravitational wave telescopes in a Tibet prefecture close to Line of Actual Control with India to detect faintest echoes resonating from universe which may reveal more about the Big Bang theory.



Yao Yongqiang chief researcher with the National Astronomical Observatories of the Chinese Academy of Sciences said that the construction had started for the first telescope, code-named Ngari No.1. It is expected to be operational by 2021.

## 18. China forex reserves fall by USD 320 billion in 2016

China's foreign exchange reserve fell nearly 320 billion dollars from a year earlier, following a drop of more than 512 billion dollars in 2015. Foreign reserves stood at over three trillion dollars as of the end of December.



In December, the forex reserves dropped by USD 41 billion from the previous month which would make it their sixth consecutive monthly decline. The Chinese currency fell about 7 percent against the dollar in 2016.



## 19. US trade deficit in November rose to the highest level in 9 months

The US trade deficit in November rose to the highest level in nine months as imports of oil and other foreign goods increased, while American exports fell for a second month.

The Commerce Department reported that the trade deficit jumped 6.8% to USD 45.2 billion, the largest imbalance since February. Exports edged down 0.2% to USD 122.4 billion, reflecting lower overseas sales of American-made airplanes, autos and farm products. Imports rose 1.1% to USD 231.1 billion, led by a 7.6% jump in oil.



## 20. Gen. Raheel Sharif to head the Islamic Military Alliance

Former Pakistan Army chief Raheel Sharif has been appointed to head the Saudi Arabia-led 39-nation Islamic military coalition formed to combat terrorism. Raheel retired as the army chief in November 2016.

The Islamic Military Alliance to Fight Terrorism (IMAFIT) currently has 39 members. The headquarters of the Saudi-led coalition would be based in Riyadh. The coalition includes countries like Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Sudan, Malaysia, Egypt, Yemen among others.



## 21. Nana Akufo-Addo sworn in as President of Ghana

Nana Akufo-Addo has been sworn in as Ghana's new President. He won the country's Presidential election, defeating President John Mahama by 53.8 percent to 44.4 percent. Nana Akufo-Addo is the leader of New Patriotic Party (NPP).

Akufo-Addo had promised to boost growth and deliver jobs during his campaigns. Ghana is the world's second biggest producer of cocoa after Ivory Coast and Africa's second biggest gold producer after South Africa.





## 22. Pakistan test-fired Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile

Pakistan conducted its first successful test-fire of a Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM). The missile, Babur-3, with a range of 450 kilometres was fired from an underwater, mobile platform and hit its target with precise accuracy.



Babur-3 is a sea-based variant of Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) Babur-2. The Babur-3 SLCM incorporates state-of-the-art technologies including underwater controlled propulsion and advanced guidance and navigation features, duly augmented by Global Navigation, Terrain and Scene Matching Systems.

## 23. Pakistan launched its 'first submarine nuclear-capable missile'

Babur-3 missile, a nuclear-capable missile was launched by Pakistan. It is first submarine cruise missile with 450 km range, which can handle various types of payloads. The missile features technologies such as terrain hugging and sea skimming flight capabilities. It was launched with an aim to evade hostile radars and air defenses.



Missile is underwater controlled propulsion and advanced guidance and navigation. The missile, Babur-3, was fired from an underwater, mobile platform in the Indian Ocean.

## 24. China revised 2015 GDP to USD 9.96 trillion

China revised the size of its economy in 2015 to 68.91 trillion yuan (that is, 9.96 trillion US dollars), up 354.6 billion yuan from its preliminary figure.

The National Bureau of Statistics announced that economic growth for 2015 was unchanged at 6.9 per cent but the size of China's economy in 2015 has been revised to 68.91 trillion yuan (9.96 trillion U.S. dollars), up 354.6 billion yuan from its preliminary figure. China's economic growth rate objective has been set at 6.5 percent to 7 percent in 2016.



## 25. Norway became the first country to cease FM Radio Broadcasting

Norway has become the first country to cease FM radio broadcasting as the Government plans to roll out digital-only radio over the course of the year that offers a wider range of broadcasting options and greater sound quality.

The main reason behind this technological shift is to offer a better radio service to the whole population. The process will be completed nationwide by December. There are currently 22 national digital stations, along with around 20 smaller ones.



## 26. Daniel Ortega sworn in as Nicaragua's President for the 3<sup>rd</sup> term

Daniel Ortega has been sworn in for a third consecutive term as President of Nicaragua. His wife Rosario Murillo was sworn in as the new Vice President.

Ortega, a 71-year old former rebel fighter, took the oath in Managua with the Presidents of Venezuela, Bolivia and Taiwan in attendance. Ortega and Murillo were elected in November with 72.5 percent of the vote, but with a high rate of abstentions. Their party won 71 of the 92 seats in parliament.



## 27. Festival of India to be Organized in Ghana

A Festival of India is being organised in Ghana from January 25 to March 16, 2017. The activities of the Festival include amalgamation of Indian classical dances, Sufi & Folk Music, and Saptarang – confluence of seven classical dance forms culminating in Vande Matram.

To complete the experience, a Food Festival, Yoga and Meditation, Film Festival will also be organised during the Festival.

The Festival events are being showcased in four cities of Accra, Kumasi, Cape Coast, Takoradi in Ghana.



## 28. Japan pledged 1 trillion Yen aid package to Philippines

Japanese Prime Minister inked aid package for Philippines of worth a ¥1 trillion (8.7 billion dollars) for next 5 years. With this aid package, Japan will help Philippines with Japanese technology, infrastructure development, maritime and security management. Both the countries will establish a joint committee on economic collaboration to help with Manila's infrastructure development.



Japan and the Philippines exchanged papers on Japan providing high-speed boats to the Philippine Coast Guard in a bid to enhance maritime safety.

## 29. India & Sri Lanka inked an MoU for rain water harvesting systems

India signed MOU with Sri Lanka to build 3000 rain water harvesting systems at a cost of SLR 300 million in Jaffna District. This rain harvesting MOU will help 3000 households by providing them clean water supply. It will also pave way for training of the households on operation and maintenance (O&M) of the rain water harvesting systems.



The Sri Lankan Government and the Indian government will jointly identify beneficiaries and further assist resettlement of internally displaced families in Jaffna.

## 30. Ecuador takes over Chairmanship of G-77

United Nation's Chairmanship of G-77 developing nations has been taken over by Ecuador from Thailand. G-77 promotes the interests of the 134 developing countries. Ecuador will also focus on 17 UN goals for 2030 to promote sustainable development goals and save environment.



The Group of 77 (G77) at the United Nations is a group of developing nations, designed to promote economic and social status of its members. There were 77 founding members of the organization, but since November 2013, the organization have 134 member countries.

### 31. US ended the 20 year old financial sanctions on the Sudanese Government

USA ceased trade and financial sanctions on Sudanese government, after they improved on their regional security. It will be possible after twenty years that Sudanese government will be able to receive imported goods and services from the US. This has also lifted bans on Sudanese property and assets held in the US. Both the countries will be able to trade in oil and gas industry.



Some US sanctions still prevail like ban on weapons sales and restrictions on Darfur-related sanctions.

### 32. Two ships sold to Pakistan Navy by China for maritime security

Along the sea route of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), China has handed over two ships to the Pakistan to safeguard the strategic Gwadar port and trade routes. These two ships are equipped with state-of-the-art guns and will be part of Navy. China will hand over two more ships namely Dasht and Zhob to the navy, as soon as its work will be finished.



The CPEC will open new vistas of speedy development in Balochistan and create employment opportunities for its youths.

### 33. China handed over two ships to the Pakistan Navy

China handed over two ships to the Pakistan Navy for joint security to safeguard the strategic Gwadar port. The port forms a part of the \$ 46 billion sea route of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC links western China through Pakistan with the Middle East, Africa and Europe.



The two ships are named after two rivers Hingol and Basol near Gwadar. The two ships will also be used to protect the sea-lanes in the Arabian Sea. China will also provide two more ships, Dasht and Zhob, to Pakistan navy.



### 34. Antonio Tajani elected as the new President of the European Parliament

Italian conservative Antonio Tajani has been elected as the new President of the European Parliament.

Mr. Tajani is a former spokesman for Italy's Silvio Berlusconi and an ex-European commissioner. He defeated another Italian, Gianni Pittella, and will take over from Germany's Martin Schulz. Mr. Tajani secured 351 votes, against 282 for Mr. Pittella, a socialist.



### 35. CEPI formally launched at World Economic Forum Davos

World Economic Forum (WEF) Davos welcomed the launch of Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations as it received contract of developing vaccines against fatal diseases worth \$460-million. The three diseases for which vaccine will be developed are Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS)-coronavirus, Lassa fever, and Nipah virus.

CEPI is given responsibility to use contract prize of \$460mn and prevent outbreaks of these 3 diseases before they become global health emergencies. CEPI aims to develop at least two vaccines for each virus within 5 years.



### 36. Donald Trump sworn in as the 45<sup>th</sup> US President

Donald Trump was officially sworn in as the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States of America, took oath in front of about 8 lakh people administered by Chief Justice John Roberts.

Donald John Trump is an American businessman, television personality, politician.

Donald Trump promised Americans to bring employment to the country by not outsourcing jobs abroad and let American workers have it.



### 37. Hong Kong withdraws visa-free entry to Indians

Hong Kong has withdrawn visa-free facility for Indians from January 23, 2017, by making amendments to its visa agreement with India since Indians have been overstaying in Hong Kong violating visa norms. Under the previous visa agreement, Indian visitors could visit the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region for 14 days but now Indians must pre-register themselves.



The said decision was taken to prevent illegal immigration. The pre-arrival registration will be valid for a 6 month period or until the expiry date of the Indian passport linked to it.

### 38. Nepal launched a 10-year-plan to cut reliance on vegetable imports from India

Nepal Government launched a 10-year-plan to cut reliance on vegetable imports and boost domestic production by adopting modern farm techniques. Nepal's far-western region has seen a rise in commercial vegetable farming. India exports around 25,000 metric tonnes of worth Rs. 55 billion of vegetables annually.



The government has aimed at achieving self-sufficiency in wheat and vegetables by this fiscal year, and in paddy and potato in two years. It has targeted making the country self-sufficient in maize and fish by the next three years.

### 39. China developed world's biggest solar park

To improve its green energy benefits, China has developed world's biggest solar park termed as Longyangxia Dam Solar Park, in the western province of Qinghai.

An effort that started in 2013 on 27 square km of area, can generate 850 MW of power and supply electricity to 200,000 households.

Park has capacity to produce 110GW of solar power and 210GW of wind power and slash pollution by 2020.



#### 40. UK published a draft legislation to start the Brexit process

The UK government published a draft legislation in Parliament that would allow it to begin the process of leaving the EU, two days after the Supreme Court ruled that Prime Minister Theresa May cannot unilaterally trigger Britain's exit from the 28-nation bloc and must seek Parliament's approval. The European Union (Notification of withdrawal) Bill was published in the House of Commons.



Described as among the shortest notifications to be published in the British Parliament, the two-clause Bill had its first reading in the House as a procedural step.

#### 41. Australia celebrated its National Day on 26<sup>th</sup> January

Australia Day is celebrated on 26 January, marking the arrival of the first British convict fleet in 1788.

Australia's 700,000 indigenous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still struggle with the impacts of colonization and track near the bottom of the country's 23 million citizens in almost every economic and social indicator.

They gained citizenship in 1967 only and a vote on whether to recognize Aborigines in the constitution as the country's first people has been on hold for years.



#### 42. IMF predicted Greece's Government debt highly unsustainable

IMF predicted Greece's government debt as highly unsustainable and "explosive" in the long run. The International Monetary Fund announced its annual report on the Greek economy and stated that the debt burden of the beleaguered nation will require significant debt relief from European institutions, including dramatically extending the grace periods and maturities of the loans.



The IMF board is due to discuss the confidential report, which includes a debt sustainability analysis.

### 43. Denmark becomes first to appoint world's first 'digital ambassador'

To build global ties, Denmark has appointed "digital ambassador", who will establish and build Denmark's relations with the tech giants. With this, Denmark becomes the first country in the world to appoint a special "digital ambassador".

Digital ambassador has not been selected yet, but the new appointment will act as tech liaison who reflects a diplomatic power shift between established nations and privately-owned conglomerates such as Google, Apple, IBM, and Microsoft.





# MISCELLANEOUS

- **Serbia** and the Union Cabinet agreed for an MoU in the field of IT and electronics.
- **Kerala** launched India's first solar powered boat.
- **14444** is the helpline number launched by the Government to promote Digital Payments.
- West Bengal inaugurated the **8<sup>th</sup> Dantan Gramin Mela 2017**.
- **Patna** hosts the 350<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Gobind Singh.
- **Surekha Marandi** was appointed as Executive Director of RBI.
- **USA** introduced H1-B visa reform bill.
- **Rafael Nadal** won the 2016 Mubadala World Tennis Championship.
- Manipur, Tripura and Meghalaya celebrated their statehood day on **21st January 2017**.
- **INS Vikramaditya** will be first to have an ATM onboard.
- **Kiran Doshi** won The Hindu Prize 2016.
- Inclusive Development Index 2017 placed India at the **60<sup>th</sup> place**.
- **Oxfam** released 'An Economy for the 99 Percent'.
- **Melbourne** organized the Australian Open 2017 Tennis Tournament.
- **IMF** released the World Economic Outlook Update 2016.
- **Eugene Cernan** was the last man to walk on the Moon.
- **Farrukh Amantov** won the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the Delhi International Chess tournament.
- India became an associate member of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (**CERN**).
- **USA** announced the withdrawal of 'Wet Foot, Dry Foot' Policy for Cubans.
- **Mumbai** hosted 2017 International Conference on Disability Communication.
- Daniel Ortega was selected as the President of **Nicaragua**.
- **Assam** launched an e-Wallet called Tokapoisa.in.
- **La La Land** won seven Golden Globes Awards.
- Kerala launched **India's first transgender school** Sahaj International.
- **Odisha** organized an 11-day gala festival Bargarh Dhanua Jatra.

- **Wesley So** bagged the 2017 Tata Steel Chess Tournament.
- Iris Mittinaere was crowned as the **Miss Universe 2016**.
- **Pravind Jugnauth** was appointed as the Prime Minister of Mauritius.
- **Lionel Messi** was selected as the World's Best Playmaker for the year 2016.
- **Denmark** was adjudged as the most corruption-free nation.
- **Bengal** won the Under-19 Cooch Behar Trophy 2016-17.
- India recently contributed USD 100k to the United Nations for **Haiti Cholera Relief**.
- **PB Acharya** was appointed as the acting Governor of Arunachal Pradesh.
- **Guwahati** organized the Brahmaputra Literary festival.
- **India** will host the T20 World Cup Cricket for the Blind in February 2017.
- **Praful Patel** was appointed as the new member of FIFA's Finance Committee.
- **Israel** approved building permits for 566 settler homes in the annexed East Jerusalem.
- **Mike Pompeo** was appointed as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.
- PNB launched contactless card **Wave N Pay**
- **2017 National Girl Child Day** was celebrated with the theme 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'.
- **V Shanmuganathan** resigned as the Governor of Meghalaya.
- Karnataka organized **Kambala festival**, a Buffalo Race.
- Ashok Chakra award was honoured to **Hangpan Dada**
- **Roger Federer** bagged the 2017 Australian Open Men's Singles title.
- **Sameer Verma** won the 2017 Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold men's singles badminton title.
- Scientist **GN Rao** was inducted into the 2017 Ophthalmology Hall of Fame.
- **30<sup>th</sup> January 2017** is observed as the National Anti-leprosy day.
- **Draft National Steel Policy 2017** was released to replace the National Steel Policy 2005.
- **Nasha Mukti** campaign was launched by the Bihar State Government.
- India approved an MOU for cooperation in the field of Small and Medium Enterprises and Innovation with the **UAE**.

# NATIONAL

## 1. Key announcements by PM Narendra Modi on New Year's Eve

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced several sops for the welfare of the poor.

Some of the announcements made were:

- Poor and middle class to get 4% exemption on interest for home loans up to Rs 9 lakh and 3% exemption for home loans up to Rs 12 lakh.
- 3 crore Kisan credit cards will be converted into RuPay cards.
- Banks have been asked to raise cash credit limit for small business to 25%.
- Senior citizens to get 8% interest rate on deposits up to Rs 7.5 lakh for 10 years.



## 2. India and Singapore inks a 3<sup>rd</sup> Protocol for amending the DTAA

India and Singapore signed Third Protocol to amend Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement to prevent double non-taxation, check revenue loss and curb black money through automatic exchange of information. There will also be some relaxation in norms on economic double taxation in transfer pricing cases.

The decision was a taxpayer friendly measure under Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Action Plan to meet minimum standard of providing MAP access in transfer pricing cases.



### 3. Government to set up Financial Data Management Centre

The Government of India announced to establish Financial Data Management Centre to arrange financial sector regulators data in a single database format and offer analytical solutions to it. Although the Reserve Bank of India is not in favour to share company-specific data with FSDC.



The Committee under Ajay Tyagi, additional secretary in Union Finance Ministry, has submitted its report and a draft bill titled The Financial Data Management Centre Bill, 2016. Financial Data Management Centre will collect data and manage the entire financial system database.

### 4. President passed the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Ordinance, 2016

The President gave a nod to the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Ordinance, 2016 so that industries may pay wages by digital means to workers. The said decision was implemented to promote cashless economy. The decision came into the action by amending Payment of Wages Act, 1936 and President's nod to this ordinance turned it into law as per article 123 of the Constitution.



However, it is not compulsory for employers to make wage payments through digital means and they can still pay in cash.

### 5. Cabinet approved an MoU between India and Portugal

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given an approval for signing of an Agreement for cooperation in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors between India and Portugal. The Agreement covers various activities in these fields which include exchange of scientific and technical information, trade in plants and plant products, exchange of information in phytosanitary issues and visits of experts and consultants.



The Agreement provides constitution of a Joint Working Group comprising of representatives from both countries.



## 6. Cabinet approved an MoU between India and Kenya

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Kenya on bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors.



The MoU covers various activities in these fields which include agricultural research, animal husbandry and dairy, livestock and fisheries horticulture, natural resource management, post-harvest management and marketing, soil and conservation, water management, irrigation farming systems development and integrated watershed development.

## 7. Cabinet approved the agreement between India and Uruguay

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved signing and ratifying an Agreement between India and Uruguay regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.



The Agreement will help in the availability of relevant information for the prevention and investigation of Customs offences. The Agreement is also expected to facilitate trade and ensure efficient clearance of goods traded between the countries. The draft Agreement takes care of Indian Customs' concerns and requirements, particularly in the area of exchange of information.

## 8. IPR Enforcement Toolkit launched for Police

The Commerce & Industry Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched an IPR Enforcement Toolkit for Police. The toolkit has been jointly prepared by Cell for IPR Promotion and Management and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

This toolkit will be a ready reckoner for police officials across the country in dealing with IP crimes, specifically Trade Marks counterfeiting and Copyrights piracy.



In addition to details of offences under various laws, it provides for checklists for registering a complaint and conducting search and seizures.

## 9. Piyush Goyal launched web portal & Mobile App for UDAY

Power Minister Piyush Goyal launched the web portal and a Mobile App for the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana called as UDAY. App will detail on the scheme regarding the number of states joining the scheme and the progress achieved by each state under various parameters such as cost of electricity, bonds issued and others.



The new portal and the app will detail the exact progress being achieved by every state under the scheme.

## 10. Textile Ministry launched Bunkar Mitra-Handloom Helpline Centre

Textile Minister Smriti Irani launched a Bunkar Mitra-Handloom Helpline Centre where professional queries of weavers will be answered by the experts in the field. The toll-free number is 1800-208-9988.



This helpline will function from 10.00 AM to 6 PM and weavers will be able to call from anywhere in India and available in 7 languages. The officials of Ministry will monitor issues on which maximum complaints are received, so that corrective actions can be taken accordingly.

## 11. MSDE to set up Indian Skill Development Services

The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship issued the notification of setting up of Indian Skill Development Services. This service has been created for the Training Directorate of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.



Under the leadership of Prime Minister skill development has taken a priority with a hope that Skill India mission will supply huge human resource not only in India but also Internationally. This is a step forward to meet the target of skilling 500 million people by 2022.

## 12. India and Kazakhstan sign a Protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC)

India and Kazakhstan signed a Protocol to amend the existing Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) for the avoidance of double taxation and for the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.

The Protocol provides internationally accepted standards for effective exchange of information on tax matters. Further, the information received from Kazakhstan for tax purposes can be shared with other law enforcement agencies with authorisation of the competent authority of Kazakhstan and vice versa.



## 13. Japan to assist in making Chennai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi Smart Cities

Japan has decided to be associated with the development of Chennai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi as smart cities. This was conveyed by Japan's Ambassador to India Mr. Kenji Hiramatsu.

So far, leading countries have come forward to be associated with development of 15 smart cities. These include: United States Trade Development Agency (USTDA) –Visakhapatnam, Ajmer and Allahabad, UK-Pune, Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh) and Indore, France-Chandigarh, Puducherry and Nagpur and Germany –Bhubaneswar, Coimbatore and Kochi.



## 14. Seven agreements signed between India and Portugal

India and Portugal exchanged seven agreements in different fields, including defence cooperation, agriculture, renewable energy and marine research. The MoUs were signed after bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa in New Delhi.

The two leaders jointly released commemorative stamps issued by the postal departments of India and Portugal. These stamps depict Dandiya and the Portugese dance form of Pauliteiros. Mr Costa is the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas this year.



### 15. First student startup fund has Rs 200 crore

India's first student start up and innovation policy has been idealised by the Gujarat government. The policy aims to support over 1,000 innovation per year and provide Rs 200 crore in the form of grants to ideas developed by students.



The policy will create an Innovation and Pre-incubation Ecosystem Support (IPIES) across all universities of the state. Around Rs. 100 crore will be allocated by the state government and the remaining amount will be created by internal sources, like university funds and CSR funds.

### 16. PM Narendra Modi launched Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana

PM Narendra Modi lunched a special skill development programme — 'Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojna', after the inauguration of 14th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas convention at Bengaluru, aimed at Indian youth seeking overseas employment.



PKVY will be implemented by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) through its training partners and in consultation with the Union Ministry of External Affairs and the Union Skill Development Ministry. It will provide training and certify Indians who are seeking overseas employment in selected sectors.

### 17. SC directed EC for VVPAT in EVMs for fair elections

To ensure 100% transparency in elections, Supreme Court has directed the Election Commission to implement the Vote Verifier Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) in electronic voting machines (EVMs).



VVPAT is "a system of printing paper trail when the voter casts his vote, in addition to the electronic record of the ballot". The paper record generated will have a serial number, name and symbol of candidate for whom the vote was cast.



## 18. PM Modi inaugurated the India International Exchange at the GIFT City in Gujarat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the India International Exchange - the International Centre of BSE, at GIFT city near Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

The 'India International Exchange' will trade in all the products like the other exchanges in the world such as Singapore, Hong Kong, London and New York in currency, equities, commodities and derivatives. Currently, Indian companies have to contact foreign exchanges to raise funds in foreign currency. Now this procedure would become less expensive and faster.



## 19. Piyush Goyal unveiled world's largest street light replacement program in SDMC

Power Minister Piyush Goyal unveiled world's largest street light replacement programme in South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) area. Mr Goyal also launched a mobile app called Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) Complaint App for SDMC, wherein users can now lodge complaints about faulty street lights.

Street Lighting National Program (SLNP), currently running in the SDMC area is the World's Largest Street Light Replacement Program, where two lakh LED lights will replace inefficient lamps.



## 20. Manohar Parrikar inaugurated International Conference & Exhibition

Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar inaugurated three-day International Conference and Exhibition on Re-enforced Plastics (ICERP) at Bombay Exhibition center. Government assured complete support to FRP institute and for such collaborations, since reinforced plastic play an important role in light weight and corrosion resistant application in various sectors.

ICERP organized by FRP Institute is the 8th in the series since 2002. ICERP 2017 focused on upgradation of composites technology in India to reach global level in terms of product quality, finishing and also to achieve global standards.



## 21. IRCTC Rail Connect launched for faster booking of train tickets

Railways launched new IRCTC Rail Connect app, to facilitate booking of train tickets in a faster and easier way. Equipped with latest technology, the new App also makes possible booking of tatkal ticket, ladies quota, premium tatkal quota booking and current reservation, replacing the existing 'IRCTC connect' app.



This App is based on a next generation e-ticketing system. It provides Payment Gateway linked to more than 40 banks to facilitate payments through net banking, Credit cards and Debit Cards.

## 22. Kerala's 1300 beneficiaries to get houses in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of PMAY

Kerala announced that a total of 1,300 beneficiaries will get houses in the first phase of the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation limits.

The civic body will soon submit a detailed project report to the Government in this regard. Till date, it has received around 16,000 applications for houses from across the 100 wards in the civic body which is set to provide houses to all by 2022.



## 23. India and Kenya sign agreements in the agriculture sector

India and Kenya signed agreements in the agriculture sector which were inked after delegation level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in New Delhi.

India is collaborating with Kenya to raise agricultural productivity there. India also announced 100 million US dollars Line of Credit to Kenya for agricultural mechanization. Both the countries would also explore opportunities in maritime economy and focus on quick operationalization of the defence cooperation along with hydrography, communication networks, anti-piracy, capacity building and defence medical cooperation.



## 24. Health Ministry to roll out Measles-rubella vaccine in February 2017

The Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare will roll out measles-rubella (MR) vaccine in the Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) in February 2017 in five states and Union territories. In addition, Pneumococcal conjugate (pneumococcal pneumonia) vaccine will also become a part of the UIP basket in three other states from March 2017.

The MR vaccine will be introduced in Goa, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu. The pneumonia vaccine will be introduced in Himachal Pradesh and parts of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.



## 25. India-CERT Signed MoU with US-CERT

India and USA have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information technology of the Government of India and the Department of Homeland Security, Government of the United States of America on cooperation in the field of cyber security.

The MoU intends to promote closer co-operation and the exchange of information pertaining to the Cyber Security in accordance with the relevant laws, rules and regulations of each economy. This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is based on equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.



## 26. Government to add 40 more towns to Smart Cities list

Government will add by 40 more cities to the list of towns which are to be developed as Smart Cities. With this, the total number of smart cities would reach 100. Since January 2016, the government has announced three lists of smart cities which will get Rs 200 crore for improving their infrastructure.

The Government of India has a vision of developing 100 smart cities as satellite towns of larger cities by modernizing the existing mid-sized cities.





## 27. The Union Government released a draft for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dog Breeding and Marketing) Rules, 2016

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change released draft notification of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Dog Breeding and Marketing Rules), 2016.

The objective of the Rules is to make dog breeders and their marketers accountable and to prevent infliction of any cruelty in this process. There were also no specific rules, or guidelines for mandatory registration of breeders and establishments and requirements to be met by such breeders.



## 28. An MoU of Rs. 67,000 Crores signed for the high-speed bullet train

The Gujarat Government and the Ministry of Railways signed an MoU worth 67,000 crore rupees for the ambitious Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed Bullet train project in the ongoing Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit.

The manufacturing work will soon be initiated in parts of the state which will be covered under bullet Train project. The Government of Gujarat signed one more MoU with Ministry of Railways to set up a container depot at Rajkot. Railways will invest 100 crore rupees to establish a container depot at Rajkot.



## 29. Government to sell 51% stake in Pawan Hans

Government of India disinvested 51% shareholding for transfer of management control. Pawan Hans is a joint venture where state-owned ONGC holds 49 percent. The Government has planned to divest through consulting firm, investment bankers, merchant bankers, financial institutions and banks.

Pawan Hans deals in helicopter support services to the oil sector for off-shore exploration operations and has a fleet of 46 helicopters. The Government has budgeted for Rs. 56,500 crores of revenue from disinvestment in 2016-17, including Rs. 20,500 crores from strategic sales.





### 30. India inked an MOU with USA to aid the third world countries

Various MoUs were inked between the India and USA, between the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and Union Ministry of External Affairs' Development Partnership Administration. Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is a US agency that provides funds to capable countries and curtail poverty through sustainable development growth.



MoUs were inked in the field of information technology, assistance to third world countries, sustainable development goals, reducing poverty, economic growth and aid in third world countries.

### 31. 'SEZ India' app launched by the Commerce Ministry

Commerce Ministry launched a Mobile app named "SEZ India" under its broader e-Governance initiative. It will help the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) Units and Developers to find information easily and track their transactions on Online System. Now they can file all their transactions digitally through SEZ Online system and track the status on the go through the SEZ India mobile app.



The app has four sections – SEZ Information, SEZ Online Transaction, Trade Information and Contact details.

### 32. An App named 'SEZ India' launched by the Commerce Ministry

A Mobile app named "SEZ India" has been launched by the Commerce Secretary for Special Economic Zones. Now the SEZ Developers & Units can file all their transactions digitally through SEZ Online system and track the status on the go through the SEZ India mobile app.



The app also helps the Importers / Exporters to track the status of 'Bill of Entry / Shipping Bill' integration and processing in the EDI system of the ICEGATE. App would help the SEZ Units and Developers to find information easily and track their transactions on SEZ Online System.

### 33. India & Mauritius inked MoU for Cooperation in the field of Cooperatives

The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Govt. of Mauritius, signed MoU for Cooperation in the field of Cooperatives. 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 the agro industry, fisheries and the dairy sector.



The two ministers expressed satisfaction at the historic, time-tested relationship between India and Mauritius which is anchored in linkages of culture and ancestry.

### 34. India and World Bank inked MoU for “Nagaland Health Project”.

A financing agreement for IDA credit of US\$ 48 million for the ‘Nagaland Health Project’ was signed between World Bank and Indian government. The objectives of the project is to improve health services and increase their utilization by communities in targeted locations in Nagaland.



Communities in targeted locations will benefit from project activities at the community and health facility levels. The project will directly benefit about 600,000 people. It will support and complement existing systems and mechanisms involving communities under the National Health Mission.

### 35. AIIMS signed three MoUs

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi has signed MoUs with NBCC (India) Limited, HSCC (India) Limited and with HITES HLL Life Care Ltd to expand infrastructure and other facilities.



AIIMS signed an MOU worth ₹ 4441 crores with NBCC (India) Limited, ₹ 2500 crores with HSCC (India) Limited and ₹ 729 crores with HITES HLL Life Care Ltd, a cumulative net worth of ₹ 7670 crores.

### 36. Petroleum Conservation Campaign ‘Saksham 2017’

The Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) and Oil & Gas Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) under the aegis of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) are organizing a Campaign to sensitize the masses about the conservation and efficient use of petroleum products towards achieving twin objectives of better health & environment and securing availability of Oil & Gas for future generations.



The campaign is named as SAKSHAM 2017 (Sanrakshan Kshamta Mahotsav). The campaign would be conducted from January 16 to February 15, 2017.

### 37. Union Cabinet gave nod to repeal 105 old laws

The Union Cabinet approved introduction of the Repealing and Amending Bill, 2017 to repeal 105 old laws in Parliament.

Out of them, which would be repealed include 2008 amendments to the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the President's Emoluments and Pension Act and the Vice-President's Pension Act. The two Member Committee constituted by the PMO, the Law Commission of India and the Legislative Department identified 1,824 redundant and obsolete Central Acts for repeal.



### 38. Centre approved the construction of 78,703 houses for urban poor

Centre approved construction of 78,703 affordable houses for the benefit of Economically Weaker Sections in the urban areas of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal with an investment of around Rs 3000 cr.

Of the total houses, over 52000 houses have been cleared for Tamil Nadu, over 21000 for West Bengal and 5000 in Kerala. With this, the total number of houses approved for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana reached over 15.48 lakh.



### 39. Cabinet approves a Rs. 10,000 Crore incentive for electronic manufacturing

The Cabinet has approved 10,000 crore rupees incentive for the electronic manufacturing sector till March 2018 with an aim to move towards the goal of 'Net Zero imports' in electronics by 2020.



Under the Modified Special Incentive Scheme, investors in electronics manufacturing can apply till March 2018. The incentives will be available for investments made within 5 years from the date of approval of the project. A unit receiving incentives under the scheme, should provide an undertaking to remain in commercial production for a period of at least 3 years.

### 40. Cabinet approves an MoU between India and Serbia for cooperation in the fields of IT and Electronics

The Cabinet has given an ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Serbia for promoting cooperation in the fields of Information Technology and Electronics.



The Cabinet also gave its ex-post facto approval to the MoU between India and Vietnam in the field of Cyber Security. The MoU intends to promote closer cooperation for exchange of knowledge and experience in detection, resolution and prevention of cyber security-related incidents between the two countries.



#### 41. Cabinet approves an MOU between India and UAE on Bilateral Cooperation

The Union Cabinet has approved an MoU between India and the United Arab Emirates on Bilateral Cooperation in the Road Transport and Highways sector and cooperation in the field of Small and Medium Enterprises and Innovation.



An MoU on the Mutual Recognition of Certificates of Competency between India and the United Arab Emirates was also cleared by the Cabinet. It will pave way for recognition of maritime education and training, certificates of competency, endorsements, training documentary evidence and medical fitness certificates for seafarers.

#### 42. Cabinet approved the Trade Agreement negotiations with Peru

Union Cabinet has approved the negotiating for the Trade Agreement with Peru on trade in terms of goods, services and investment.

A Joint Study Group between the two countries was constituted to explore the possibility for entering trade agreement in January 2015.

Both sides concluded the Joint Study Group Report in October last year and agreed to carry forward the discussions over the issue.



#### 43. Javadekar launched the web portal ShaGun for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Human Resources Development Minister Prakash Javadekar launched a dedicated web portal ShaGun for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan at New Delhi.



ShaGun aims to capture and showcase innovations and progress in elementary education sector of the country by continuous monitoring of the flagship scheme - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The Minister also unveiled the 'Toolkit for Master Trainers in Preparing Teachers for Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs', which has been prepared by World Bank in collaboration with Ministry of Human Resource Development.

#### 44. Government received 45 proposals under the UDAN scheme

Airports Authority of India has received 45 initial proposals from 11 bidders covering more than 200 regional connectivity scheme (RCS) routes.

These initial proposals cover as many as 65 airports. The scheme UDAN (Ude Desh Ke Aam Naagrik), aims to boost regional air connectivity and provides various incentives to airlines. The fare for a one hour journey of approximately 500 kilometers on a fixed wing aircraft or for a 30-minute journey on a helicopter would be capped at Rs. 2500 under the scheme. The scheme was launched in October 2016.



#### 45. Cabinet approved a one-time loan of Rs. 45000 crores to FCI

The Union Cabinet has approved a one-time loan of Rs 45000 crore to Food Corporation of India to meet its food subsidy requirements. The loan will be provided from National Small Savings Fund (NSSF). Besides, the Cabinet also took decision to exempt States except Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh from NSSF investments from April, 2016.



In addition, FCI will reduce the amount of its current Cash Credit Limit with the banking consortium to the extent of the NSSF loan amount.

#### 46. Cabinet approved MoU on cooperation on Youth matters between India, Russia

The Union Cabinet has approved MoU on cooperation on Youth matters between India and Russia. Exchange programs in the field of Youth Affairs between the two countries will help in promoting exchange of ideas, values and culture amongst Youth through establishment of people-to-people contacts and in consolidating friendly relations between the two countries.



Exchange programs will help in developing international perspective among the Youth and expanding their knowledge and expertise in the areas of Youth Affairs.

#### 47. Union Ministry to launch talent search portal

Union Sports Minister, Mr. Vijay Goel said that they will soon launch a talent search portal in a bid to spot bright sportsmen and groom them.

Responding to a query from students on what the Central government is doing to promote sportsmen, Goel said that with the help of the portal, the talents will be selected and will be trained at Sports Authority of India.



The idea behind launching the portal is that grass root population also gets an opportunity to contribute their share in sports. With the help of the portal, the talents will be selected and will be trained at Sports Authority of India.

#### 48. Cabinet apprised of the MoU between ISRO and JAXA for cooperation in the field of outer space

The Union Cabinet has been apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Tokyo, Japan between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) for cooperation in the field of outer space.



The purpose of this MoU is to pursue future cooperative activities in the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable in each country and their international obligations.

#### 49. Cabinet approves MoU between India and Vietnam in the fields of cyber security

The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding between India and Vietnam in the field of Cyber Security signed between Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), India and the Cyber Security Department, Ministry of Public Security, Vietnam.



The MoU intends to promote closer cooperation for exchange of knowledge and experience in detection, resolution and prevention of cyber security-related incidents between India and Vietnam. It will result in significant mutual benefits in the cyber security sector, through institutional and capacity-building in the field of cyber security in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

## 50. Cabinet approved MoU between India and the United Arab Emirates on the Mutual Recognition of Certificates of Competency

The Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Arab Emirates on the Mutual Recognition of Certificates of Competency.



The proposed MoU will pave way for recognition of maritime education and training, certificates of competency, endorsements, training documentary evidence and medical fitness certificates for seafarers issued by the Government of the other country in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 1/10 of the Convention, and cooperation between the two countries in training and management of seafarers.

## 51. Cabinet approved MoU between India and the United Arab Emirates on Bilateral Cooperation in the Road Transport and Highways sector

The Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Arab Emirates on Bilateral Cooperation in the Road Transport and Highways Sector to be signed between the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, India and the Federal Transport Authority – Land and Maritime, U.A.E.



The proposed MoU envisages increased cooperation, exchange and collaboration between India and the UAE, and will contribute to increased investment in infrastructure development and enhance logistics efficiency.



## 52. Cabinet approved the package for supporting Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) – Augmentation of CGTMSE

The Union Cabinet has given ex-post facto approval to the package for supporting Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) – Augmentation of the Corpus of Credit Guarantee Trust Fund for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).



The proposal entails – Augmentation of the corpus of the Trust from Rs. 2,500 crore to Rs. 7,500 crore, to be fully funded by the GoI. To increase coverage of the loans covered under the credit guarantee scheme from Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 2 crores. To increase coverage of the credit guarantee scheme for loans being extended to micro and small enterprises by NBFCs also.

## 53. Cabinet approved the Establishment of Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Jharkhand

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan Proposal of the DARE/ICAR Plan Scheme of the 'Establishment of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)-Jharkhand'. It will have an estimated outlay of Rs. 200.78 crores (100% ICAR share) on 1,000-acres land provided by the Government of Jharkhand at the Gauria Karma Village in Barhi Block of Hazaribag.



IARI-Jharkhand would be a unique Institution, which would possess all the hallmark identities as that of IARI at New Delhi.

#### **54. Cabinet approved MoU between India and the United Arab Emirates on Institutional Cooperation in Maritime Transport**

The Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Arab Emirates on Institutional Cooperation in Maritime Transport.



The proposed MoU will pave way for facilitation and promotion of maritime transport, simplification of customs and other formalities, wherever possible, observed in Ports and facilitation of the use of existing installations for the disposal of waste. The MoU will enable Shipping Companies in both countries to enter into bilateral and multi-lateral arrangements for sustainable trading activities.

#### **55. Cabinet approved Alternative Mechanism to decide on the quantum of disinvestment in case of minority stake sale in CPSEs**

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval to Alternative Mechanism, who would decide on the quantum of disinvestment in a Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSE) on a case by case basis subject to Government retaining 51 percent equity and management control. This is in addition to the present functions performed by Alternative Mechanism as has been approved by CCEA in August, 2014.



This would reduce speculation and overhang and expedite the disinvestment process.

#### **56. Digi Dhan Melas distributed prize worth Rs. 61 crores**

The Information Technology Minister announced that over 3,80,000 consumers and 21,000 merchants have won the prize money worth around 61 crore rupees at 24 Digi-Dhan Melas across the country to give a boost to the digital payment systems and cashless economy.



The schemes were launched on 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 and shall remain open till 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2017. The schemes are aimed at incentivising the consumers and the merchants to promote digital payments.

### 57. CCI imposes Rs. 206 crores as penalty on seven cement companies

Competition Commission of India imposed a penalty of nearly 206 crore rupees on seven cement companies for bid-rigging and cartelization i.e. equivalent to 0.3 percent of each of their average turnover for three financial years.

Shree Cement, UltraTech Cement, Jaiprakash Associates, J K Cement, Ambuja Cements, ACC and J K Lakshmi Cement have been penalized for violating competition norms regarding a tender floated by a Haryana agency back in 2012.



### 58. India concluded MoU on MSME Cooperation with IORA

Ministry of MSME, Government of India finalized an MoU on MSME Cooperation with Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) member countries. The focus areas of the Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) were to promote youth and women's economic empowerment, finalize linkages and alliances amongst MSMEs organizations and exchange best practices, policies and programs for MSME development.



IORA Secretariat at Mauritius will be the coordinating agency for the implementation of the MoU. IORA special fund created for the member countries to use it for carrying out activities envisaged under this MoU.

### 59. First flight under UDAN scheme to take off in February 2017

The first flight is likely to take off in February 2017 under the government's ambitious regional connectivity scheme-UDAN. The scheme UDAN seeks to boost regional air connectivity and provides various incentives to airlines.

The fare for a one hour journey of 500 kilometers on a fixed wing aircraft or for a 30-minute journey on a helicopter will be capped at 2500 rupees under the scheme.

There are 75 operational airports in India and 43 new airports will be added under UDAN scheme.



## 60. Govt inked an MoU to set up 1,000 Janaushadhi Kendras

To make quality medicines available at an affordable price in the rural areas and gram panchayats, the Government of India has inked an MoU with the National Yuva Cooperative Society and establish 1,000 Janaushadhi Kendras across India.



The PMBJP scheme would save expenses of common man on health and give an impetus to the Make in India mission in the pharma sector. Government aims to open 3000 kendras by the end of the financial year, adding to 750 Janaushadhi Kendras at present.

## 61. Health Ministry to launch a control program for five non-communicable diseases

The Health ministry will launch population based prevention, screening and control program for five common non-communicable diseases, namely Hypertension, Diabetes, and Cancers of oral cavity, breast and cervix. In the first phase, the population based screening component will be rolled out in 100 districts in 32 states and UTs with about 1000 sub-centers undertaking screening before March 31s 2017.



These Non-Communicable diseases account for over 60% of all mortality in India. Primary health Centers helps early detection and serves to raise health awareness among people to lead healthy lifestyles.

## 62. India Innovation Index to rank performance of Indian states

The World Economic Forum (WEF), NITI Aayog, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and Cornell University will work to develop an India Innovation Index to assist policies that promote inclusive growth and reflect of India's ground reality. The index will be based on key pillars of innovation.



The base of index comprises the strength of institutions, capital and research, policies and the level of business economy, among others. This index will encourage states to compete with each other. The first ranking will be released at the India Economic Summit in New Delhi on October 4-6, 2017.



### 63. Union Government cleared the amendment on Jallikattu

Since Union cabinet cleared the amendment, Tamil Nadu Governor can promulgate ordinance as per Article 213 of the constitution and removed 'bull' from the list of performing animals. This will certain that provisions of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA), 1960 do not apply to the bull and bypass Supreme Court imposed ban on Jallikattu in May 2014.



The apex court had earlier banned use of bull as performing animals in traditional events such as Jallikattu, bullock-cart races etc.

### 64. Special Task Force created for women safety

In response to a notice issued by the High Court to the L-G on a DCW petition seeking response to form committee on women's safety, a special task force (STF) was reformed regarding women's safety under the leadership of Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal.



Committee will review decisions taken by the Delhi Police and other departments on issues related to women's safety. The meeting will be held every 15 days. The committee is reformed, as earlier, a committee was formed in 2013 following the December 16, 2012 'Nirbhaya' case.

### 65. India to introduce new high speed trains

Indian railways to introduce new trains soon with speed up to 200 kms per hour. This will be possible with the help of Russian Railways. Russian Railways has come up with several technical and innovative solutions, including reconstruction of railway track as well as solving speed restrictions. At present, the fastest train in India is Gatimaan Express with speed of 160 km per hour.



A protocol for this project was inked between the railway ministries of the two countries in October 2016. Project will be jointly funded.

## 66. Steel Ministry to implement a New Draft steel policy

In order cease cheap imported raw materials such as cooking coal and export the output in a more cost-effective manner, Steel ministry envisaged set up of greenfield steel plants along India's coastline with the help of new draft National Steel Policy of 2017.



New draft policy involves investment of Rs. 10 lakh crore to enhance domestic production and offer 11 lakh new jobs. This will also double production capacity to 300 million tonnes by 2030-31. Gas-based steel plants and technologies will curtail expensive imports of coking coal.

## 67. Union Cabinet approved Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana – 2017

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave its post-facto approval for launching of Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana 2017. The scheme will be implemented through LIC to provide social security to elderly persons aged 60 years and above.



The scheme will provide an assured pension based on a guaranteed rate of return of 8% per annum for ten years. The differential return would be borne by Government of India as subsidy on an annual basis.

## 68. Cabinet approves ratification of the Second Commitment Period of Kyoto Protocol

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave its approval to ratify the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol on containing the emission of Green House Gases. The second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 2012. So far, 65 countries have ratified the Second Commitment Period.



Implementation of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects under this commitment period in accordance with Sustainable Development priorities will attract some investments in India as well.

### 69. Cabinet approves Indian Institute of Management Bill, 2017

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the Indian Institute of Management(IIM) Bill, 2017, under which the IIMs would be declared as Institutions of National Importance which will enable them to grant degrees to their students.



The Bill provides for complete autonomy to the Institutions. The Bill also provides for periodic review of the performance of Institutions by independent agencies, and placing the results of the same on public domain. There is also a provision of Coordination Forum of IIMs as an advisory body.

### 70. Cabinet approves a New Scheme for promotion of Rural Housing

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved a new scheme for promotion of Rural Housing in the country. The Government would provide interest subsidy under the scheme. Interest subsidy would be available to every rural household who is not covered under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Grameen).



The beneficiary who takes a loan under the scheme would be provided interest subsidy for loan amount up to Rs. 2 Lakhs. The new scheme is expected to improve housing stock in the rural areas.

### 71. Cabinet approves setting up of a world class Integrated Exhibition at Delhi

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), a Mini Ratna Category-1 Company under the Department of Commerce, for redevelopment of Pragati Maidan by setting up of a world class Integrated Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.



The total cost of the project will be Rs. 2,254 crore. ITPO will utilise Rs.1,200 crore out of its free reserves towards funding of the project.



## 72. MoUs on Electoral Cooperation with Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Fiji and Nepal signed

On the 7<sup>th</sup> National Voters Day which was on the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017, the Election Commission of India (ECI) hosted an International Seminar on 'Strategies for Empowering Young and Future Voters' on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017, in partnership with UNDP India. Interaction through the International Seminar provided a larger opportunity to gain from international experience.



The ECI signed Memorandum of Understanding with Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Fiji and Election Commission of Nepal to establish an institutional framework for their ongoing cooperation in the field of election management and administration.

## 73. National Action Plan for Children, 2016 released by the WCD Ministry

National Action Plan for Children, 2016 (NPAC) was launched on the National Girl Child Day in New Delhi. The National Policy for Children (2013) provides for formation of a National Co-ordination and Action Group. The Action Plan has four key priority areas; survival, health and nutrition; education and development; protection and participation.



The plan puts focus on new and emerging concerns for children such as online child abuse, children affected by natural and man-made disasters and climate change.

## 74. India inked an MOU with UAE

Various MoUs were inked between the India and UAE, during visit of Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan in New Delhi on the Republic day. MoUs were inked in the field of defence, agriculture, oil storage, road transport, highways, manufacturing, technology, research, development, cyberspace, innovation and cooperation between public and private sector institutions of the two nations.



India and UAE also held discussions on 'Annual Defence Dialogue' to discuss the security and defence cooperation issues between the two countries.



## 75. Guidelines issued for differently-abled and disabled for respecting National Anthem

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment issued new guidelines for differently-abled people to show respect to the National Anthem. According to the new guidelines, those who are unable to stand will have to display maximum attentiveness while persons with hearing disabilities and those visually challenged will have to stand up when the national anthem is played at cinema halls or at a public function.



The guidelines gave relaxation to the people with intellectual disabilities.

## 76. UIDAI achieved 111 Crore Mark on Aadhaar Generation

With the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) achieved another landmark by generating 111 crore Aadhaar in a population of 125 crores plus. Aadhaar's total saturation percentage is 91.7% (as per Census 2011) while over 99% adult population above the age of 18 have been assigned Aadhaar numbers. Twenty-two States/UTs have more than 90% saturation.



The Government has planned to launch Aadhaar Pay, where any person with his Aadhaar number linked to Bank account, can make and / or receive payment, with his thumb impression alone.

## 77. Around 33,000 kms of roads constructed under the PMGSY

Around 33 thousand kilometres of roads have been constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, PMGSY which is 67.53 per cent of the annual target. It means that the average construction of roads is 111 kilometres per day. Another major achievement has been the use of green technologies and non-conventional materials in construction of roads under PMGSY because they are low cost, non-polluting and labour friendly.



In the last two years, more than 2,634 kilometres of roads have been constructed using the green technology.

### **78. General Anti Avoidance Rule will be effective from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017**

The General Anti Avoidance Rule will be effective from the 1st of April ,2017. It seeks to prevent companies from routing transactions through other countries to avoid taxes.



GAAR will not interplay with the right of the taxpayer to select or choose method of implementing a transaction. India will be the 17th nation in the world to have laws that aim to close tax loopholes. GAAR is in force in nations like Australia, Singapore, China and the UK.

### **79. President launched the countrywide Pulse Polio Program for 2017**

The President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee launched the Pulse Polio program for 2017 by administering polio drops to children less than five years old. Around 17 crore children of less than five years across the country will be given polio drops as part of the drive of Government of India to sustain polio eradication from the country.



The Government of India has also introduced the injectable Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV) into its routine immunization program.

### **80. Minister for Social Justice distributed Aids and Assistive Devices Under ADIP Scheme**

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment distributed Free Aids and Assistive devices under the ADIP scheme of Government of India to 1544 Divyangjans in Delhi. A total of 1544 Persons with different kind of disabilities were provided with 2904 numbers of aids and assistive devices with the value of Rs 180 Lakhs under the ADIP scheme.



Camp was organized by Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), to help the Divyangjans to live a respectable life and now Universal Identity cards will be made for Divyangjans.

### 81. Ministry sets target to construct 40 kms road per day in 2017-18

Union Road Transport and Highways minister Nitin Gadkari set a target to construct 40 kilometers' road per day in the next financial year. Dedicating the new Brahmaputra bridge at Sariaghat in Guwahati, 15 thousand crore rupees will be spent to construct 1253 kilometers of national highways in Assam. A bridge over the Brahmaputra connecting Majuli island will be constructed.



The Centre will invest 1 lakh crore rupees in the road sector in Assam. The length of the bridge is nearly one and half kilometers.

# PERSONS IN NEWS

## 1. NDMC appointed Rio Olympic Medalist Deepa Malik as one of their brand ambassadors for its Swachh program

New Delhi Municipal Council, NDMC, has appointed Rio Olympic Medalist Deepa Malik and first female amputee to climb Mount Everest Arunima Sinha as brand ambassadors for its Swachh program.

This announcement was made by the NDMC Chairman Naresh Kumar. NDMC also has decided to make Parliament Street as disable friendly road under the Sugamya Bharat - a scheme launched by Prime Minister of India for the Divyangjan.



## 2. Kenyan runner David Rudisha to be the Mumbai Marathon event ambassador

Kenyan middle-distance runner David Rudisha is the International Event Ambassador for the 14<sup>th</sup> Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon.

David Rudisha is the reigning Olympic and world 800m champion and world record holder. He was the 2010 IAAF World Athlete of the Year.

David was also the Track & Field News Athlete of the Year for three consecutive years between 2010 and 2012. The Mumbai Marathon will held on January 15.



## 3. Gionee announced Virat Kohli as its new brand ambassador

Gionee India has announced cricketer Virat Kohli as their new brand ambassador. Virat Kohli will join actress Alia Bhatt for campaigning activities. Gionee aims to achieve target as much as 2.5 times in 2017 and has already marked 1.2 crore customers in India.

Gionee has also sponsored the IPL cricket team Kolkata Night Riders, football club Shillong Lajong (part of the ISL) and Pro Kabaddi League for the last few years. Gionee will set up 500 brand stores by March 2018 in India.





#### 4. Kapil Dev inducted into the Legends Club Hall of Fame

Cricket icon Kapil Dev was inducted into the Legends Club 'Hall of Fame' at the Cricket Club of India in Mumbai. Kapil Dev, who led India to the emphatic World Cup victory in 1983, is considered as the country's greatest all-rounder.



He was presented with a citation by former India player and Legends Club President Madhav Apte. Gavaskar was also presented a citation by Wadekar. He was already inducted into the club's Hall of Fame on July 11, 2013.

#### 5. Famous Indian doctor G.N. Rao selected for Ophthalmology Hall of Fame

The 2017 Ophthalmology Hall of Fame instituted by the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery selected Gullapalli N. Rao, an eye specialist surgeon from India to include in Ophthalmology Hall of Fame. It is an honour for pioneers in ophthalmology for their distinguished careers in modern ophthalmology. Since 1999, 55 scientists and physicians of all generations have been honoured with this recognition.



The AIIMS pass out post graduate Gullapalli N. Rao returned to India and founded the L V Prasad Eye Institute in 1987. Presently, he is President of the prestigious Academia Ophthalmologica Internationalis.

# PLACES IN NEWS

## 1. The World famous 11-day festival Bargarh Dhanua Jatra began

The 11-day world famous Bargarh Dhanua Jatra began on 2<sup>nd</sup> January as all the rituals were conducted before Goddess 'Samaleswari'.



Dhanu jatra is an annual drama-based open air theatrical performance celebrated in Bargarh, Odisha. It is spread across a 6-km radius and is considered as world's largest open air theater. It is based on mythological story of Lord Krishna. Bargarh becomes the Mathuranagari and Ambapalli area is staged as Gopapur. Jeera River is considered as river Yamuna and Hatapada Mandap as the Raj Darbar of king Kansa.

## 2. PM inaugurated the Indian Science Congress at Tirupati

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 104th Indian Science Congress at the Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati. The theme of the event is, 'Science and Technology for National Development'



About 14,000 scientists and scholars from across the country will participate in the event. Six Nobel Prize winners from different countries including the US, Japan, Israel, France and Bangladesh would also take part in the event. It is the second time that Tirupati is hosting the Indian Science Congress.

## 3. Two day Assam Biotech Conclave began in Guwahati

The two-day Assam Biotech Conclave began in Guwahati. The conclave was organized by Guwahati Biotech Park in association with industry body FINER. The conclave created business and partnering opportunities for its stakeholders and to showcase the facilities and opportunities offered by Guwahati Biotech Park.

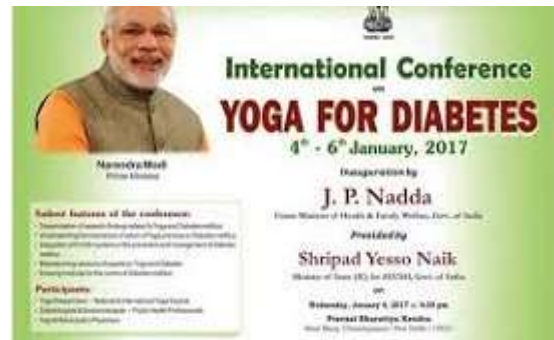


The first draft policy on Assam Biotechnology was also released. Several MoUs were signed as a part of the conclave. The main highlights of the conclave were business and industry academia session, technical and sericulture session among others.

#### 4. International Conference on Yoga for Diabetes held in New Delhi

The three-day International Conference on “Yoga for Diabetes” began in New Delhi on January 4, 2017.

The conference aims to generate discussions on the role of Yoga in the prevention and management of Diabetes and to draw up a roadmap to be adopted for the control of Diabetes through Yoga. Approximately 400 delegates and 50 experts from India and abroad participated in the Conference. The conference consisted of main and parallel sessions on different aspects of Yoga & Diabetes including research, policy making and panel discussion.



#### 5. The 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of FSDC held in New Delhi

The 16th meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held in New Delhi and was attended by heads of all financial sector regulators as its members. It reviewed the major issues and challenges facing the economy.

The council took stock of the Indian economy, demonetization and deliberated on domestic and global growth scenario, fiscal, monetary and external sector, foreign capital flows, status of NPAs of public sector banks, developments in financial markets, as also issues pertaining to Fintech, digital innovations and cyber security.



#### 6. International Kite festival held at Ahmedabad

A week long International Kite festival was held at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad.

Theme pavilion based on 'Tourist Destinations of Gujarat', kite workshop, adventure games for kids, craft stalls to display the local art and food stalls with local delicacies were the major attractions of this year's International kite festival.

Around 51 kite fliers from 8 different states while more than 100 kite fliers from 31 countries are participating in this event.





## 7. International Kite Festival held from January 12-17 in Hyderabad

The second International Kite Festival, KITE 2017, in Hyderabad started on 12<sup>th</sup> January and went on up to 17<sup>th</sup> January. The event aimed to raise awareness about the importance of education and empowerment of girl children.



Telangana Tourism and Incredible India along with the Hyderabad-based Aga Khan Academy, hosted the event in the 100-acre campus of the Aga Khan Academy near Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, Shamshabad. The festival had participation from 17 countries with 70 international and 40 national kite flyers.

## 8. A 4-Day National Youth Festival with the theme Youth for Digital India held at Rohtak, Haryana

The 21<sup>st</sup> National Youth Festival with the theme “Youth for Digital India” began in Rohtak, Haryana.



The theme of this 4-day festival reflects the most critical and crucial importance of the thrust accorded to the area of Digitalisation and Skill Development by Government of India and realise the proclaimed national goal for the PM’s vision of ‘Youth Led Development’. About 5000 participating youth delegates from different States/UTs enriched their knowledge and exchanged their experiences during the festival.

## 9. Hyderabad hosted the 1<sup>st</sup> ABU International Television Dance Festival

Hyderabad hosted grand event of first edition of Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union International Television Dance Festival on 15<sup>th</sup> January, aimed at introducing the Asia Pacific region’s cultural diversity to the world audience. Various countries participated in the event such as Maldives, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Fiji and Indonesia. Event displayed traditional and contemporary dance performances by artistes from worldwide.



The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union was established in 1964 as a non-government association to assist the development of broadcasting in the region.



## 10. New Delhi hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> International Kite Festival

New Delhi hosted the 4<sup>th</sup> International Kite Festival and witnessed professional kite flying experts from worldwide. Various other events like crafts bazaar, magic shows, puppet shows, mehndi artistes, candy-floss makers, quiz contests and dance performances by various institutions of Delhi government was also arranged for visitors.



International kite flyers from Germany, Korea, USA, China, Thailand, Ukraine, Canada, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Jaipur, New Zealand, Australia and Netherlands displayed their talent at the 4 day kite festival.

## 11. International Television Dance Festival held in Hyderabad

Prasar Bharti organized the first edition of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) International Television Dance Festival at Hyderabad. The festival witnessed participation of dancers of age group 18-25 years from various countries such as Maldives, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Philippines, etc.



It was conducted to create a “connection” between people from different parts of the world through dance and bring the cultural diversities together worldwide. Prasar Bharti started with the selection process in June 2016 to select the finalists that will represent India in the grand finale.

## 12. The 58<sup>th</sup> India International Garment Fair held in Pragati Maidan

The three-day 58<sup>th</sup> India International Garment Fair - IIGF was held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. The fair provided a platform to overseas garment buyers to source products and forge business relationships with Indian players in the apparel and fashion accessories domain.



More than 130 participants from 14 states participated in the fair. The fair catered primarily to Autumn-Winter styles and the sellers showcased women’s wear, accessories, kids wear and menswear.

### 13. Indo-Canadian Ice Hockey Friendship Cup 2017 held at Leh

Indo-Canadian Ice Hockey Friendship Cup, 2017 was held at Leh district of Jammu and Kashmir where USA Hockey Foundation lifted the cup defeating Delhi Sacred Bulls (a team from High Commission of Canada, New Delhi).



The Indo- Canadian Ice Hockey Friendship Cup is one of the annual event in Ladakh during a two-month long Ice Hockey tournament starting from mid-December to mid-February every year, which is being organized by the Ladakh Winter Sport Club at Ice Hockey rink, Karzo in Leh town.

### 14. 'Bharat Parv' inaugurated at Red Fort, Delhi

Bharat Parv, a national festival showcasing the country's diverse culture, cuisines, handicrafts and catch glimpses of a progressive India was inaugurated by Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent charge) for Tourism and Culture at Red Fort, Delhi. It is an event organized by the Government of India at the Red Fort, Delhi from 26th to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017, as part of the Republic Day 2017 Celebrations.



The prime aim of organizing the event was to promote the rich cultural diversity of the country. It included display of parade, Crafts Mela, Cultural Performances etc.

### 15. Indian Republic Day celebrated at Indo-Bangla border Enclaves

Republic Day was also celebrated at Chitmahal or the Indo-Bangladesh border Enclaves, which were handed over to each other barely one and a half year ago.



For most of the people who chose to stay back on the Indian side of the fence rather than going to Bangladesh irrespective of their religious affinity, this Republic Day has come as an opportunity to stamp their claim to their ancestral land and their affinity to India's multi lingual, multi ethnic and multi religious culture where existence is deeply rooted in tolerance and co-existence, along with democracy.

# REGIONAL

## 1. Mori in Andhra gets Smart Digital Village tag

Mori village in Andhra Pradesh became a complete Smart Digital Village. It is a small village under Sakhinetipalli Mandal in East Godavari district with a population of 4500.

All the 1189 households in the village became fully digital as Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu finally launched the AP FiberNet project that will provide internet at a speed of 15 Mbps, Wi-Fi, a telephone connection and 250 cable television channels (using a triple-play set-top box) for a total price of Rs. 149 per month. Mori also recently bagged the Swachh Village award at the national level.



## 2. Gujarat CM inaugurated Digital AVMS RTO Check-post

Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Vijay Rupani dedicated India's first laser technology based advanced AVMS RTO check-post at Shamlaji of Aravalli district. The check-post is equipped with an advanced ray technology with a cost of Rs. 4.72 crores.

The State Government aims to make all the 16 check-posts across the state advanced, automatic and transparent with a cost of Rs. 35 crores during next year to make the traffic check-post well-equipped with advanced tools for making it full of transparency and corruption-free.



## 3. Maharashtra Government Bans use of Purse Seine Nets for Fishing

The Maharashtra State Government has banned all purse seine nets from January 1<sup>st</sup> to safeguard fingerlings, fish species and increase their population. Purse seine nets are large fishing nets used to catch fish in bulk.

All such nets are banned for use within the territorial waters, which is 12 nautical miles from the sea shore. The nets have mesh spanning from 25 mm to 35mm that blocks small fish and fish eggs from falling back into the ocean, thereby stopping them from multiplying.





#### 4. Andhra Pradesh launched NTR Arogya Raksha Scheme

Andhra Pradesh Government launched NTR Arogya Raksha Scheme. The scheme aims to provide medical treatment to the people below Above Poverty Line (APL) at Rs. 1200 premium per annum. One can register for the scheme at any of the Mee Seva centres till February 2017.



Under the health scheme, Rs. 2 lakhs worth medical treatment would be provided free of cost in any 432 corporate hospitals in the state. This NTR Health Scheme will cover the 1044 diseases.

#### 5. Maharashtra Cabinet approved Babasaheb Ambedkar Krushi Swavalamban Yojna

Maharashtra Cabinet approved the implementation of Babasaheb Ambedkar Krushi Swavalamban Yojna, under which Scheduled Caste farmers will be given various incentives. The incentives include 100% grant for digging or repairing wells, boring, drip irrigation, farm ponds or other facilities for agriculture and irrigation.



'Krushi Mahotsav' (agriculture fair) will be organised in each district to spread awareness about new technologies, market management and agri-allied businesses among farmers.

#### 6. Maharashtra Cabinet decisions

Maharashtra Cabinet cleared the way for implementation of Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Swadhar Yojna under which SC students will be provided hostel, food and other educational facilities.



The government will amend the Maharashtra Co-operative Institutions Act to regulate functioning of non-agriculture co-operative credit societies and protect the interests of depositors. The Cabinet also decided to allot 20 acres of land to Goregaon Film City in suburban Goregaon for setting up National Centre of Excellence for Animation, Visual, Effect, Gaming and Comics.



## 7. PM Narendra Modi released a special commemorative postage of Guru Gobind Singh

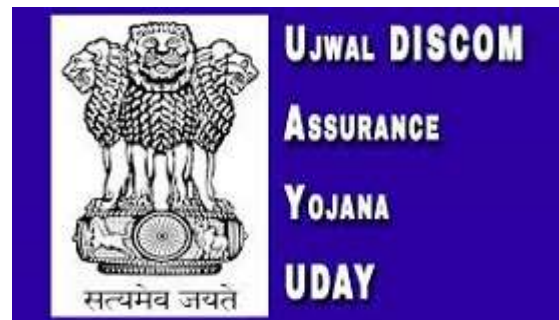
On the 350<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh, Indian Prime Minister released postal stamp of Guru Gobind Singh at Prakash Parva celebration held in Patna. Prime Minister urged people to inculcate the values of Guru Govind Singh ji Maharaj. Guru Gobind Singh ji's entire life was devoted in serving the people and fighting for justice.



Bihar Governor Ram Nath Kovind, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Punjab Chief Minister Prakash Singh Badal, Union Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad, Ram Vilas Paswan and Harsimrat Kaur witnessed the occasion.

## 8. Telangana and Assam join the Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojna

With Telangana and Assam joining remarkable UDAY scheme, the toll reached to 20 for the states covered under the scheme. Under scheme, over 90 per cent of the debt of state electricity distribution companies will be covered by the debt restructuring scheme for discoms.



There will be an overall net benefit of Rs. 6,116 crores to Telangana and Rs. 1,663 crores to Assam under the scheme. The Assam government will take over Rs. 928 crores debt and Telangana government will cover debt of Rs. 8,923 crores of total discom debt.

## 9. Ludhiana launched mobile app for Election Commission of India

To ease the voting procedure for voters, candidates, election staff and Election Commission of India, Ludhiana state administration launched a mobile app termed as "ECI360", designed by company '01 Synergy'. App will ease reporting forum for ECI in upcoming assembly elections.



The App "ECI360" has been divided into different sections such as voter, candidate, SVEEP and admin. It is launched with an aim to bring transparency and accountability regarding the elections and voting. App will be a network of back end systems which is user friendly.

## 10. The 4<sup>th</sup> Assam International Agri-Horti show organized in Guwahati

The Fourth Assam International Agri-Horticulture show was organised in Guwahati.

Around 10 foreign countries took part in the show. Nearly 600 farmers of Assam were trained on doubling farmers' income, more crop per drop and agri-preneurship development during the show. Over 200 organizations from across the country took part in the show. Business meet, exhibitions, discussion were also organised.



## 11. Telangana Government announced financial assistance of ₹1000 per month to single women

The Telangana Government has announced a new scheme to provide financial assistance of one thousand rupees per month each to single women in the state. The new scheme will be implemented from April 2017.

Single women who are below poverty line constitute two to three lakhs in the state. The Government has directed district collectors to start enrolment of single women and appealed to the beneficiaries to come forward to enrol their names under the scheme.



## 12. Island Tourism Festival 2017 held in Andaman & Nicobar

The Island Tourism Festival 2017 was held at Port Blair in Andaman & Nicobar Islands. It is the annual cultural event organized for promotion of tourism and entertainment for islanders.

During the 10-day event, performances by the cultural troupes from mainland helped the Islanders renew their cultural ties with mainland India. An International Cultural Group from Khazakhstan also performed the ITF Ground. The other attractions were the food courts, fun games and handicrafts etc.



### 13. Delhi Government approved the fourth phase of Metro project

The Delhi Government approved the fourth phase of Metro project featuring six corridors measuring over a hundred kilometre. It will take the network to the outer areas of the national capital and make the airport more accessible.



The total length of the metro corridor in the city will cross the 450-km mark. The mega project will cost over 50 thousand crore rupees. Its Detailed Project Report (DPR) was cleared in June 2016.

### 14. Delhi Government unveils the Good Samaritan Policy

The Delhi government has approved 'Good Samaritan Policy'. The government will give monetary incentive of Rs. 2,000 and appreciation certificate to people who help road accident victims in Delhi. Earlier, the government had decided to provide basic life support training to all auto-rickshaw drivers to provide helping hand in case of a road accident.



As per the 'Road Accidents in India' report, Mumbai had the highest number of 23,468 number of road accidents during 2015 while Delhi had the highest number of 1,622 deaths due to road accidents.

### 15. SVEEP Campaign: 23000 New voters aged between 18 to 19 years registered in Jalandhar district

The SVEEP Campaign being run by the ECI in order to encourage the more and more participation of Young voters during the ensuing Punjab Assembly Elections got a major fillip in Jalandhar district as 23000 youths aging between 18 to 19 years registered as new voters during last four months' span from September 7 to end of December.



Before September 7, 2016 there were only six thousand voters of aged between 18 to 19 years.



## 16. Maharashtra launched India's largest WiFi service

MumbaiWiFi, an exclusive service connecting 500 hotspots across Mumbai under the smart city project, was launched by Maharashtra government at Mumbai. It has been announced that the government will extend the free WiFi services across 1200 hotspots by 2018.



Some of such hot spots are Gateway of India, Churchgate, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, Prabha Devi, Shivaji Park, Tarapore Aquarium, Bombay Stock Market, among various places across Eastern, Western and Harbour railways.

## 17. Haryana to build 'Prarambh School for Teachers Education'

The Haryana Government announced to build State level Prarambh School at village Silani of district Jhajjar to provide a 4 year integrated teachers training course and make available trained teachers. Presently, teachers will teach to students of 15 states.



Prarambh will improve the quality of elementary and secondary teacher education by providing them professional skills. It will be an autonomous institution built at 10 acre land. The program will cover the academic content from degree to post-graduation level.

## 18. Arunachal signs MoU with NDDB to promote dairy development

Arunachal Pradesh has signed a MoU with National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) during the Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017 with an aim to promote the dairy sector and rural livelihoods in the state.



NDDB will conduct a study related to milk production and consumption to identify areas of intervention. Based on the study, the Dairy Board will prepare a road map in consultation with the Govt of Arunachal Pradesh. A breeding policy will be prepared to enhance milch animal productivity.



### 19. Vedanta launched a smart class project in Chitradurga

Vedanta Foundation and Vedanta Sesa Goa Iron Ore, in collaboration with the Karnataka Directorate of Education, have launched 'The Smart Class' project in schools in Chitradurga, Karnataka. It is a pilot project to promote digital education in schools across the State.



Vedanta Limited (Formerly known as Sesa Sterlite Ltd.), a Vedanta Group company is a global diversified natural resource company, with operations across zinc-lead-silver, oil & gas, iron ore, copper, aluminium and commercial power.

### 20. Valedictory function of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017 concluded

The valedictory function of Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017 concluded at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar. Total 25578 MoUs were signed during the 3 days of summit where more than 18000 MoUs were signed in MSME Sector. About 5938 MoUs were signed with the investment of more than 10 crores each.



Major MoUs were signed in Agro, Health, Power and Gas, Food Processing, Petro Chemicals, Automobiles, Environment, Road, IT, Biotechnology, Rural Development and Textile Sectors.

### 21. Sex ratio in Haryana crossed 900 mark

The number of girls per 1000 boys has crossed the 900 mark in Haryana. It was 879 girls per 1000 boys as per 2011 census. The state government is making efforts to deploy one doctor per 1,000 persons compared to existing one doctor per 1,700 persons in the state.



Around 24 agreements involving potential investment worth 20,000 crore rupees have been signed during Pravasi Haryana Divas celebrations that will provide employment to 43,000 persons in the state.

## 22. MoUs worth Rs. 8,835 crore signed in textile sector during Vibrant Gujarat 2017

MoUs worth Rs. 8,835 crores were signed in textile sector during the Vibrant Gujarat 2017. MoUs have been signed in different sectors such as textile parks, textile processing, machinery, carpet development, etc.

Gujarat produces 29% of India's total cotton production. Two major institutes of Gujarat, namely NIFT and NID, and various engineering colleges offer degrees in textile technology, textile processing and textile engineering.



## 23. Kerala unveiled its first solar boat

To improve water development transport in the state, Kerala state government unveiled its first solar boat 'Aditya' at Vaikom. Solar boat services will be provided between Vaikom and Thavanakkadavu. Boat has seating capacity of 75, made at cost of Rs 1.50-crore and can travel at a speed of 14km per hour.

It took 2 years to build such boat. The boat was made based on the research conducted by Cochin University of Science and Technology's ship technology department.



## 24. Digital Dakiya scheme inaugurated by the Madhya Pradesh government

Digital Dakiya, which aims at encouraging cashless transactions was launched at Indore, Madhya Pradesh. "Digital Dakiya or Digital Postman will visit different places to teach and encourage people about cashless transactions and its benefits. State government will provide Identity cards to the volunteers deployed in this program.



Digital Dakiyas visit door to door and trained households specially women and elderly people about digitized transactions. The scheme aimed at urban as well as rural areas.

## 25. 'Pinakin' mobile app launched by the Tamil Nadu government

In a move to make available information on tourism in Tamil Nadu with audio facilities, Tamil Nadu Tourism Department has come up with a mobile app 'Pinakin'. Tourists can get guidance about world heritage tourist sites like Mamallapuram, Thanjavur Big Temple, Gangaikonda Cholapuram and Darasuram.

The app will be available in two languages i.e. Tamil and English. The free audio guide is first such initiative where users not only can get information regarding ticket prices, parking details, etc. but also can listen to interesting stories and facts as well.



## 26. Gujarat's 'Gunotsav' school evaluation drive held in state

The three-day Gunotsav, an exercise of assessing over 34 thousand schools was launched in Gujarat. This year, around 54 lakh primary students of 34,000 schools will be assessed under this drive. This drive is aimed at assessing the quality of education imparted to students of Class 1 to 8 of the government-run primary as well as grant-in-aid schools across the state.



Under this drive, around 4,500 people would visit these schools and give them grade.

## 27. The 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Kerala Schools Arts Festival held at Kannur

The 57<sup>th</sup> annual Kerala Schools Arts Festival, tipped as Asia's largest youth art fete, held at Kannur, Kerala. The seven day-festival organized by the State Education Department attracted about 12,000 children from high schools, higher secondary and vocational schools of 14 districts across the state to compete in 232 events held simultaneously in 20 different venues in the northern district capital of the state.



The legendary Malayalam playback singers K.J. Yesudas and P Jayachandran were the finds of the first school arts festival held in 1957.



## 28. Kozhikode Corporation becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> Elderly-friendly corporation in Kerala

The Kozhikode Corporation became the first Elderly-Friendly Corporation in Kerala. The Kozhikode state government has planned to setup Senior citizen's club, Day care centres as a part of Vayomitram project for the welfare of the elder people in the state.

The ₹1.75-crore project plans to ensure the physical, mental and social well-being as well as security of senior citizens in the city. As part of the project, Ayurveda medical camps and distribution of vaccines will be held in all wards.



## 29. Bihar Government to stop manufacturing of liquor from 1<sup>st</sup> of April

The Bihar state cabinet meeting chaired by the Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has taken decision to stop manufacturing of liquor in the state from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

It was decided not to renew the license of 21 out of 27 liquor manufacturing and bottling factories in the state. The government has said these factories can produce soft drinks and other product. License of remaining six factories will be renewed which produce Ethanol only.



## 30. Karang in Manipur becomes India's first cashless island

The Union ministry of electronics and information technology under its Digital India program announced Karang, a small lake island in Manipur, as the country's first cashless island. 400 beneficiaries, 16 merchants, including six motor boat service providers, registered themselves for the digital campaign.

The Karang island is in the middle of Loktak, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India. Akodara village in Gujarat was India's first digital village.





### 31. Sikkim observed State Organic day

Sikkim observed State Organic day on 18th January. Last year on this day Sikkim became First Organic State of the country. The day aims to give message to the world on the importance of organic farming in preserving environment and the planet as a whole.

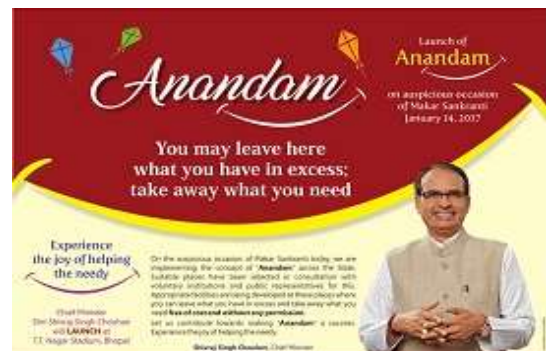
The state agriculture and horticulture department organized Organic festival in Saramsa Garden near Ranipool in east Sikkim on the occasion. Exhibition cum sale and competitions of various organic produces, vegetables and fruits of local growers was the attraction of the festival.



### 32. Anandam Scheme launched in Madhya Pradesh

The Madhya Pradesh State Government launched a scheme called as 'Anandam' under which needy people will be provided with basic needs of day to day life such as jackets, sarees, blankets, utensils, school bags donated by economically well public who wish to donate. People who wish to make available such basic needs to needy people can provide it through website 'www.anandsansthanmp.in'.

People who donate will be called as Anandak. It has begun from the district head-quarters. This will be launched at cities and panchayat level.



### 33. Dharamsala announced as the second capital of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh announced Dharamsala as the second capital of the state. Since, Dharamsala is considered as tourist capital and commercial capital of the state, it deserves to be considered as 2nd capital of Himachal Pradesh.

Dharamsala was already marked special due to presence of Dalai Lama's residence and the headquarters of Central Tibetan Administration (the Tibetan government in exile). Dharamsala is a city in Himachal's Kangra district. Kangra is the largest district in the state.



### 34. Mizoram launched Entrepreneurship Development Scheme

New Economic Development Policy under Entrepreneurship Development Scheme was launched by Mizoram state government and fund of Rs. 2 crore is made available for implementation of policy. It is launched with aim to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations with minimum harm to the environment.



The scheme would help state government boost Assam's agriculture, food processing and tourism sectors and stimulate the growth of business ties with other countries under Start up initiative.

### 35. World Bank approved Rs. 1,376 Crore loan for Tripura Power Upgradation

The World Bank has approved a loan of Rs. 1376 crores for complete upgradation and improvement of the power system network. The project is divided into five phases. Up gradation in power system would create new 132 KV substations at Belonia, Bagafa, Sabroom and Satchand in South Tripura district, Rabindranagar, Gokulnagar in Sipahijala district, Mohanpur Amarpur in Gomati district and Manu in Dhalai district.



The SPML Infra Ltd has been awarded this contract of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase with the budget of Rs. 461 crores.

### 36. Bihar State Government launched the Nasha Mukta campaign

In a move to make Bihar, an alcoholic addiction free state, Bihar state government launched 'Nasha Mukta campaign' with creation of over 11 thousand km long human chain across the state. It is claimed to be world's largest human chain. This grand level campaign will last for 45 minutes and involve participation of over 2 crore people.



With this campaign, Bihar will not only break Bangladesh's record of 1050km human chain formed, but also will become an ideal state of the country as dreamed by Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi.

### 37. Himachal Pradesh topped India's learning outcomes levels

As per the Annual Status Education Report, a survey by NGO, Himachal Pradesh has proved to stay ahead of Kerala in terms of learning outcomes. It has the country's highest reading and learning levels, with highest rate of children who can study standard II level of text in the country. Achievement level of government schools of HP was 65.3 per cent as compared to the national level of 41.6 percent.



Further, the survey found that enrolment rate of students in the age group six to 14 in Himachal Pradesh was 99.8 percent.

### 38. Gujarat created a new world record with 3.5 lakh people singing the National Anthem

On the occasion of setting up of the idol of goddess Khodiyar at a newly-built Khodal Dham temple in Rajkot, Gujarat created world record when around 3.5 lakh people sang the anthem together in the presence of observers from Guinness World Records.



Prior to this, a record was made by Bangladesh where 2,54,537 people had sung the national anthem. Trust associated with the temple has also set two new records for Limca Book of Records, by organizing the longest (40km) 'Shobha-Yatra' (procession) and a 1008-kund 'Mahayagna'.

### 39. Tamil Nadu Assembly passed the Jallikattu Bill

Tamil Nadu passed ordinance thereby amended the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and replaced the ordinance issued on January 21, 2017 to allow the states traditional sport, under the chairmanship of Chief Minister O Panneerselvam. This will certain that provisions of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (PCA), 1960 do not apply to the bull and bypass Supreme Court imposed ban on Jallikattu in May 2014.



The apex court had earlier banned use of bull as performing animals in traditional events such as Jallikattu, bullock-cart races etc.



#### 40. Goa becomes the first state to send postal ballots electronically

Goa became first state to start electronic transmission of postal ballot to service voters. In other words, returning officers will transfer the postal ballots to service voters by electronic means so that the service voters can download it, fill it and send it via e-mail to returning officer. This will not only save the time for transfer of postal ballots but also increase the use of such facility.



It is a way of bringing transparency to the system. Goa has 822 service voters at present.

#### 41. Kerala became the first State to introduce a E-health project

Kerala became the first State in the country to introduce E-health project in Government health sector. The initiative help process data in the health care system and administration of hospitals through which the public could access information about various health schemes, details of hospitals, and treatment facilities, besides seeking online appointments.



Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan launched the project in Thiruvananthapuram. Seven out of 14 districts will be covered in the first phase of the Centrally-aided project undertaken at a cost of Rs. 92.12 crores.

#### 42. Assam launched 'Chief Minister's Award' to reward districts adopting digital payments

To promote cashless payments, Assam's Chief Minister announced for 'Chief Minister's Award' to be distributed annually every year to best performing district of the state that adopts digital means and improve digital literacy among the society.

It has been decided that a prize of Rs. 50,000 would be presented at the end of every financial year to Deputy Commissioner for the best performing district. Assam has performed better than many states in the country in ushering in cashless transactions at tea gardens.





#### 43. Madhya Pradesh Government announced a total ban on polythene bags

To save the environment, cows and bring cleanliness, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced a total ban on use and manufacture of polythene carry bags with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017. Polythene manufactures are given a 3 months' time span to stop producing such polythene.



Announcement was made on Republic Day, where Chief Minister emphasized on production and use of cloth/paper bags. Prior to this, Uttar Pradesh government stopped use of polythene bags in 2015.

#### 44. Delhi University's Hansraj College hoisted the first 'Monumental' flag

On the 68<sup>th</sup> Republic Day, Delhi University's Hansraj College became first public university in India to get a 100 feet tall monumental flagpole. It was hoisted by MP Naveen Jindal, Hans Raj alumnus and founder of the Flag Foundation of India. It is 2<sup>nd</sup> such flag as first flag was 207 feet tall, installed in Central Park, CP, Delhi.



The resolution to install the national flag on campuses was adopted on February 18, 2016, by HRD Minister Smriti Irani with an aim of raising nationalism in students.

#### 45. Krishi Samridhi-Rashtriya Krishi Mela inaugurated in Raipur

Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh inaugurated Krishi Samridhi-Rashtriya Krishi Mela at Raipur, Chhattisgarh and announced setting up of KVKs in Mungeli and Bemtara of Chhattisgarh under the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan. In order to increase liaison between farmers and scientists for technological development and its utilization 'Mera Gaon-Mera Gaurav' and 'Farmers First' programmes were initiated.



An unprecedented increase of almost Rs. 500 crores have been included in the budget of agriculture research in the year 2016-17.

#### 46. Kerala started 'e-health Kerala' health project

To bring more efficient electronic database in the health department and have backup of efficient electronic medical record, Kerala started 'e-health Kerala' health project with the help of health department in association with the state IT Mission. Kerala distributed 8,000 tablet computers to health workers so that they can prepare public health survey database.



This project will be majorly funded by the Central Government with Rs. 96 crores as cost of the project. This project will allow the state to monitor the health of its people and can take effective control measures.

#### 47. Mysuru inaugurated India's 1st post office Passport Seva Kendra

Mysuru inaugurated India's first post office Passport Seva Kendra to make it easy for public in conveyance. It will be named POPSK because the ministry of external affairs (MEA) in union with the postal department will offer passport related services through a network of post offices.



The POPSK will carry out all operations excluding printing and dispatch of passports. Regional passport officers will train the postal department employees on processing an application. Second such PSK is planned to open in Gujarat.

#### 48. 'Dulari Kanya' scheme introduced in Arunachal Pradesh

In wake of declining ratio of girl child, Arunachal Pradesh Governor V Shanmuganathan launched 'Dulari Kanya' scheme, on the Republic Day, to control infant mortality in the state. Under this scheme, every girl child will get Rs. 20,000 bank deposit and will get accrued interest at the age of 18 years. Scheme will track mortality rate at every stage such as pre-natal and ante-natal care stage.



Government recalled various schemes initiated by the state in various sectors like health, education, rural connectivity, hydropower etc.

#### 49. A 2-day North East Investors' Summit held in Shillong

The first ever "Investors Summit" exclusively for North Eastern Region (NER), organized jointly by the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of DoNER during 29-30 January, 2017 was inaugurated in Shillong. The summit aimed to showcase the NER as a global destination for investment, and to explore the possibility of bringing in convergence of efforts of various central Ministries and North Eastern States to attract investment in NER.



The meet witnessed participation of over 400 delegates from across the country and signing of MoUs in various areas, among local entrepreneurs.

#### 50. A 2-day North East Seed Biodiversity Festival held in Agartala

In Tripura, two-day North East Seed Biodiversity Festival cum Workshop of Traditional Crops 2017 held in Agartala. The festival cum workshop was organized by Development research and communication services centre, jointly with the state agriculture department.



During this two-day workshop, various topics such as; traditional seed movement in India, community based indigenous seed system, genetics and plant breeding approach for bio-diversity, Bio-diversity for livelihood of forest dwellers were discussed. Workshop was beneficial for farming community, officials and students for their development and understanding.

# REPORTS

## 1. India ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> among nations offering the highest salaries to expats

As per a survey from HSBC, India ranked third among the countries offering the highest average annual salary to expatriates. The combination of high salaries and excellent work culture has placed Switzerland at the top of the careers league table.

The best employment packages, including health benefits, are found in Middle East countries like Bahrain. HSBC surveyed 26,871 expats in more than 100 countries.

The top 5 Countries are:

- Switzerland
- Hong Kong
- India
- Singapore
- China



## 2. Around 30 Indian-origin Men & Women Inducted into 2017 Forbes' Super Achievers List

The 2017 edition of Forbes' list of super achievers under the age of 30 has over 30 Indian-origin innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders. The list features those who seek to break the status quo and transform the world.

Some prominent names in the list are:

- 27-year-old Vivek Kopparthi: co-founder of NeoLight
- 27-year-old Prarthna Desai: healthcare company Zipline
- 28-year-old Shaun Patel: owner of OrthoNinja
- 17-year-old Rohan Suri: founder of Averia Health Solutions

The word "Forbes" in a large, blue, serif font.



### 3. India placed at the 92<sup>nd</sup> position on the global index of talent competitiveness

As per the global index of talent competitiveness released by The Adecco Group and the Human Capital Leadership Institute of Singapore (HCLI), India ranks at 92<sup>nd</sup> position in respect of how countries grow, attract and retain talent.



The list is topped by Switzerland followed by Singapore and the United Kingdom at 2<sup>nd</sup> spot and 3<sup>rd</sup> spot places respectively. Others in the top 10 comprise the United States (4<sup>th</sup>), Sweden (5<sup>th</sup>), Australia (6<sup>th</sup>), Luxembourg (7<sup>th</sup>), Denmark (8<sup>th</sup>), Finland (9<sup>th</sup>) and Norway (10<sup>th</sup>). Last year, India was placed at 89<sup>th</sup> place on the index.

### 4. Oxfam survey says '8 men own half the world's wealth'

Ahead of the World Economic Forum summit in Davos, Oxfam, the confederation of charitable organizations focused on rising global poverty and stated that the wealth of the world's poorest 3.6 billion people is the equivalent to the combined net worth of six American businessmen.



They include Microsoft founder Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg who co-founded Facebook, and Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, said Oxfam. The charity pointed to a link between the vast gap between rich and poor and growing discontent with mainstream politics around the world.

### 5. India Ranked 60<sup>th</sup> in the Inclusive Development Index 2017

As per the Inclusive Development Index (IDI) of the World Economic Forum (WEF), India ranks at the 60<sup>th</sup> position with a score of only 3.38. Lithuania topped the list among the 79 developing countries. China is ranked at 15<sup>th</sup> position while Pakistan is ranked at 52<sup>nd</sup> position.



Norway has topped the list among 30 advanced economies in the Inclusive Development Index of the advanced economies report released by the WEF. Luxembourg (2<sup>nd</sup>), Switzerland (3<sup>th</sup>), Iceland (4<sup>th</sup>) and Denmark (5<sup>th</sup>) make into the top five.

## 6. India ranked 78<sup>th</sup> in the global 'Passport Index'

The Indian passport has been ranked at the 78<sup>th</sup> position in the recently released Passport Index 2017. The report ranks countries based on the number of nations their citizens can visit without a visa or on arrival.

The list is topped by Germany with a visa-free score of 157. Sweden and Singapore rank second in the list with a visa-free score of 156. India ranks ahead of China and Pakistan which are ranked 58<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> on the list respectively.



## 7. WEF Report announced Bengaluru as the most dynamic city in the world

World Economic Forum revealed Bangalore as the most dynamic cities of the world in its Momentum Index 2017 among 30 cities. Momentum Index is based on population, technology and R&D, connectivity, output and corporate activity, education, and sustained economic changes.

This list was followed by Ho Chi Minh City of Vietnam at 2<sup>nd</sup> place and silicon city at the 3<sup>rd</sup> spot. List also comprised some other Indian cities like Pune (13), Chennai (17), Delhi (23) and Mumbai (25).



## 8. World witnessed hottest year on record in 2016

World witnessed the hottest year on record in 2016, surpassing the exceptionally high temperatures of 2015. The globally average temperature in 2016 was about 1.1 degree Celsius higher than the pre-industrial period.

Surging concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane for human induced climate change and record breaking average temperature rise in 2016. Record ocean heat contributed to widespread coral reef bleaching, including in the Great Barrier Reef, which has seen up to 50 per cent of its coral die in certain parts.



## 9. Transparency International organisation released Corruption Perception Index 2016

Transparency International organisation released Corruption Perception Index 2016 rating 176 countries worldwide where India was ranked 79th among the 176 countries. The list was topped by duo New Zealand and Denmark which means they are least corrupted, more transparent towards access to information about public expenditure.

Somalia was ranked the most corrupt country followed by South Sudan, North Korea, Syria, and Yemen. Survey was prepared on basis of World Bank data, the world economic forum and other institutions.



# RESIGNATIONS & RETIREMENTS

## 1. Somdev Devvarman announced retirement from professional Tennis

Somdev Devvarman announced his retirement from professional tennis. Somdev touched a career-high rank of number 62 in 2011.

Devvarman is the only Indian to have reached the final of the Chennai Open singles event in 2009. He won the singles gold medal at the 2010 Commonwealth Games. He also won singles gold at the Asian Games in 2010 as well as the doubles gold along with Sanam Singh. He was honoured with the Arjuna Award in 2011.



## 2. Narinder Batra resigned as IOA associate VP

Dr. Narinder Batra resigned as the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Associate Vice-President as an expression of his protest appointments of Suresh Kalmadi and Abhay Chautala as life presidents of the national Olympic body.

The IOA during its annual general meeting named Kalmadi and Chautala as life time presidents. Kalmadi, tainted by the 2010 New Delhi Commonwealth Games corruption scandal, had declined the life presidency offer.



## 3. UK envoy to EU Sir Ivan Rogers resigned

The UK's top Diplomat in the European Union, Sir Ivan Rogers, has resigned. He was appointed to the role of permanent representative by David Cameron in 2013. He was expected to be in office till October 2017. He was also expected to play a major role in the Brexit negotiations with the EU.

Sir Ivan has also served as private secretary to ex-chancellor Ken Clarke, principal private secretary to ex-PM Tony Blair and Mr. Cameron's Europe adviser.





#### 4. Table Tennis Olympic Champion Li Xiaoxia announced retirement

China's Table Tennis Olympic Champion Li Xiaoxia has announced her retirement through social media. Li helped China win the team gold medal at the Rio Olympic Games. She also finished the runner-up in the singles event.



Li is the eighth table tennis Grand Slam winner in history with singles crowns from the 2008 World Cup in Kuala Lumpur, 2012 Olympics in London and 2013 world championships in Paris. She also has several doubles and teams world titles to her name.

#### 5. Mahindra Singh Dhoni stepped down as the Captain of T-20 & ODI format of cricket

Mahindra Singh Dhoni announced his decision to step down as captain of Team India's limited over cricket matches. He will, however, be available for selection for the ODI and T20 England series starting 15th of January.



Dhoni had earlier stepped down as Captain of India's Test team. Under Dhoni, India had won a T-20 and ODI World Cup and a Champions Trophy title. The 35-year-old from Ranchi played 283 ODIs and 199 of them as captain.

#### 6. Ashirbad Behera, Ranjib Biswal quit posts from Odisha Cricket Association

On the direction of the Apex court, Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) secretary Ashirbad Behera, President Ranjib Biswal and all OCA office-bearers quit their posts.



The Supreme Court on January 2 had asked to dissolve OCA. Meanwhile, President of Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association - MPCA Sanjay Jagdale and Chairman Jyotiraditya Scindia demitted their posts in the light of Lodha committee recommendations. Two other office-bearers vice president M. K. Bhargava and Ashok Jagdale also demitted their posts, as they crossed 70 years of age criteria recommended by the Lodha committee.

## 7. Dilip Vengsarkar Resigned as the MCA Vice-President Post

Former India skipper Dilip Vengsarkar stepped down as the Vice-President of the Mumbai Cricket Association in view of the Honourable Supreme Court order dated 2nd January 2017. Earlier Sharad Pawar had resigned as the President of the MCA.



Vengsarkar served four two-year terms as the MCA vice president from 2002 to 2010. Vengsarkar was also the chief national selector from 2006-08. Currently, he's the chairman of the National Cricket Academy (NCA).

## 8. The 13-time Gymnastics World Champion, Yana Kudryavtseva, announced retirement

Russian Rhythmic Gymnast Yana Kudryavtseva announced her retirement from competition. She is currently 19 years old. Kudryavtseva won 13 world championships from 2013 to 2015. She won Silver in Rio Olympics 2016.

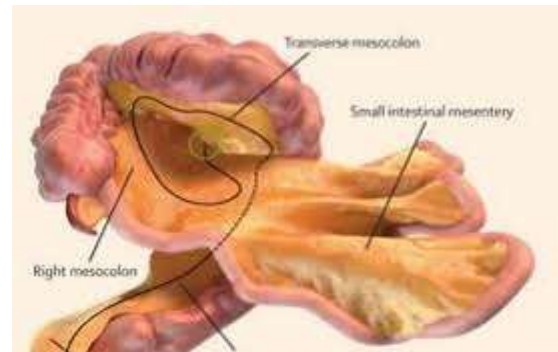


She is also the 2015 European Games All-around champion, two-time (2014, 2016) European Championships All-around champion, the 2012 European Junior ball champion. Kudryavtseva was one of the finalist for the 2015 SportAccord Awards in category of the Sportswoman of the Year 2014.

## 1. Scientists discover new human organ called mesentery

Scientists from Ireland have discovered a new human organ named the mesentery. It is found in our digestive systems. Earlier it was thought to be made up of fragmented, separate structures. However, scientists believe it to be a continuous organ. It will be human body's 79th organ.

It is a double fold of peritoneum and connects the intestine to the abdomen. It attaches the stomach, small intestine, pancreas, spleen and other organs to the posterior wall of the abdomen.



## 2. India's Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope plays key role in rare discovery

India's Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope, GMRT based at Khodad near Pune and NASA's Chandra X-ray telescope have played an important role in making a rare discovery about the universe.

For the first time, it has been shown that the central dense cores of certain kinds of special galaxies are the source that high energy particles like electrons need to create relic radio emissions that are seen in clusters of galaxies.



## 3. China launched the updated version of Kuaizhou-1A rocket

China successfully launched three satellites into space in its first commercial mission using an updated version of Kuaizhou-1A rocket. The KZ-1A rocket was made from the Kuaizhou-1 rocket with improvements in adaptability. It is a low-cost solid-fueled carrier rocket with high reliability.

The KZ-1A rocket is designed to launch low-orbit satellites weighing below 300 kg and will be used for forestry survey, environmental protection, disaster management and relief purposes. Mission was carried out under leadership of China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation.



#### 4. ISRO and CNES ink pact on satellite launch

CNES, French Space agency and Indian Space Research Organisation entered an MoU to launch satellite technology. MoU will make the CNES-ISRO partnership more strong, enable France to learn from the Indian model of streamlining the costs of space programmes and equipping Axiom Research Lab's lunar rover with two latest-generation CASPEX micro-cameras, developed by CNES.



CNES will help ISRO with French technology in sending Team Indus on this first private mission to land a rover on the moon.

#### 5. ISRO inked agreement with French Space Agency

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) inked a partnership agreement with French Space agency (CNES) in satellite launch technology. The agreement was signed between ISRO Chairman Kiran Kumar and CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall.



French Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault met Rahul Narayan, CEO of leading Indian "NewSpace" start-up, Axiom Research Labs. The start-up has put forward TeamIndus which is designing an all-terrain rover by end-2017. The French Space Agency will provide cameras to the rover.

#### 6. SpaceX's Falcon 9 Rocket successfully placed 10 satellites into orbit

SpaceX successfully placed constellation of 10 satellites into orbit on board of its two stage Falcon 9 Rocket. Falcon 9 is a two-stage rocket designed and manufactured by SpaceX for safe transit of satellites.



SpaceX ferries supplies to the International Space Station and is in progress to develop a Falcon which will carry astronauts to the station. Satellites were placed into the orbit for Iridium Communications Inc. so that they can replace its existing network of satellites and provide global voice and data communications.



## 7. World's lightest watch created using graphene

Scientists have developed the world's lightest high-performance mechanical watch made using the 'wonder material' graphene and weighing just 40 grams. The RM 50-03 watch was made using a unique composite incorporating graphene to manufacture a strong but lightweight new case to house the delicate watch mechanism.



Graphene is the world's first two-dimensional material at just one-atom thick. It was first isolated in 2004 and has the potential to revolutionise a large number of applications including high-performance composites for the automotive and aerospace industries, as well as flexible, bendable mobile phones and tablets and next-generation energy storage.

## 8. NASA approved mission to explore iron-rich asteroid "16 Psyche"

NASA has approved a mission to explore 16 Psyche, an iron-rich asteroid whose contents are said to be worth over 100-thousand times the value of the entire world economy.



The mission, proposed in 2014, would send a NASA spacecraft to Psyche, running tests to learn more about the history and composition of the celestial body. Psyche is an asteroid with a diameter in excess of 125 miles, about the same size of the state of Massachusetts, and is almost entirely composed of iron and nickel.

## 9. Baby born using a new type of 3-person IVF

The Times reports that doctors in Kiev used a method called pronuclear transfer to help a previously infertile couple have a baby. This new type of three-person IVF is a first case in the world. However, it is not the first baby born with DNA from three parents.



The baby, born on 5th January, is thought to be the world's second modern three-parent baby. Another child was created using a slightly different method in Mexico. Doctors developed three-person IVF to help women who are at risk of passing on serious genetic disorders, called mitochondrial disease, to have a healthy child.

## 10. ISRO to launch record breaking 103 satellites at one go

ISRO plans to launch 103 satellites in one go on a single rocket and create a record in space. The highest number of satellites launched in a single mission so far has been 37 by Russia in 2014. NASA has earlier launched 29 satellites in one go in 2013 whereas ISRO had earlier launched 20 satellites in one go.



These Satellites will be launched with the help of launch vehicle PSLV (C37) from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.

## 11. Researchers build world's first stable semi-synthetic organism

World's first stable semi-synthetic organism a single-celled bacterium is created by US's Scripps Research Institute scientists. It is meant to play important role drug discovery and other applications. Semi-synthetic organism is the modified form of E.coli bacteria which is created by introducing DNA molecules that are not found in nature in a common bacterium.



This new semi-synthetic organism has ability to create microbes that can manufacture new proteins and form new medicines and nanotechnology based medicines.

## 1. Sivalingam Sathish Kumar of Railways clinched gold for sixth time

Sivalingam Sathish Kumar of Railways won the gold for the sixth consecutive year in the men's 77kg category at the 69th men and 32nd women senior National weightlifting championships at Nagercoil in Tamalnadu. Ajay Singh of Services finished second and Papul Changmai of Assam came third.



Kojum Taba from Services clinched the gold medal in the 85kg men's category. Lalchhanhimi of Mizoram took the gold in the women's 69kg category.

## 2. Rafael Nadal bagged the Mubadala Tennis Championships 2016

Rafael Nadal retained the title for the second consecutive year and his fourth win overall at the Mubadala World Tennis Championship. He defeated World No.11 Belgian David Goffin in the final 6-4, 7-6 to win the championship.



Andy Murray fought World No. 3 Milos Raonic to win the third place. The Mubadala World Tennis Championship carries a prize of \$250,000. It is played at the International Tennis Centre at The Zayed Sports City, Abu Dhabi.

## 3. Virat Kohli voted as India's Sportsperson of 2016

Virat Kohli has been voted as India's Sportsperson of the Year 2016 in a poll conducted by India Today. Kohli got 44.18% votes, badminton ace PV Sindhu was second with 31.51% while star all-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin came third with 13.83% of the votes.



Paralympian Deepa Malik (4.05% votes), the Rio Olympics wrestler, Sakshi Malik (3.37% votes), Paralympian Devendra Jhajharia (3.04% votes) were the other top contenders for the sportsperson of the year 2016.

#### 4. Kush Bhagat creates history with 3 gold medals wins in chess championship

Mumbai prodigy Kush Bhagat has won all three gold medals on offer in the 1<sup>st</sup> Western Asia Youth Chess Championships held at Al Ain Chess Club in UAE. Kush was supreme in all the three categories - rapid, blitz and standard.

He achieved the feat of being the only Indian to bag all the crowns in the competition. Kush overcame the challenges from 158 participants from 20 countries across the world.



#### 5. Mithali Raj to captain India in Women's World Cup Qualifier

Mithali Raj to captain a 14-member Indian squad to the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifiers to be held in Colombo from February 3-21. The World Cup will be played in the UK from June 26 to July 23. In the upcoming ICC Women's World Cup Qualifiers, India will play from Group A alongside Sri Lanka, Ireland, Zimbabwe and Thailand.

The top four sides from the Super Six stage will complete the eight-team line-up for the ICC Women's World Cup 2017.



#### 6. Arthur Morris inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame

Australia cricketer Arthur Morris was inducted into the International Cricket Council's Hall of Fame by Steve Waugh in Sydney. With this, Morris became the 82<sup>nd</sup> player to be inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame. Arthur Morris is among the best left-handed openers with an exceptional average. He has scored 12,614 runs in 162 first class matches with 46 centuries and 46 half-centuries.



Other such Indian cricketers who have been honoured are Sunil Gavaskar, Bishan Singh Bedi, Kapil Dev and Anil Kumble.



## 7. India won the SAFF women's Championship for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive time

India defeated Bangladesh 3-1 in the final of the 4th SAFF Women's Championship at the Kanchenjunga Stadium in Siliguri to win their fourth consecutive South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Women's Football Championship title.

The Indian eves are now unbeaten in 19 matches having won 18 and drawn one. This was Bangladesh's maiden final appearance in the championship. For India, the goals were scored by Dangmei Grace, Sasmita Malik and Indumathi. Bangladesh's lone goal came through Sirat Jahan.



## 8. National Ice Skating Championship held in Gurugram, Haryana

The National Ice Skating Championship 2017 began in Gurugram, Haryana. The Around 300 ice skaters across the country participated in the two-day event being organised by the Ice Skating Association of India.

This championship was divided into two major disciplines - Figure Skating and Short Track Speed Skating with two separate competitions for boys and girls in different age categories. Winners of the competitions will receive medals and certificates along with cash prizes and for the first time, girl speed skaters will be conferred with the VASUDHA Trophy.



## 9. Sania Mirza won the Brisbane women's doubles title

Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza picked up her first title of the season, combining with American Bethanie Mattek-Sands to lift the Brisbane International women's doubles title. The top-seeded Indo-American duo triumphed 6-2 6-3 against the second-seeded Russian team of Ekaterina Makarova and Elena Vesnina in the final.

The trophy, however, ended Sania's 91-week reign as the world No.1 doubles player in the WTA rankings. That position was taken over by her partner Bethanie.



## 10. Djokovic won the Qatar Open tennis title

Novak Djokovic has won the Qatar ExxonMobil Open tennis title after he defeated Andy Murray 6-3 5-7 6-4 in the final. It was the 36th contest between the two, and Murray lost for the 25th time against his old rival. With this, Djokovic also ended Murray's winning streak of 28 consecutive ATP Tour matches.



It was the 67<sup>th</sup> career tour-level title for Djokovic. The Qatar Open is held annually in January at the Khalifa International Tennis and Squash Complex in Doha, Qatar, since 1993.

## 11. Agut defeats Medvedev to win the Chennai Open title

Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain won the men's singles title of the Chennai Open 2017 after he defeated Daniil Medvedev of Russia 6-3 and 6-4 in the final.



It was the fifth ATP singles title for Agut including two in 2016 when he won in Sofia and Auckland.

This was the second time that Agut was playing a final at the Chennai Open, having ended runner-up to Janko Tipsarevic in 2013.

## 12. Abbu Ammaz from Kashmir bagged the National Boxing Championship

Kashmir's 8-year-old boy Abbu Ammaz bagged gold medal in Thai Boxing Championship at the national level. He was felicitated by the district authorities and the civil administration as well as by the police.



Thai Boxing Indian Federation expanded its activities from Jammu & Kashmir to Kanyakumari through its 25 member states. This federation has provided the best semi-light full contact fighter in National & international Championships.

### 13. Claudio Ranieri won FIFA Coach of the Year award

Claudio Ranieri from Leicester City was presented FIFA Football Coach of the Year award 2016. There were some other nominations such as Portugal's Fernando Santos who bagged Euro 2016 championship and Zinedine Zidane who helped Real Madrid win Champions league.



Claudio led Leicester to the Premier League title in 2016 and so he was honoured with this award. Leicester City announced Ranieri as the club's new manager on a three-year contract in 2015.

### 14. Cristiano Ronaldo presented with the World Soccer's Player of the Year award

With the historic wins of Champions League and the European Championships, Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo was presented with World Soccer's World Player of the Year award at FIFA Football Awards held in Zurich, Switzerland. Cristiano Ronaldo won by 34.54% votes, leaving behind Lionel Messi with 26.42% votes. It was 4th time that Cristiano Ronaldo was presented with this award.



The awards were decided by votes from a panel of 100 journalists with points awarded to each selection. Best FIFA Women's Player award was given to Carli Lloyd.

### 15. Jimmy Adams appointed new Director of West Indies Cricket

West Indies appointed former batsman Jimmy Adams as the new director of cricket for helping to rebuild the side.



Adams played 54 Test matches for West Indies side and returned to Jamaica after ending a five-year spell as a head coach of the English county side Kent last October. He replaces Englishman Richard Pybus, who had been in the position since November 2013. However, the West Indies are still without a head coach after the departure of Phil Simmons in September.



## 16. FIFA to expand competition to 48 teams in World Cup

FIFA has decided that the World Cup will be expanded to host 48 teams, up from 32. An initial stage of 16 groups of three teams will precede a knockout stage for the remaining 32 when the change is made for the 2026 tournament.

The number of tournament matches will rise to 80, from 64, however, the eventual winners will still play only seven games. The tournament will be completed within 32 days. The changes mark the first World Cup expansion since 1998.



## 17. Cristiano Ronaldo won FIFA best player award

Cristiano Ronaldo was named the world's best player at the inaugural Best FIFA Football Awards in Zurich. Portugal forward Ronaldo beat Barcelona's Lionel Messi and Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann to the prize.

Ronaldo also won the Ballon d'Or in December with both honours recognition for success in the Champions League with Real and Euro 2016 with Portugal. Carli Lloyd of the United States was named the world's best female player.



## 18. Sreejesh became the member of FIH Athletes' Committee

The Indian hockey team captain PR Sreejesh became a member of International Hockey Federation Athletes' Committee. The Committee comprises a total of eight current and former hockey players who have the responsibility to act as a liaison between the FIH and the athletes to make sure the players have voice in the FIH decision making process.

Sreejesh's role will be to seek and provide feedback to the FIH on behalf of all athletes.





## 19. 'Diplomats Cricket Championship Cup' launched in Dubai

To promote sportsmanship among the diplomatic missions of UAE, Consulate General of India announced launch of the 'Diplomats Cricket Championship Cup' in association with the Skyline University College, Sharjah at Dubai. Various members of diplomatic missions, embassies and their respective families will participate in the event.



Countries like Sri Lanka, South Africa, Pakistan, New Zealand and Afghanistan will be part of event. First edition of this two days event, is scheduled to happen on 20th and 21st of February.

## 20. Alphonse and Borneo bagged the 14<sup>th</sup> Mumbai Marathon

The 14<sup>th</sup> Mumbai Marathon race winners were Tanzania's Alphonse Felix Simbu in Men's category and Kenya's Borneo Kitur Chepkirui in women's category. Kenya's Borneo finished off race in her style in 2:29 seconds whereas Alphonse Felix finished off race in 2:09 seconds.



Indian athletes, army soldier Kheta Ram and Jyoti Shanker Gawte bagged the men and women's category in the full marathon. Other top Indian athletes who were part of race were Elam Singh, Mohammed Yunus, and Ladakh's self-trained runners, Jigmet Dolma and Tsetan Dolkar.

## 21. Gujarat won the Ranji Trophy title beating Mumbai

Gujarat won their first ever Ranji Trophy title beating Mumbai by five wickets in the final at the Holkar stadium held at Indore.

Mumbai had a good start to the day, picking up three wickets in the first session while Gujarat did manage to score 99 runs.

Juneja decided to take the aggressive route whereas Parthiv had a fair share of luck. This collaboration put on 116 for the fourth wicket which lead to the victory.



## 22. Sports Minister Vijay Goel inaugurated Khelo India competitions

Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and sports Shri Vijay Goel inaugurated Khelo India National Level Competitions. The competitions in Delhi have been organized by SAI under aegis of Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in Swimming, Cycling and Wrestling.



Approximately 1000 participants from more than 25 states/Union territories are taking part in the National Competitions. Khelo India National Level Competitions will be conducted in different disciplines in January and February, 2017.

## 23. Valtteri Bottas to join Lewis Hamilton at Mercedes

Valtteri Bottas has been named as Lewis Hamilton's new team-mate for the forthcoming Formula One season at Mercedes. Bottas replaced world champion Nico Rosberg following his retirement from the sport.



Rosberg will stay on with Mercedes in an ambassadorial role. Bottas has agreed a one-year contract with Mercedes. Bottas has an impressive track record in the junior categories and nine podiums in F1. He has claimed nine podiums to date but is yet to secure his first Grand Prix victory.

## 24. Farrukh Amonatov Wins the Delhi International Chess Tournament

Grandmaster Farrukh Amonatov of Tajikistan won the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the Parsvnath Delhi International Chess tournament after he drew with Grandmaster Diptayan Ghosh in the 10<sup>th</sup> and final round. Ghosh stood second while Dzhumaev Marat secured the third position.



Amonatov won Rs. 4 lakh as prize money while the other two players won Rs. 3 lakh and Rs. 2 lakh respectively. Arpita Mukherjee won the Women's International Master norm. Suhaib Ahmad won the first prize in group C.

## 25. Punjab Royals bagged the championship of Pro Wrestling League Season 2

Punjab Royals bagged the Pro Wrestling League Season 2 title held in New Delhi and defeated Haryana Hammers 5-4. Punjab reigned supreme with their imports Vladimir Khinchegashvili, Vasilisa Marzaliuk and Ilias Bekbukatov, besides India's Nirmla and Jitendra doing the damage in the crucial ties of the day.



The winners were honored with the Champions trophy along with a prize money of whopping 1 crore and 90 lacs. The runners up were given prize money of 1 crore and 10 lacs.

## 26. Alibaba announced as global partner of Olympic Games through 2028

The International Olympic Committee and Alibaba Group jointly announced a long-term partnership through 2028. Joining the Olympic Partner (TOP) worldwide sponsorship program, Alibaba will become the official "Cloud Services" and "E-Commerce Platform Services" Partner, as well as a Founding Partner of the Olympic Channel.



Alibaba will help the IOC achieve with a variety of key objectives outlined in Olympic Agenda 2020, while positively shaping the future of the Olympic Movement.

## 27. Pan-India initiative for girl's football launched

On the National Girl Child Day, a pan-India football based program for girls between the age of 10 to 15 years was launched.



The program named "Khelegi toh Khilegi" was flagged off by Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas at Delhi, where over 700 girls participated. It aims at developing girls football in the country, with an intention to empower the girl child. Starting from Delhi, the initiative will be held at 15 cities across India in the first year.



## 28. Virat Becomes Fastest Batsman to Score 1000 Runs as ODI Captain

Virat Kohli surpassed AB de Villiers's record, and became fastest batsman to score 1000 ODI runs as captain. Kohli is playing only his fifth match as ODI captain but he has led the team in the 50 over-format, thereby scoring 1000 runs in 17 innings as captain.



The list is followed by South Africa's AB de Villiers at the 2<sup>nd</sup> position, Kane Williamson at the 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Alistair Cook at the 4<sup>th</sup> and Sourav Ganguly at the 5<sup>th</sup> place. Kohli has 27 ODI centuries where he scored the maximum he could.

## 29. Hayden, David and Betty inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame

Veteran batsmen, David Boon and Matthew Hayden and the brilliant women's all-rounder Betty Wilson will be announced to be inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame at the 2017 Allan Border Medal ceremony. Mathew Hayden has always been famous for his role as an excellent opening batsman and an outstanding fielder.



Betty Wilson was famous for her smart all-round skills as a batter and off-spinner. Boon made 7,422 runs in his 107 Tests in the 1980s and 1990s. He was famous for his tough techniques.

## 30. 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia finals to be held at Kremlin

Russia will organize 2018 FIFA World Cup finals at Kremlin, which is scheduled for December 1. It has a capacity of 6000 viewers. Russia will host the 2018 World Cup between June 14 and July 15 at 12 stadiums in 11 cities including Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kazan and Sochi. These four cities will also host 2017 Confederations Cup.



A UNESCO World Heritage site, the Kremlin is a fortified complex in the heart of Moscow. Russia bagged bids from Belgium/Netherlands, England and Portugal/Spain to host the 2018 World Cup at a vote in December 2010.



### 31. Roger Federer lifted his 18<sup>th</sup> Grand Slam Tennis title

Swiss star Roger Federer lifted his 18th Grand Slam Tennis title and defeated Spain's Rafael Nadal in five sets 6-4, 3-6, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3.

The 35-year old Federer has also become the second-oldest winner of a Grand Slam tournament in the Open Era after Australian Ken Rosewall who won the Australian title at the age of 37 in 1972. American-Colombian duo of Abigail Spears and Juan Sebastian Cabal bagged the Mixed doubles title beating Indo-Croatian pair of Sania Mirza and Ivan Dodig in the final. The American-Colombian pair won in straight sets 6-2, 6-4.



### 32. Serena Williams bagged her 23<sup>rd</sup> major singles title

Serena Williams bagged her 23<sup>rd</sup> major singles title in the women's category, defeating her sister Venus Williams with a 6-4, 6-4 victory. With this win, Serena becomes seven-times winner of the Australian Open. This was the ninth time the sisters had met in a grand slam final. Serena clinched the record for an Open-era major titles, nearly 18 years after winning her first.

Serena received £2.24m prize money and Venus, being runner-up received £1.15m as prize money.



### 33. Tokyo 2020 olympics ambassador unveiled

Japan's cult animated character 'Son Goku' was finalized as brand ambassador of 2020 Olympics to promote and celebrate its rich influence on modern culture. It will appear on all the official Olympics 2020 merchandise. Son Goku is an animated character from Dragonball Z.

Other cartoon characters have also been sporting ambassadors such as Mario, Naruto and Sailor Moon. Announcement was made

Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe at closing ceremony of Rio 2016.

