

CURRENT AFFAIRS



MARCH 2017

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Current Affairs March 2017

This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and huge collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **March 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

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. Neil Gaiman appointed as the UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador

Internationally acclaimed author Neil Gaiman has been appointed as a global Goodwill Ambassador by the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

Mr. Gaiman had been working closely with UNHCR since 2013 to raise awareness about the plight of forcibly displaced people and to generate much needed funds. He has championed UNHCR's work through media interviews and via his social media channels.

He has supported several fundraising initiatives and UNHCR campaigns and events.



2. IAS officer Sumit Mullick appointed as the Chief Secretary of Maharashtra

Senior IAS officer Sumit Mullick was appointed as the Chief Secretary of Maharashtra. He will succeed Swadheen Kshatriya.

Mr. Mullick, a 1982 batch IAS officer is Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) and currently serving as the Chief Protocol Officer in the General Administration department. He had earlier served as the Divisional Commissioner of Amravati and worked as Secretary of School Education. He was also Secretary to the Governor.



3. Senior IAS officer Ajay Tyagi became the SEBI Chairman

Senior IAS officer Ajay Tyagi became the 9th Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India. He took over the charge from U K Sinha and was appointed for a period of three years.

Mr. Tyagi is 1984 batch IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre. Prior to this appointment, he has handled capital markets division in the Finance Ministry. He was the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change before joining the Finance Ministry in November 2014 as an Additional Secretary. He has also worked in ministries of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Steel and Rural Development.



4. JS Deepak named as India's next Ambassador to the WTO

Telecom Secretary J S Deepak has been named as India's next Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) beginning June 2017.

A 1982 batch IAS officer from Uttar Pradesh, Deepak, has been shifted from the Telecom Ministry and has been made Officer on Special Duty in the Commerce Department. During his earlier stint in the Commerce Ministry, he was India's chief negotiator at the WTO and for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement.



5. P K Purwar announced as the CMD of MTNL

The Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) appointed P K Purwar, as the Chairman and Managing Director of MTNL, for 5 years. Prior to this appointment, he has been working as Director (Finance) in MTNL. He has experience of working as additional charge of the post of MTNL CMD between June 2014 and June 2015.

The Committee under the Chairmanship of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) has appointed CMD of MTNL, as post was vacant, since the superannuation of A K Garg.



6. Cairn India appointed Melody Meyer and Atul Gupta as advisors

Melody Meyer and Atul Gupta have been appointed as Technical Advisors by Cairn India. Meyer and Gupta would be heading specific projects to drive the company's aim of contributing 50% of India's overall crude production.

Meyer is a US citizen and has 37 years of experience across nine countries. Gupta, a British citizen of Indian origin, has over 36 years of experience. Mr Gupta has also served as the Managing Director of Hindustan Oil Exploration Company.



7. Dr. K Srinath Reddy appointed as the adviser to the Odisha Govt

Professor Dr. K Srinath Reddy has been appointed as the adviser to the Odisha Government. He will advise the State Government on proper implementation and smooth delivery of the ongoing health service programs.

Mr. Reddy would be accorded the rank of a Cabinet Minister in the State. He is a Padma Bhushan awardee. He was the former head of the Department of Cardiology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi.



8. Harm Ohlmeyer selected as the CFO of Adidas

Supervisory Board of Adidas AG has appointed Harm Ohlmeyer (49) as the successor for long-time Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Robin J. Stalker (59). Harm Ohlmeyer has been appointed to the Executive Board as an ordinary member with immediate effect and as the CFO of Adidas AG effective May 12, 2017. Harm Ohlmeyer started his career with Adidas in 1998 and gained extensive experience in the areas of Finance and Sales.



Prior to this, Harm Ohlmeyer held various positions within the company's Finance organisation, including SVP Finance Adidas Brand.

9. Narendra Kumar takes over as the Chairman of the Central Water Commission

Shri Narendra Kumar, an officer of the Central Water Engineering Service (1979 Batch) has assumed the charge of Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC). He has served in various capacities in CWC as an Assistant Director in the Design Organisation, Deputy Director in Project Appraisal Directorate and Director in Dam Safety Organisation and Project Monitoring Directorate.



Shri Kumar was also a member of Experts Committee for Scientific Assessment of flood prone area in India and Standing Committee for Morphological studies of Indian rivers. He took over as a Member (River Management) of Central Water Commission in October 2014.

10. Pradeep Nair appointed as the Regional Director of Ford Foundation for India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

The Ford Foundation has appointed Pradeep Nair as their Regional Director for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Mr. Nair will succeed David Hulse and guide the foundation's operations out of New Delhi.

Mr. Nair has more than 20 years of experience building partnerships among the government, corporate, philanthropic and civil society partners in the South Asia region. He was the Country Director of the U.S. based Institute for Sustainable Communities.



11. HSBC named AIA Group boss Mark Tucker as their Chairman

Europe's biggest bank, HSBC Holdings Plc, has named an insurance veteran and AIA Group boss Mark Tucker as their Chairman. Tucker will replace Douglas Flint later this year. Tucker will take over as the Group Chairman designate from September 1 and as their Non-Executive Group Chairman on October 1.

Tucker would become the bank's first-ever external Chairman. Tucker's main challenge will be to oversee a return to profit growth.



12. KPMG appointed Bill Thomas as their Global Chairman

William B Thomas has been elected as the Chairman of KPMG International. He will lead the KPMG Global Network of professional services firms for a 4-year term, effective October 1, 2017, succeeding John B Veihmeyer.

Bill has served as the Chairman of KPMG's Americas region since 2014 and has been a member of the Global Board since 2009. He was CEO and Senior Partner of KPMG in Canada from 2009 to 2016.



13. Indian-American Seema Verma to head a top US Healthcare Agency

Indian-American Seema Verma has been sworn-in as the Head of a key healthcare agency in the Donald Trump administration.

Ms. Verma will head the 1-trillion US Dollar Centres of Medicare and Medicaid Services that provides health services to 130 million Americans. Ms. Verma is the second Indian-American to be inducted into the Trump administration. US Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley was the first cabinet rank official from the community to serve in any presidential administration.



14. Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar appointed as the Acting Chief Justice of J&K Court

Justice Ramalingam Sudhakar has been appointed as the Acting Chief Justice of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court after Chief Justice Paul Vasanthakumar retired from service. Justice Sudhakar is the senior-most judge of the Jammu & Kashmir High Court. He was transferred from the Madras High Court.

Delhi High Court Judge Justice Badr Durrez Ahmed will be the next Chief Justice of the J&K High Court. Justice Paul Vasanthakumar took oath as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir in February 2015.



15. Justice Chittaranjan Sharma was sworn in as the Assam's Upalokayukta

Justice Retd. Chittaranjan Sharma was sworn in as the Assam's Upalokayukta. He was administered the oath of office by Assam Governor Banwarilal Purohit. Justice Sharma was a former Judge of the Gauhati High Court.

The Lokayukta is an anti-corruption ombudsman organization in the Indian states. Karnataka Lokayukta is considered as the most powerful Lokayukta in the country. There are no Lokayuktas in Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal.



16. Shri Upendra Tripathy appointed as Full Time Interim Director General of ISA

Mr. Upendra Tripathy has been appointed as the Interim Director General (IDG) of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on a full-time basis.

Mr. Upendra Tripathy was the Former Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy from 1st April, 2014 until 31st October 2016. Mr. Tripathy is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Karnataka Cadre. He has worked with local, provincial and union governments in India for the last 36 years.



17. Madhabi Puri Buch appointed as a SEBI whole time member

The Government has appointed Madhabi Puri Buch as new whole time member of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). She has been appointed for a period of three years. She, thus, became the first women and a person from private sector to be appointed for the key post with SEBI.

She is currently serving at the New Development Bank in Shanghai. Buch has an experience of over 20 years where she has worked with several private banks. She was the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer at ICICI Securities Ltd.



18. PV Sindhu roped in as the brand ambassador of PepsiCo

PepsiCo has roped in Rio Olympic Silver Medalist PV Sindhu as the brand ambassador for its sports drink, Gatorade. Sindhu, currently ranks amongst the top 10 players in badminton, became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic silver medal in 2016.

The company will unveil an all new SweatMore campaign with Sindhu through a digital film. Gatorade is the official sports drink of the Indian Cricket Team, UEFA Champions League, NBA etc. It was launched in India in 2004.



19. ICC appointed Ankur Khanna as new CFO

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has appointed Ankur Khanna as its new Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Prior to joining ICC, Mr. Khanna was working with Air Asia India where he has held the post of CFO for the last one year. Khanna was the Regional Finance Director at Air France.

He has also worked in senior roles at KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and ITC, an associate company of British American Tobacco.



20. Jason Kothari selected as the CEO of FreeCharge

Snapdeal, e-commerce website announced to invest \$20 million in the mobile platform FreeCharge and appointed Jason Kothari as the Chief Executive Officer of its digital payment platform, FreeCharge.

Prior to this appointment, Kothari has experience of working as the CEO of Softbank-backed online real estate company, Housing.Com.

He also has experience of working as the CEO and Vice Chairman of character-based entertainment company, Valiant Entertainment.

FreeCharge is presumed to achieve the target of bringing digital payments over \$1 trillion (roughly Rs. 65,39,812 crores) by 2025.



21. Justice Navniti Prasad Singh took oath as the Chief Justice of Kerala High Court

Justice Navniti Prasad Singh took oath as the Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court. Governor P. Sathasivam administered him the oath at Raj Bhavan in Thiruvananthapuram. Singh, earlier, served as a judge at the Bihar high court.

Justice Singh will replace Justice Thottathil B Radhakrishnan, who had been serving as the acting Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court. Justice TB Radhakrishnan has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Chhattisgarh High Court.



22. Minoru Kato named as the India President and CEO of HMSI

Minoru Kato has been appointed as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India Pvt Ltd (HMSI), the local two-wheeler unit of the Japanese automaker.

Kato replaces Keita Muramatsu. He started his career in Honda Japan in 1988 and has over 29 years of experience with expertise in production control, motorcycle planning, and sales across Europe, Japan, and South-East Asia. Kato has been CEO of Honda Vietnam Co from April 2014.



AWARDS

1. JNU won the award for the Best University

Jawaharlal Nehru University has won the annual visitor's award for the Best University 2017. Dr. Deepak Pant from the Central University of Himachal Pradesh won the visitor's award for innovation, while the visitor's award for research has been jointly won by Dr. Shyam Sunder from the Banaras Hindu University and Professor Niranjana Karak from Tezpur University.



The Best University will receive a citation and a trophy, while winners of the visitor's award for innovation and research will receive a citation and cash award of one lakh rupees.

2. Singer Rihanna honoured with the 2017 Humanitarian Award

Harvard University honoured veteran singer Rihanna with the 2017 Harvard University Humanitarian of the Year award. She was honoured for her contribution towards people for curing breast cancer. She built the Center for Oncology and Nuclear Medicine to diagnose breast cancer at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.



Harvard University Humanitarian of the Year award praises public-spirited leaders of various fields such as Physician, Statistician, etc., every year, in the memory of late Rev. Professor Peter J. Gomes.

3. 'Most Popular Tourism Destination Award' to Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has won the "Most Popular Tourism Destination Award" at the Guangzhou International Travel Fair (GITF) in China for the second consecutive year.



China has been Sri Lanka's second largest source market for tourism since 2014. The GITF is South China's leading travel Expo drawing affluent travel enthusiasts every year from mainland China. 19 Travel and tour agents from Sri Lanka participated in the Travel Fair.

4. M P Veerendra Kumar presented with Moortidevi award

The Bharatiya Jnanpith presented the 30th Moortidevi award to eminent Malayalam author and journalist M P Veerendra Kumar for his Malayalam travelogue 'Hymavathabhoovil', which dwells upon ancient trails of Indian culture, myth, literature and people strewn in the plains, valleys and mountains of India". The award carries an amount of Rs. 4 lakh, a statue of Saraswati and a plaque.



Kumar is the Chairman and Managing Director of the Malayalam daily Mathrubhumi and a Rajya Sabha MP.

5. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan won the best actress award at the International Film Festival

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has won the Best Actress Award at the International Film Festival and Awards of Australia (IFFAA) for her character in the film Sarbjit. She played the role of Sarbjit Singh's sister Dalbir Kaur.



The film was based on the story of Sarbjit Singh, an Indian national who was punished by Pakistan's Supreme Court on the charges of spying. The film was directed by Omung Kumar. Randeep Hooda portrayed the role of Sarbjit Singh.

6. SERB Distinguished Fellowship Award to Lalji Singh

The Former Director of the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Lalji Singh, has been selected for the award of SERB Distinguished Fellow in recognition of his continued outstanding performance and for mentorship young researchers.



The award is given by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) which is a statutory body of the Government of India. It carries an amount of Rs. 60,000 a month and a research grant of Rs. 5 lakh a year for a period of three years.

7. Textiles Minister announces the Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya National Awards

The Union Textiles Minister, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani announced the 'Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya National Awards' on the International Women's Day. It is a new category of awards specially for women handloom weavers and women handicraft artisans.



The Textiles Minister also launched an online "Handloom Weaver MUDRA Portal" in association with Punjab National Bank. She also distributed the Buniyaad Reeling Machines to woman silk-reelers.

8. The Prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskars given away to 33 women by the President

The President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented the Nari Shakti Puraskars 2016 at a special ceremony/function held in New Delhi on the International Women's Day. The awards were presented to 33 awardees in recognition of their efforts in rendering distinguished services for the cause of women, especially vulnerable and marginalized women.



Some of the major awardees are:

- State of Rajasthan
- Chhanv Foundation (Sheroes Café), Delhi
- Mizo Hmeichhe Insuihkhawm Pawl (M.H.I.P), Mizoram
- Sadhana Mahila Sangha, Karnataka
- Shikshit Rojgar Kendra Prabandhak Samiti, Rajasthan
- Tripunithura Kathakali Kendram Ladies Troupe, Kerala

9. PM Modi presented the Swachh Shakti Awards 2017 to Women Sarpanches

On the International Women's day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented the Swachh Shakti 2017 awards – A Convention of Women Sarpanches to 10 women Sarpanches, held at Gandhinagar, Gujarat to honor Sarpanches, who have contributed immensely to the movement towards a Clean India.



The 10 Women Awardees were Manju Maurya (UP), Uttara Thakur (Chhatisgarh), Neelam (Haryana), Shivani Dakoy (WB), Asha Putri (Rajasthan), Sumitra Kumari (Assam), Ramila Ben (Gujarat), Akkama Harval (Karnataka), M. Malika (Tamil Nadu) and Sushila Kurkute (Maharashtra).

10. Mahabaleshwar Sail honoured with the Saraswati Samman 2016

Eminent Konkani writer Mahabaleshwar Sail has been honoured with the Saraswati Samman 2016 for his novel 'Hawthan'. The book was published in 2009 and shortlisted from 22 books written in as many languages.



The award carries a cash prize of Rupees 15 lakhs and a citation. The award is given every year for an outstanding literary work written in any Indian language by an Indian citizen and published during the last 10 years. It is instituted by the K K Birla Foundation.

11. IIT-M Solar Inverter System wins the 2017 IEEE Spectrum Technology Award

Indian Institute of Technology-Madras has won the 2017 IEEE Spectrum Technology in the Service of Society Award for its solar-direct current (DC) inverter system.



The system, developed using micro grid technology, converts in-home power distribution from 230V Analog Current to 48V DC to directly power appliances and devices. The system is also equipped to tap rooftop solar power, making it the most energy efficient solution for homes and offices.

12. Zee Cine Awards 2017 announced

Amitabh Bachchan was adjudged as the Best Actor for his role in "Pink", while Alia Bhatt bagged the Best Actress award for her role in "Udta Punjab" at the Zee Cine Awards 2017.

Major Winners are:

- Best Film Award: Pink
- Best Actor Male (Viewer's Choice): Salman Khan
- Best Actor Female (Viewer's Choice): Anushka Sharma
- Best Film (Viewer's Choice): Dangal
- Best Director - Ram Madhvani for Neerja



13. 2016 Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Rashtriya Krishi Vigyan Protsahan Puraskar presented

Ramakrishna Ashram, situated in the South 24 Parganas of West Bengal, was conferred with the national-level Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Rashtriya Krishi Vigyan protsahan Puraskar for 2016. The award carries a cash prize of Rs. 25 lakhs. In addition to it, 11 awards of Rs. 2.25 lakhs each at the regional level were also awarded.



"Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Rashtriya Krishi Vigyan Protsahan Puraskar" has been launched since year 2016 is the birth centenary year of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay, pioneer of Antyodaya.

14. Indian-American Indrani Das won Top Science Prize

Indian-American Indrani Das won the top prize of \$2,50,000 in the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition in the United States (US) for her research on treating brain injuries and diseases. Arjun Ramani, also an Indian-American, won the third prize of \$1,50,000/- for his project on networks using mathematical field of graph theory and computer programming.



The award is also reckoned as the "Junior Nobel Prize". It is the oldest US science competition for students.

15. Canadian teacher won \$1M Global Teacher Prize

Maggie MacDonnell of Canada has won a \$1m Global Teacher Prize for “changing the lives of her students and transforming her community”. She was among 10 finalists chosen from 20,000 nominations and applications from 179 countries.

She has taught for the past six years in the Inuit village of Salluit, Québec, in the Canadian Arctic. Palestinian teacher Hanan Al Haroub had won the award last year. The prize is set up by Dubai-based Varkey Foundation.



16. ABB India bags award for restoring 1,035 MW Sharavathi plant in Karnataka

ABB India has won the The India Smart Grid Foundation (ISGF) innovation award for restoring and modernising the critical 1,035 MW Sharavathi hydropower plant in Karnataka. The plant accounts for 25% of Karnataka Power Corporation’s generation.

The ABB team with the support from KPCPL management could restore the entire plant in just six months. The restoration and modernisation will help lower overall costs.



17. Major Rohit Suri awarded with the Kirti Chakra

Major Rohit Suri who was a part of the surgical strikes in PoK was awarded the second highest peacetime gallantry award ‘Kirti Chakra’ by President Pranab Mukherjee during the military investiture ceremony.

Some of the other awardees are:

- Lieutenant General Eastern Army Commander Praveen Bakshi: Param Vishisht Seva Medal, the highest Distinguished Service Medal
- Nb Sub Vijay Kumar: Shaurya Chakra
- Corporal Gursevak Singh of Indian Air Force: Shaurya Chakra (posthumously)



18. Indian-American Computer Scientist Anshumali bagged NSF's CAREER Award

Indian-American computer scientist, Anshumali Shrivastava bagged National Science Foundation (NSF)'s prestigious CAREER award for his research on redesigning the current machine-learning processes. National Science Foundation (NSF)'s prestigious CAREER award praises the research and educational development of young scholars who inspire to become leaders in their fields.



The award is given to about 400 scholars each year. Anshumali Shrivastava has abilities to enable faster, more scalable computations required by big data and machine-learning technologies.

19. Raghu Rai conferred with Lifetime Achievement award

The Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) conferred the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 6th National Photography Awards to photojournalist Raghu Rai for "his remarkable contribution to the field." The ministry felicitated a total of 13 photographers. The main winners were:



- Professional Photographer of the year award to Shri K.K. Mustafah
- Amateur Photographer of the year award to Shri Ravinder Kumar

The theme for this year's awards for Professional category was "Skilled India", while in the Amateur category the topic was "Swatch Bharat".

20. Yves Meyer wins the 2017 Abel Prize

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters awarded the 2017 Abel Prize to French mathematician Yves Meyer for his work on wavelets, a mathematical theory with applications in data compression, medical imaging and the detection of gravitational waves.



Meyer will receive 6 Million Norwegian Krone (about £600,000) for the prize. The award recognises outstanding contributions to mathematics and is the maths equivalent of the Nobel Prize.

21. The 8th Laadli Media Awards 2016

The 8th Laadli Media Awards for Gender Sensitivity 2016 (Northern and Eastern Region) were awarded to Anima Pookkunyil, Assistant Editor with BusinessLine, and Shreya Ila Anasuya, a Delhi-based freelance journalist for their critical gender-sensitive reportage. Ila Anasuya was awarded for her report on Suzette Jordan. Anima Pookkunnyi was awarded for her story about Kamlesh Kairi's petition to the Supreme Court against the unjust laws.



The award is organised by Population First to recognise efforts by those in the media and advertising industry who work to end gender prejudice.

22. Filmmaker Gurinder Chadha honoured with the Sikh Jewel Award

Indian-origin British Director Gurinder Chadha has been honoured with the Sikh Jewel Award for 2017 for her immense contribution to British cinema. Chadha is well known for her films like Bhaji on the Beach, Bend It Like Beckham and Bride and Prejudice. Her latest film is "Viceroy's House".



Jasminder Singh, OBE, Chairman and founder of Edwardian Hotels, Jagjeet Singh Sohal, a writer, broadcaster and communications consultant, and Khalsa Aid founded in 1999, also received the Sikh Jewel Awards.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

1. 'Numbers Do Lie' authored by former cricketer Aakash Chopra

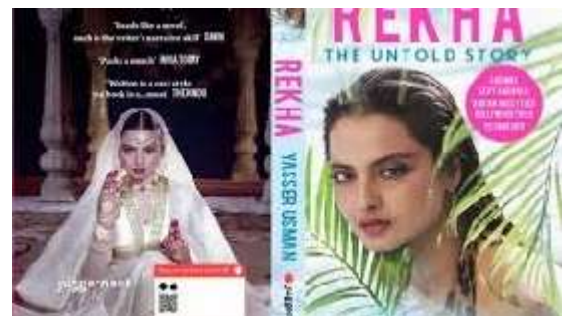
Former Indian test batsman, Aakash Chopra released his latest book 'Numbers Do Lie' in New Delhi. The book has been authored by Aakash in collaboration with the team from Impact Index, an analytics system for cricket devised by Jaideep Varma.



The book shares 61 stories about cricketers from all times. The stories are based on the findings of Impact Index. Aakash brought in a human element, writing about how and why particular cricketers were successful.

2. Rekha – The Untold Story authored by Yasser Usman

The book titled, Rekha: The Untold Story, authored by Yasser Usman was in the news recently. The book is published by Juggernaut.



The book tells about Rekha and her childhood days. It also brings into light her entry into Bollywood. It also talks about her relationship with the reigning superstars of the time, her many other love affairs and the shocking suicide of her husband, Mukesh Agarwal.

3. The Rise of Sivagami: Book 1 of Baahubali - before the beginning by Anand Neelakanthan

The book titled "The Rise of Sivagami: Book 1 of Baahubali - before the beginning" was released on 7th March 2017. The book was written by noted author Anand Neelakanthan. The book is a prequel to the film Baahubali - The Beginning.

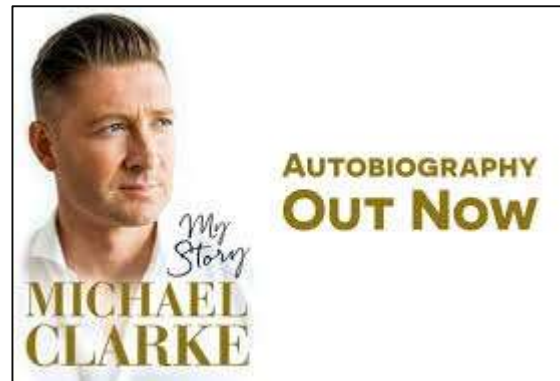


Anand Neelakantan is known for his famous fiction books 1. Asura: Tale of the Vanquished 2. Ajaya: Roll of the Dice and 3. Ajaya: Rise of Kali. His first book Asura: Tale of the Vanquished was shortlisted for Crossword popular award in 2013 and his second book, Ajaya: Roll of the Dice was shortlisted for Crossword popular award in 2014.

4. Michael Clarke launched his autobiography 'My Story'

Michael Clarke launched his autobiography 'My Story' published by Pan MacMillan. The former Australian Captain, in his 11-year international career, played 115 Tests making 8643 runs and 28 centuries.

His tenure as a captain of the Australian team included achievements like a 5-0 whitewash of England in 2013-14, the 2015 World Cup triumph, and a ten-hour unbeaten 161, batting with a broken shoulder to lead Australia back to the #1 World Ranking in 2014.



5. A Book titled '50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution' launched

The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh, launched the Coffee Table Book titled "50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution" commemorating National Dairy Development Board's (NDDB) Golden Jubilee year.

This book encapsulates NDDB's remarkable 50-year journey and the value it has created for millions of dairy farmers in this country. It also highlights the Dairy Board's efforts towards bringing about socio-economic change in rural India.



6. Army Released a Book on the Rashtriya Rifles

General Bipin Rawat, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), released the book 'Home of the Brave' on the history of Indian Army's Counter Insurgency Force, the Rashtriya Rifles (RR). The book is authored by Mr Nitin A. Gokhale, Defence & Security Analyst and Brig S K Chatterji (Retired).

Home of the Brave traces the early history of the RR, its organization, including its raising and subsequent deployment in Punjab, the North East and in Jammu & Kashmir.



COMMITTEES

1. Sports Ministry to form committee to resolve grievances of women sports persons

The Sports Ministry decided to constitute a high-level committee to resolve the grievances and complaints of women sports persons in India. The committee under the Chairmanship of the Joint Secretary Sports will comprise Athletes, Advocate, Senior Officer of MYAS and Sports Journalist – All Women.

Women athletes, if they will have any complaint can approach the committee for their grievance redressal. Sports Authority of India in its Special Area Game Scheme has provided training to 807 women sports persons out of total 1862 sports persons.



2. Madhukar Gupta Committee Report

The Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Shri Madhukar Gupta, has submitted its report to the Government to strengthen the border protection and address vulnerabilities in fencing along the Indo-Pakistan border.

The Committee has given its recommendations broadly on the issues of Threats and Border Protection, assessment of force level, deployment on the border, infrastructure and technology issues for protection of border and administrative issues. It has been decided to initiate action considering the recommendations of the Committee in consultation with the stakeholders.



3. Mallikarjun Kharge becomes next PAC Chairman

Congress leader in Lok Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge has been nominated to become the next Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC). He will succeed his party colleague K.V. Thomas who is completing three terms in the post and will take charge from May 1.

The PAC has 22 members — 15 Lok Sabha and seven Rajya Sabha. The committee is reconstituted every year. The chair of the PAC is given to an MP of the main Opposition party.



4. High level committee to examine working of CCIM, CCH

A Committee under the Chairmanship of Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog has been set up to examine the working of the regulatory bodies namely, Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) and Central Council of Homoeopathy(CCH) and their governing legislations namely, Indian Medicine Central Council Act 1970 and Homoeopathy Central Council Act 1973 respectively, for suggesting suitable reforms.



The members of the committee include:

- Additional Principal Secretary to Prime Minister.
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO), NITI Aayog.
- Secretary, Ministry of AYUSH.

5. Cabinet approved the setting up of a National Commission for socially & Educationally Backward Classes as a Constitutional Body

The Union Cabinet has approved the setting up of a National Commission for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes, NSEBC as a constitutional body. The Commission will comprise of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and three other members.



The Cabinet has also repealed the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 and dissolved the body that was constituted under it. The move follows demands for constitutional status for the National Commission for Backward Classes to allow it to hear the grievances of OBCs.

DEATHS

1. Senior Congress Leader Haji Abdul Salam passed away

Senior Congress leader and Member of Rajya Sabha Haji Abdul Salam passed away at Imphal at the age of 69 years.

He was the first Manipuri Muslim to be a member of Rajya Sabha from Manipur and has represented the Upper House since 2014. He was elected to the 3rd, 6th and the 8th Manipur Legislative Assembly from Wabagai Assembly Constituency.

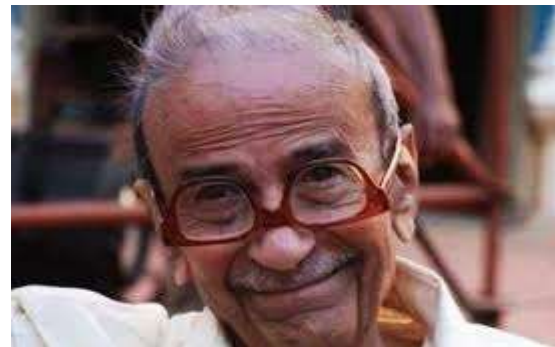
He also served as a Minister and was once the Vice President of Manipur Pradesh Congress Committee.



2. Popular Gujarati writer Tarak Mehta passed away

Popular Gujarati writer and noted play writer Tarak Mehta passed away at the age of 87 years. The famous humourist was best known for his column "Duniya Ne Undha Chasma" in Mumbai based Gujarati news weekly "Chitralekha". He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2015. He has written around 80 books on various pressing issues.

The popular comic television serial 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah' is a television adaptation of Padma Shri Taarak Mehta's column 'Duniya Ne Undha Chasma'.



3. Veteran Politician Yumnam Yaima Singh passed away

Veteran politician and former Member of Parliament Yumnam Yaima Singh passed away at the age of 95. Y Yaima Singh was first elected to the Territorial Council in 1957. He was elected seven times continuously to the Manipur Assembly from Oinam Constituency from 1962 to 1985. He had held various Ministerial posts such as Education, IFCD, Law & Legislative Affairs. He was the Speaker of Manipur Legislative Assembly from 1980 - 85.

He wrote a book titled "A Piece of Tenth Lok Sabha" in English, amongst many others.



4. French football legend Raymond Kopa passed away

French football legend Raymond Kopa who won the European Cup three consecutive times with Real Madrid in the 1950s, passed away in Paris. Kopa was also central part of the French side beaten by Pele's Brazil in a classic World Cup semi-final in 1958.

He has also been winner of Ballon d'Or, football's top individual award. He won two European Cups in 1958 and 1959 with the Spanish giants. He was one of the major lead during World Cup.



5. Former IFS and MP Syed Shahabuddin passed away

Former IFS and MP Syed Shahabuddin passed away at the age of 82 years. Shahabuddin was the leader of the Babri Action Committee and had strongly opposed the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

Shahabuddin is the former President of All India Muslim Majlise Mushawarat. He began working as a diplomat for the Indian Foreign Service (IFS). He also served three terms from 1979-1996 as a MP.



6. Former Lok Sabha Speaker Rabi Ray passed away

Noted socialist leader and former Lok Sabha speaker Rabi Ray passed away at the age of 91 years. He was first elected to the Lok Sabha in 1967, from the Puri parliamentary constituency.

Mr. Ray was the Union minister of health and family welfare in the Morarji Desai ministry from January 1979 to January 1980 and the speaker of ninth Lok Sabha from 1989-1991.

He was also a former Chairman of Common Wealth Speakers Forum.



7. Thomas E Starzl, ‘Father of Transplantation’ passed away

Dr. Thomas E. Starzl, known as the “Father of Transplantation” passed away at the age of 90 years. He performed the first successful liver transplant on a human patient in the 1960s.

Dr. Starzl also helped advance the drugs that made organ transplants markedly more survivable. he was awarded the National Medal of Science, the nation’s highest scientific honor in 2004. He also received the Lasker-DeBakey Clinical Medical Research Award in 2012.



8. Bengali Folk singer Kalikaprasad Bhattacharya passed away

Popular Bengali folk music singer Kalikaprasad Bhattacharya passed away in a road accident at Palsit in West Bengal's Hooghly district at the age of 56 years.

Besides popularising folk songs of rural Bengal among the present generation in the albums of his band 'Dohar', he had also lent his voice in films like Jaatishwar (2014), Moner Manush (2010) and Bhuban Majhi (2017).



9. Famous journalist Arvind Padmanabhan passed away

Veteran journalist and Executive Editor at IANS, Arvind Padmanabhan died due to heart attack at the age of 50. He handled various jobs such as Business Bureau of the wire service, Business Editor of IANS and then the Bureau Chief of IANS. IANS is Indo-Asian News Service. He has also worked with PTI, The Times of India and TV18.

He has also working experience of Indian Abroad newspaper as Business section in-charge in 1999.



10. Former Puducherry Agriculture Minister M Chandrakasu died

Former Agriculture Minister of Puducherry M Chandrakasu passed away at the age of 67 years.

Chandrakasu was first elected as Congress legislator from Neduncadu reserved constituency in Karaikal in 1980. He again won the same seat in 1985 elections and went on to become the Speaker of the Assembly. After his third win from the same constituency, he became Minister in the Congress ministry led by V Vaithilingam between 1991 and 1996. He was Agriculture Minister in the AINRC government formed by Rangasamy in 2011.



11. Filmmaker and Author Amy Krouse Rosenthal passed away

Amy Krouse Rosenthal, a prolific children's book author, filmmaker and speaker passed away at the age of 51 years. Amazon named her "Encyclopaedia of an Ordinary Life" a top 10 memoirs of the decade.

She wrote more than 30 children's books, including "Little Pea," "Uni the Unicorn," "I Wish You More," "Exclamation Mark," "Spoon," "Chopsticks" etc. She wrote the heart-wrenching column "You May Want to Marry My Husband" while she was battling the ovarian cancer.



12. Rock and Roll legend Chuck Berry passed away

Rock and Roll legend Chuck Berry passed away at the age of 90 years. Berry, a guitarist and singer, in a seven-decade career boasted a string of hits, including classics "Roll Over Beethoven" and 'Sweet Little Sixteen'.

He received a lifetime achievement Grammy in 1984 and was among the first inductees to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1986. Berry is included in several of Rolling Stone magazine's "greatest of all time" lists; he was ranked fifth on its 2004 list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time.



13. Veteran politician Pyarimohan Mohapatra passed away

Former Rajya Sabha member and former principal secretary to the Odisha Chief Minister, Pyarimohan Mohapatra passed away due to illness. He has experience of working as chief strategist for Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. He has played important role in in the BJD's move to part ways with the BJP in the run up to the 2009 general elections.



He has been Rajya Sabha member from 2010 to 2012, however he was removed from party in 2012 on charges of attempting a coup to topple the chief minister Naveen Patnaik.

14. Famous meteorologist Dev Raj Sikka died

Former Director of the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and famous meteorologist, Dev Raj Sikka passed away due to cardiac arrest. He has been Chairman of the Monsoon Mission of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, a program to improve monsoon-related forecasts.



Sikka was honoured with the lifetime achievement award by the Indian Meteorological Society for his outstanding contribution to Indian meteorology. He was also associated with Council for Scientific and Industrial Research's committee on climate change and Research and Advisory Council of the National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecast.

15. Eminent Jurist TR Andhyarujina passed away

Eminent jurist and senior advocate T R Andhyarujina passed away at the age of 84 years. Andhyarujina served as Solicitor General during 1996-98. He was also the Advocate General of Maharashtra (1993-1995).



He was Chairman of the Committee on Banking Laws appointed by the Government of India in 1998. The report submitted by the Committee led to the enactment of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act).

16. Former Punjab Minister Gurdev Singh Badal passed away

Former Punjab Minister and senior Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Gurdev Singh Badal passed away at the age of 85 years. He had also served as the party's Vice President.

Mr. Badal was a five-time Member of Punjab legislative Assembly. He had represented Panjgrain and Jaito assembly seats.

In 1992, Gurdev had boycotted the Assembly elections, along with the SAD.



1. India successfully test-fired a supersonic interceptor missile

India successfully carried out an interceptor missile test. The indigenously developed supersonic interceptor missile can destroy any incoming enemy ballistic missile at low altitude.

The interceptor is a 7.5-meter long single stage solid rocket propelled guided missile equipped with a navigation system, a hi-tech computer and an electro-mechanical activator, the official said. India is the fourth country in the world to have a ballistic missile defence programme.



2. Indian Navy successfully conducted their maiden firing of Anti-Ship missile

The Indian Navy successfully test-fired an anti-ship missile for the first time from an indigenously built Kalvari class submarine in the Arabian Sea.

All six Kalvari class submarines being built in India will be equipped with this anti-ship missile. These missiles will provide the submarines the ability to neutralise surface threats at extended ranges. This missile launch is a significant milestone in enhancing the Indian Navy's sub-surface warfare capability.



3. DRDO handed over its developed products to Indian Army

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) handed over three of its products for induction into the Indian Army. The products were namely (i) Weapon Locating Radar (WLR), SWATHI, (ii) NBC Recce vehicle and (iii) NBC Drugs.

DRDO has been developing several products for the Indian Army in support of their field operations and welfare of soldiers on ground. Many of these products have been inducted and are presently operational in field units. These weapons are developed by DRDO's Electronics & Radar Development Establishment (LRDE).



4. INHS Asvini wins Raksha Mantri's Trophy

The Defence Minister Shri Manohar Parrikar presented the Raksha Mantri's Trophy and Citation for the best Service Hospital in the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) for the year 2016 to INHS Asvini, Mumbai.



The Command Hospital (Southern Command), Pune and Command Hospital (Northern Command) Udampur were jointly adjudged the second-best Service Hospitals. The 'Raksha Mantri's Trophy' was instituted in 1989 to create a healthy competition among the Command Hospitals of the Army and its equivalent hospitals in the Navy and Air Force.

Command Hospitals of the Army and its

5. University of Hyderabad research projects bagged Rs. 113 Crore funding

Strategic research projects at the University of Hyderabad (UoH) Centre-ARCHEM will get Rs. 113 crores funding for the next five years. It is supported by the Defence Ministry.



The University will soon become the first public-funded University to house a 500 MHz NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance), as a joint facility between The Advanced Centre for Research in High Energy Materials (ARCHEM) and the School of Chemistry. ARCHEM will drive at least 30 national projects, which are aimed at boosting indigenous efforts of critical defence technologies.

ARCHEM will drive at least 30 national projects, which are aimed at boosting indigenous

6. World's oldest serving aircraft carrier INS Viraat decommissioned

India's oldest serving aircraft carrier INS Viraat was decommissioned from service. It was also the world's oldest aircraft carrier in active service. The warship completed 30 years in service.



This carrier is referred to as the 'Grand Old Lady' in the naval community. It was first commissioned in 1959 in the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom as HMS Hermes. Later it was commissioned in the Indian Navy on May 12, 1987.

7. Indo - Oman Joint Army Exercise Al Nagah-li 2017

A 14-day joint defence exercise 'Al-Nagah-II' between the armies of India and Oman began at Bakloh in Himachal Pradesh. It is the second edition of the joint exercise. The previous edition of the Exercise was held at Muscat, Oman in 2015.



The aim of this exercise was to acquaint both forces with each other's operating procedures, improve the interoperability in conducting joint operations in the backdrop of counter insurgency/counter terrorism environment as also to enhance the existing military relationship between the Indian Army and the Royal Army of Oman.

8. Indo-Nepal joint Military exercise 'Surya Kiran'

The 11th Indo-Nepal Joint Military Exercise Surya Kiran was held at Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand. The fourteen-day exercise was aimed at training of troops in counter insurgency operations in mountainous terrain. It formally incorporated issues related to humanitarian assistance and disaster management. It will help enhance defence co-operation and military relations between the two countries.



The Nepal Army was represented by the officers and troops of the elite DURGA BAKSH Battalion while the EKTA SHAKTI Battalion of the Punjab Regiment participated on behalf of the Indian Army.

9. INS Tillanchang commissioned by Indian Navy at Karwar

INS Tillanchang, a Water Jet Fast Attack Craft was commissioned into the Indian Navy by Vice Admiral Girish Luthra, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command, at Karwar. The ship has been indigenously designed and built and is an upgrade from the Chetlat class.



INS Tillanchang is about 50m long and powered by three waterjet propulsion system, which give it speeds of over 35 knots. The ship is armed with a 30mm main gun and manned by 50 personnel.

10. India successfully test-fires the new BrahMos supersonic cruise missile

India successfully test-fired an extended range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Chandipur Integrated Test Range, off the Odisha coast.

This is the first test of the missile after its strike range was extended following India's entry in Missile Technology Control Regime. The strike range of the new BrahMos missile has been enhanced from 290 to 450 kms. The missile can carry a warhead of 300 kgs. Another version of the missile with a strike range of 800 kms is under development.



11. India and Russia inked long-term support pact on Sukhoi Su-30MKI

India and Russia inked two long-term support agreements for the Sukhoi Su-30MKI combat aircraft fleet. The five-year contract is expected to be worth \$300 million.

The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and United Aircraft Corporation and United Engine Corporation have signed the agreement for general terms and conditions governing the long-term supply of spares and rendering technical assistance for five years for Su-30 MKI aircraft. A logistics hub would also be set up in Bangalore where HAL assembles Su-30MKI.



12. India-Russia Military Industrial Conference

The India-Russia Military Industrial Conference was held in New Delhi. About 150 representatives from Russia participated in the conference.

The conference was organized by the Department of Defence Production in the Ministry of Defence. It primarily aims at addressing issues related to life-cycle support and maintenance of major Russian-origin equipments/platforms such as the SU-30 MKI Aircrafts, Mi-17 Helicopters, MiG-29K Aircrafts, INS Vikramaditya and T-90 tanks.



13. DRDO handed three naval systems to Navy

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) handed over following three Naval Systems to the Indian Navy:

- **USHUS-II Submarine Sonar:** A highly-evolved compendium of multiple sensors.
- **Directing Gear for Hull Mounted Sonar Array:** An electro-mechanical system that supports the transducer array of hull-mounted ship sonar systems and rotates it at a controlled speed
- **RLG based Inertial Navigation System for Ship Applications (INS-SA):** Provides vital information on the ship's position coordinates and heading for steering it to its destination accurately.



14. Indian Navy successfully test fired surface-to-air missile from INS Vikramaditya

The Indian Navy has successfully test fired the newly installed surface-to-air Barak missile system from its aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya. The test was conducted in the Arabian Sea against a live low-flying high speed target.

This exercise was carried out by the Navy as part of the 'Operational Readiness Inspection' of the Western Fleet.

INS Vikramaditya is a modified Kiev-class aircraft carrier which entered service with the Indian Navy in 2013.



15. Indian Navy to de-induct TU142M Long Range Maritime Patrol aircraft after 29 years

The Indian Navy's long-range maritime patrol aircraft TU 142M was de-inducted after 29 years of accident-free service. The workhorse played a key role in operations including the IPKF mission in Sri Lanka. TU 142M was inducted in the Navy at Dabolim in Goa in 1998 from Russia.



The Tupolev-142M fleet is being replaced by 12 P-8I maritime surveillance aircraft of Boeing. The new aircrafts are equipped with harpoon anti-ship missiles, lightweight torpedoes, rockets and new generation sensors and radars.

16. Inauguration of 'Test Bed' of Integrated Automatic Aviation Meteorological Systems (IAAMS) at INS Rajali

Admiral Sunil Lanba, PVSM, AVSM, ADC Chief of the Naval Staff, inaugurated the first ever 'Integrated Automatic Aviation Meteorological System (IAAMS)' at INS Rajali. The IAAMS is an ambitious project of the Indian Navy to modernise the meteorological infrastructure of the nine Naval Air Stations (NAS). INS Rajali at Arakkonam was identified for setting up this sophisticated system on a 'Test Bed' site.



It is equipped with the state of the art Meteorological Sensors viz., Radar Vertical Wind Profiler, Transmissometer, Ceilometer and Automatic Weather Observation System.

17. The INLCU L51 commissioned into the India Navy

The INLCU L51 was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 28th Mar 2017. It is first of the eight ships of the LCU Mk IV Class. It has been built by M/s Garden Reach Ship Builders & Engineers Ltd, Kolkata.



The ship has a displacement of 900 tons and spans 62.8 meters in length and 11 meters in breadth. It is propelled by 02 MTU diesel engines and can sustain speeds up to 15 knots. It has been built to assist in amphibious operations by carrying out beaching operations.

1. DIFC and GIFT City signed MoU

The Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to increase cooperation and collaboration between the two financial centres.



As a part of the MoU, both the centres will share best practices, exchange of information on banking, financial service and securities, legislation and regulation and cooperation in training. Indian institutions make up the third largest community of financial firms at DIFC after the US and the UK.

2. Cisco and Reliance Jio Build World's Largest All-IP Digital Services Platform

Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. ("Jio") has partnered with Cisco to further expand Jio's existing multi-terabit capacity with the first All-IP converged network.



With this network, Jio offers a unique combination of high-speed data, mobile video, VoLTE, digital commerce, media, cloud, and payment services. The All-IP network is built for the ever-increasing volumes of data, and its promise to shape the future of India, with end-to-end digital solutions and broadband for all.

3. BEML launched 200KW solar rooftop project in Mysore

Bharat Earth Movers Limited, a Mini Ratna Category-1 Public Sector Company under the Ministry of Defence, has inaugurated a 200 KWp grid connected Rooftop Solar project at its Mysore Complex. With this, BEML moved towards achieving the target of utilizing 100% Renewable energy for Captive Consumption.



BEML has commenced its initiation by setting up a 5MW Windmill Project at Gadag District, Karnataka. It also set up 18 MW windmill project in Koppal and Bagalkot districts in Karnataka from which 9MW electricity is already getting generated. The balance 9MW project is under commissioning.

4. ET Money ties up with HDFC Life to launch data-led insurance policy

HDFC Life launched an exclusive data-led group term insurance plan in partnership with ET Money. This is the country's first term insurance plan based on the spend pattern of the users.

It will help HDFC Life reach out to the customers in a paperless, self-help environment with privacy and convenience. One can get a group term life insurance coverage that ranges anywhere from Rs. 25-50 lakhs.



5. Bharti Airtel and Millicom sign pact to merge in Ghana

Bharti Airtel Ltd (Airtel) and Millicom International Cellular S.A. (Millicom) have inked an agreement through their subsidiaries Airtel Ghana Ltd and Tigo Ghana Ltd respectively to combine their operations in Ghana.

Airtel and Millicom will have equal ownership and governance rights in the combined entity. The combined business would serve nearly 10 million customers, of which 5.6 million are data customers. It would cover more than 80% of Ghana's population with high speed data. The revenues would be around USD 300 million.



6. MakeMyTrip partnered with PayPal for hotel bookings

PayPal has partnered with MakeMyTrip, Indian online travel booking company, to facilitate hotel and holidays booking in addition to airline tickets. MakeMyTrip will automatically send invoices to customers by an email along with a link that can be followed to complete payment through PayPal.

The partnership with MakeMyTrip will help foreign tourists continue to enjoy the seamless and secure PayPal experience to book hotels and holiday packages and tide through the recent challenges they are facing post the demonetisation of select Indian currencies.



7. NTPC commissioned 45 MW of Bhadla solar plant

NTPC has commissioned 45 Megwatt of Bhadla solar power plant. It had commissioned 115 MW of the plant in the previous month. With this, the company's total installed capacity has become 48,188 MW.



Bhadla solar park is a proposed 2,255 MW solar power plant located at Bhadla in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. NTPC has plans to set up 10,000 MW renewable projects by 2022. NTPC now has 19 coal based, seven gas based, 10 solar PV, one hydro and nine subsidiaries or joint venture power stations.

8. Direct Tax Collections up to February, 2017 show growth of 10.7%

The Direct Tax collections up to February, 2017 net of refunds stands at Rs. 6.17 lakh crore, which is 10.7 % more than the net collections for the corresponding period last year. This collection is 72.9 % of the total Budget Estimates for Direct Taxes for Financial Year 2016-17.



The growth rate under Corporate Income Tax (CIT) is 11.9% while that under Personal Income Tax (PIT) (including STT) is 20.8 %. However, after adjusting for refunds, the net growth in CIT collections is 2.6 % while that in PIT collections is 19.5 %. Refunds amounting to Rs.1.48 lakh crore have been issued during April 2016- February 2017.

9. Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) based inflation increased to 5.2% in January, 2017 from 3.4% in the previous month mainly due to rise in 'fuel & power' inflation reflecting hike in global crude oil prices.



The Government has taken a number of measures to control inflation like: (i) increased allocation for Price Stabilization Fund in the budget 2017-18 to check volatility of prices of essential commodities, in particular of pulses; (ii) created buffer stock of pulses through domestic procurement and imports; (iii) announced higher Minimum Support Prices so as to incentivize production; (iv) imposed 20 per cent duty on export of sugar; and (vi) reduced import duty on potatoes, wheat and palm oil.

10. Intel buys Mobileye for \$ 15.3 billion

Intel has acquired Mobileye, a leader in computer vision for autonomous driving technology, for \$15.3 billion. It is the biggest-ever acquisition of an Israeli tech company. Mobileye accounts for 70 percent of the global market for advanced driver-assistance and anti-collision systems.

The deal values Mobileye at \$63.54 per share in cash. The deal is expected to close in about nine months. Mobileye's CTO and co-founder, Professor Amnon Shashua, will lead Intel's autonomous driving division, which will be based in Israel.



11. Jet Airways partnered with Uber

Jet Airways has partnered with ride-hailing app Uber to offer its customers a greater choice by facilitating their travel to/from the airport once they have booked a ticket on the Jet Airways app.

Uber has 4 lakh driver partners registered on its platform and operates in 29 cities in India. The feature is also being rolled out in other markets like South Africa, Egypt, Russia, etc.



12. BHEL's first 800-MW supercritical power plant starts commercial operation

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has commenced commercial operation of its first 800 MW unit, which is the highest-rating coal-based supercritical thermal power plant. The milestone was achieved for the first unit of the 2x800 MW Yeramarus Thermal Power Station of Raichur Power Corporation Limited (RPCL), in the Raichur district of Karnataka.

Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd. (KPCL) and BHEL are the main equity partners of RPCL, the owner and operator of this power plant.



13. Essar's Nand Niketan Township becomes India's First Private Sector Township to go cashless

Essar's Nand Niketan Township became India's first private sector township to go cashless with the help of The Mobile Wallet (TMW), a Mumbai-based financial technology company. The Wallet is powered by the RBL Bank Ltd.

The pilot project involved the adoption of TMW's twin offering—the smartphone-based TMW app and the MasterCard-enabled TMW and RBL Bank co-branded Prepaid Card, which has almost universal acceptance at all outlets and billers that accept MasterCard in India.



14. GST Council approved SGST & UTGST Draft Bills

The Goods & Services Tax (GST) Council in its 12th meeting held at New Delhi, approved the final drafts of UTGST (Union Territory GST) and SGST (state GST).

With this, all five enabling draft bills stand approved.

The draft bills now need to be approved by the Cabinet and tabled in the Parliament's ongoing budget session. July 1 is the tentative date of GST's implementation.



15. ONGC to invest Rs. 21,500 crores in India's deepest gas find

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) will invest over Rs. 21,528.10 crores to develop India's deepest gas discovery by 2022-23. The company will use the investment in developing the ultra-deep-sea UD-1 find. It will help ONGC double its output from its prime KG basin block.

ONGC is planning to drill nine wells on the discovery which will produce a peak output of 19 million standard cubic metres per day.



16. Aeries Financial Tech and Rubique enter a partnership

Aeries Financial Technologies has inked a strategic partnership for its fin-tech product "CASHe" with online marketplace for financial products Rubique.

As a part of the agreement, Rubique will enlist CASHe on its online platform for borrowers to avail viable short-term loan products from CASHe. CASHe is India's most preferred fintech company in the personal lending space with multiple loan products ranging from Rs. 5,000-1 lakh payable over 15, 30 and 90 days.



17. NEXTracker to Expand Manufacturing in India

NEXTracker, a Flex company, will be manufacturing additional structural components of its solar tracking systems locally in India. It has partnered with APL Apollo Tubes Limited along with four other local steel fabricators.

NEXTracker will be increasing its local steel content percentage to over 80% by volume and weight of its final product. The association will reduce the shipment time by up to 50%.



18. Samsung Pay launched in India

Samsung launched a new digital payments service in India, called Samsung Pay. Users of Samsung S7 Edge, S7, S6 Edge Plus, A series 2016 and 2017, and Note 5 can avail their service. It will be available on Visa, MasterCard and Rupay payment cards. ICICI, HDFC, Standard Chartered, SBI, Axis bank cards will be supported, along with Paytm and Amex cards.



The service enables consumers to pay for products and services by simply waving their Samsung smart phone near a cash register.

19. HUDCO received SEBI approval to float an IPO

SEBI has approved the application of State-run Housing and Urban Development Corp. Ltd (HUDCO) to raise funds through an initial share sale as part of the government's disinvestment drive.



The initial public offer will comprise sale of 200,190,000 equity shares—10% stake—by the central government through an offer for sale (OFS) route. The government holds 100% stake in the company. IDBI Capital, Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities, SBI Capital Markets and ICICI Securities will manage the company's public issue.

20. Government removed 1% TCS on cash purchase above Rs. 2 lakh

The Government has removed the 1% tax on cash payments of over 2 lakh rupees for purchase of any goods or service after it banned cash dealings above that limit from 1st of April. The tax at source on goods and services, including jewellery, has now been removed through an amendment to the Finance Bill, 2017.



The Government in the previous Budget had provided for the seller to collect tax at the rate of 1% from the purchaser on sale in cash of any goods or offering any services exceeding 2 lakh rupees.

21. ONGC to buy debt-ridden Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation announced to buy an 80% stake in the KG-basin natural gas block in debt-ridden Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation for \$1.2 billion. Deal has been inked such that ONGC will pay \$995.26 million for three discoveries in the KG-OSN-2001/3 block.



The share holding pattern will be such that 80% stake will be bought by ONGC, rest Geo Global Resources (India) and Jubilant Offshore Drilling Private Limited will hold 10% stake each. ONGC will pay for the full development cost.

22. Idea Cellular approved the merger with Vodafone India, Vodafone Mobile Services

The board of directors of Idea Cellular approved the scheme of amalgamation of Vodafone India Limited (VIL) and its wholly owned subsidiary Vodafone Mobile Services Limited (VMSL) with the company.

The transaction is subject to necessary approvals from concerned authorities, including SEBI, Department of Telecom, RBI and others. The Idea-Vodafone merger will create the country's biggest telecom services provider with a customer base of over 394 million.



23. Airtel acquired Tikona's 4G business for ₹1,600 crores

Tikona Digital Networks has sold its 4G spectrum to Airtel in a deal assumed to be at Rs. 1600 crore and expected to be completed in 60 days. Tikona had acquired the spectrum in 2010 for ₹1,058 crores.

Bharti Airtel will also assume Tikona's debt of about ₹450-500 crore. The deal also includes 350 telecom towers owned by Tikona. Post completion of the deal, Airtel will have 30 MHz in the 2300 MHz band in 13 circles.



24. Pawan Hans ties-up with HAL to train Helicopter Pilots

The State-run Pawan Hans together with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will train Helicopter Pilots. The tie-up is a first of its kind as there is no training facility for chopper pilots. The course will begin in Bengaluru in July.

Pawan Hans also tied-up with Mumbai University to offer a Bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering along with a course on aircraft maintenance engineering from the next academic session. Pawan Hans is a joint venture where state-owned ONGC holds 49%.



25. BHEL commissioned a 250-MW eco-friendly power plant in Gujarat

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has successfully commissioned 250 MW unit based on eco-friendly Circulating Fluidized Bed Combustion (CFBC) technology, using low grade coal (lignite) as the primary fuel.

It is the second unit to be commissioned at Bhavnagar Energy Company Limited (BECL)'s 2x250 MW thermal power project, located at Padva village in Bhavnagar District of Gujarat.

The first unit of the project was commissioned earlier in May, 2016. The project is based on CFBC technology – an environment friendly technology to utilize India's large resource of low grade, high moisture lignite.



26. India exports buffalo meat worth over Rs. 21,300 Cr between April 2016 to Jan 2017

India exported buffalo meat worth over 21300 crore rupees between April 2016 to January 2017. As per the existing Meat Export Policy, export of beef is not permitted. Only boneless meat of buffalo, meat of goat, sheep and birds is permitted for export.

The major importers of these products include Bhutan, Nepal, Gabon, Germany and Japan. Processed meat is exported to the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, Vietnam, Italy, Canada, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Maldives and the USA.



27. Bharat Dynamics, L&T sign up for torpedo export

The Union Government has facilitated a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) and L&T for export Torpedoes (LWT-XP).

The torpedoes are designed and developed by the Naval Science & Technology Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam. However, they are manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL), the defence public sector unit. Hyderabad-based BDL is also the main producer of all indigenously developed missiles. NSTL is a leading research lab under the DRDO, which is supporting the Navy.



28. CCI imposed Rs. 591 crore as penalty on Coal India

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a penalty of ₹591.01 crore upon Coal India Limited (CIL) for fuel supply pacts.

The CCI had found that CIL and its subsidiaries violated the Competition Act by imposing unfair and discriminatory conditions in Fuel Supply Agreements (FSAs) with power producers for supply of non-coking coal.

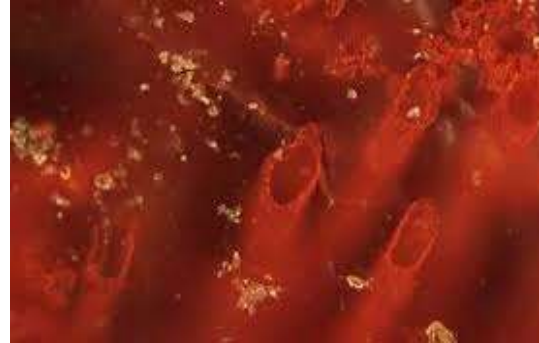
The CCI has also asked for modification of the FSA. CCI is the fair-trade regulator in the country.



ENVIRONMENT

1. World's oldest fossils discovered in Quebec, Canada

Geologists have found the world's oldest fossils in the Nuvvuagittuq Supracrustal Belt (NSB) on the coast of Hudson Bay in the northern reaches of Canada's Quebec province. They have discovered chunks of quartz that contain tiny tubes and filaments left behind by microorganisms. The fossils date back between 3.77 and 4.3 billion years ago.



The fossils are thought to be the remains of bacteria that lived on iron and dwelt around hydrothermal vent systems i.e. mineral rich hot springs on the seafloor.

2. Conservation drones to be used to monitor Tigers

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun will use drones over select tiger reserves of the country for the monitoring of tiger population in the reserves.

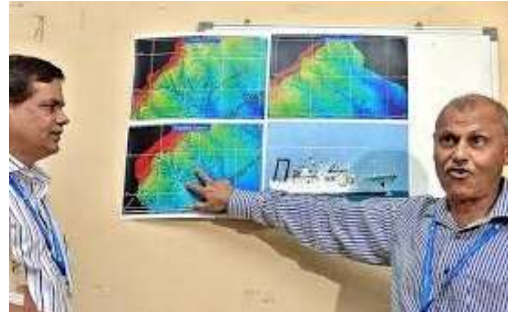


The drones would collect and transmit visual data on animal movements, poaching activities and instances of forest fire from inaccessible forest terrains on a real-time basis. Each reserve would get five vehicles and each vehicle would cost around Rs.4,00,000.

3. Scientists discover a new Canyon System near Kovvada, Andhra Pradesh

A team of scientists from CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) have discovered three new canyons close to Kovvada in Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. These three canyons together form a major canyon system in the depths of the Bay of Bengal.

Canyon systems are generally formed by flow of river water into the sea. The new canyon system was found to be deeper than Grand Canyon of US and is probably formed by the river Kandivalasa. The canyons were named as Andhra Canyon, Mahadevan Canyon and Krishna Canyon.



4. Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand come together for elephant census

The States of Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have decided to carry out a common program for elephant census between May 9 and 12. It is a first of its kind program to be conducted by these states together.

The States will conduct the census based on an identical set of rules — using the direct and indirect counting methods. As per the 2015 census, Odisha has 1,954 elephants while Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal had approximately 700, 275 and 130 elephants, respectively.



5. Mass Coral bleached in Great Barrier Reef for the second consecutive year

Australia's Great Barrier Reef is experiencing mass coral bleaching for a second consecutive year.

Corals have a symbiotic relationship with tiny marine algae called 'zooxanthellae' that live inside and nourish them. When sea surface temperatures rise, corals expel the colourful algae. The loss of the algae causes them to bleach and turn white. The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest collection of coral reefs, with 400 types of coral, 1,500 species of fish and 4,000 mollusc species.



6. World's first fluorescent frog is discovered in Argentina

Scientists at the Bernardino Rivadavia Natural Sciences Museum in Buenos Aires have discovered the world's first fluorescent frog near Santa Fe in Argentina. In normal light the frog appears to have a dull, mottled brown-green skin with red dots, but under UV light it glows a bright fluorescent green.

The frog is a dull green/brown with red spots in normal light. Three molecules hyloin-L1, hyloin-L2 and hyloin-G1 were responsible for green fluorescence.



7. Uttarakhand HC accords human status to Ganga, Yamuna

The Uttarakhand High Court accorded the status of "living human entities" to the Ganga and Yamuna, two of India's most sacred rivers.

The decision was accorded by a division bench of Justices Rajeev Sharma and Alok Singh of Nainital High Court. The court ordered that the Director, Namami Gange project, the Chief Secretary and the Advocate General of Uttarakhand will act as the "legal parents" of the holy rivers and work as the human face to protect, conserve and preserve them and their tributaries.



8. Environment Ministry Official to chair the Animal Welfare Board of India

The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) will now be permanently chaired by a senior official from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEF). AWBI is a statutory advisory body under the MoEF.

The government has appointed Sharad Singh Negi, Special Secretary and Director-General (Forests), MoEF as the new Chairperson with effect from March 1. The new board formed consists of 18 members. AWBI had always been chaired by somebody outside government, such as veterinarians, animal welfare activists or retired judges.



9. World's largest Capstone discovered by archaeologists in Telangana

The archaeology department of Telangana has discovered the world's largest Capstone after excavating an ancient human burial site in Narmeta village in Nangunuru mandal of Siddipet district in Telangana.



The Capstone of the menhir burial reportedly weighs about 40 tonnes. The department is all set to undertake DNA testing of various artefacts that have been discovered at this site. It will help in tracing the lineage of pre-historic humans, their food habits, lifestyle and how their population later became extinct.

10. Six Copper Axes dating back to the 2nd Millennium BC discovered in Saharanpur District of UP

Six copper axes dating back to the second millennium B C were discovered in a brick field at Sakatpur Must village in Saharanpur district of Uttar Pradesh.



The chance discovery made last month also yielded saffron coloured pottery of the same period. These discoveries indicate the scientific knowhow in that era.

This region has thoroughly been explored and several sites have been discovered bearing evidence of a 4000-year-old civilization that flourished there.

11. Kanha Tiger Reserve became the first Tiger Reserve in India to get an official mascot

The Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh became the first tiger reserve in India to get an official mascot named "Bhoorsingh – The Barasingha". It is aimed to create a better connect with the visitors, especially the younger generation.



Barasingha, or swamp deer, is the state animal of Madhya Pradesh. The Kanha tiger reserve, spread over Mandla and Balaghat districts, is the only place in the world where the species exists. The mascot has been designed by cartoonist Rohan Chakravarty, who runs a popular website greenhumour.com.

1. SIDBI signed a pact with CSFB to help MSMEs avail loans at cheaper rates

The Small Industries Development Bank of India has inked an agreement with the Capital Small Finance Bank (CSFB) to enable it to provide loans at a concessional rate to MSMEs.

The MoU is aimed at promoting and strengthening the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). As a part of agreement, SIDBI will also co-finance MSMEs for capital expenditure under 'SIDBI Make in India Soft Loan Fund for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises', popularly known as SMILE, at a concessional rate of 9.60%.



2. Lakshmi Vilas Bank inked tie-up with Centrum for wealth management of HNI Clients

Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) has tied up with Centrum Group, wherein the latter will offer wealth management and family office services to High Networth Individuals (HNI) of the bank.

Centrum will manage investment portfolios of the HNIs. Centrum Wealth Management is a five-year-old firm engaged in investment advisory across all asset classes. It also has a Rs. 500 crores private equity fund, named 'Kalpavriksh'.



3. American Express launched 'Buyer Initiated Payments'

American Express, a global leader in payment solutions has launched an electronic payment platform linked to corporate card, Buyer Initiated Payments (BIP) to eliminate payment through cheques or drafts.

The BIP card will help organizations and their vendors by reducing the processing cost and offer extended payment terms compared to traditional invoice payments. BIP enables companies to increase the Days Payable Outstanding (DPO) while still paying vendors on time.



4. Reliance General Insurance tied up with Catholic Syrian Bank

Reliance General Insurance (RGI), a part of Reliance Capital, has entered Bancassurance tie-up with the Catholic Syrian Bank (CSB).

As a part of this tie-up, RGI will offer its vast array of affordable General Insurance products to customers of the Catholic Syrian Bank. The Company plans to boost its top line by up to 15 percent through these tie-ups. Reliance General Insurance has already signed partnerships with Indusind bank, Bank of India, SVC Bank and Andhra Bank under new open architecture Bancassurance guidelines.



5. India foreign exchange reserves increased by USD 63.7 million

India's foreign exchange reserves increased by USD 63.7 million to USD 362.79 billion in the week ended 24th February 2017. Foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves, increased by USD 63.4 million to USD 339.783 billion. In the previous week, the reserves had declined by USD 56.8 million to USD 362.73 billion.



The Gold reserves remained unchanged at 19.248 billion. India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund rose by a marginal USD 100,000 to USD 1.444 billion, while the country's reserve position also increased by USD 0.2 million to USD 2.318 billion.

6. NPAs at record high of Rs. 6.8 lakh crore

The NPAs of public sector banks reached at a record high of Rs 6.8 lakh crore. 70% of these NPAs belong to big corporate houses.

Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chief K V Thomas favoured naming and shaming corporate houses which default on repayment of bank loans. NPAs declared by various PSBs are – State Bank of India: Rs. 97,356 crores, Punjab National Bank: Rs. 54,640 crores, Bank of India: Rs. 44,040 crores, Bank of Baroda: Rs. 35,467 crores, Canara Bank: Rs. 31,466 crores.



7. IRDAI proposed up to 50% hike in motor insurance premium

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has proposed up to 50% increase in motor insurance premium beginning April 1.

- For cars, up to 1,000cc: Rs. 3355
- For cars, more than 1,000cc: Rs. 9246
- For 2-wheelers up to 75 cc: no change
- For sports bikes and super bikes: Rs. 1194



However, there is no proposal to increase third party motor insurance premium for small cars (up to 1,000 cc) from Rs. 2,055 currently.

8. RBI to penalize Rs. 10,000 for bank branches refusing to exchange soiled notes

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has clarified that currency notes with scribbles are legal tender. However, any note with slogans and messages of a political nature cease to be legal tender.

As per the Clean Note Policy of RBI introduced in 1999, the citizens should refrain from writing on the notes.

If any bank branch refuses to exchange soiled notes from any member of the public, the bank should pay a penalty of Rs10,000.



9. Finance Minister gave in-principle approval to PSU banks for ESOPs

The Union Finance Ministry has given its in-principle approval to Public Sector Banks (PSUs) to offer stock options to their employees from 2017-18.

However, only those banks which have earned substantial profit as well as made remarkable improvement in managing NPAs could offer the Employee Stock Option plans (ESOPs). ESOPs help reward and retain key and top-performing employees. It would also help motivate the employees to build a strong financial status of the bank.



10. HDFC Bank launched chatbot “Eva” for customer service

HDFC Bank Limited announced the launch of Eva (Electronic Virtual Assistant), a futuristic Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven Chatbot for Customer Service. The Chatbot is powered by Senseforth, a Bengaluru-based AI start-up.

Eva is India’s first AI-based banking Chatbot and can answer millions of customer queries across multiple channels instantly. Eva can assimilate knowledge from thousands of sources and provide answers in simple language in less than 0.4 seconds.



11. State Bank of India launched ‘Work from Home’ facility for Employees

The State Bank of India has approved the ‘Work from Home’ policy to enable its employees to work while at home using mobile devices. It will help increase the employee productivity.

The bank will use mobile computing technologies and thus have continuous control over all the enabled devices centrally to manage and secure the data and applications on the mobile devices. It will be monitored through carefully designed MIS and dashboard.



12. IDFC bank launched India’s first Biometric-Based Payment System

IDFC Bank became the first bank to launch India’s first Aadhaar-linked cashless merchant solution, named as ‘Aadhaar Pay’. IDFC launched ‘Aadhaar Pay’ across 16 States on pilot basis. One of the main attractive feature of payment system is that, it does not charge any merchant discount rate and anyone with a mobile phone and small dongle can turn into a merchant for everyone else and start accepting payments.



It is developed by IDFC Bank under the guidance of the Ministry of IT, NITI Aayog, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), and National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

13. RBI Restricts Cash Loan against Gold by NBFC to Rs. 25,000

The Reserve Bank of India has issued a guideline for Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) which now cannot lend more than Rs. 25,000 in cash against gold. Any loan for more than Rs. 25000 must be disbursed through cheque as part of RBI's "go digital" drive post-demonetisation.



The earlier threshold was Rs. 1 lakh and above. The new guideline is in line with the provisions of the Income Tax Act.

14. ICICI Bank, SBI top bank frauds list: RBI

As per a data published by RBI, ICICI Bank topped the list of banks that witnessed the most number of frauds during April to December period of 2016 with the state-owned SBI taking the second spot. During the first nine months of the current fiscal, as many as 455 fraud cases, involving 1 lakh rupees and above, were detected in ICICI Bank, closely followed by SBI with 429, Standard Chartered with 244 and HDFC Bank with 237.



However, in value terms, frauds involving 2,237 crore rupees were reported in SBI, followed by Punjab National Bank with 2,250 crore rupees and Axis Bank with 1,998 crore rupees.

15. Bank of Baroda approved bond issue

The Capital Raising Committee of Bank of Baroda's board approved raising of funds through issuance of Basel III compliant Additional Tier-I bonds (perpetual debt instrument). The bonds to be raised amount to ₹500 crores with the Greenshoe option of ₹500 crores.



A Perpetual bond, which is also known as a perpetual or just a perp, is a bond with no maturity date. The Greenshoe option is a special provision in an IPO prospectus, which allows underwriters to sell investors more shares than originally planned by the issuer.

16. IndusInd Bank to acquire IL & FS Securities Services

The IndusInd Bank will buy IL&FS Securities Services Ltd (ISSL), a subsidiary of Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) Ltd, in an all-cash deal. However, the cost of acquisition was not disclosed. The proposed acquisition is expected to close within the next three months.



The ISSL is a capital market intermediary for professional clearing, depository and custodial Services. In FY2016, ISSL reported a revenue of ₹277.60 crores and a net profit of ₹39 crores.

17. SEBI gives nod to Reliance Communications for a merger with Aircel Ltd.

Reliance Communications Ltd (RCom) has received the nod from capital markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) to spin-off and merge its wireless division with Aircel Ltd and Dishnet Wireless Ltd.



The proposed merger has also received nod from the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd and BSE Ltd. Both RCom and Maxis Communications will hold 50% each in the merged entity and have equal representation on the board and committees.

18. SBI announced a Rs. 6,000 Crore Tractor Loan Settlement Scheme

The State Bank of India has announced a one-time farm loan settlement scheme worth 6,000 crore rupees primarily for tractors valid until 31st March.

The loans disbursed before 2011 and falling under doubtful or loss category accounts as of September 2016, will be considered under the scheme. Other agricultural loans like Kisan Credit Cards and other term-loans for tractors and farm loans may also be covered under the scheme. SBI's total farm loan portfolio is 1.25 Lakh Crore rupees and tractor loan book is about 6,000 crore rupees.



19. Retail inflation rises to a 4-month high of 3.65%

The retail inflation rose to 4-month high of 3.65% in February 2017, mainly due to an increase in the prices of food items. The inflation measured in terms of the Consumer Price Index had stood at 3.17% in January 2017. The retail inflation was 5.26% in February 2016.



As per the data released by the Central Statistics Office, retail inflation in food items rose to 2.01% in February, from 0.61% in January. But, prices of vegetables declined by 8.29% and of pulses by 9.02%.

20. Wholesale Inflation rises to 6.55% in February

The wholesale inflation shot up to a 39-month high of 6.55% in February 2017, because of costlier food and fuel items. The wholesale price based inflation had stood at 5.25% in January 2017, and 3.68% in December 2016.



As per the official data, food inflation jumped to 2.69% in February, from minus 0.56% in January. Inflation in the fuel basket spurted to 21.02% in February, from 18.14% in January.

21. UCO Bank, Future Generali tie up

Future Generali India Insurance Company Limited (FGII) has entered a corporate agency tie-up for its products with UCO Bank. As a part of the tie-up, FGII will offer its insurance products across branches of UCO bank.



The FGII is a joint venture between Future Group – The game changers in Retail Trade in India and Generali – a 186 year old Global Insurance Group. UCO Bank also announced its Corporate Agency Tie-up agreement with Liberty Videocon General Insurance Company for distribution of General Insurance Products.

22. HDFC Bank to offer online loans against securities

HDFC Bank has launched an instant Digital Loan against Securities (LAS) facility wherein customers can calculate their eligibility for overdraft limit against shares, and open a current account instantly. The bank has tied up with the National Securities Depository Ltd. (NSDL) for this.

The customers can avail loan against shares in three steps – select the shares to be pledged on net banking; accept agreement through one-time password (OTP); and pledge the shares with NSDL online through OTP.



23. State Bank of India signed an MoU with CREDAI

The State Bank of India has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) to jointly conduct various initiatives towards development of the realty sector. The MoU was signed for a period of three years.

The SBI will be a national partner for all CREDAI activities. SBI and CREDAI will jointly work together for various marketing activities like conclaves, seminars, exhibitions, campaigns and CSR activities as well. CREDAI is the largest real estate association in the country with over 11,500 members.



24. RBI got an approval to print Rs. 10 plastic notes

The Government has authorized the RBI for a field trial with plastic banknotes of Rs. 10 at five locations of the country. Plastic notes are expected to last longer than cotton substrate based banknotes.

An inter-disciplinary Standing Committee on Cyber Security has been constituted to review the threats inherent in the existing and emerging technology and suggest appropriate policy interventions to strengthen cyber security and resilience.



25. ESAF Small Finance Bank becomes the first private bank of Kerala

ESAF Small Finance Bank became Kerala's first private sector bank after it was launched by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The bank is promoted by ESAF Microfinance and Investments (P) Ltd.

The small finance bank has plans to open 85 branches in its first year of operation. Currently the bank has a network of 285 branches in 93 districts spread over 11 states.

The bank has a business target of Rs. 20,000 crore by 2020.



26. BSE tied up with Sentifi for Algo Analysis, Updates

The BSE has tied up with Sentifi, a Swiss company and leader in algorithmic-based analysis, for social media updates of 40,000 globally listed stocks. Sentifi analyses in real time the public online communication of more than 60 lakh persons and organisations relevant to the financial markets.

As a part of the agreement, Sentifi would track, analyse and report social media messages on various stocks which would be provided on the BSE website.



27. SEBI allows celebrity endorsements in MFs

SEBI has allowed celebrities to endorse Mutual Fund instruments to increase awareness of mutual funds as a financial product. SEBI issued new advertising code that will require fund houses to communicate in a simple manner with the public.

The SEBI Board also approved the investment by mutual funds in REITs and InvITs. The move is likely to help in attracting more number of investors into Real Estate and Infrastructure Investment Trusts, with a permission to invest only up to five percent of its net asset value in units of a single issuer of REITs and InvITs.



28. ICICI Bank launched India's first mobile banking application for rural customers

The ICICI Bank Ltd. launched a unique mobile banking app called 'Mera iMobile' for rural customers that allow them to access banking services as well as information on agricultural services. Anyone including non-ICICI Bank customers can also download and use the app which is available in eleven Indian languages.

The App allows users in rural areas to avail as many as 135 services. It is the first banking app to offer agriculture related information like crop wise mandi prices of nearly 230 crop varieties across 460 mandis. It also displays taluka-wise weather update for close to 3700 talukas across and over 300 districts.



29. RBI proposes to fix upper limit in PPIs at Rs. 1 Lakh

The RBI proposed to fix the upper limit for Prepaid Payment Instruments at Rs. 1 lakh.

As per the RBI's new draft norms for PPIs, amount in a PPI should not exceed Rs. 1 lakh at any point of time if the customer provides full KYC and Rs. 20,000, if the customer provides minimum KYC details to the PPI issuing entity. The maximum value of any prepaid payment instrument should not exceed Rs. 50,000. The cash loading to PPIs should be limited to Rs. 50,000 per month subject to the overall limit of the PPI.



30. NTPC Plans to Achieve 32 GW Installed Capacity via Renewable Sources by 2032

NTPC Ltd. has raised Rs. 2,000 crore through issuance of green masala bonds in overseas market under its USD 4 billion medium term note programme. The proceeds of these bonds will be used for financing renewable energy projects in accordance with applicable guidelines and regulations of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

"National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) Limited has drafted/prepared its long-term Corporate Plan and has planned to achieve 32 GW installed capacity through renewable energy resources by 2032", the minister added.



31. Finance Ministry finalized capital infusion for 10 PSU banks

The Finance Ministry has approved ₹8,586-crore capital infusion plan for 10 weak and non-performing public sector banks. The capital allocation would be linked to quarterly milestones.

The 10 identified banks are:

- Allahabad Bank (₹418 crore)
- Andhra Bank (₹1,100 crore)
- Bank of India (₹1,500 crore)
- Bank of Maharashtra (₹300 crore)
- Central Bank of India (₹100 crore)
- Dena Bank (₹600 crore)
- IDBI Bank (₹1,900 crore)
- Indian Overseas Bank (₹1,100 crore)
- UCO Bank (₹1,150 crore)
- United Bank of India (₹418 crore)



32. South Indian Bank introduces Aadhar-based payment app

South Indian Bank (SIB) has introduced Aadhar-based payment in its Unified Payment Interface (UPI) mobile application- 'SIB M-Pay'. Even non-customers of South Indian Bank can link any of their bank accounts in this mobile application.

Unified Payment Interface enables all bank account holders to send and receive money from their Smartphone without entering the bank account information. With SIB M-Pay, the fund transfers can be done by just entering the Aadhar number of the beneficiary. The amount will be credited directly to the beneficiary's Aadhar linked bank account.



33. BSE, NSE to launch F&O series in 15 companies

BSE and NSE will introduce futures and options (F&O) contracts in 15 companies - PVR, InterGlobe Aviation, Indian Bank, Equitas Holdings, Reliance Defence and Engineering, Muthoot Finance, Capital First, Suzlon Energy, Infibeam Incorporation, Escorts, Ujjivan Financial Services, Piramal Enterprises, Shree Cements and Max Financial Services.



Trading in equity derivatives segment of these securities can be done from March 31, 2017. Presently, there are over 200 securities available in the F&O segment for trade.

34. RBI approved appointment of T S Anantharaman as part-time Chairman

The Reserve Bank of India has accorded its approval for appointment of Shri T S Anantharaman as Part-time Chairman of the Catholic Syrian Bank. Anantharaman has been holding the position of Non-Executive Director of the bank since August 28, 2009. Currently, he is an investment consultant and director of number of other companies and institutions.



Anantharaman is a senior chartered accountant. He had served with United Nations for seven years. Anantharaman was the President of Chamber of Commerce, Thrissur, Thrissur Management Association and several other institutions.

35. REPCO inked an agreement with NHB

Repco Home Finance Ltd (RHFL) has inked an agreement with National Housing Bank for implementation of credit-linked subsidy scheme for the middle-income group.



The scheme divides middle income group into two categories — with annual household income up to ₹12 lakhs and ₹18 lakhs. The subsidy will be available for the two brackets for a loan amount of ₹9 lakhs and ₹12 lakhs at the rate of 4% and 3% per annum, respectively, for a tenure of 20 years. Maximum permissible carpet area is 90 sqm and 110 sqm. The maximum subsidy amount for an individual beneficiary is ₹2.35 lakhs.

36. Syndicate Bank opened 40 'Ananya' branches

Syndicate Bank digitally inaugurated 40 'Ananya' transformed branches. These 40 branches are a part of the 372 Phase 1 Ananya transformed branches that aim to enhance customer experience, improve sales focus, and improve digital transactions through a dedicated digizone.

Project Ananya is a two-year large-scale transformation project undertaken by the bank to provide customers with 'best in class' services while improving and modernising the whole bank.



37. ICICI Bank partnered with Truecaller

ICICI Bank announced its partnership with Truecaller to power a new UPI based mobile payment service called as 'Truecaller Pay'. It will allow users of the app to instantly create a UPI id, send money to any UPI id or a mobile number registered with the BHIM app. Users can also recharge their mobile number from within the Truecaller app itself.

Any user of Truecaller app, including non-ICICI Bank customers can link their bank account of any bank (participating in UPI) to create a UPI id and instantly make payments in a safe and secure manner.



38. Truecaller partnered with Google and Airtel

Truecaller has announced partnership with Google to integrate the tech giant's video calling app Duo within the Truecaller app. This feature will be available for Android and iOS users.

Truecaller has partnered with Airtel in India to bring Truecaller's caller identification and spam detection features to feature phones. The 'Airtel Truecaller ID' feature will identify a caller and send his information via a flash message in advance.



39. SBI launches 'Unnati' Credit Card

State Bank of India launched a unique credit card 'SBI Card Unnati' targeted at all SBI customers, including Jan Dhan account-holders across the country.

The target clientele of the card are new users of credit cards who do not have a credit history. It will not have annual fees for the first four years. Any SBI customer with a balance of at least ₹25,000 in his/her savings account with the bank would be eligible for the Unnati credit card.



40. Paytm became the first e-commerce company to become ASCI member

Paytm is set to become the first e-commerce company to become a member of the self-regulatory voluntary organisation - Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

The reason behind the move is advertising violations by e-commerce companies, which are big spenders on television, print and digital media, have been on the rise in recent years. A complaint was filed against PAYTM to ASCI on November 2016 when Paytm had made a misleading advertisement with offer of "flat 50% cashback" but it was limited to Rs. 150 only.



IMPORTANT DAYS

1. International Women's Day observed

The International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated across the globe on 8th March. The theme for this year's Women's Day is "Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030". The theme is #BeBoldForChange.

It is also known as the United Nations (UN) Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. The day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.



2. World Kidney Day observed worldwide

The World Kidney Day (WKD) was observed worldwide on 9th March 2016. The theme of the World Kidney Day 2017 is "Kidney Disease & Obesity, Healthy Lifestyle for Healthy Kidneys."

The World Kidney Day (WKD) is observed every year on the second Thursday in March. This day is a mutual initiative of International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF). The aim of the day is to raise awareness about the role played by kidneys in maintaining overall health.



3. World Consumer Rights Day

The World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is observed every year on 15th March for celebration and solidarity within the international consumer movement.

The WCRD is an opportunity to promote the basic rights of all consumers, for demanding that those rights are respected and protected, and for protesting the market abuses and social injustices which undermine them. The theme for this year is 'Building a Digital World Consumers Can Trust'.



4. Commonwealth Day celebrated in the Westminster Abbey

The Commonwealth Day is the annual celebration of the Commonwealth of Nations held on the second Monday in March. The theme for 2017 is "A peace-building Commonwealth".

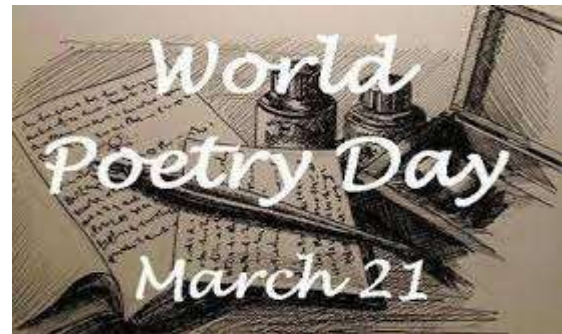
It is marked by a multi-faith service in Westminster Abbey, normally attended by Queen Elizabeth II as Head of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is one of the world's oldest political associations of states. Currently there are 52 member nations in the group.



5. World Poetry Day

The World Poetry Day is held on March 21 each year. It is an initiative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to appreciate and support poets and poetry around the world.

UNESCO recognizes the unique ability of poetry to capture the creative spirit of the human mind. The day celebrates one of humanity's most treasured forms of cultural and linguistic expression and identity.



6. International Day of Forests observed

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of Forests is observed annually on 21st March to promote the importance of forests and trees in our lives. The day addresses issues such as deforestation. International Day of Forests was observed for the first time on March 21, 2013.

The theme of this year is 'Forests and Energy'. The theme highlights the importance of wood energy in improving people's lives, powering sustainable development and mitigating climate change.



7. International day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2017 observed globally

The United Nations' (UN) International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed every year on March 21. 2017 Theme: Racial profiling and incitement to hatred, including in the context of migration.

It creates awareness among people of racial discrimination's negative consequences. It also encourages people to remember their obligation and determination to combat racial discrimination.



8. World Water Day observed

The World Water Day is celebrated on March 22 every year. The day highlights the importance of freshwater and promotes sustainable management of freshwater resources.

The theme of 2017 World Water Day is "Why Wastewater". It aims to highlight on wastewater and ways to reduce and reuse as over 80% of all the wastewater from our homes, cities, industry and agriculture flows back to nature polluting the environment and losing valuable nutrients and other recoverable materials.



9. World Meteorological Day 2017 observed globally

The United Nations' (UN) World Meteorological Day is observed annually on March 23 to commemorate the establishment of World Meteorological Organization on this day in 1950. The theme for year 2017 is "Understanding Clouds".

The theme highlights the enormous importance of clouds for weather climate and water. Clouds are central to weather observations and forecasts. The World Meteorological Day marks the launch of a new edition of the International Cloud Atlas.



10. World Sparrow Day observed

The World Sparrow Day was observed around the globe on 20th March. The day aims to raise awareness of the house sparrow and then other common birds to urban environments, and of threats to their populations.

It is an international initiative by the Nature Forever Society of India in collaboration with the Eco-Sys Action Foundation (France) and numerous other national and international organizations across the world.



11. World Tuberculosis Day

The World Tuberculosis Day is observed annually on March 24. The theme for World Tuberculosis Day 2017 is 'Unite to End TB: Leave no one behind'. 2017 is the second year of a two-year "Unite to End TB" campaign for World TB Day.

The day aims to raise public awareness of tuberculosis and the efforts made to prevent and treat this disease. It is one of eight official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO).



12. World Theatre Day

The World Theatre Day is celebrated annually on the 27th of March. The Day was created in 1961 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI). This day is a celebration for those who can see the value and importance of the art form "theatre".

The first World Theatre Day Message was written by Jean Cocteau in 1962. ITI is an International Non-Governmental Organization founded in 1948 by UNESCO and the International Theatre Community.



13. 'Earth Hour' observed on 25th March

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement observed annually towards the end of March. It is organized by the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). This year it was observed on 25th March 2017 marked the 10th anniversary of Earth Hour.

The event is held to encourage individuals, communities, households and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights for one hour, from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m. as a symbol for their commitment to the planet.



1. EU member states approved visa-free travel for Georgia

The European Union member states approved visa-free travel for Georgian citizens in the European Union for a period of 90 days in any 180-day period. However, the UK and Ireland are not included in this arrangement.

Georgia had been urging the EU to grant visa-free travel to show its citizens that close ties with Europe can deliver concrete benefits. Ukraine has also been urging the EU to grant visa-free travel for its citizens to EU countries.



2. Pakistani diplomat Amjad Hussain B Sial assumed office as the new Secretary General of SAARC

Mr. Amjad Hussain B Sial of Pakistan has become the new Secretary-General of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). He assumed the charge in Kathmandu and replaced outgoing Secretary General Arjun Bahadur Thapa of Nepal, who completed his term on 28th February.

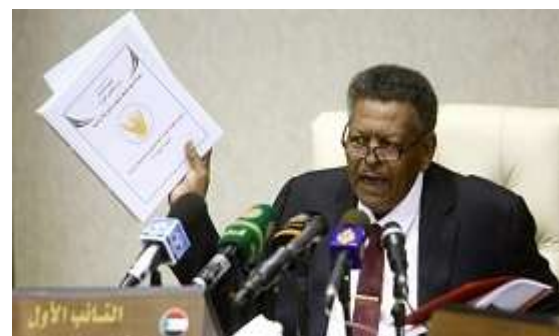


Mr. Sial has 33 years of experience in Pakistan's Foreign Service. He has also served at the SAARC Secretariat as a Director in Kathmandu. The SAARC Secretary-General tenure is of three years.

3. Sudan's Bashir named Hassan Saleh as the new Prime Minister

Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir has named his first Vice President and long-time ally Hassan Saleh to the newly-created post of the Prime Minister. The President had abolished the post after coming to power in a 1989 coup.

Mr. Saleh will hold onto his current post of Sudan's first Vice President. Saleh, a retired Army General, is a former Defence, Interior and Presidential Affairs Minister. He is also



currently the National Congress Party's Deputy Leader for Executive Affairs.

4. Malaysia to cancel Visa Free entry for North Koreans

Malaysia has cancelled the Visa Free entry for North Koreans entering the country following the murder of Kim Jong-nam at the Kuala Lumpur Airport as the bilateral ties worsened between the two countries.

The Malaysian Government implemented the change on the grounds of National Security. North Koreans will be required to obtain a visa as of March 6th, before entering Malaysia. Malaysia is one of the few countries that North Koreans could visit without a visa.



5. The 13th ECO Summit was hosted in Islamabad

The 13th Meeting of the ECO Heads of State/Government was hosted by Pakistan. The last ECO Summit was held in October 2012 in Baku.

The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an Intergovernmental Regional Organization established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey for promoting Economic, Technical and Cultural Cooperation among the Member States. The Current Membership Countries Include:

- Afghanistan
- Azerbaijan
- Iran
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyz Republic
- Pakistan
- Tajikistan
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan and
- Uzbekistan.



The headquarters of the ECO is in Tehran, Iran.

6. Parts of Eastern Ukraine to use Russian Ruble as Currency

The parts of Eastern Ukraine, currently occupied by the Luhansk People's Republic will use the Russian Ruble as its official currency. Ruble was already being used informally in the pro-Russian territory along with the Ukrainian hryvnia. Luhansk's central bank will announce the value of the Ruble against the US Dollar, Euro, and Hryvnia.



The LPR is a break-away region in the south of the state of Luhansk, claimed by rebel groups allied to Moscow in May 2015.

7. South Korea and USA began their Annual Military Exercise

South Korea and the United States began their joint Military Exercise, called Foal Eagle, which is conducted annually. The exercises will run through April and involves Ground, Air and Naval forces.



The exercise in 2016 had involved about 17,000 American troops and more than 300,000 South Koreans. The two countries also are planning a computer-simulated command post exercise, called Key Resolve, starting March 13.

8. Cognizant Acquired Japanese Digital Firm Brilliant Service

Cognizant has acquired Brilliant Service Co. Ltd., an intelligent products and solutions company headquartered in Osaka, Japan, specializing in Digital Strategy, Product Design and Engineering, the Internet of Things (IoT), and Enterprise Mobility.



Brilliant Service was founded in 2004 and provides end-to-end Android/iOS applications, embedded software, user experience design and online-to-offline services to major corporations in Japan. As part of the acquisition, a team of 70 professionals with extensive digital solutions experience and insights in the Japanese market will join Cognizant.

9. Chinese growth target cut to 6.5%

The Chinese growth target for this year has been cut to around 6.5%, down from 6.5 to 7% last year. The Chinese economy expanded at its slowest pace in 26 years in 2016.

China's growth rate has fallen sharply in recent years due to falling demand for its goods globally and overcapacity in its manufacturing and steel sectors.

The government has set a target of over 11 million for urban job creation.



10. Leaders' Summit in Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of IORA concluded in Jakarta

Indonesia, as the current Chair of IORA, hosted the first ever IORA Leaders' Summit on 7th March 2017 in Jakarta under the theme "Strengthening Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable, and Prosperous Indian Ocean". The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Celebrated its 20th Anniversary.

The Summit is a game-changer for regional cooperation and a demonstration of Member States and Dialogue Partners commitment to the Indian Ocean region.



11. Egypt hosted 'India by Nile' fest

Egypt hosted fifth edition of the Mega Cultural Festival 'India by the Nile', which was organized by India. Egypt showcased India's culture, arts and cuisine, Indian and Egyptian handicrafts, from March 8 to April 27 in Cairo, Giza, Alexandria, Port Said and Ismailia Governorates.

'India by the Nile' was considered as special because India celebrated 70 years of diplomatic relations with Egypt and it was for the first time that Indian flag was projected onto the Giza Pyramids as part of the celebration.



12. Iran successfully tests ballistic missile

Iran has successfully tested a ballistic missile. The sea-launched ballistic missile named Hormuz 2 successfully destroyed a target from 250 kilometres.

The Hormuz 2 can hit floating targets with high accuracy within a range of 300 kilometres. The missile is like the anti-ship Khalij-e-Fars (Persian Gulf) Ballistic Missile in appearance. Iran also recently acquired the advanced S-300 Air Defence System from Russia. It is also planning to test the domestically manufactured Bavar 373.



13. Pakistan National Assembly passed the Hindu Marriage Bill

The Pakistan National Assembly has passed the Hindu Marriage Bill 2016, after amendments made by the Senate, to regulate marriages of Hindus in Pakistan. The law will be applicable in the provinces of Baluchistan, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Hindu Marriage Bill 2016 protects the customs and customary rites of the Hindu community. It also provides a mechanism for registration of marriage, separation and remarriage. The bill will help Hindu women get documentary proof of their marriage. The bill will need the signature of President Mamnoon Hussain to become a law.



14. South Korean President Park Geun-hye removed by court

South Korea's Constitutional Court upheld a parliamentary vote to impeach the President Park Geun-hye over a corruption and cronyism scandal. Park becomes South Korea's first democratically elected leader to be forced from office. Park was the country's first female leader to become the President.

A snap presidential election would be held within 60 days. Liberal Moon Jae-in, who lost to Park in the 2012 election is likely to win the election.



15. Donald Tusk re-elected as the President of the European Council

Donald Tusk has been re-elected as the President of the European Council. His term was to end on May 31st, but was widely expected to be renewed for two and a half years. 27 of the EU's 28 governments supported Tusk.



Previously he was the Prime Minister of Poland (2007–2014) and a co-founder and chairman of the Civic Platform (Platforma Obywatelska) party. Tusk succeeded Herman van Rompuy as the President of the European Council on 1st December 2014.

16. Commonwealth Trade meet began in London

The first Commonwealth summit focused on stimulating trade within the group started in London. The Commonwealth leadership is targeting an increase in intra-Commonwealth trade to \$1 trillion by 2020, from \$750 billion. The two-day event involved a series of roundtable discussions between ministers from over 30 countries and chief executives.



The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 52 independent and sovereign countries, mostly former territories of the British Empire.

17. Jiratchaya Sirimongkolnawin of Thailand crowned Miss International Queen 2016

Jiratchaya Sirimongkolnawin of Thailand has been crowned Miss International Queen 2016. The competition is the world's largest and most popular transgender pageant. The contest was held at the Tiffany's nightclub in the Thai seaside town of Pattaya.



Brazil's Nathalie Oliveira and Venezuela's Andrea Collazo finished at second and third place respectively. Miss International Queen began in 2004. Contestants must have been born a male and between the age of 18 and 35.

18. Pakistan to conduct its first census in 19 years

Pakistan is set to conduct its first national census in 19 years. Over 2,00,000 troops and civilian officials will collect crucial data. The first phase started from March 15 and would conclude on April 15. After a ten-day gap the second phase will start from April 25 and conclude on May 25. An amount of Rs. 18.5 billion had been allocated for the census.



The last population census was conducted in Pakistan was in 1998, which recorded a National Population of approximately 180 million at that time.

19. India's contribution to UN increased to Rs. 244 crores

India's contribution to the United Nations rose 55% to Rs. 244 crores in 2015-16 as compared to the previous financial year. The government had also made voluntary contributions to the tune of Rs. 22 crore to international organisations, including UN agencies, in the last financial year.



India had contributed of Rs. 157 crores in 2014-15. For the period 2016-18, India's Scale of Assessment for the UN's Regular and Peacekeeping budgets has been fixed at 0.737% and 0.1474%, respectively.

20. China, Saudi Arabia consider deals worth about \$65 billion

China and Saudi Arabia signed Memorandums of Understanding and letters of intent potentially worth about 65 billion dollars during Saudi King Salman's visit to Beijing. The agreements involved investment, energy, space and other areas.



The Saudi King, who has overseen the launch of an ambitious economic reform plan since his accession two years ago, is on a month-long Asian tour. Saudi Arabia has sought to boost oil sales to China, the world's second-largest oil market, after losing market share to Russia last year, by working mostly with China's top three state oil firms.

21. US raised benchmark interest rate by 0.25%

The US Federal Reserve has raised its benchmark interest rate by 0.25 percent for only the third time in a decade. The central bank voted to raise its key rate target to a range of 0.75 percent to 1 percent.

The Fed had been expected to raise rates after a robust February jobs report, solid pay gains, rising inflation and a dip in the unemployment rate to 4.7 percent. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve is Janet Yellen.



22. Pakistan successfully test-fired surface-to-sea missile

Pakistan has successfully conducted test of its surface-to-sea missile. The new land based anti-ship missile will increase Pakistan's operational reach to launch long range, anti-ship missiles from land. This missile is equipped with advanced technology and avionics. The name of the missile was not disclosed.

Pakistan had test fired a 2,200 kilometre range indigenously-developed surface to surface nuclear-capable missile Ababeel in January 2017. It had also successfully test-fired a submarine-launched cruise missile Babur-III in January.



23. Singapore, Vietnam inked MOUs in banking and infrastructure

Singapore and Vietnam inked MoUs to improve their business ties. The MoUs include a string of new collaborations in banking, power generation and infrastructure on the third day of an official visit by Singapore Prime Minister Lee HsienLoong.

At a joint news conference with Vietnam's Prime Minister Nguyen XuanPhuc, Mr. Lee said economic ties are strong and the two countries are taking their strategic partnership forward. Both sides have agreed to further discuss liberalising bilateral air services to boost connectivity.



24. World Bank announces 57 billion US\$ for sub-Saharan Africa

World Bank Group's fund International Development Association (IDA), meant for poorest countries funding, announced for \$45 billion bulk financing for Sub-Saharan African countries for the period of next three fiscal years. Bulk financing include \$8 billion in private sector investments and \$4 billion in financing for Reconstruction and Development.



This World Bank Group's funding will be dedicated through special "windows" to finance regional initiatives such as support refugees and their host communities, health, education, and infrastructure projects and help countries during crises.

25. Carrie Lam to become Hong Kong's first female Chief Executive

Mrs. Carrie Lam won the election to become the first woman Chief Executive of Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a special administration region of China, which rules it under the "one country, two systems" principle where it enjoys a degree of autonomy and rights not seen in China.



Mrs. Lam will govern the city for five years from July 1, taking over from Mr. Leung Chun Ying.

26. Sima Kamil becomes the first woman to head a major Pakistani bank

Sima Kamil has been appointed as the new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of United Bank Limited (UBL) in Pakistan. She thus became the first woman in Pakistan to head a leading bank. UBL is the country's third-largest lender.



Sima will replace the outgoing CEO Wajahat Hussain. She is currently deputy CEO and will take charge on the 1st of June, 2017. UBL has branches in over 15 countries. The bank controls assets of more than Rs. 1 trillion.

27. David Beasley appointed to head the World Food Program

The United Nations has appointed David Beasley of the United States as the Executive Director of the UN World Food Program (WFP), which delivers emergency food assistance around the world and works with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience.



Mr. Beasley, who is the Chair of the Centre for Global Strategies, was Governor of the state of South Carolina from 1995 to 1999. He will replace Ertharin Cousin, also a US national, whose five-year term expires on 4th April.

28. UAE Cabinet approved visa on arrival for Indian passport holders with US Visa, Green Card

The UAE Cabinet approved a decision to grant Indian passport holders 'visa on arrival' provided they have a valid US visa or a green card holder.



Citizens of India holding normal passports with a six month or more validity having a valid green card or visa issued by the United States of America shall be granted entry visas to the UAE from all ports for a period of 14 days, subject for a single renewal for the same period upon payment of applicable fees.

29. Amazon makes entry in UAE by acquiring Souq.com

Amazon has made its entry in UAE by acquiring Souq.com, the Middle East's largest online retailer. The agreement brings Amazon into a fast-growing market as it expands into a wide range of services. The value of the deal remained undisclosed, but as per the analysts it is estimated anywhere between 650 million USD to one billion USD.



Souq.com, based in Dubai is the largest e-commerce platform in the Arab world offering more than 400,000 products such as consumer electronics, fashion products, and household goods. The Chief Executive and Co-founder of Souq.com is Ronaldo Mouchawar.

30. World Environmental Education Congress 2017

The 9th World Environmental Education Congress will take place in September 9-15, 2017 in Vancouver, BC, Canada. The World Environmental Education Congress (WEEC) is an international congress addressing education for environment and sustainability. WEEC 2017 is the 9th congress and will feature the theme of Culture/Environment: Weaving New Connections.



The congress is an international meeting point for everyone working with education for environment and sustainable future or who has an interest in the field.

MISCELLANEOUS

- State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest public lender, will resume charging customers who don't maintain Monthly Account Average Balance (MAB) in their savings bank accounts from April 1, 2017.
- The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented the 'Standard' to 125 Helicopter Squadron and 'Colours' to Mechanical Training Institute of Indian Air Force.
- The Union Government has approved outright sale of state-owned SAIL's three special steel units: Alloy Steels Plant (ASP), Salem Steel Plant (SSP) and Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Plant (VISP).
- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has introduced a mobile application named 'Exam Locator' to help students appearing for class 10th and 12th examinations to locate their exam centres.
- Jammu and Kashmir Minister for Food, Civil Supplies, and Consumer Affairs Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali inaugurated the first smart tribal model village 'Habbi' in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat was conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) by the Nagpur-based Maharashtra Animal and Fishery Sciences University for his contribution in the field of veterinary sciences and social work.
- 1253 stations have been identified for development under Adarsh Station Scheme. Out of 1253 stations, 1017 stations have already been developed and remaining railway stations are planned to be developed by 2017-18.
- Korea's Hyundai Engineering Co has signed a deal worth 3 billion euros (USD 3.2 billion) with an Iranian investment fund to invest in a major Iranian oil project.
- The Bandhan Bank Ltd inked an agreement with Avenues India Pvt Ltd, a payment solution provider in India, to provide the merchants with access to the point of sale (POS) and the payment gateway products.
- The U.S. state of Kansas has recognised March 16 as 'Indian-American Appreciation Day' to honour an Indian techie who was killed in a racially-motivated hate crime.
- Russian bank VTB has decided to close its only office in New Delhi, India to cut costs but will continue to work in India.
- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched initiatives to develop Majuli, world biggest river island, as India's first carbon neutral district and as a biodiversity heritage.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) will help Karnataka with low-cost technologies for water conservation and efficient use of water in the drought-affected districts.

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) directed all mobile phone service providers to reverify existing customers, prepaid and post-paid, using their unique Aadhaar identity number and biometric details. Aadhaar-based e-KYC would also be mandatory for customers procuring new SIM card.
- The External Affairs Ministry and the department of posts announced the opening of a Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) at Nellore in Andhra Pradesh. It would be the 86th POPSK in the country.
- National chopper operator Pawan Hans is set to launch its "Delhi Darshan" rides with a 10-minute sortie costing Rs 2,499 per person.
- Shuttlers Purva Barve and Varun Kapur handed India double delight by winning their respective age group sections in the Li Ning-Israel Open 2017 badminton tournament held in Israel.
- Tanushree Pareek became the first woman combat officer to be commissioned in the 51-year history of the BSF, the country's largest border guarding force.
- The two-day 'World Conference on Environment' organized by the National Green Tribunal in New Delhi concluded on 26th March.
- The Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) has been adjudged the 'Best Small Bank for 2016'.
- Vijaya Bank entered an MoU with Piaggio Vehicles for providing financial support for the purchase of vehicles under Small Road Transport Operators (SRTTO) scheme in Bengaluru.
- The Insurance Regulatory and Development authority of India (IRDAI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 20 lakh on ICICI Prudential Life Insurance Company on various charges like free look cancellations not being in line with regulations and delay in processing surrenders/partial withdrawals.
- NTPC has commissioned 55 Mega Watt (MW) of Bhadla Solar Power Project in Rajasthan, with this, the installed capacity of Bhadla Solar Power project has become 260 MW and that of NTPC's solar power projects has become 620 MW.
- Whanganui River, which is viewed by the Maori Iwi tribe in New Zealand as their ancestor, has been legally granted the status of a person.
- Pakistan State Sponsor of Terrorism Act of 2017 (HR 1449) was introduced in the US House of Representatives by Ted Poe, the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Terrorism.
- Thailand celebrates National Elephant Day on 13 March.
- The winner of the All England Open Men's Singles title is Lee Chong Wei.
- In UK, the House of Lords has passed the Brexit bill, which will allow government to trigger Article 50 to pave its way to leave the European Union (EU).
- Indian hockey player S V Sunil honoured with the Asian Player of the Year 2016 by the Asian Hockey Federation.

- The theme of the 2017 World Autism Awareness Day is "Autism and the 2030 Agenda: Inclusion and Neurodiversity".
- The High Court of Uttarakhand ordered a 'complete' ban on mining activities in the State for four months.
- The Law Commission of India submitted its 267th report to the Union Government on Hate Speech.
- India has renewed its agreement on the supply of petroleum with Nepal.
- World Bank signed USD 100 million credit agreement to improve quality of health care services in all 13 districts of Uttarakhand.
- The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the National Skill Development Fund (NSDF) signed a MoU with Sashastra Seema Bal for execution of skill development Programmes.
- Sentinel-2B satellite in the series of Sentinel satellite was launched by European Union.
- The Swachh Shakti 2017 – A Convention of Women Sarpanches was held in Gujarat.
- The 11th edition of North-East Business Summit (NEBS) started in New Delhi.
- Maharashtra Animal and Fishery Sciences University recently conferred honorary degree of Doctor of Science on RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat.
- Donald Tusk was recently re-elected as the President of the European Council.
- Diego Maradona has been named as the new ambassador of the Chinese Super League.
- 50 un-served airports and airstrips of the state governments, Airports Authority of India and Civil enclaves will be revived after the approval by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).
- The anti-missile system that is being deployed by the US in South Korea is THAAD.
- Padma Bhushan awardee, K Srinath Reddy, was appointed as the adviser to the Odisha government for its ongoing public health programmes.
- US President Donald Trump's new executive order spared Iraq from the immigration ban.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently released a special commemorative postage stamp on 100 years of Yogoda Satsang Math, which is located at Dakshineswar, Kolkata, West Bengal.
- The Union Cabinet approved the signing of a MoU on renewable energy with Portugal.
- The former President of the USA, George W Bush, authored the book Portraits of Courage: A Commander in Chief's Tribute to America's Warriors.

- Lipstick Under My Burkha won the Audience Award at the Glasgow Film Festival 2017.
- Reliance Industries won the 7th National Award for Technology Innovation in Petrochemicals and Downstream Plastics Processing Industry in the category of Innovation in Polymeric Materials.

1. MEITY to promote digital transactions in place of NITI Aayog

The Union Government has shifted the responsibility of promoting digital transactions in the country to the Union Ministry of IT and Electronics (MEITY) from NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog.

This decision has been taken in view of the core competence of MEITY to promote digital means for various transactions. The IT Ministry is responsible for encouraging the growth of IT-Enabled Services Industries. NITI Aayog is focussed on monitoring and suggesting ways to improve various government schemes.



2. Government pumped Rs. 1050 crores for sewage treatment in Patna for "Clean Ganga"

To develop adequate sewage treatment infrastructure in Patna and keep the Ganga clean, the Union Government has awarded projects worth 1050 crore rupees under the Namami Gange program.

The amount will be spent for setting up two Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs), renovation of one existing STP, construction of two pumping stations and laying of new underground sewage network of about 400 kilometres. The progress of the construction will be monitored by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).



3. Centre to constitute a task force to give suggestions for the use of biodegradable plastic in packaging

The union Government is planning to constitute a task force to give suggestions for the use of biodegradable plastic in packaging. The task force will also give suggestions on how to bring down the cost of biodegradable material in plastics.

The task force will be headed by Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Secretary Anuj Kumar Bishnoi. Biodegradable plastics get decomposed by the action of living organisms' bacteria.



4. Government inked a Financing Agreement with the World Bank for US\$ 63 Million for the Tejaswini Project

The Union Government has signed a Financing Agreement with World Bank for IDA credit of \$63 million for the "Tejaswini Socio-Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) Project".



This project seeks to empower the adolescent girls with basic life skills and thereafter provide further opportunities to acquire market driven skill training or completion of secondary education, depending on the inclination of the beneficiary. The project will be delivered in 17 Districts of Jharkhand. About 680,000 adolescent girls and young women in the project Districts are expected to benefit from the program. The closing date for the project is 30th June, 2021.

5. Government notified Specified Bank Notes (Cessation of Liabilities) Act, 2017

The Union Government has notified the Specified Bank Notes (Cessation of Liabilities) Act, 2017. The law makes the holding of more than 10 scrapped notes (old Rs500 and Rs1,000 notes) punishable attracting fine of Rs10,000 or five times the cash held, whichever is higher.



In terms of this ordinance, with effect from December 31, 2016, the Specified Bank Notes shall cease to be the liabilities of the Reserve Bank of India and shall cease to have the guarantee of the Central Government.

6. NMCG inked MoU with Rotary India for the Success of Namami Gange

National Mission for Clean Ganga under Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation signed an MoU with Rotary India to make Namami Gange programme a mass movement with the involvement of more and more voluntary organisations.



Rotary India will support clean Ganga mission through their 'WASH in Schools' program in various schools. The MoU shall remain in force for two years. The MoU will pave the way for integrating the theme of Ganga Rejuvenation with Rotary's program of WASH.

7. NGT bans camping activities within 100 meters of Ganga in Uttarakhand

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered a ban on camping activities within 100 metres of the River Ganga. The NGT order came after it lifted the ban on camping activities on the beaches of river Ganga in Uttarakhand conditionally imposed earlier.



The NGT has allowed camping on as many as 25 sites out of a total of 33 beach sites. The remaining sites fall in the 100 metre range. The ban was imposed from Kaudiyala to Rishikesh in Uttarakhand.

8. Government launched nationwide Swachh Shakti Saptah

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation launched Swachh Shakti Saptah, a week-long program of activities across the country to highlight the role of women in Swachh Bharat Mission and to recognize their leadership. Over 1000 Women Swachhta Champions from grassroots in Haryana attended the event. Deputy Commissioners of 11 ODF districts of Haryana were honoured on the occasion.



Swachh Shakti Saptah culminated with a mega-event in Gujarat named Swachh Shakti 2017 where Indian Prime Minister addressed 6000 women sarpanches and honoured them for their contribution to Swachh Bharat.

9. Government has added over 4000 medical PG seats for 2017-18

The Government of India approved over 4,000 PG medical seats in various medical colleges and hospitals for the academic session 2017-18, taking the total toll to 35,117, to strengthen tertiary care and improve the medical education in the country.



To increase the PG seats in clinical subjects, the Government had decided to amend the teacher student ratio in clinical subjects in government medical colleges. Announcement made in budget of adding 5000 PG medical seats, will also be achieved.

10. WCD proposed to set up Women’s Entrepreneurship Council

The Ministry of Women and Child Development to present proposal in Cabinet for setting up of a Women’s Entrepreneurship Council, to solve problems faced by business women. The Council, modelled on the lines of chambers of commerce, will seek to resolve issues through policy changes.



An App named – ‘Shouting’ will be launched to curb harassment to women, that would allow the victim to reach out to 10 people near a woman to keep the perpetrators at bay before the arrival of the police.

11. 100 districts in India declared Open Defecation Free

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation announced that the number of ODF (Open Defecation Free) districts in the country has crossed 100. Over 1.7 lakh villages have become ODF.



The mission launched by PM Narendra Modi, with its urban and rural component handled by the respective ministries, aims to make the country ODF by 2019. Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh became the first states to declare their urban areas as Open Defecation Free (ODF).

12. Government approved Rs. 756 crores scheme to treat cataract patients

The Union Government has approved a scheme of Rs. 756 crores for the treatment of 786 lakh cataract patients in the next 5 years. The Government aims to free India from cataract by 2022.



Under this scheme, the beneficiary would receive Rs. 2,000 as financial assistance for each operation, including the cost of lenses. The Government will also develop a mobile application to bring the government, private doctors, clinics and NGOs together for monitoring.

13. GST Council approved the CGST Bill and IGST Bill

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council has approved the draft CGST Bill and the draft IGST Bill as vetted by the Union Law Ministry.

Some of the main features of the two Bills are:

- A State-wise single registration for a taxpayer for filing returns, paying taxes and to fulfil other compliance requirements.
- A taxpayer should file one single return state-wise to report all his supplies, whether made within or outside the State or exported out of the country and pay the applicable taxes on them.



14. Centre launched a survey on Gangetic dolphins

The Union Government has launched a survey in the river Ganga to determine the population of aquatic life, including that of the endangered Gangetic dolphin. It is a first ever across-the-river survey.

The survey is being conducted through Wildlife Institute of India (WII), under the Namami Gange programme. The data fetched through the survey will enable the Centre to take suitable measures to improve the quality of the river water.



15. WCCB convened Operation Thunderbird & Operation Save Kurma to Combat Wildlife Crime

The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) under the Ministry of Environment and Forests coordinated nationwide 'Operation Thunder Bird' and 'Operation Save Kurma' in India to combat illegal trade of wildlife animals.

Operation Thunderbird is the code-name for INTERPOL's multi-national and multi-species enforcement operation. A total of 2, 524 Live species of scheduled animals, 19.2 kg of elephant ivory, 1 tiger skin, 9 carcasses of wild animals, 1 organ pipe coral, 1 jar snake venom, 8 leopard skins and 1 Indian Mujtac skin was seized. 'Operation Save Kurma' is a turtle specific operation where over 15,000 live turtles were seized.



16. India to supply additional 60 MW power to Bangladesh

Tripura will supply an additional 60 MW of electricity to Bangladesh over and above the 100 MW of power the state is supplying to it. India is already supplying 500 MW of power from West Bengal to Bangladesh.

A 47 kilometre double circuit transmission line was erected, linking the power grid at Surjyamaninagar in western Tripura to the Comilla power grid in eastern Bangladesh, to facilitate the power supply.



17. To support women founded start-ups, Facebook launches 'SheLeadsTech'

Facebook has launched a new initiative 'SheLeadsTech' for women entrepreneurs in India to encourage more women founders, who wish to have their own start up or business.

As a part of this program, Facebook will nurture and mentor start-ups founded or co-founded by women. Once an application for the programme is made online and gets approved, Facebook will provide them access to FBStartup, which will help in gaining technical support, free credits to tools and training on Facebook Developer Tools, etc.



18. CCEA approved revised Cost Estimate-I of 400 Mega Watt Koteshwar Hydro Electric Project in Uttarakhand

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, CCEA approved the Revised Cost Estimate-I of 400 Mega Watt Koteshwar Hydro Electric Project in Uttarakhand at an estimated completion cost of over 2,717 crore rupees. The project is being implemented by Tehri Hydro Development Corporation India Limited.

In addition to the additional generating capacity of 400 Mega Watt of peaking power it will regulate releases from Tehri Reservoir for irrigation and drinking water supply. The Project has already been commissioned fully in March, 2012.



19. Cabinet Approves MoU between India and the UAE in Energy Efficiency Services

The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the National Productivity Council, an autonomous body under the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, and Al Etihad Energy Services UAE, to provide various services in the field of energy management and conservation.

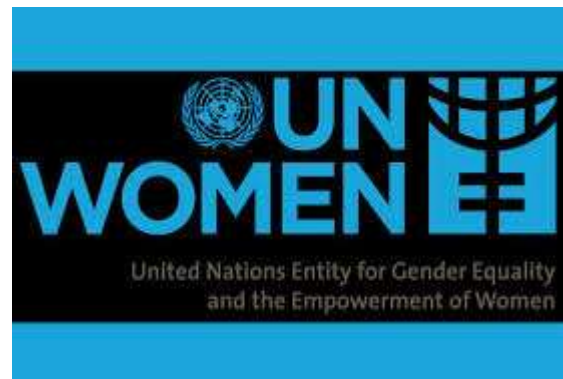


Under the MoU, the NPC will provide the following services:

- Energy Assessment Services
- Training & Certification of Energy Auditors
- Demand Side Management.

20. Cabinet approves an MoU between India and the UN-Women

Union Cabinet has approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Nations Entity of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).



The proposal seeks to provide technical support to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in strengthening capacities of governance institutions including Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to better leverage opportunities created for gender equality through legislation, policies and programmes. Activities under this MoU will be implemented at the district and sub-district level in six States i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

21. Cabinet approves signing of Agreement on Oil Storage and Management between ISPRL and ADNOC of UAE

The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for signing of the Definitive Agreement on Oil Storage and Management between Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) and Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) of UAE. As per the Agreement, the ADNOC will fill up 0.81 MMT or 5,860,000 million barrels of crude oil at ISPRL storage facility at Mangalore, Karnataka.



Out of the crude stored, some part will be used for commercial purpose of ADNOC, while a major part will be purely for strategic purposes. The signing of the Agreement will augment India's energy security.

22. Cabinet approves the resolution of Food Cash Credit to Punjab for food procurement operations

The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post facto approval for settlement of Legacy Food Cash Credit Accounts (up to crop season 2014-15) of Punjab Government for food procurement operations.



Early settlement of legacy issues will help the banks in disbursement of food credit in the larger interest of numerous farmers of the State and uninterrupted continuity in food procurement operations to ensure food security for the nation. Settlement of outstanding Cash Credit Limits (CCL) account by availing term loan by the Punjab Government would entail savings in terms of interest payment.

23. Cabinet approved an (MoU) on Renewable Energy between India and Portugal

The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Renewable Energy between India and Portugal.

The MoU will help in strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The MoU envisages constitution of a Joint Working Group which can co-opt other members from Scientific Institutions, Research Centres, Universities, or any other entity, as and when considered essential.



24. Cabinet approved an MoU between India and Portugal on cooperation in the field of IT&E

The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Portugal on cooperation in the field of IT&E. The MoU was signed on January 6, 2017 in New Delhi.

The MoU will help in developing a long term and sustainable cooperation based on equality and mutual interest in the areas of IT&E in line with each country's laws and regulations.



25. Cabinet approved the development of 50 unserved and under-served Air Strips

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal for revival of 50 unserved/under-served airports/airstrips of the State Governments, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Civil enclaves in three financial years starting from 2017-18.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be Rs. 4500 crore. 15 airports/airstrips each would be revived during 2017-18 and 2018-19 each while 20 airports/airstrips would be revived during 2019-20. As an outcome of the approval, small cities/towns shall be connected on commencement of operation of flights to under-served/un-served airports.



26. The IBBI recognises two Insolvency Professional Entities (IPEs)

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has recently recognized two Insolvency Professional Entities (IPEs) - IRR Insolvency Professionals Private Limited; and AAA Insolvency Professionals LLP.

An IPE is jointly and severally liable for all acts or omissions of its partners or directors as IPs committed during such partnership or directorship.

A limited liability partnership, a registered partnership firm or a company may be recognized by the IBBI as an IPE if most the partners of the limited liability partnership or registered partnership firm are registered as insolvency professionals (IPs); or most the whole-time directors of the company are registered as insolvency professionals.



27. PM Modi dedicated a Petrochemical complex of ONGC to the nation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated ONGC Petro additions Ltd (OPaL) plant to the Nation at a function in Bharuch, Gujarat.

The OPaL is a joint venture company promoted by ONGC, GAIL and GSPC. It is set up with an investment of Rs. 30,000 Crore and the production capacity is 14 Lakh Tonnes of polymers and 5 Lakh tonnes of chemicals per annum. It is expected to generate further investment of Rs. 40,000 crore and employment to 20,000 people in downstream.



28. PM Modi released a special postage stamp on 100 years of Yogoda Satsang Math

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a postage stamp to commemorate 100 years of Yogoda Satsanga Society of India at a function in New Delhi. Yogoda Satsang Society of India was founded by Paramahansa Yogananda in 1917.

Paramahansa Yogananda is considered as one of the preeminent spiritual figures of modern times. He introduced millions of westerners to the teachings of meditation and Kriya Yoga through his book, Autobiography of a Yogi.



29. India to modernise 400 railway stations with the help of private enterprises

India is in the process of modernizing at least 400 of its railway station with the help of private enterprise over the next few years and will focus on safety and use of clean energy to develop the railway network in India.

The Government is planning to spend around 142 billion US Dollar over the next 5 years in modernization and improving the safety of the Indian Rails.



The first private sector-driven redevelopment plan at Habibganj (near Bhopal) is expected to be flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi shortly, paving the way for seeking participation for the other 22 projects, most of them British-era facilities.

30. Trade Mark Rules 2017 come into effect

The Trade Mark Rules, 2017 have come into effect from 7th March which will replace the erstwhile Trade Mark Rules 2002 and streamline and simplify the processing of Trade Mark applications.

In the revamped rules number of Trade Mark forms have been reduced from 74 to eight. The fee for online filing has been kept at 10% lower than that for physical filing to promote e-filing of trade mark applications. The fees for Individuals, Start-ups and Small Enterprises have been reduced to 4,500 rupees for e-filing of trade mark applications.



31. CBDT signed a Bilateral APA with the subsidiary of a Japanese Company

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has entered a bilateral Advance Pricing Agreement (APA) with rollback provision with a Japanese subsidiary. The total number of APAs entered by the CBDT has reached 141 with this signing.

With this signing, the total number of bilateral APAs with Japanese subsidiaries has reached five, all with rollback provisions. All these five bilateral APAs are with Japanese trading companies (Sogo Soshas). The bilateral signing of APAs in this sector provides tax certainty up to nine years in each of these cases.



32. Union Cabinet Approved Accession to Global Customs Convention

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for India's accession to the Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets (TIR Convention) and necessary procedures for ratification. It will help in faster movement of export goods.

The Customs Convention on International Transport of Goods under cover of TIR Carnets, 1975, is an international transit system under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to facilitate the movement of goods within and amongst the parties to the convention. At present, there are 70 members to the convention.



33. Women Empowerment schemes of Narendra Modi government

Following are the list of Women Empowerment Schemes launched by the Modi Government.

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme
- One Stop Centre Scheme
- Women Helpline Scheme
- UJJAWALA: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Resue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Working Women Hostel
- Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers
- Ministry approves new projects under Ujjawala Scheme and continues existing projects
- SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
- Revision under IGMSY in Accordance with National Food Security Act, 2013 in XIIth Plan
- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP)
- NARI SHAKTI PURASKAR
- Awardees of Stree Shakti Puruskar, 2014 & Awardees of Nari Shakti Puruskar



- Awardees of Rajya Mahila Samman & Zila Mahila Samman
- Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY) - A Conditional Maternity Benefit Scheme
- Mahila police Volunteers
- Mahila E-Haat

34. Government launched web portal for obtaining CRZ clearances

The Union Government launched the web portal for obtaining Coastal Regulation Zone clearances. The objective of the web portal includes – enhancing efficiency, transparency and accountability in the process of CRZ clearances.

The Portal is a web-based system for obtaining clearances required from the Ministry under the “Coastal Regulation Zone” (CRZ) by the Project proponents. The Portal is a very user-friendly initiative, which enables submission of applications for CRZ clearance in a single-window interface and facilitates quick flow of information related to CRZ clearances.



35. Government announces a new licensing policy for hydrocarbon exploration

The Union Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has announced new Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) for oil and gas exploration. The policy offers single license to explore conventional and unconventional oil and gas resources, as the country seeks to propel investment in the energy sector.

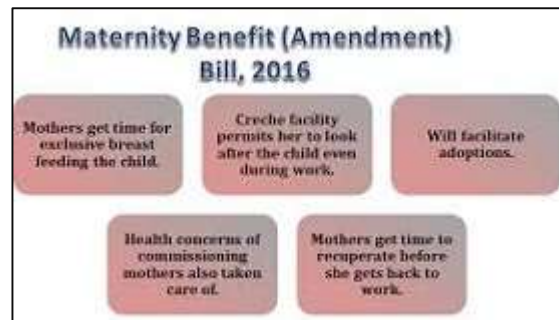
It has been named as “Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy” or HELP. It also gives the freedom to the investors in pricing and marketing for crude oil and natural gas.



36. Parliament passed Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016

The Parliament passed the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 with Lok Sabha. The bill seeks to enhance paid maternity leave for women engaged in organised sector from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children.

It will be applicable to mines, factories and all establishments employing 10 or more people. Minister of Labour and Employment Bandaru Dattatreya announced that the amendment has job, wages and social security aspects as its integral parts. Violation of the provisions of the amendment bill would attract 3 to 6 months of imprisonment and a penalty of up to Rs 5000.



37. India and Belgium inked protocol amending India-Belgium DTAA

India and Belgium signed a Protocol amending the existing agreement and protocol between the two countries for avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income. The Protocol will broaden the scope of the existing framework of exchange of tax related information.



The Protocol was signed by Sushil Chandra, Chairman Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on behalf of India and Mr. Jan Luykx, Ambassador of Belgium to India, on behalf of Belgium.

38. Rajya Sabha passed the Enemy Property Bill

The Rajya Sabha passed the Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016.

Highlights of the Bill:

- The Bill amends the Enemy Property Act, 1968, to vest all rights, titles and interests over enemy property in the Custodian
- The Bill declares transfer of enemy property by the enemy, conducted under the Act, to be void. This applies retrospectively to transfers that have occurred before or after 1968.
- The Bill prohibits civil courts and other authorities from entertaining disputes related to enemy property.



39. International Yoga Fest ends in New Delhi

The International Yoga Fest concluded on an enthusiastic note in New Delhi. The fest was a curtain raiser for this year's International Day of Yoga celebrations.

The three day event was organised by Ministry of AYUSH, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) in association with Indian Yoga Association (IYA) and New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) to sensitize the masses regarding celebration of International Day of Yoga held every year.



40. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated country's largest waste-to-power plant

Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated 24 Mega Watt, the country's largest, waste-to-power plant at Narela-Bawana in New Delhi. The plant was launched by the North Delhi Municipal Corporation.

The plant would dispose of 1,300 Metric Tonne waste daily and produce compost and energy. The project will use 2,000 metric tonnes of waste every day to generate 24 megawatt of energy. The project is built at a cost of Rs 650 crore and spread across around 100 acres.



41. Centre to launch a pilot project on ornamental fisheries

The Union government will launch a pilot scheme for the development of ornamental fisheries with a total outlay of Rs. 61.89 crore. The project will focus mainly on creating an enabling environment for a sustainable and holistic development of Ornamental Fisheries for the socio-economic development of the people involved in this activity as well as for exports.

A total of 8 potential States have been identified, viz., Assam, West Bengal, Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It shall be implemented by the National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) through the Fisheries Departments of States/UTs.



42. Government issued draft security rules on e-wallet payments

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has released set of draft guidelines for Information Technology (Security of Prepaid Payment Instruments) Rules 2017 for Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPI) companies. The draft was released for public suggestions until March 20.



The draft rules underline security parameters that digital wallet companies, such as Paytm, FreeCharge and Mobikwik, must follow. They also stipulate standards for data protection and customer grievance redressal.

43. President inaugurate the 12th CII-Exim bank conclave on India Africa Project Partnership

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the 12th CII-EXIM Bank Conclave on India Africa Project Partnership (March 9, 2017) in New Delhi.



The two-day Conclave was organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with the EXIM Bank of India with the support of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India. Over 450 international delegates from over 37 African countries participated in the conclave.

44. Mission Fingerling with an expenditure of Rs. 52000 lakhs to achieve Blue Revolution

The Government of India has envisaged a program named 'Blue Revolution' to unlock the country's latent potential and possibilities in the fisheries sector through an integrated approach.



This program with a total expenditure of about Rs. 52000 lakh will facilitate the establishment of hatcheries and Fingerling rearing pond to ensure the fish production of 426 crores fish fingerling, 25.50 crores Post Larvae of shrimp and crab in the country.

45. Lok Sabha Passes the Admiralty Bill, 2016

The Admiralty (Jurisdiction and Settlement of Maritime Claims) Bill, 2016 was passed by the Lok Sabha. The Bill aims to establish a legal framework to consolidate the existing laws relating to admiralty jurisdiction of courts, admiralty proceedings on maritime claims, arrest of vessels and related issues. It also aims to replace archaic laws which are hindering efficient governance.



The Bill confers admiralty jurisdiction on High Courts located in coastal states of India and this jurisdiction extends up to territorial waters.

46. Railways and UNEP signed Letters of Intent (LOI) on Environment Initiatives

The Ministry of Railways signed a LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to formalise the cooperation in environmental conservation.

The focussed areas identified for joint activities would be to –

- Collaborate in Formulating Specific Roadmap for achieving 20% reduction in Water consumption at Railway establishments.
- Collaborate in the development of a Draft action plan for establishing waste management centres at major stations on Indian Railways.
- Collaborate in the development of a Draft action plan for Indian Railways on sustainable public procurement for green technology.



47. India launched the second stage of HCFCs phase out plan

India has launched the second stage of its plan to phase out Hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) by 2030 as required under the Montreal Protocol. India has already successfully implemented HPMP stage-I.

Under HPMP-II, India has secured \$44.1 million for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol for phasing out 8,190 metric tonnes or 769.49 ODP (Ozone Depleting Potential) tonne of HCFC consumption between 2017 to 2023 to meet the compliance targets under Montreal Protocol for 2020.



48. Inter-state River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2017 introduced in Lok Sabha

Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Sushri Uma Bharti introduced Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2017 in Lok Sabha.

The Bill proposes a Single Standing Tribunal (with multiple benches) instead of existing multiple tribunals, which shall consist of one Chairperson, one Vice-Chairperson and not more than six other Members. The total period for adjudication of dispute has been fixed at maximum of four and half years. The decision of the Tribunal shall be final and binding with no requirement of publication in the official Gazette.



49. Union Government established Banana Research Centre at Vaishali in Bihar

The Union Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare Minister Shri Radha Mohan Singh laid the foundation stone of the Banana Research Centre at Gorole, Vaishali in Bihar.

The centre will work in the areas of finding reasons of less production in banana, enhancement in acreage for cultivation, suitable utilization of the various parts of the plants, different products, marketing and value addition. India holds number one position in the world in banana production. Maharashtra is the largest producer.



50. CCEA approved proposal for opening of 50 new Kendriya Vidyalayas

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, CCEA has approved the proposal for opening of 50 new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) under Civil and Defence Sector in the country. The project will cost Rs 1160 crore. The new KVs will be opened from class 1st to 5th for which 650 regular teaching and non-teaching posts will be created.



The new KVs will address the educational needs of eligible students with high quality standards and will play a role of pace-setting educational institutions in the districts concerned.

51. Nirmala Sitharaman launched the Trade Infrastructure for Export Scheme

Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched the Trade Infrastructure for Export Scheme (TIES) focused on addressing the needs of the exporters.



The Central Government funding will be in the form of grant-in-aid, normally not more than the equity being put in by the implementing agency or 50% of the total equity in the project. (In case of projects located in North Eastern States and Himalayan States including J&K, this grant can be up to 80% of the total equity). The grant in aid shall, normally, be subject to a ceiling of Rs 20 Cr for each infrastructure project.

52. Cabinet apprised of MoUs for cooperation in Youth and Sports Matters with Indonesia and the Kyrgyz Republic

The Union Cabinet has been apprised of the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) signed between India and Indonesia for cooperation in youth and sports matters. While with the Kyrgyz Republic, the MOU is for cooperation in the field of youth development.

The MoUs envisage organizing Youth Exchange Programmes with Indonesia and The Kyrgyz Republic, and cooperation in other youth and sports related matters. Youth exchange and other programs will help in developing international perspective among the youth and expanding their knowledge and expertise.



53. Cabinet approves of an MoU between India and Bangladesh on Aids to Navigation (AtoNs)

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Aids to Navigation (AtoNs) between the Directorate General of Lighthouses & Lightships (DGLL), Ministry of Shipping, Government of India and the Department of Shipping, Government of Bangladesh.

The MoU envisages cooperation between Bangladesh and India:

- To extend advice on lighthouses and beacons;
- To extend advice on Vessel Traffic Service and chain of Automatic Identification System (AIS);
- To impart training as per International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) training module.



54. MoU between LBSNAA, Mussoorie and NIPAM of Namibia for capacity building

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie and Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM), Namibia in the field of capacity building of public officials of Namibia and other training activities for the benefit of both the institutes.



The MOU will help the Academy to disseminate some of its experience in running a training institution for higher civil services in the country to NIPAM.

55. Special assistance measure for Andhra Pradesh by way EAPs

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the Special assistance measure for Andhra Pradesh by way of special dispensation in funding of Externally Aided Projects (EAPs) and funding of irrigation component of Polavaram project.



The Central Government, after the enactment of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act 2014, has provided central assistance of Rs. 10,461.04 crores to the state of Andhra Pradesh which includes Rs.4403 crore released during 2014-15, Rs.2000 crore released during 2015-16 and Rs. 4058.04 in released in 2016-17.

56. Cabinet approves revised MoU between India and Bangladesh for establishing Border Haats

The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the Revised Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Mode of Operation (MoO) between India and Bangladesh for establishing Border Haats on India-Bangladesh Border.



Currently four Border Haats are operational, two each in Meghalaya and Tripura. The Revised MoU and Mode of Operation will provide a legal framework for establishment and operationalization of additional Border Haats. The Border Haats aim at promoting the well-being of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders of two countries, by promoting traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets.

57. Cabinet approved sale of 24% equity holding in Lubrizol India Private Limited

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its in-principle approval to permit Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Indian Oil) to sell its 24% equity in one of its Joint Venture Companies, M/s. Lubrizol India Private Limited (LIPL) to Lubrizol Corporation, USA (LC), the other Joint Venture Partner.



The sale will enable IOC to have long term association with its joint venture partner and thus LIPL to have access to the latest global additive technologies developed by Lubrizol Corporation, USA.

58. Cabinet approved Policy for Early Monetization of Coal Bed Methane Gas Marketing

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval for marketing and pricing freedom to the Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Contractors to sell the CBM at Arm's Length Price in the domestic market.



While discovering the market price for Arms-Length Sales, the Contractor must ensure a fully transparent and competitive process for sale of CBM with the objective that the best possible price is realized for the gas without any restrictive commercial practices.

59. Fund Allocated under Nai Manzil scheme

The Ministry of Minority Affairs has targeted to cover 70 thousand minority school drop outs under the Nai Manzil scheme during 2016-17 with a budget allocation of Rs. 120 crore.

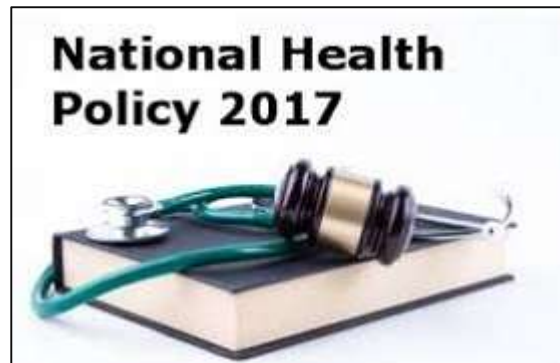


The Nai Manzil scheme is an educational and livelihood initiative supported by the World Bank, which can be availed of by the school drop-outs belonging to six notified minority communities namely, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains including Muslim students studying in madrasas. The scheme has been rolled from the current financial year i.e. during 2016-17 only.

60. Cabinet approved National Health Policy 2017

The Union cabinet approved the National Health Policy 2017. NHP 2017 provides the much-needed policy framework for achieving universal health coverage and delivering quality health care services to all at an affordable cost.

It seeks to strengthen the health surveillance system and establish registries for diseases of public health importance, by 2020. It also seeks to align other policies for medical devices and equipment with public health goals.



61. Rs. 31733 crore collected as Construction Workers' Welfare Cess up to Dec 31, 2016

A sum of Rs. 31,733 crores have been collected as Construction Workers' Welfare Cess by the States and Union Territories up to 31st December 2016 at the rate of one per cent of the cost of construction. Out of the collected amount, a total of 6872.51 crore rupees has been spent.

The Building and Other Construction Workers' Welfare Cess Act provides for levy and collection of cess at a rate not exceeding two per cent but not less than one per cent of the cost of construction as the Central Government may notify. The cess is collected by the state governments and utilized for the welfare of the building and other construction workers.



62. Indian Railways enters an agreement with an Australian Research Centre

Indian Railways has entered an agreement with a Railway research centre in Australia to support future research and technology development related to critical infrastructure in India.

The agreement was signed between representatives from Monash University Institute of Railway Technology (IRT) and Indian Ministry of Railways corporation DFCCIL (Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Limited). They will provide guidance on the establishment of a new applied research and development institute in India known as SRESTHA (Special Railway Establishment for Strategic Technology & Holistic Advancement).



63. World Bank approves funding for India's ambitious National Hydrology Project

The World Bank Board approved the US\$175 million loan to India for the National Hydrology Project which will strengthen the capacity of institutions to assess the water situation in their regions and reduce their vulnerability to recurring flood and droughts, saving hundreds of lives and livelihoods.

The entire project, worth over Rs. 3679 crores, will be implemented by 2023-24. The World Bank will provide financial assistance for nearly 50% of its total cost.



64. Social Security Agreement between India and Brazil

India and Brazil have signed a social security agreement. As per the agreed text, detached workers of the two countries are exempted from making social security contributions in either countries so long as they were making such contributions in their respective countries. The SSA between India and Brazil once in force by early 2018 will also be the first such agreement between the BRICS countries.



India has signed and operationalized Social Security Agreements (SSAs) with 18 countries - Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and South Korea.

65. India joins WHO call to end TB by 2030 in South East Asian

India joined WHO and signed a 'call for action' against tuberculosis and pledged to scale up measures to end the disease by 2030. The global targets seek to reduce TB mortality by 90 per cent and incidence by 80 per cent by 2030.



Around 2.8 million new TB cases are reported in India annually and nearly half a million die due to the disease. The South East Asian Region bear half of the global tuberculosis burden. In 2015, TB caused nearly 8,00,000 deaths in the region, while an estimated 4.74 million new cases were reported.

66. First fully India-made train flagged off from the Dadar station

The first made-in-India rake, Medha, was flagged off from Dadar to Borivali, at Lokmanya Tilak Terminus.



The 12-coach train has been manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai. The rake can run at a speed of 110 kmph. It has a capacity of 6,050 passengers and the number of seats is 1,168.

There is a GPS-based information system to indicate the stations.

67. Solar Energy Scheme for Small Power Loom Units

The Union Government has approved a new scheme to provide financial assistance/capital subsidy to small power loom units, for installation of Solar Photo Voltaic (SPV) plant, to alleviate the problem of power cut/ shortage faced by decentralized power loom units in the country. The Scheme will come into force with effect from 01.04.2017.



Under this Solar Energy Scheme, the plants have two options:

- On-Grid Solar Power Plant where power cut/shortage is negligible and power tariff is high
- Off-Grid Solar Power Plant in areas where there is power shortage & on-grid power is not continuously available.

68. ICAR, ICRISAT signed collaborative agreement for crop improvement

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) signed an agreement of collaboration in the areas of climate smart crops, smart food and digitalization of breeding database.



The 3-year work plan from 2016-18 facilitates the transfer of agricultural technologies between the two institutes. The partnership includes funding to research grain legumes and dryland cereals and support for the Smart Food initiative to deliver sustainable and nutritionally rich products to consumers.

69. IIT-Madras signed MoU with Tanstia-FNF Service

IIT-Madras has signed a MoU with small scale industry body Tanstia-FNF Service Centre for technology transfer of water treatment analysis kits designed to treat drinking water mainly in rural areas.



The research at IIT-Madras for developing the filter and the kit was funded by International Development Research Centre, Canada. The water filter technology removes turbidity, organic matter, colour, odour, and most bacteriological contamination can be removed.

70. Rajya Sabha passed the HIV, AIDS (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014 by a Voice Vote

The Rajya Sabha passed the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014 by voice vote. The bill provides for the prevention and control of the spread of HIV Syndrome and for the protection of human rights of persons affected by the Virus.



The bill gives legislative backing to the people living with HIV and prohibits the feeling of hatred.

71. Government collected Rs. 3,91,529 crores as advance tax till 16th of March 2017

The Government has collected Rs. 3,91,529 crores as advance tax till 16th of March during the current fiscal compared to Rs. 3,52,899 crore in the corresponding period last year.

The advance tax received post demonetization has increased. In the previous financial year, an amount of Rs. 7420 crore was collected from direct taxes after refunds.

In the current financial year, Rs. 7,65,525 crore have been collected as net direct taxes up to 16th of this month.



72. Around 1,18,000 affordable houses for urban poor approved under the PMAY

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation approved construction of nearly 1,18,000 affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor in six States under the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana, PMAY (Urban). It will cost 5773 crore rupees for which central assistance of 1816 crore has been approved.

The six states include Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha. So far more than 17,60,000 affordable houses being constructed under the PMAY (Urban) with a total investment of 96,000 crore rupees for which central assistance of nearly 27,700 crore rupees has been approved.



73. India and Ethiopia agreed to strengthen cooperation in communication

India and Ethiopia have agreed to strengthen the cooperation in critical areas related to communication and outreach. The cooperation will be worked out through a policy and institutional framework in the various domains.



India would provide full support to Ethiopia for capacity building in critical subjects related to communication and journalism through the platform of Indian Institute of Mass Communication. The two countries also discussed the possibility of Student Exchange programmes between educational institutions of both the countries.

74. Cabinet approved amendment to 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009'

The Union Cabinet has approved the amendment to Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.



This will ensure that all teachers, in position as on 31st March, 2015, acquire the minimum qualifications prescribed by the academic authority to extend the period for such training for four years up to 31st March, 2019. This would also ensure that all Teachers would attain minimum qualifications as considered necessary to maintain the standard of teaching quality.

75. Lok Sabha passed Finance Bill, 2017

The Lok Sabha has passed the Finance Bill, 2017. In the bill the Government has capped cash transactions at Rs 2 lakh instead of Rs. 3 lakh. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had moved 40 amendments to the bill.



Income tax payers would also have to declare their Aadhaar number in all tax returns filed from 1st of July. They would also have to link the Aadhaar number with the PAN before the July deadline.

76. Suresh Prabhu released a New Water Management Policy in the Indian Railways

The Railways Minister Suresh Prabhu released New Water Management Policy in Indian Railways at New Delhi. Under the new water policy, water audits, restoration of water bodies and recycling of water will be ensured. Environment Directorate has also been set up in the Railway Board.



The Railways also launched VIKALP scheme in which the passengers will be provided confirmed reservation in alternate trains without giving extra fare or any refund provided for the difference of fare.

77. Government sets a target to triple the Nuclear Power Generation by 2024

The Government has set a target to triple nuclear power generation by 2024. The nuclear power generation capacity in the country is expected to reach nearly 15,000 Mega Watt by 2024 as the government has sped up setting up new plants. India's nuclear power generation capacity was 4,780 MW in 2014.



The government has allowed the Nuclear Power Corporation of India to go for setting up of joint venture nuclear plants along with Public Sector Undertakings.

78. CCEA approved MSP for Copra to Rs. 6500 per quintal for 2017 season

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs-CCEA, has approved MSP for fair average quality of Milling Copra to 6500 rupees per quintal for 2017 season from 5950 rupees per quintal. MSP for FAQ of Ball Copra has been increased to 6785 rupees per quintal from 6240 rupees per quintal. The higher price will step up investment in coconut cultivation and thereby production and productivity in the country.



The CCEA also approved fresh estimates of project Deepening and Widening of Mumbai Harbour Channel and Jawahar Lal Nehru Port Channel Phase-II. The estimated cost would be 2029 crore rupees.

79. Cabinet approves Amendment in the Customs and Excise Act

The Union Cabinet has approved the following proposals:

- Amendment to the Customs Act, 1962;
- Amendments to the Customs Tariff Act, 1975;
- Amendment to the Central Excise Act, 1944;
- Repeal of the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985; and
- Amendment or repeal of the provisions relating to Acts under which cesses are levied.



80. Cabinet approved a proposal to establish a Fund of Fund for Start-ups (FFS)

The Union Cabinet has approved the following proposals regarding the Fund of Funds of Start-ups (FFS) which was established in June, last year with a corpus of Rs. 1,000 crores.

The Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs) supported by FFS shall invest at least twice the amount of contribution received from FFS in Start-ups. The operating expenses for carrying out due diligence, legal and technical appraisal, convening meeting of Venture Capital Investment Committee, etc. would be met out of the FFS to the extent of 0.50% of the commitments made to AIFs and outstanding. This will be debited to the fund at the beginning of each half year; i.e. April 1 and October 1.



81. Cabinet approves a proposal for Amendments to the NABARD Act, 1981

The Union Cabinet has approved the following proposals:

- Amendments to National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act, 1981 which include provisions that enable Central Government to increase the authorized capital of NABARD from Rs. 5,000 crore to Rs. 30,000 crore and to increase it beyond Rs. 30,000 crore in consultation with RBI, as deemed necessary from time to time.
- Transfer of 0.4 per cent. equity of RBI in NABARD amounting to Rs. 20 crores to the Government of India.



82. Cabinet approves an MoU between India and the USA on cooperation in the field of Cyber Security

The Union Cabinet has been apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and the US Homeland Security Department on cooperation in the field of Cyber Security.



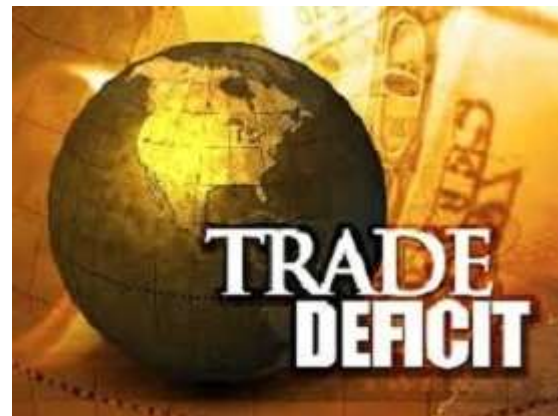
The MoU intends to promote closer co-operation and exchange of information pertaining to the Cyber Security in accordance with the relevant laws, rules and regulations and based on equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit.

83. India’s overall Trade Deficit

The value of India’s overall trade deficit for the last three years and the current year is as follows:

(in US\$ Billions)

Years	Exports	Imports	Trade Balance	% Growth
2013-14	466.22	528.97	-62.74	--
2014-15	468.45	529.61	-61.17	-2.52
2015-16	416.60	465.64	-49.04	-19.82
2015-16 (Apr-Jan)	348.44	396.90	-48.46	--
2016-17 (Apr-Jan)*	355.22	389.29	-34.07	-29.68



84. Inclusion of Cities in World Heritage List

Five Indian cities have been included in the Tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, namely, Historic City of Ahmadabad, Delhi – A Heritage City, Jaipur City, Rajasthan, Ekamra Kshetra – The Temple City, Bhubaneswar and The Victorian & Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai.

All the required information for Tentative list proposals has already been submitted to UNESCO World Heritage Centre.



85. Credit Linked Interest Subsidy scheme for tax paying Middle Classes made effective from January 1, 2017

The Middle-Income Groups (MIG) with annual incomes of above Rs. 6.00 lakhs and up to Rs. 18.00 lakhs per year are eligible for interest subsidy on housing loans under the new CLSS (MIG). Those who have been sanctioned housing loans and whose applications are under consideration since January first this year are also eligible for interest subsidy.



The Prime Minister has announced interest subsidy of 4% on housing loans of up to Rs. 9.00 lakhs of those with an income of Rs. 12.00 lakh per year and of 3% on housing loans of up to Rs. 12.00 lakh of those earning Rs. 18.00 lakh per year.

86. Deepening and Widening of Mumbai Harbour Channel and JN Port Channel (Phase-II)

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved fresh estimates of the project Deepening and Widening of Mumbai Harbour Channel and JN Port Channel (Phase-II). The cost of the project will be Rs.2029 crore excluding the Service Tax. The entire project cost will be funded through internal resources of JN Port Trust (JNPT) with market borrowing, if necessary.



The project includes the existing channel to be widened from presently 370 m to 450 m for straight reach, channel to be extended from existing 33.5 Kms to 35.5 Kms.

87. India and ADB Sign \$350 Million Loan for upgrading roads in Madhya Pradesh

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India signed a \$350 million loan for improving about 1,500 kilometers of major district roads in Madhya Pradesh in line with the State's Road Development Plan. Madhya Pradesh will provide counterpart support of \$150 million.



The Project will involve upgrading roads with concrete pavements, strengthening culverts and bridges, and maintaining the improved road assets for a period of five years after construction, on a performance based payment format.

88. Centre approved assistance of about Rs. 5021 crore to states affected by natural disasters

The Union Government approved assistance of about Rs. 5021 crores to ten states affected by flood, drought and other natural disasters. Around Rs. 4979 crores were approved from the National Disaster Response Fund and over Rs. 40 crores from the National Rural Drinking Water Program.

These states are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Manipur, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.



89. Centralised Digital Online Platform VAHAN and SARATHI to Curb Corruption

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has introduced online based citizen centric application VAHAN 4.0 and SARATHI 4.0 under digitization to ease out the processes and curb corruption. 85 Road Transport offices under VAHAN4.0 and 235 Road Transport offices under SARATHI 4.0 have been brought to the centralised platform.

The Implementation of provisions of Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (MV Act) and Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 (CMVRs) comes under the purview of State Governments.



90. Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana

Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY) aims for integrated development of selected villages having more than 50% Scheduled Caste (SC) population.

The scheme was launched in 2009-10 on a pilot basis, for the integrated development of 1000 villages in 5 States viz. Himachal Pradesh (Northern Region), Bihar (Eastern Region), Rajasthan (Western Region), Tamil Nadu (Southern Region) and Assam (North-Eastern Region) and further extended in 2015 to another 1500 villages in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Haryana.



91. Cabinet cleared 4 supporting GST legislations

The Cabinet cleared four supporting Goods and Services Tax (GST) legislations - the Compensation Law, the Central-GST (C-GST), Integrated-GST (I-GST) and Union Territory-GST (UT-GST). They will be introduced as Money Bills.

Once approved by Parliament, the states would start taking their State-GST (S-GST) bill for discussion and passage in the respective state assemblies. Passage of all the legislations would pave the way for introduction of GST from 1st July this year.



92. Lok Sabha passed Appropriation Bill, 2017

The Lok Sabha has passed the Appropriation Bill, 2017 authorising certain payments and appropriation from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for 2017-18. The House also passed the Supplementary Demands for Grants (General) for 2016-17.

The Government has provided 10 lakh crore rupees for farm credit and 3.46 lakh crore rupees for creating infrastructure in rural areas. Under MGNREGA, the government has earmarked over 48,000 crore rupees which is more than the last year budget.



93. Centre reduced interest cost of states participating in UDAY by Rs. 11,989 crores

The Union Government has reduced the interest cost of states participating in the Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) by 11,989 crore rupees for the first nine months of this year, as compared to the previous financial year. The inbuilt control mechanism of the scheme ensures that there is no debt piling up.

UDAY provides for debt financing by banks and financial institutions to DISCOMs only for working capital. Financing of DISCOMs will be done through bonds issued by State Governments or by the DISCOMs backed by the states.



94. India's first sign language dictionary to come up soon

The government is all set to come up with the country's first-of-its-kind dictionary which aims to bring uniformity in sign languages used by hearing and speech impaired people. It is being developed by the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC).



Indian Sign Language, ISL dictionary, has so far compiled 6,032 Hindi and English words and their corresponding graphic representation of the signs which are used in daily life. The dictionary is being developed in both print and video format to help bridge the communication gap.

95. NBCC to execute social housing project in Mauritius

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed between India and Mauritius to execute a US \$20 million (Rs. 130 crores) social housing project in Mauritius.



As per the MoU, NBCC will undertake construction of 700 duplex type houses in 18 months in Dagotiere and Mare Tabac. NBCC will also execute construction of new Supreme Court Building at a cost of US \$ 33 million (Rs. 220 crores) in Port Louis in 24 months. Government of India has sanctioned a grant of US \$ 353 million for execution of five projects in Mauritius including Metro Express Project, new ENT Hospital and supply of digital tablets to primary school children.

96. India Notifies Amended Tax Treaty with Singapore

India notified the Third Protocol amending the existing India-Singapore double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA). Under the treaty, capital gains tax will be levied at source of investments with effect from April 1. It would curb revenue loss, prevent double non-taxation and streamline the flow of investments.



The provisions of the Third Protocol signed in December 2016 thus became law in India. Besides Singapore, India amended bilateral tax treaties with Mauritius and Cyprus in 2016.

97. CCEA approved winding up of CHBL and ICBL

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved winding up of CREDA HPCL Biofuel Ltd (CHBL) and Indian Oil - Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA) Biofuels Limited (ICBL).

Joint Ventures between CHBL and ICBL were formed for carrying out energy crop (Jatropha) plantation and production of bio-diesel in 2008 and 2009 respectively. Due to various constraints like very poor seed yield, limited availability of wasteland, high plantation maintenance cost etc., the project became unviable and Jatropha plantation activities were discontinued.



98. Indian Railways to install Wi-Fi kiosks at 500 remote stations for e-services

Indian Railways is planning to set up Wi-Fi hotspot kiosks at about 500 stations. The service has been named as "Railwire Saathi". It will help people access an array of online services, including various government schemes.

The scheme will be executed across the country by RailTel, the telecom arm of railways and is expected to be operational by May. The scheme also aims to provide employment opportunities. It is a Wi-Fi entrepreneurship model where unemployed youths, preferably women, can be trained and supported to set up a Wi-Fi hotspot.



99. Parliament passed the Mental Healthcare Bill, 2016

Parliament passed the Mental Healthcare Bill, 2016 after the Lok Sabha approved it. The bill seeks to provide for mental healthcare and services for persons with mental illness and to protect, promote and fulfil the rights of such persons during delivery of healthcare services.

The bill also states that a person who attempts suicide shall be presumed to be suffering from mental illness at that time and will not be punished under the Indian Penal Code. The bill also provides for a penalty and imprisonment in case of violation of its provisions.



100. I&B Minister Venkaiah Naidu launched online Film Certification System of CBFC

Information and Broadcasting Minister M Venkaiah Naidu launched the online film certification system of CBFC, e-cinepramaan, in New Delhi. Consultation has already begun on Benegal Committee and Mudgal Committee reports on Central Board of Film Certification, CBFC.



The complete automation of the film certification process will make the entire process transparent and efficient with an objective to eliminate the need for human interface to the extent possible.

101. JNPT became first Major Port to install Radiological Detection Equipment (RDE) at Road and Rail Gates

The Marine Department of JNPT had initiated installation and commissioning of Radiological Detection Equipment at all the exit gates including the Rail Gates. The work was awarded to M/s Electronic Corporation of India (ECIL) in 2012 at a total cost of Rs. 23.324 crores.



Twenty-Eight Vehicle Monitor Systems have been installed at the Road, Rail, Exit Gates. Out of these 11 are at North Gate Complex, 3 at the South Gate Complex, 7 at Central Gate Complex and 7 at Railway Gates, in addition to the above one Limb monitor, each has been installed at South Gate and NSICT Gate.

102. Government and World Bank Sign US \$100 million Agreement for Better Healthcare in Uttarakhand

The Government of India, the Government of Uttarakhand and the World Bank signed a credit agreement for the US\$100 million Uttarakhand Health Systems Development Project to improve access to and quality of health care services in all 13 districts of Uttarakhand.



Out of the total project size of USD 125 million, USD 25 million will be the counterpart contribution of the State Government. The closing date of Uttarakhand Health Systems Development Project is 30th September, 2023.

103. ESIC launched Mobile Clinic Services in AP and Telangana

The Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) launched Mobile Clinic Services for the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana when Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment Bandaru Dattatreya flagged off 'Jan Suraksha Vans/Ambulances'. The annual expenditure for these will be around Rs. 30 crores.



These are the first States in the country where the facility would be made available initially and later expanded to other parts of the country.

104. Value of Output of Milk at Current Prices Rs. 5,00,405 Crores in 2014-15

As per National Account Statistics Report, 2016, the value of output of milk at current prices was Rs. 5,00,405 crores in 2014-15, while at constant prices (2011-12) it was 3,89,846 crores. As compared to last year, the growth in value of output of milk is about 7.4 percent at constant prices.



A Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund would be set up in NABARD with a corpus of Rs. 8,000 crores over 3 years. Initially, the Fund will start with a corpus of Rs. 2,000 crores.

105. AAI, DRDO and Government of Jharkhand Signed a Tripartite MoU for Development of Deoghar Airport

Airports Authority of India, Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Government of Jharkhand signed a tripartite MoU for development of Deoghar Airport in Deoghar district of Jharkhand. The existing Deoghar Airport will be developed for operations of A-320 and C-130 Aircraft.



The D.R.D.O, Govt. of Jharkhand and AAI will provide Rs. 200 Crores, Rs. 50 Crores respectively to develop, operationalize and maintain the airport. The time frame given to develop and operationalize the Deoghar Airport is two years.

106. All four GST Bills passed in Lok Sabha

The Lok Sabha passed all four Goods and Services Tax Bills - Central GST, Integrated GST, UT GST and GST Compensation.

The Central GST deals with taxation related to Centre, integrated GST deals in taxation of inter-state movement of goods and services while the Union Territory GST Bill covers taxation in Union Territories. The compensation law has been prepared to give a legislative backing to the Centre's promise to compensate the states for five years for any revenue loss arising out of GST implementation.



107. SC bans sale, registration of BS-III vehicles from April 1, 2017

The Supreme Court banned sale and registration of vehicles, which are not BS-IV compliant, in India from April 1, 2017 when the new emission norms come into force.

The court also prohibited registration of vehicles, which do not meet Bharat Stage-IV emission standards, from April 1 except on a proof that such a vehicle was sold on or before March 31. The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) had earlier informed the apex court that companies were holding stock of around 8.24 lakh vehicles, which are not BS-IV compliant, including 96,000 commercial vehicles, over six lakh two-wheelers and around 40,000 three-wheelers.



108. India became net exporter of Electricity for the first time

For the first time, India has turned around from a net importer of electricity to net exporter of electricity. As per Central Electricity Authority, which is the designated authority of the government for cross border trade of electricity, India has exported around 5,798 million units to Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar during the current financial year.

Export to Nepal has increased 2.5 times and export to Bangladesh has risen 2.8 times in the last three years.



109. CBEC renamed as CBIC under GST regime

The Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC) is being renamed as the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC), after getting legislative approval, ahead of the transition to the Goods and Services Tax from 1 July.



The CBIC would supervise the work of all its field formations and directorates and assist the government in policy making in relation to GST, continuing central excise levy and customs functions. CBIC will have 21 zones, 101 GST tax payer services commissionerates comprising 15-sub commissionerates, 768 divisions, 3969 ranges, 49 audit commissionerates and 50 appeals commissionerates.

110. Government signed deal for Hydrocarbon project in Neduvasal, Tamil Nadu

The Central Government has signed a contract with GEM Laboratories for the Discovered Small Fields (DSF) Bid 2016 for extracting Hydrocarbons at Neduvasal, in Tamil Nadu.



The cumulative peak production from the 31 fields is expected to be around 15,000 barrels per day (bpd) of oil and two million metric standard cubic metres per day (mmscmd) of gas.

The estimated total revenue would be approximately Rs. 46,400 crores.

111. NASA, ISRO jointly working on project NISAR

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are jointly working on the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission to codevelop and launch a dual frequency synthetic aperture radar satellite.



NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission is a dual frequency (L & S Band) Radar Imaging Satellite. The cost of the project comprises of (i) cost of ISRO's work share, which is estimated to be Rs. 788.00 Crores and (ii) cost of JPL's work share, which is expected to be around USD 808 million.

112. Seven airports to get rid of hand baggage tags from April 1

Passengers do not have to go through stamping and tagging of the hand baggage at seven major airports with effect from April 1. These include Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Cochin and Ahmedabad.

CISF Director General O P Singh said that it has put in place the required security systems that would help in ushering in this passenger-friendly move.

This move would enhance "passenger experience and provide hassle free security environment to them".



113. Government announced regional aviation routes, airlines under UDAN scheme

Government has announced regional aviation routes and airlines after the first round of bidding under Regional Connectivity Scheme-UDAN, Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik.

All flights in first round will become active within 4-6 months. Five airlines - Air India subsidiary Airline Allied Services, SpiceJet, Air Deccan, Air Odisha and Turbo Megha will operate on 128 routes. Over 45 unserved and under-served airports will be connected under the scheme. They would be operating 19 to 78 seater aircraft. The airports that would be connected under UDAN include Bhatinda, Puducherry and Shimla.



PERSONS IN NEWS

1. Singer Vaikom Vijayalakshmi sets a world record - plays Gayathri Veena for record five hours

Famous Malayalam playback singer Vaikom Vijayalakshmi has set a world record by playing Gayathri Veena continuously for over 5 hours. She set the new world record by playing 67 songs continuously on the Gayatri Veena at an event in Kochi.

She has now become the first person to play Gayathri Veena, a single string musical instrument, continuously for the longest time ever. She has rendered songs in Malayalam, Tamil and Telugu films.



2. Paddleboarder Chris Bertish makes world-first Atlantic crossing

Chris Bertish of South Africa became the first person to cross the Atlantic Ocean on a stand-up paddleboard after completing an epic 4,050-mile voyage alone at sea.

Chris crossed the ocean in a span of 93 days. He started from Morocco's Agadir Marina and ended his mission at the English Harbour on the island of Antigua. He has won the Maverick Big Wave Invitational, California 2010, set the world record for open ocean 12-hour nonstop SUP in South Africa, 2013, and set the fastest time crossing the English Channel on an SUP in 2013 (5 hours, 26 minutes).



3. B P Kanungo appointed as the Deputy Governor of the (RBI)

The Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of B P Kanungo as a Deputy Governor in Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for three years. He has been appointed in place of R Gandhi.

Mr. Kanungo was appointed as an RBI executive director on 1 March 2016. The ACC has also named Dilip S Shanghvi, promoter of Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Limited, as member, Western Local Board of RBI.



4. Jaitley gets the Additional Charge of the Defence Ministry

After Manohar Parrikar resigned to take on the new role of Goa Chief Minister, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was given the additional charge of the Defence Ministry.

This is the second time that Jaitley is holding the additional portfolio of Defence Ministry during the present NDA government.

Mr. Jaitley holds the portfolios of Finance Minister and Minister of Corporate Affairs in addition to the new role assigned.



5. Manohar Parrikar appointed as the Chief Minister of Goa

Manohar Parrikar was appointed as the Chief Minister of Goa by Governor Mridula Sinha. Mr Parrikar resigned as the Union Minister of Defence.

The BJP had won 13 seats while the Congress had won 17 in the 40-member Goa Assembly. However, BJP managed to garner support from legislators of other parties and independents to reach the required support of 21 MLAs.



6. OnePlus India signed Amitabh Bachchan as their New Brand Ambassador

Chinese smartphone maker OnePlus has roped in Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan as its brand ambassador in India. Mr Bachchan was signed as its first-ever "OnePlus Star". He was earlier the brand ambassador of Zen Mobiles and even helped LG to launch its G3 and G4 smartphones in the Indian market.

OnePlus also recently inaugurated its first ever experience store in Bengaluru. CEO and Founder of OnePlus is Pete Lau.



7. ICC appointed Sachin Tendulkar as their Official Ambassador of Women's World Cup 2017

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced Indian cricketer legend Sachin Tendulkar as the official ambassador of Women's Cricket World Cup 2017 on International Women's Day. The Women's World Cup this year starts on June 24 at England and Wales. The 21-day tournament has 28 matches to be played at five different venues. The final will be played at Lord's.



Tendulkar played in six World Cups where he played 45 matches and scored 2278 runs at an average of 56.95.

8. CAS tribunal upholds lifetime ban on Sergei Portugalov

The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) upheld a lifetime ban levied against Sergei Portugalov, former chief of the Russian Athletics Federation's Medical Commission, for his role in providing illicit substances to Russian athletes.



The arbitration involved the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) and the Russian Athletics Federation. World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) had reported that Portugalov supplied performance enhancing drugs to athletes and coaches.

9. N Biren Singh sworn in as the CM of Manipur

Nongthombam Biren Singh was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Manipur. The oath of office was administered by Governor Najma Heptulla. This brought an end to the 15-year old Congress rule in the state.



Yumnan Joykumar Singh of the National People's Party (NPP) was appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister. Biren had left Congress and joined BJP last year. Congress had emerged as the single largest party with 28 seats in the election while the BJP came in at second place with 21 seats.

10. Pawan Goenka gets 2nd term as the IIT-Madras Board Chairman

The Managing Director of Mahindra and Mahindra Ltd, Pawan Goenka, will continue as Chairman, Board of Governors of IIT Madras for another three years. He had been serving as Chairman, BoG of IIT-Madras, since 9th June 2014.



Mr. Goenka is an alumnus of IIT Kanpur and has a Ph.D. from The Cornell University, New York. He is also an alumnus of The Harvard Business School, Advanced Management Program.

11. Captain Amarinder Singh sworn-in as CM of Punjab

Captain Amarinder Singh was sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Punjab for second time. He became the 26th Chief Minister of Punjab.



Mr. Singh took the oath along with 9 ministers. The oath was administered by Governor V P Singh Badnore. Amarinder had led Congress to victory with 77 seats out of 117 seats.

The state can have a maximum of 18 ministers.

12. Yogi Adityanath sworn in as the 21st Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh

Yogi Adityanath took oath as the 21st Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh along with Keshav Prasad Maurya and Dinesh Sharma as Deputy Chief Ministers. 47 other ministers took oath as well. The oath-taking ceremony was administered by governor Ram Naik at a function in Lucknow's Kanshiram memorial ground.



Yogi Adityanath is a five-time Member of Parliament from Gorakhpur. The BJP won 312 seats of the 403-seat assembly in Uttar Pradesh.

13. ICMR Director Soumya Swaminathan named in the UN group on Antimicrobial Resistance

Indian Council of Medical Research director Soumya Swaminathan has been named to the ad hoc Interagency Coordination Group on Antimicrobial Resistance to provide expertise on and coordinate the global fight against antimicrobial resistance. Swaminathan is clinical scientist known for her research on tuberculosis.



The high-level group is set up by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and will be co-chaired by Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and World Health Organisation Director-General Margaret Chan.

14. Gaurvi Singhvi became first girl to swim from Sea Link to Gateway of India

A 14-year-old Gaurvi Singhvi from Udaipur swam the Arabian Sea from the 36-km Bandra Worli Sea Link to the Gateway of India route in 6 hours and 30 minutes. She became the first girl to swim across that route while also breaking an earlier record.



Gaurvi is ranked 11th in the All Indian Ranking by the Sports Federation of India. She has also won the Gold medal at the State Level and has been a District champion for almost three years.

15. Anil Ambani inducted into the Atlantic Council

Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani has been inducted into The Atlantic Council - the international advisory board of global think-tank. Other notable members of the board include Thomas Enders, CEO, Airbus Group, Rupert Murdoch, CEO, 21 Century Fox and Stephen A. Schwarzman, CEO of the Blackstone Group.



The Atlantic Council is a foreign policy think tank head quartered in Washington, DC. It aims to shape policy choices and strategies and provide a forum for navigating the economic and political changes. The Atlantic Council is chaired by Jon Huntsman Jr.

1. Dharamshala approved to be Himachal's second capital

Himachal Pradesh cabinet approved Dharamshala as the second capital of the state, at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh. Since, Dharamshala is considered as tourist capital and commercial capital of the state, it deserves to be considered as 2nd capital of Himachal Pradesh.

Dharamshala was already marked special due to presence of Dalai Lama's residence and the headquarters of Central Tibetan Administration (the Tibetan government in exile). Dharamshala is a city in Himachal's Kangra district. Kangra is the largest district in the state.



2. Government's Biotech Innovation to be launched in Bengaluru

The BIRAC Regional Entrepreneurship Centre (BREC), Indian government's innovation hub has been decided to be set up at Bengaluru, by Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms – C-CAMP, technology and innovation hub. The full form of BIRAC is the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council.

It is set up by the Government with an aim to raise Biotechnology Entrepreneurship Awareness Programs, conduct workshops with international experts, boost biotech start-ups and improve the biotechnology entrepreneurship scenario across India.



3. A 3-day National Conference on Innovation in Educational Administration

A three-day National Conference on Innovation in Educational Administration organized by National University of Educational Planning and Administration was held in New Delhi.



About 150 district and block level education officers from across India and resource persons and faculty of the university participated in the conference. The main objective of the programme was to recognise innovative ideas and best practices adopted by district and block level education officers for effective management of the educational administrative system at district and block levels.

4. National conference on Jal Kranti Abhiyan organised in New Delhi

Ministry of Water Resources and River Development organized a national conference on Jal Kranti Abhiyan in New Delhi. About 700 participants representing various stakeholder groups such as farmers, panchayat members, NGOs and students attended the daylong conference.



The Ministry had launched Jal Kranti Abhiyan on June, 2015 to consolidate water conservation and management in the country through a holistic and integrated approach involving all stakeholders.

5. India's tallest Tricolor hoisted at Attari border

India's tallest tricolour was hoisted at Amritsar's Attari border. The flag is 360 feet high. It measures 120 feet in length, 80 feet in breadth. It was a project of the Amritsar Improvement Trust Authority of the Punjab government.



The flag is said to be visible from Lahore. The entire project was built at an approximate cost of Rs3.50 crore. Previously, Ranchi had the tallest national flag at 300 feet.

6. Chandigarh to host Destination North East 2017

The three day 'Destination North East-2017' event was hosted by Chandigarh beginning 6th March, 2017. The annual event was organized outside Delhi for the first time.

The 'Destination North East-2017' was organized by Ministry of DoNER to showcase North East as a potential destination for investment and highlight the rich traditions and customs of the region. The core theme of the festival is to highlight the use of appropriate technologies in all sectors of development for North Eastern Region.



7. Tribal festival 'Bhagoria' celebrated in MP

The annual tribal festival 'Bhagoria' was organised at Bhagoria haats (local markets) in Jhabua, Alirajpur, Dhar, Khargone and Barwani districts in western Madhya Pradesh.

The festival is celebrated in the month of March before the Holi Festival by the local tribes called Bhils and Bhilalas. It is also called as the festival of love. Bhagoria Haat Festival is one of its kind in which young girls and boys have a right to elope after choosing their life partner.



8. Mobile World Congress to be organized in Delhi

To involve Indian business association with Mobile World Congress, GSM Association announced to organize three day India World Congress in New Delhi, India from September 27. It is announced with an aim to focus on reaching out to the South East Asian markets and highlight technological developments in the world of mobile telephony.

Every year, GSM Association holds Annual Mobile World Congress in Barcelona and Shanghai. The event invites representatives from global tech giants Facebook, Huawei, Ericsson, vendors and content owners.



9. A 2-day North-East Business Summit held in New Delhi

The 11th North East Business Summit held in New Delhi. The two-day event was an initiative to facilitate investment, highlight strengths of the North-East Region and business opportunities which North-East must offer.



It was announced in the Summit that an e-commerce portal will soon be launched to sell NER handicrafts and handloom worldwide on the IRCTC website and land will be provided for expansion of the rail link to Darjeeling, which will be further extended to Sikkim.

10. The 10th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance: ICEGOV 2017

The 10th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV2017) was organised in New Delhi, between 7 and 9 March 2017. The theme of the event was "Building Knowledge Societies: From Digital Government to Digital Empowerment".



The key objective of ICEGOV2017 was to explore how Digital Government can lead to Digital Empowerment by local knowledge. ICEGOV 2017 is the 10th edition of ICEGOV. The conference was conducted in Montevideo in 2016).

11. 'International Vision Zero Conference' on Occupational, Safety and Health

Three days International Conference on the VISION ZERO and its relevance to Occupational Safety and Health was held from 15th to 17th, March 2017 in New Delhi. It is organized by Directorate General Factory Advice and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI), Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment and German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV), Germany in association with International Social Security Association - Manufacturing, Construction and Mining.



The conference aims to focus on the Occupational Safety and Health issues and challenges in the Manufacturing, Construction and Mining sector.

12. Second India-UAE conference on globalization held in Dubai

The second India-UAE conference on Globalisation was held in Dubai. The Conference was organised by the All India Management Association (AIMA). It aims to create a thought leadership platform for a constructive dialogue on key areas of mutual interest between the two countries.



The theme of the conference is 'Resetting Globalisation: Collaborating in a Fast Changing World'. The conference will bring together policy makers, CEOs, entrepreneurs, investors and senior managers from both India and the UAE.

13. A 3-Day International Buddhist Conference inaugurated at Rajgir

The three days "International Buddhist Conference" was organized by Ministry of Culture and Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Deemed University at Rajgir International Buddhist Conference, Bihar and inaugurated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of Culture and Tourism.



The main highlights of the conference were release of the reprint of the Pali Tripitaka in Devanagri script by Holiness the Dalai lama and announcement of the opening of the department of the Buddhist science for the first time in Asia.

14. 'Make in India' Conference held in Houston

The first-ever Houston India Conference was held in Houston, USA and hosted by Asia Society Texas Centre. The theme of the two-day conference was 'Make in India - The Inside Story'.



The conference held discussions on best ways of doing business in India including dialogue on 'Make in India'. The central focus of the conference was to provide a collaboration platform and share today's India story with the audience in Texas who are interested in investing in India.

15. Osmania University to host the 105th Indian Science Congress

Osmania University will host the 105th edition of the Indian Science Congress during January 3-7, 2018. The conference will be on the theme 'Science and Technology - Reaching the Unreached'.

About 20 Nobel laureates are expected to attend the conference. This will be the sixth time the university will be hosting the conference. The university had hosted the 85th session of the event in 1998. The 104th session of the event was held at the Sri Venkateswara University in Tirupati in January this year.



16. G-20 Framework Working Group (FWG) held in Varanasi

The Government of India and RBI hosted the two-day 3rd Meeting of the G-20 FWG in Varanasi on the 28th and 29th of March, 2017. The G-20 FWG discussed the Current State of the Global Economy as well as G-20 agenda on Inclusive Growth and Reports on Strong, Sustainable and Balanced Growth & G-20 Enhanced Structural Reform Agenda among others.



The G-20 FWG is one of the core Working Group of G-20 and deliberates on matters related to global economy and on the policy co-ordination that is required between the major economies of the world to face global economic challenges.

17. Sarhul Festival celebrated in Jharkhand

The popular tribal festival of nature worshipping - 'Sarhul', was celebrated all over Jharkhand with enthusiasm. It started with the tribal priests- called 'Pahan', worshiping nature at various common religious places- called 'Akharas'.

People came out in traditional dresses on streets in large number where various dance groups, musical groups and tableau were centers of attractions. Sarhul also marks the beginning of the New Year for the tribal of Jharkhand.



1. 'Amma Kalviyagam' portal launched in Tamil Nadu

Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister O Panneerselvam launched a portal, "ammakalviyagam.in" which will be a "hub of learning, interaction, opportunity, and connection." It was an initiative in line with Jayalithaa's Vision TN 2023.



This portal will help students get assistance from reputed teachers free of cost. It is a platform for learners, experts, academic and industry professionals, and recruiters to meet, gain and provide skills, and discover and hone talent. The initiative was based on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) model.

2. Aashray signed MoU with Jharkhand, to set up incubation centre for start-ups

Incube Ventures Pvt Ltd, under the banner of Aashray Promotion of Social Enterprises Foundation, has signed an MoU with the Jharkhand government's Department of Information Technology and e-Governance (DoIT) to establish an incubation centre for start-ups in the state.



Incube Ventures Pvt Ltd is a Gujarat-based company. The MoU was signed during the 'Momentum Jharkhand Global Investors' Summit 2017'. As part of the MoU, Ashray Foundation will incubate at least 20 start-ups certified by the Jharkhand State Evaluation Board.

3. World Bank offered over \$1-billion loan to Maharashtra

World Bank's Chief Executive Officer, Kristalina Georgieva announced that the World Bank is working closely with the Government of Maharashtra to deliver a proposed assistance program of over \$1 billion in the areas of urban transport and climate resilient agriculture over the next 2-3 years.



Over the last five years, World Bank has invested over \$1.4 billion in Maharashtra in urban transport, rural water supply and agriculture. The cumulative assistance of the World Bank to Maharashtra has amounted to around \$4 billion.

4. Odisha Government signed MoU with Invest India

The Odisha government has signed an agreement with Invest India, the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industries, to promote start-ups in the state.

A toll-free start up helpline, 1800-345-7100, was launched. Startup Odisha Initiative and Startup India Hub run by the Invest India will help Odisha in achieving the Mission-1000 Startups by the year 2020 and help the youth in realising their dreams. It is in line with the Prime Minister's initiative Start-up India.



5. Kerala State Government Budget to make Internet facility a right of citizens

Kerala State Finance Minister Dr Thomas Isaac presented many proposals under state budget, where one of the major announcement was made to make internet facility, a right of citizens. The decision has been taken due to economic slump faced by people during demonetization. It has been announced to provide basic free internet services to 20 lakh poor families.



Other announcements made were like budget of Rs 68 crore for women protection, Rs 127 crore for Suchitwa Mission, Rs 150 crore on water conservation projects and many social welfare measures were announced in the Budget.

6. Delhi government approved wages hike of skilled, semi-skilled & unskilled workers

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Baijal approved Delhi government's hike proposal of increasing minimum wages of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Government had approved a 36% increase in the minimum wages benefitting 50 lakh workers' families.



As per the approved wages, skilled workers will be paid from Rs. 11,830 to 17,604 rupees per month, semi-skilled workers will be paid from Rs. 9,724 to 14,698 rupees and unskilled workers will be paid from Rs. 10,764 to 13,350 rupees per month.

7. Assam celebrated the 8th international Guwahati Film Festival

In Assam, the two-day long Guwahati Film Festival held at Guwahati. The festival was organized by Chalachitram, Directorate of Film Festival and state Cultural department. Several films and documentary were screened during the festival at three places in Guwahati. 'The Pride of Assam' was selected as the best film at heritage short film competition which was held as a part of the festival.



More than 20 films were screened during festival. It was organized with aim to celebrate diversity of languages, literature, culture, society, traditions, music, identity, media of the north-eastern region of the country.

8. Yatra.com signed an MoU with Madhya Pradesh Government to promote homestays

Online travel company Yatra.com inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Madhya Pradesh Government to jointly promote homestays in the state to give tourists a very homely experience. Yatra.Com had recently signed MoU with Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat Governments.



As a part of the MoU, Yatra will list over 90 properties on its website and promote all the state tourism approved homestays, where travellers can book a room with a local family or the entire house.

9. Odisha achieved the highest decline in Infant Mortality Rate

Odisha has achieved the highest decline in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR). As per the 4th round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-2015-16, Odisha's IMR is 40 per 1000 live births, which is lower than the national average (41).



The IMR in Odisha was 96 per 1000 births in 2000. During the same period, the national average of IMR was 68. Odisha's IMR is better than six major States Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Assam, Rajasthan and Jharkhand.

10. Google India signed an MoU with the Telangana Government

Google India has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana Government to support the digitisation efforts of the state. Google India will provide Google Cloud credits and access to all cloud platform products to eligible start-ups engaged with Telangana government's T-Hub initiative.



As a part of the MoU, Google India and the Telangana Government will also work on promoting digital literacy among rural women through program 'Internet Saathi'.

11. West Bengal Clinical Establishments (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Bill, 2017 passed

The West Bengal State Legislative Assembly passed the West Bengal Clinical Establishments (Registration, Regulation and Transparency) Bill, 2017. It repeals the West Bengal Clinical Establishments (Registration and Regulation) Act, 2010.



The legislation seeks to bring transparency, end harassment of patients and check medical negligence in private hospitals and nursing homes. It brings clinics, dispensaries and polyclinics under its purview. The Bill also seeks for a 13 member West Bengal Clinical Establishment Regulatory Commission to monitor activities of private hospitals.

12. Assam Cabinet Declares Sanskrit as a Compulsory Subject up to Class 8th

The State Cabinet of the Assam Government announced to make Sanskrit along with computer education mandatory in all the schools up to Class VIII. Teachers will also be appointed for this purpose. The Government is also planning to connect each panchayat of the state with Internet facility by the end of next financial year.



The cabinet also decided to appoint a special teacher to monitor cleanliness at all high schools in the state. These teachers will be appointed in high schools under Swachh Bharat Mission.

13. West Bengal government gave official status to Tribal Language 'Kurukh'

The West Bengal government has granted official status to the Kurukh language as well as to the Rajbanshi-Kamtapuri language on the occasion of International Mother Language Day.

Kurukh is spoken by Oraon and Kisan tribes while Rajbanshi-Kamtapuri is spoken by the Koch Rajbanshi community. Kurukh is a Dravidian language and written in Devanagari. UNESCO has listed it in a "vulnerable" state. The state government has also set up a committee, headed by Indologist Nrisingha Prasad Bhaduri, which would help create a written form for Rajbanshi-Kamtapuri.



14. Haryana Government announced Tirtha Darshan Scheme

The Haryana State Government announced the Tirtha Darshan scheme under which senior citizens belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families and of Haryana domicile would be able to go on a pilgrimage within the country. The government would bear the entire cost of the tour.

The government would bear only 70% of the cost for senior citizens of non-BPL families. Over 400 destinations can be visited under the scheme. The maximum number of pilgrims would be only 250 every year.



15. Kerala tops in GST registrations

Kerala has achieved the maximum number of registrations under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, the registrations being complete in all aspects. 60% of an estimated 2.5 lakh traders in the state have migrated to the new platform.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) is a proposed system of indirect taxation in India merging most of the existing taxes into single system of taxation. A business entity that is currently registered under any of the existing tax regimes is compulsorily required to enrol under GST law.



16. Haryana State Budget

Haryana Finance Minister Captain Abhimanyu presented a budget of Rs. 1,02,329.35 crore, which is an increase of Rs. 9,041.59 or 13.18% from the last budget. The budget comprises 21.88% as capital expenditure of Rs. 2,393.52 crore and 78.12% as revenue expenditure of Rs. 79,935.84 crore.

Highlights of budget allocation:

- No new taxes were introduced
- Agriculture and allied: Rs. 4963.09 crore
- Education: Rs. 15546.65 crore
- Health and Family Welfare: Rs. 3839.90 cores
- Industries and Minerals: Rs. 399.88 crore
- Social Welfare, Women and Child Development: Rs. 6859.55 crore



17. Kerala State Budget

Kerala's Finance Minister T.M. Thomas Issac presented the 68th state budget in the Assembly. Highlights of the budget:

- Rs. 150 crore for water conservation and Rs 201 crore for soil and land conservation
- Rs. 350 crore for Karunya scheme
- Rs. 100 crore for Smart City mission
- Rs. 2600 crore has been announced for SC welfare and Rs 750 crore for ST welfare
- Primary health sector to get Rs. 2,000 crore



18. Ola inked MoU with Government of Madhya Pradesh

Ola has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Madhya Pradesh State Skill Development Mission (MPSSDM) and Directorate of Skill Development (Technical Education and Skill Development Dept.) Govt. of Madhya Pradesh.



The MOU is focused towards training, skill development and empowerment of 25,000 driver partners by 2019. Ola along with the State's Skill Development Department will provide essential training infrastructure, utilities and technology for an improved employment scenario in Madhya Pradesh.

19. Tumke Bagra elected Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly Deputy Speaker

Arunachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly has unanimously elected TumkeBagra as the Deputy Speaker of the house. Mr. Bagra represents Along West constituency. He has been elected to the post for the second time. The seat of the deputy speaker fell vacant after T Norbu Thondok resigned from the post.



The Assembly also passed the Arunachal Pradesh Private Educational Institutions (Regulatory Commission) Bill 2017 and the Arunachal Pradesh Anatomy Bill 2017.

20. China overtook Eurozone as the world's biggest bank system

As per a report by Financial Times, China's banking system has overtaken the Eurozone to become the world's biggest by assets.



Chinese bank assets hit \$33tn at the end of 2016, versus \$31 trillion for the Eurozone, \$16 trillion for the US and \$7 trillion for Japan.

The value of China's banking system is more than 3.1 times the size of the country's annual economic output, compared with 2.8 times for the Eurozone.

21. Shiv Sena's Vishwanath Mahadeshwar elected as the new Mumbai Mayor

Vishwanath Mahadeshwar of the Shiv Sena was elected as the new Mayor of Mumbai, with the support of the BJP. He defeated the Congress nominee Vitthal Lokare by 171-31 margin. He was elected the 76th Mayor of Brihan Mumbai Municipal Corporation.



Out of the 227 corporators, 218 participated in the voting. Mahadeshwar is a former Principal of Raje Sambhaji Vidyalaya and Junior College in Santacruz East. He is a three-time municipal corporator from Bandra.

22. Delhi Government presented Rs. 48,000 crore budget for 2017-18

The Delhi Government presented a Rs. 48,000 crore budget for 2017-18 in the Assembly. In its third Budget, the Delhi Government abolished the plan and non-plan expenditure heads and presented it in terms of revenue and capital classification in line with the Centre's decision.

A few main points are:

- 11300 crore rupees for education sector out of which 17 crore rupees have been set aside for libraries for nursery and primary classes. - 5736 crore rupees for health sector.
- 7,571 crore rupees for the civic bodies.
- VAT on Aviation Turbine Fuel will be brought down from 25% to 1% for flights to remote areas such as North Eastern states to compliment Centre's regional connectivity scheme.



23. Vasundhara Raje presented Rajasthan budget 2017 in state assembly

Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, who also holds the Finance portfolio, presented the state budget 2017-18.

Key Highlights:

- Rs. 1,399 crore has been allotted for higher education in the budget.
- Deemed Assessment Scheme has been introduced for VAT, Entry Tax, Luxury Tax and Entertainment Tax in the state.
- Roads of 410 km in Rajasthan and 5000 km of rural roads would be revamped at a cost of Rs. 800 crore
- Launch of Project Leopard to conserve the big cat in select areas
- Rs. 6000 crore on clean drinking water scheme



24. Haryana: Girl child ratio increased to 938 per 1000 male

In Haryana, girl child ratio has increased to 938 per 1000 male children in February. It was 879 girls per 1000 boys as per 2011 census.

In January 2017, the registered girl child ratio was 922. The gradual increase in the ratio of girl child is result of effective implementation of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' programme implemented by Prime Minister from Panipat in the country.



25. Odisha launched a helpline number for distressed women

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched a helpline number 181 for women in distress on the International Women's Day. The toll free helpline number will be available 24/7 in all the 30 districts of the state.

The helpline will provide information about women-related government schemes and programmes. It will also extend support to women affected by violence. Through the helpline, women can lodge police complaint and get medical, legal as well as counselling services.



26. Tamil Nadu Government launched Rs. 1,580 crore Housing Scheme

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami launched a housing scheme estimated at Rs. 1,580 crore with Central assistance for the economically poor. The Chief Minister gave away work orders to five beneficiaries in order to mark the launch.

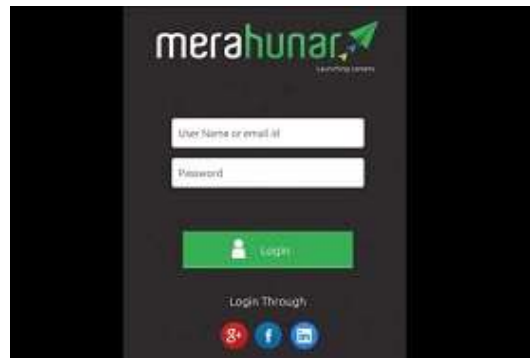
The Government will construct concrete houses for 50,170 beneficiaries in town panchayat limits in the year 2016-17.



27. Himachal Pradesh launched mobile app 'Mera Hunar HP'

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh launched a mobile app and website titled 'Mera Hunar HP' or 'My Talent'. It will directly connect prospective employers with job aspirants as the latter's resume will contain addresses and contact numbers.

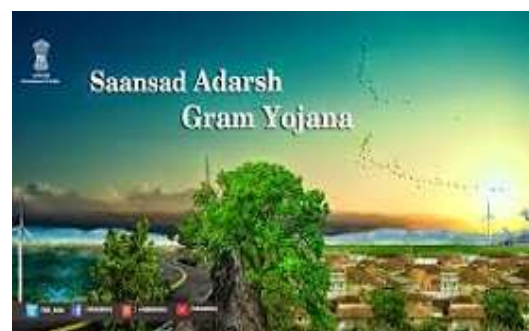
The Chief Minister said this initiative will supplement the state's skill development scheme and be of great help to pass outs of industrial training institutes. This initiative will also make available real-time employment data of the state.



28. Arunachal Government launched a new scheme called as the Adarsh Gram Yojana

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has launched a new scheme - Adarsh Gram Yojana - with a view to reach to the poor people in rural areas. The programme has been launched in line with the basic philosophy of the Prime Minister - Sabka Saath Sabka Vikaas.

Under the scheme, 123 villages, comprising one village per circle, are to be developed as 'model villages' during the fiscal year 2017-18. A corpus of 93 crore rupees has been earmarked in the next year's budget.



29. Women Safety app ‘Ammavin Aran’ launched by AIADMK

The IT wing of the AIADMK launched a app called "Ammavin Aran" meaning 'mother's fortress' It is a first of its kind women safety application in Tamil Nadu.

The app will give the user details about the nearest police station and hospital along with map details and phone number. There is an in-built whistle, which can manipulate the phone speaker to create a loud noise when pressed by anyone in distress. Also the app carries an in-built call recorder and and 'Tips' icon to provide life-saving information.



30. Karnataka announces Rs10-crore fund for women entrepreneurs

As a celebration of International Women’s Day, Information Technology (IT) Department of Karnataka has announced a fund of Rs. 10 crores to engage more women in entrepreneurship.

This Idea2POC fund will benefit the women entrepreneurs by providing them a support of up to Rs. 50 Lakhs for ideas that disrupt technologies. Under the scheme, they would also be provided legal, and mentoring support to the women willing to start a business in the information technology space.



31. Telangana proposed Rs. 605-crore ‘KCR Kit’ scheme for pregnant women and new born

The Telangana state government has come out with a new Rs. 605 Crore innovative scheme named as KCR Kit. The scheme is designed to focus on women welfare and new born. The kit would consist of soaps useful for mother and child, baby oil, baby bed, mosquito net, dresses, sarees, hand bag, towels and napkins, powder, diapers, shampoo and toys for the kid.



The KCR Kit will be useful for up to three months. It will help address the complications during the time of pregnancy and help reduce infant mortality rate.

32. Gujarat State Government to provide e-marketplace for businesses

The Gujarat Government has signed an agreement with a global cloud-based solution provider cloudBuy.com to develop a B2B marketplace for small and large business units in the state.

The e-marketplace will help promote businesses in the state on one single platform. The participants can trade with each other and across India and globally. VISA AP will facilitate transactions on the portal via purchase cards.



33. World Bank loan for MP solar plant

The World Bank will finance loan to develop internal transmission arrangements of the upcoming Rewa Ultra Mega Solar project in Madhya Pradesh.

The World Bank will provide 25 per cent of the loan amount under its Clean Technology Fund, where the money will be provided at an interest rate of only 0.25 per cent.



This would be the first solar power project of the country to receive a loan under CTF.

34. Karnataka State Budget 2017-18

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddramaiah presented a soft budget without any fresh taxes for 2017-18 in the State Assembly. The State would end the year with an overall deficit of Rs. 196 Crores, with capital account deficit being Rs. 332.54 Crores and a revenue surplus of Rs. 136 Crores (as against Rs1062.51 crore for current fiscal).



The fiscal deficit for 2017-18 was estimated at Rs. 33,359 crores, which accounted to 2.61 percent of the State Gross Domestic product (GSDP).

35. AP Budget 2017-18

The Finance Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. Yanamala Ramakrishnu, presented the Budget for Andhra Pradesh for financial year 2017-18 on March 15, 2017.

Some of the highlights of this budget are:

- Total expenditure for 2017-18 is estimated to be Rs 1,56,999 crore
- Total receipts (excluding borrowings) for 2017-18 are estimated to be Rs 1,26,968 crore
- Revenue deficit for the next financial year is targeted at Rs 416 crore. Fiscal deficit is targeted at Rs 23,054 crore.
- Rs 3,600 crore has been allocated for the Agriculture Debt Redemption Scheme.
- 1,10,000 houses are proposed to be undertaken in 2017-18 under the Affordable Housing Projects.



36. Telangana State Budget

The Finance Minister of Telangana, Mr. Eatala Rajender, presented the Budget for Telangana for financial year 2016-17.

Some of the highlights of this budget are:

- The Gross State Domestic Product of Telangana for 2016-17 is estimated to be Rs 6,70,756 crore.
- Total expenditure for 2016-17 is estimated to be Rs 1,30,416 crore
- Revenue surplus for the next financial year is targeted at Rs 3,718 crore
- Fiscal deficit is targeted at Rs 23,467 crore
- Rs. 24,132 crore to be spent on irrigation in the state
- Two lakh two bed room houses to be built for eligible poor people.
- Mission Bhagirath scheme to provide drinking water supply to all houses in the state.



37. The Current Northeast Budget is around Rs. 50,000 Crores: Dr. Jitendra Singh

The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Dr Jitendra Singh said that the current budget for Northeast for 2017-18 is around Rs. 50,000 crore.



The 10 % contribution from budget of the each of the 56 non-exempted Union Ministries earmarked for Northeast, amounts in total to over Rs. 43,000 crore which was earlier around Rs. 33,000 crore. The Railway budget for Northeast is Rs. 5,500 crore, the budget for special roads scheme for Northeast is Rs. 150 crore and the budget for BTC, KAATC & DHATC amounts to about 120 crore.

38. HIMURJA implementing Himachal Pradesh Roof Tops Solar Energy Program

The Himachal Pradesh Government Energy Development Agency - HIMURJA is implementing the Roof Tops Solar Energy Program of the Union Ministry for New and Renewable Energy in Himachal Pradesh.



The Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has released an instalment of 5 Crore rupees under the Roof Tops Solar Energy Program for Himachal. The beneficiary will get seventy percent subsidy on commissioning of one megawatt project on their roof. They will also sell their surplus energy to the state electricity board which would provide them additional income.

39. Punjab to provide 33% reservation for women in Government jobs

Punjab cabinet has decided to provide 33% reservation for women in all government jobs. The cabinet also decided to increase representation of women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies from the present 33% to 50%. A series of decisions were also taken for the benefit of freedom fighters.



The cabinet has decided to provide a house to every freedom fighter and 300 units of free electricity every month. It was also decided to provide one out-of-turn tube well connection to the freedom fighters and to exempt them from paying toll tax for state highways.

40. Haryana Government notified AYUSH Medicine Procurement Policy 2016

Haryana Government has notified Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy Medicine Procurement Policy, 2016.

It is with the objective of ensuring uninterrupted supply of good quality AYUSH medicines free of cost to the people through Government Hospitals, Prathmik Swasthay Kendras, Government Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Unani Dispensaries, Panchkarma Centres and National Health Mission (NHM) Institutions in the State. Every batch of medicines would undergo testing before it is distributed.



41. Assam Government Signed an MoU with SBI

The Assam Government signed two MoUs with SBI, which are:

- To provide housing loan at subsidised interest rates of 5% for its women employees and 5.5 % for men.
- Education loan for higher education for their children at 4%.

The housing loan for the employees will come under the state government's scheme "Apun Ghar" with a cap of Rs 15 lakh. The state government will provide interest subsidy at the rate of 3.50% for housing loan while it will provide suitable subsidy rate to bring down the interest on education loan at 4%.



42. AP tops in Aadhaar seeding of Jan Dhan accounts

Andhra Pradesh has topped the list of states with the highest seeded Aadhaar numbers. AP has linked 87.73% of its Jan-Dhan accounts with Aadhaar numbers as on 15th March. Tripura ranked second in the list with 87.08% and Telangana at third position with 83.56%.

The total PMJDY accounts has gone up to 28.01 crore after demonetisation. 63.61% of these accounts are successfully seeded with Aadhaar numbers.



43. Odisha became the first state to bring banking to remote rural areas through SHG

Odisha became the first state in the country to carry financial inclusion and extend banking services to unbanked areas through Self Help Groups. The state government has signed an agreement with State Bank of India to provide banking facilities to people in unbanked areas.



In the first phase SHGs would be engaged as Banking Correspondents in around 1,000 remote Gram Panchayats having no banking facilities. Gradually it would be extended to 4,000 non-banked panchayats.

44. BPL households in UP to get free electricity connections

Urban and rural BPL households of Uttar Pradesh will receive free electricity connections. Besides, APL households will get electricity connections at reasonable EMIs under a 100% financing option.



The UP government also decided to waive interests on electricity dues and provision of option of EMIs to pay off the principal amounts. The Union Ministry for Power has directed state-run EESL and the 4 DISCOMs in the state to make 10 crore LED bulbs freely available under UJALA scheme and increase awareness among the common people for the same.

45. UP to become 27th State to sign an MoU with Centre for Power-for-All Project

Uttar Pradesh will be the 27th state to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Centre to implement Power-for-All Project in the state. The state has targeted to provide power connection to every house in the state before 2019.



Implementation of Power-for-All project will help in achieving the target. The Uttar Pradesh Government is preparing a road map to control power theft and distribution loss to improve the power condition in the state and to get objective of 24 hours supply to consumers.

1. Internet users in India to cross 450 million by June

As per a report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India and Indian Market Research Bureau, internet users in the country are expected to be in the range of 450 to 465 million by June 2017.

The report said that there were 432 million users in December 2016. Of them, about 269 million were in urban areas of the country. Urban India has close to 60% Internet penetration while rural India has only 17% penetration.



2. Thiruvananthapuram ranked as India's Best Governed City

As per the fourth edition of the Annual Survey of India's City Systems 2016, Thiruvananthapuram has been ranked as the top city equipped to manage urbanisation followed by Pune and Kolkata. Delhi was ranked 9th.

The survey was conducted by the Bangalore-based urban research and advocacy group, Janaagraha. 21 cities in 18 states were surveyed on 83 parameters. Mumbai was ranked 4th while Bengaluru was ranked 16th. Hyderabad was ranked 5th.



3. IISc became the first Indian University to be ranked among the top 10 in World

The Indian Institute of Science, IISc in Bangalore has become the first Indian educational institution to make it to the top 10 of a global ranking for universities.

The IISc has been ranked eighth in the Times Higher Education Rankings, 2017 in the best small universities category. It joined the elite list that includes California Institute of Technology (Caltech) from the US, Ecole Normale Supérieure from France and Pohang University of Science and Technology, South Korea. Small universities are those with a student strength of less than 5,000.



4. Hyderabad Airport ranks 1st in the world in Airport Service Quality

As per the prestigious Airports Council International (ACI) – Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey, Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport has secured first position in the world in the 5-15 million passengers per annum (MPPA) category for the year 2016.



The Airport has improved its score from 4.4 in 2009 to 4.9 in 2016 (measured on scale of 1 to 5). Besides, the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in Delhi has been ranked world's second best airport in the category of passenger handling capacity of more than 40 million passengers annually.

5. Indian economy to grow 7.1% this fiscal: Global Rating Agency Fitch

Global rating agency Fitch predicted Indian economy to grow by 7.1% in the current fiscal before stepping up to 7.7% in the next two financial years.



Fitch said, gradual implementation of the structural reform agenda is expected to contribute to higher growth, as will higher real disposable income.

The rating agency said it expects the policy interest rate to stay at its current level of 6.25%.

6. India ranked top in bribery rate among 16 Asia-Pacific nations

As per a survey released by anti-graft Transparency International (TI), India has the highest bribery rate of 69% among the 16 nations in the Asia Pacific region.



The second in the list is Vietnam (65%). Thailand (41%) is third, Cambodia, Pakistan and Myanmar, each with 40%, were next. The rate was much lower in China (26%) and it was the lowest in Japan (0.2%). 41% people in India said that the level of corruption had increased in 2016.

7. Mercer 2017 Quality of Living index

As per the Mercer's Quality of Living Rankings 2017, Hyderabad has emerged as the best city in terms of living standards among the Indian cities for the third year in a row.



Vienna occupies first place for overall quality of living for the 8th year running, with the rest of the top-ten list mostly filled by European cities: Zurich is in second place, with Munich (4), Dusseldorf (6), Frankfurt (7), Geneva (8), Copenhagen (9), and Basel, a newcomer to the list, in 10th place. The only non-European cities in the top ten are Auckland (3) and Vancouver (5). The highest-ranking cities in Asia and Latin America are Singapore (25) and Montevideo (79), respectively.

8. Tata Steel, Wipro in World's most Ethical Companies' list

Tata Steel and Wipro have been included in a report of world's most ethical companies published by American think tank Ethisphere Institute. A total of 124 honourees were listed in the report for 2017.



The report honours those companies who recognise their role in society to influence and drive positive change in the business community and societies around the world. Ford Motor Company was named one of the

World's Most Ethical Companies for the eighth straight year in the report.

9. Women in Politics Map 2017, India placed at 148th number

As per a report published by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women that ranked all 193 UN member countries with respect to the number of women parliamentarians, India was placed at 148th rank.



India ranked 88 in the number of women ministers with five or 18.5% in the cabinet.

Rwanda ranked first in the number of women parliamentarians with 61.3 percent in the lower house, followed by Bolivia with 53.1 percent and Cuba 48.9 percent.

10. IISc, Bengaluru ranked 27th among the Top 50 in the Asia University Rankings 2017

As per the Asia University Rankings 2017 released by Times Higher Education (THE), 33 Indian universities featured in the top 300. Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) was the highest ranked Indian institute at 27. The ranking was topped by Singapore's National University, followed by China's Peking University.



The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay was ranked 42 and Chennai-based private institute Veltech University was a joint 43 in the top 50. India became the third most-represented nation in the table for the first time.

11. Changi Airport voted as the World's Best Airport for the 5th consecutive year

Changi Airport Singapore was voted as the World's Best Airport for the fifth consecutive year at the 2017 World Airport Awards. The airport also received the award for the Best Airport Leisure Amenities. It was also named the Best Airport in Asia.



The 2017 World Airport Awards are based on 13.82 million customer nominations across 105 nationalities of air travellers, with 550 airports worldwide taking part. The top 5 rankings for the World's Best Airport Award in 2017:

- Changi Airport Singapore
- Tokyo International Airport (Haneda)
- Incheon International Airport
- Munich Airport
- Hong Kong International Airport

12. Five Indians in WEF's 2017 Young Global Leaders list

Five Indians have made it to the annual World Economic Forum's 100 Young Global Leaders list. There were nine global leaders from South Asia, out of which five are from India.

They are:

- Vijay Shekhar Sharma: Founder and CEO Paytm
- Shruti Shibulal: The Tamara Hospitality
- Ambarish Mitra: Founder and CEO Blippar
- Hindol Sengupta: Editor-at large, Fortune India
- Rwitwika Bhattacharya Agarwal: Founder and CEO Swaniti Initiative



13. 2017 Healthiest Country Index

Bloomberg has released its 2017 World Health Index. Italy has been ranked as the healthiest country out of 163 countries in the index. Singapore is the healthiest country in Asia and the fourth healthiest country in the world.

Iceland and Switzerland stand second and third respectively. The index ranked 163 countries based on variables such as life expectancy, causes of death and health risks such as high blood pressure, tobacco use, malnutrition and the availability of clean water.



14. India home to 101 billionaires, Mukesh Ambani tops list: Forbes

As per a new list released by Forbes magazine, India is home to world's fourth highest number of billionaires after the US, China and Germany respectively. Reliance Industries chief Mukesh Ambani leads the club of more than 100 super rich Indians.

The list has been topped by Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates for the fourth year in a row with 86 billion US dollar networth, followed by Berkshire Hathaway Chief Warren Buffet with a new worth of 75.6 billion US dollar. Amazon's Jeff Bezos with 72.8 billion US dollar in networth was ranked third.



15. Four Indian cities among the Cheapest Global Cities

As per the Worldwide Cost of Living Index 2017 published by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), four Indian cities - New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Bengaluru are among the cheapest cities to live in globally. Almaty of Kazakhstan was the cheapest city in the index.

Singapore was ranked as the most expensive city. Hong Kong, Zurich, Tokyo and Osaka were the other top cities in the most expensive cities list.



16. India ranks 131 on the Human Development Index, Norway Number 1

The UN Development Program (UNDP)'s 2016 'Human Development for Everyone' report has ranked India 131st among 188 countries. India was categorized under the medium human development category based on life expectancy, access to knowledge and standard of living.

India's HDI has increased from 0.428 to 0.624 between 1990 and 2015. China occupies the 90th spot. The top three countries in HDI were Norway (0.949), Australia (0.939) and Switzerland (0.939).



17. Norway is the happiest place on earth

As per a United Nations agency report, Norway is the happiest place on earth. Denmark ranked second in the list. Iceland, Switzerland and Finland are the other nations in the top five, while the Central African Republic came last. Western Europe and North America dominated the top of table, with the US and UK at 14th and 19th. India was ranked 122nd in the list.

The World Happiness Report was released to coincide with the United Nation's International Day of Happiness.



18. India ranks 87th on Energy Architecture Performance

As per a report released by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF), India was ranked 87th among the surveyed 127 countries on a Global Energy Architecture Performance Index (EAPI).

The top 5 Countries are –

- Switzerland (1)
- Norway (2)
- Sweden (3)
- Denmark (4)
- France (5)



India has some of the lowest scores in CO2 emissions from electricity (117th) production and PM2.5 levels (123rd) indicators. Bahrain is ranked the lowest at 127th.

19. HDFC Bank's MD Aditya Puri featured in World's 30 Best CEOs list

HDFC Bank Managing Director Aditya Puri has featured in the list of world's 30 best Chief Executive Officers (CEOs). The list was published by American financial magazine Barron. Mr Puri was ranked 23rd in the list, above Facebook's CEO Mark Zuckerberg who is listed on the 30th spot.

The top five CEO's are:

- Mary Barra of General Motors
- Gary Dickerson of Applied Materials
- Stephen Hemsley of UnitedHealth Group
- Jensen Huang of Nvidia
- Satya Nadella of Microsoft



20. India became the 3rd largest Aviation Market in Domestic Traffic

As per a report from the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA), India has become the third largest aviation market in terms of domestic passenger traffic. India surpassed Japan to secure the position. India's domestic air passenger traffic stood at 100 million in 2016.

The United States with 719 million and China with 436 million domestic air passenger traffic were the top two countries in the list. Japan flew 97 million domestic passengers in 2016.



21. SBI's Arundhati Bhattacharya among the top 50 global leaders

The Fortune Magazine has ranked the State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman Arundhati Bhattacharya at the 26th position in its list of World 50 Greatest Leaders 2017. She is the only Indian to feature in the list this time.

The list features those who are “transforming the world and inspiring others to do the same.” The list is topped by Theo Epstein, President for Baseball of Chicago Cubs.

- Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba Group (2)
- Pope Francis (3)
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Co-chair Melinda Gates (4)
- Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos (5)



22. Around 730 million Internet users are anticipated in the country by 2020: NASSCOM

As per the National Association of Software & Services Companies (NASSCOM) – Akamai report launched on 17.08.2016 regarding “The Future of Internet in India”, 730 million Internet users are anticipated in the country by 2020.

For provision of broadband facility in rural areas, the Government is also implementing BharatNet project to provide 100 Mbps broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakhs) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fiber, fiber over power lines, radio and satellite media.



RESIGNATIONS & RETIREMENTS

1. Australia's Sarah Coyte announced retirement

Australian Women Cricketer Sarah Coyte has announced her retirement from all forms of the game at the age of 25 years to focus on her health. Coyte has fought a four-year battle against anorexia nervosa.

She played four Tests for Australia, along with 30 one-day internationals and 47 T20s. She was also a part of Australia's 2014 World T20-winning squad. She also played for the South Australia and Adelaide Strikers.



2. Reliance Capital's CEO Sam Ghosh announced to quit

Reliance Capital's CEO Sam Ghosh announced to quit the company on 31 March. Mr. Ghosh worked for nine years in the company since he joined it in 2008 as group Chief Executive Officer of Reliance Capital, while he was elevated to the board in May 2015.

Prior to joining Reliance Capital, Ghosh was the Regional CEO of Middle East and India Sub Continent region of Allianz, a German insurance company.



3. Joanna Rowsell Shand retires

Double Olympic Gold Medallist Joanna Rowsell Shand announced retirement from professional cycling. She joined British Cycling's Talent Team programme in 2004. She won the gold medal in London 2012 and at Rio 2016.

Shand also won four European gold medals and individual pursuit gold at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

In a career spanning 10 years, Rowsell Shand was a five-time world and four-time European champion.



4. Shaun Tait announced Retirement from all forms of Cricket

Australian fast bowler Shaun Tait announced his retirement from all forms of cricket. Tait last played for Australia in January 2016.

The Adelaide-born cricketer had received a national call-up after five years when he played the T20 International against India at Sydney early last year. He ended up playing only three Tests in his 15-year career, besides featuring in 35 ODIs and 12 T20 Internationals. He was an integral part of Australia's victorious campaign in the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies.



1. EU successfully launched the 5th satellite of Copernicus Observation Program

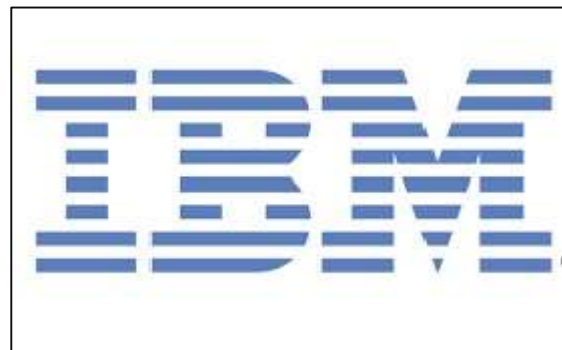
The European Union launched the fifth satellite, Sentinel-2B satellite, of the Copernicus observation program on 7th March, 2017. It will help improve services for farmers, fishermen and other users of land and sea maps.



The Copernicus earth observation program, created by the European Union, is served by a set of satellites, the program is aimed at improving the life of EU communities by providing near-real-time global environment data.

2. IBM Researchers Create World's Smallest Magnet

IBM announced it has created the world's smallest magnet using a single atom – and stored one bit of data on it. Currently, hard disk drives use about 100,000 atoms to store a single bit.



The ability to read and write one bit on one atom creates new possibilities for developing significantly smaller and denser storage devices, that could someday, for example, enable storing the entire iTunes library of 35 million songs on a device the size of a credit card.

3. Google acquired Kaggle to boost data play

Kaggle was founded in 2010 and is the home to the world's largest community of data scientists.

More than 8 lakh data experts use Kaggle to explore, analyse and understand the latest updates in machine learning and data analytics.

Kaggle will maintain independent brand for a while. Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure also offer data science services.



4. SpaceX Falcon 9 Rocket Launches EchoStar 23 Satellite

SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket has carried the EchoStar XXIII satellite into orbit for EchoStar Corporation from Launch Complex 39A at the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

The EchoStar XXIII was the heaviest geosynchronous payload launched by the Falcon 9 with a mass of around 5,500 kilograms.

The EchoStar XXIII was constructed by Space Systems Loral (SSL). The satellite has a design life of fifteen years.



5. First Blood Test for Autism developed by Scientists

Researchers at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute have developed an algorithm which is based on levels of metabolites found in a blood sample. It can help predict whether a child is on the Autism spectrum of disorder (ASD).

Autism Spectrum Disorder is estimated to affect approximately 1.5 percent of individuals. People with ASD "may communicate, interact, behave, and learn in ways that are different from most other people."



6. Amitabh Bachchan launched world's first app for breast health

Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan launched a mobile application named 'ABC of Breast Health' at an event in Mumbai. The App provides detailed information about breast cancer in 12 Indian languages.

This is the first-ever mobile app in the world. The app is created and designed by Ushalaskhmi Breast Cancer Foundation.

This app is available on Google Play as well as for the iOS for free downloading.



7. ISRO commissioned two major facilities at VSSC

ISRO has commissioned two major facilities—a Hypersonic Wind Tunnel and Shock Tunnel—at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre at Thiruvananthapuram. The facilities are the third largest in terms of size and simulation capability in the world.

These facilities would provide adequate data for design and development of current and future space transportation systems in the country. The facilities are indigenously designed, developed and 'Made in India'.



8. IIT-Kharagpur to get a Supercomputing Facility

The Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, became the first academic institution to get a supercomputing facility under the National Supercomputing Mission (NSM). It will provide about 1.5 Peta-Flop capacity support.

The institute is in the process of setting up a new Centre for Computational and Data Sciences (CCDS) around the supercomputing platform to build, manage, and operate the high-performance computing facility.



9. US Astronaut breaks the record for most Spacewalks by a woman

American Astronaut Peggy Whitson made history when she floated outside the International Space Station, breaking the record for the most spacewalks by a woman.

Whitson made her 8th career spacewalk, surpassing the record of seven previously held by American Sunita Williams.

The goal of the spacewalk is to continue upgrading the International Space Station for the arrival of commercial spaceships in the years to come.



10. The Maiden Flight of China-built Amphibious Aircraft set for May

China's amphibious aircraft, stated to be the world's largest, will embark on its maiden flight in May from southern Chinese City of Zhuhai. The AG600 will conduct a full resonance test before its maiden flight over land on May in Guangdong province and on water in the second half of 2017.

The 37-meter aircraft, with a wingspan of 38.8 meters, has a maximum take-off weight of 53.5 tonnes. The AG600 will be very useful for marine resource exploitation, marine environmental monitoring, resource detection and transportation.



1. Rangaswamy became the First Woman to Be Honoured with the BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award

The Board of Control for Cricket in India introduced the separate category of Lifetime Achievement Awards for Women beginning this year as a recognition to Women's in India.

Former India captain Shantha Rangaswamy became the first woman to receive the Lifetime Achievement Award. She received the C K Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award at the BCCI Annual Awards in Bengaluru. She represented India in 16 Tests and 19 ODIs. She has also been honoured with Arjuna Award. Under her leadership, India won a Test series for the first time.



2. Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis won the Uganda International Series Doubles Title

India's men's doubles pair of Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis won the 2017 Uganda International Series in Kampala. The top-seeded duo defeated second-seeded pair of Aatish Lubah and Georges Julien Paul of Mauritius, 21-8, 21-14 in the final.

This was the first title of the season for Kona and Francis. The pair have already won at three International Series events – in Guatemala, Peru and Botswana after teaming up at the end of the 2015 season. Currently they are ranked No 51 in the latest BWF rankings.



3. Luis Norton de Matos appointed as the new Head Coach of India U-17 Football Team

The All India Football Federation has appointed Portugal's Luis Norton de Matos as the Head Coach of the India Under-17 team for the FIFA Under-17 World Cup. The tournament is scheduled to be held in October 2017.

De Matos replaces Nicolai Adam. He is a former manager with the Benfica Reserve side. He has had five appearances for the Portugal national side.



4. India's Jitu Rai won the Gold Medal in the 50m Free Pistol event of the ISSF World Cup

Indian shooter Jitu Rai clinched a gold medal in 50 metre air pistol event in the ISSF World Cup. Jitu created a new world record with 230.1 points in final.

Another shooter of Indian team Amanpreet Singh won a silver medal in the same event.

Jitu Rai had also won a Bronze medal in 10m air pistol event of the ISSF World Cup. Earlier, Heena Sidhu and Jitu Rai clinched the gold medal in the 10m Air Pistol mixed team event.



5. BCCI Annual Awards 2017 announced

The BCCI Annual Awards committee consisting N Ram, Ramachandra Guha and Diana Edulji have picked the winners for the prestigious awards. While Virat Kohli is set to receive the Polly Umrigar Award for the second year in a row, all-rounder R Ashwin will also receive the Dilip Sardesai Award for the second time.

For their consistent show in the 2015-16 season, Mumbai Cricket Association will receive the state association of the year award. The domestic giants not only won the Ranji Trophy but also had consistent performances in the junior age groups.



6. Kripa Shankar Bishnoi appointed as the International Match Referee by UWW

Former India Wrestler Kripa Shankar Bishnoi has been appointed as international match referee by United World Wrestling (UWW). He was selected by the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) for the annual training course for match referees conducted by the UWW.

Bishnoi is an Arjuna Awardee. He cleared the examination for the Referees' Courses held at Dortmund, Germany. He had trained Bollywood star Aamir Khan and other actors for their roles in the wrestling-based film 'Dangal'.



7. Sam Querrey won the ATP Mexico Open

Sam Querrey of the United States defeated Rafael Nadal 6-3, 7-6 (7/3) to win the ATP Mexico Open. It was the ninth ATP World Tour singles title for Querrey who is currently ranked World No. 40 in the Emirates ATP Rankings. Nadal has previously own the title in 2005 and 2013.



On the women's side, the Ukraine's Lesia Tsurenko won her third career title, beating second-seed Kristina Mladenovic of France 6-1, 7-5.

8. India finished 5th with five medals at ISSF 2017

India finished fifth in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun) with five medals, including one Gold, two Silver and two Bronze medals. China, Italy, Australia and Japan were the top four countries.

The list of medal winners:

- Pooja Ghatkar in the Women`s Air Rifle (Bronze)
- Ankur Mittal in Men`s Double Trap (Silver)
- Amanpreet Singh in Men`s 50M Pistol (Silver)
- Jitu Rai in the Men`s 10M Air Pistol and 50M Pistol (Bronze and Gold)



9. Andy Murray wins the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship for the first title of 2017

Andy Murray defeated Fernando Verdasco 6-3, 6-2 to win the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships. He became the first British champion of the tournament. It was his 45th tour-level crown. Murray took home \$523,330 in prize money and 500 Emirates ATP Rankings points.



The Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championships is owned and organised by Dubai Duty Free, and held under the patronage of H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

10. OPPO won Team India sponsorship rights for Rs. 1,079 crores

Mobile manufacturing company OPPO has won the Indian team sponsorship rights for a five-year period, starting April 1 2017 for INR 1079 crore. The minimum reserve price was set by the BCCI at INR 538 crore (approx USD 81 million). It has replaced Star India.



The five year rights period starts on 1st April 2017 and continues until 31st March 2022, during which India play 14 home series and 20 overseas series, which also include the ICC Champions Trophy, ICC Cricket World Cup and the World T20 events.

11. Pablo Cuevas won the consecutive 3rd Brazil Open title

Pablo Cuevas won his third consecutive Brazil Open tennis title by defeating Albert Ramos-Vinolas of Spain 6-7 (7-3), 6-4, 6-4 in the final.



He became the first player since the tournament began in 2001 to win three consecutive Brazil Open titles.

It was his sixth ATP singles title, all of which have been on clay and since 2014. Cueva will receive 250 Emirates ATP Rankings points and \$81,220 in prize money.

12. Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia won the Men's Singles Crown at the All England Open Badminton

Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia won the Men's Singles crown at the All England Open badminton championships after he defeated Shi Yuqi of China in straight games 21-12, 21-10. It is the fifth Singles title for Lee in seven finals of the prestigious championships.



Tai Tzu Ying of the Chinese Taipei won the women's singles final after she defeated Ratchanok Intanon. The Chinese pair of Lu Kai and Huang Yaqiong won the Mixed Doubles title by defeating the Malaysian duo of Peng Soon Chan and Liu Ying Goah.

13. Chawrasia clinched the second successive Indian Open Title

SSP Chawrasia has become only the second Indian golfer to successfully defend the Hero Indian Open title. This was his sixth win on the Asian Tour and overall sixth international victory.

Chawrasia pocketed a winner's cheque of 291,660 US Dollars. Chawrasia is the third player to win back-to-back Indian Open. The other two golfers who did so earlier are Jyoti Randhawa who won in 2006 and 2007 and Japan's Kenji Hosoishi who won in 1967 and 1968.



14. Punjab won the 2017 Santosh Trophy of Football

Punjab won the 71st Santosh Trophy football tournament after defeating Railways by 2-1 goals in the final. It was Punjab's overall ninth Santosh Trophy.

The Santosh Trophy is an association football knock-out competition contested by the regional state associations and government institutions under the All India Football Federation (AIFF). It was founded 1941. The runner-up trophy is known as the Kamla Gupta Trophy while the third-place trophy is called the Sampangi Cup.



15. Hockey India brings on board four scientific Advisors

With eyes set on the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the Senior Men and Women World Cups, Hockey India in pursuit of bigger accolades has appointed new Scientific Advisors for men and women, both senior and junior teams.

They are:

- Senior men's team: Australian Scott Conway
- Junior men's team: South African Robin Anthony Webster Arkell
- Senior women's team: South African Wayne Patrick Lombard
- Junior women's team: Australian Daniel Barry



16. Babul Supriyo named Vice-president of FIFA U-17 World Cup

Union Minister Babul Supriyo has been appointed vice-president of the FIFA U-17 World Cup organizing committee.

The FIFA U-17 World Cup will be played from October 6 to 28. It will be hosted by India for the first time. The draw of the tournament will be held on July 7.

The host cities are Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Kochi, Margao and Guwahati.



17. Jwala Gutta Appointed as a SAI Governing Body Member

India's Badminton Doubles specialist Jwala Gutta has been appointed a member of the governing body of Sports Authority of India (SAI).

The 14-time national champion and two-time Olympian Jwala won the bronze medal at the 2011 World Championships. She is also a 2010 Delhi Commonwealth Games champion and a silver medallist at the 2014 Glasgow Games in women's doubles. Sports Authority of India looks into sporting affairs in the country and work towards enhancement of India's performance on international stage.



18. Mumbai lost its Permanent status in BCCI

Mumbai lost its permanent status in the Board of Control for Cricket in India, BCCI. The new constitution of the Indian Cricket Board, finalised by the Committee of Administrators appointed by the Supreme Court of India also granted full membership with voting rights to all the North-Eastern states, as recommended in the Lodha Panel reforms.

Uttarakhand, Telangana are also full members, while Bihar got back its voting right. The new rules clearly state, there could be only one full member from a state.



19. K T Irfan won the bronze in the Asian 20 km Race Walk Championships

National record holder K T Irfan clocked an impressive timing to win a bronze in the 20 kilometre men's event in the Asian Race Walk Championships in Japan. Korea's Kim Hyun-Sub took the gold in while Georgiy Sheiko of Kazakhstan bagged the silver in the event.



In the women's 20 kilometre event, India's Priyanka failed to climb the podium as she finished fourth. China's Wang Na comfortably won the gold medal. Japan's walker Kumiko Okada finished second, while Yeongeun Jeon of Korea took the third place.

20. Tamil Nadu won Vijay Hazare Trophy

Tamil Nadu has won the domestic 50-over competition, the Vijay Hazare Trophy, for the fifth time. In the Final played at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in Delhi, they defeated Bengal by 37 runs.



Dinesh Karthik who scored 112 for Tamil Nadu was declared Man-of-the-Match. It was Tamil Nadu's third victory over Bengal in the final of this competition. Karthik also emerged as the highest run-getter in the tournament.

Aswin Crist (Tamil Nadu) was the highest wicket-taker.

21. Ravindra Jadeja topped ICC's test bowler's rankings

Ravindra Jadeja topped the ICC's test bowler's rankings leaving behind Ravichandran Ashwin in the latest list of bowlers after the nine wickets haul in the drawn third Test against Australia at Ranchi. Cheteshwar Pujara gets career-high second rank among test batsmen.



Jadeja became only the third Indian player after Ashwin and Bishan Singh Bedi to top the bowling charts. Top-ranked Australian captain Steve Smith has reached a career-high rating of 941 points after scores of 178 not out and 21.

22. Shahid Afridi selected as the Ambassador of Blind Cricket World Cup

Pakistani cricketer Shahid Afridi has been selected as brand ambassador of Blind Cricket World Cup's first edition, to be played in ODI format. Blind Cricket World Cup will be hosted by Pakistan Blind Cricket Council in the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan in January 2018.

Shahid Afridi recently announced his retirement from international cricket. Afridi has played 27 Test matches and 398 ODIs. He took 97 wickets and scored 1,405 runs during his T20I international career.



23. Roger Federer won the ATP Indian Wells Masters title

Roger Federer won the ATP Indian Wells Masters title. Federer claimed a record-equalling fifth title at Indian Wells with a victory over Stan Wawrinka.

With this win in the all-Swiss final, Federer joined Novak Djokovic as the only man to win five Indian Wells titles. At 35, Federer is the oldest ATP player to win one of the elite Masters titles, replacing Andre Agassi who was 34 when he won in Cincinnati in 2004.

Federer won his 18th Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in January.



24. Union Government designated 12 Olympians as National Observers to assist the Government, SAI, NSFs

The Union Government has designated 12 Olympians as National Observers in their respective disciplines to assist the Government, Sports Authority of India, and National Sports Federations (NSFs) concerned in the preparation and implementation of the long-term development plan with respect to high priority and priority sports.

Those named as National Observers are Abhinav Bindra (Shooting), P T Usha and Anju Bobby George (Athletics), Sanjeev Kumar Singh (Archery), Aparna Popat (Badminton), MC Mary Kom and Akhil Kumar (Boxing), Jagbir Singh (Hockey), Somdev Devvarman (Tennis), Karnam Malleshwari (Weightlifting), Sushil Kumar (Wrestling), I M Vijayan (Football), Khajan Singh (Swimming) and Kamlesh Mehta (Table Tennis).



25. Cheteshwar Pujara played India's longest innings

Cheteshwar Pujara created a national record after he registered the longest Test innings for any Indian in Test cricket, in terms of balls faced. He faced 525 balls while batting in the first innings of the third test match against Australia in Ranchi. The previous record was Rahul Dravid's 495 deliveries for his career-best 270 in Rawalpindi in 2004.



Pujara is thus the first Indian to face 500 and more deliveries in a Test innings. However, he is the 41st batsman in the history of Test cricket to have consumed 500 and more balls in a Test innings.

26. Ankur Mittal won the Gold Medal in the Double Trap at the ISSF World Cup

India's Ankur Mittal won the gold medal at the ISSF Shotgun World Cup in the double trap event after he defeated Australian rival James Willet in the final. It was the first World Cup gold medal of his career in double trap.



Mittal ended with 75 points out of possible 80 while Willet managed 73. China's Qi Ying finished third to take bronze. The event was held in Acapulco, Mexico.

Mittal had settled for a silver at the recent International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup in New Delhi, where Willet had won the gold.

27. Vettel won the Australian Grand Prix 2017

Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel won the season opening Australian Grand Prix after leapfrogging pole-sitter Lewis Hamilton of the Mercedes in the first round of pit stops. Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas stood third in the race.

Top Six:

- Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari)
- Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)
- Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes)
- Kimi Raikkonen (Ferrari)
- Max Verstappen (Red Bull)
- Felipe Massa (Williams)



28. Cheteshwar Pujara sets a record for most runs in a Test season by an Indian

India's prolific test batsman, Cheteshwar Pujara, broke an eight-year record set by Gautam Gambhir, for scoring the most runs in a Test season. Pujara has scored 1316 runs at an average of 65.8 in the season surpassing the mark of 1269 by Gautam Gambhir which he achieved in the 2008/09 season.

Ricky Ponting holds the world record for the most runs ever by a batsman in a season, with 1483 runs at an average of 78.05.



29. R Ashwin broke the record of most wickets in a Test season

Ace India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin broke South Africa paceman Dale Steyn's record of most number of Test wickets taken by an international cricketer in a single season of Test cricket.

Dale Steyn had taken 78 wickets in the 2007/08 season. Ashwin picked up his 79th wicket of the season, when he removed Australian skipper Steve Smith during the fourth test.



He reached the mark in his 13 Test matches and at an average of 25.64.

30. Bhubaneswar to host the 2017 Men's Hockey World League final

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) has confirmed that Bhubaneswar will host 2017 Men's Hockey World League final and the 2018 Men's Hockey World Cup. The official event titles will be the Odisha Men's Hockey World League Final Bhubaneswar 2017 and the Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar 2018.



The Men's Hockey World League Final, involving eight of World's best teams including hosts India, will be played between December 1 to December 10, 2017. The World Cup is scheduled between November 28 to December 16, 2018 and will see 15 teams in action.

31. Satwiksairaj & Chirag clinched Vietnam Open International challenger badminton men's doubles title

Promising Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has clinched the 20,000 US Dollar Vietnam Open International challenger badminton title. In the summit clash at Hanoi, the sixth seeded Indian pair defeated the fifth seeded Thai duo of Trawut Potieng and Nanthakam Yordphaisong in three games 17-21, 21-9, 21-15.



For the young Indian pair, it was their maiden title this season, while fifth victory overall. They had won the Mauritius International Series, the India International Series, the India International Challenge and the Bangladesh International Challenge last season.

32. West Bengal won Santosh Trophy for the 32nd time

West Bengal have lifted the Santosh Trophy for the 32nd time by defeating Goa 1-0 in the final of the premier domestic football tournament at Bambolim.



The Santosh Trophy is an association football knock-out competition contested by the regional state associations and government institutions under the All India Football Federation (AIFF). It was founded 1941. The runner-up trophy is known as the Kamla Gupta Trophy while the third-place trophy is called the Sampangi Cup.

33. Kolkata Salt Lake Stadium to stage the final of FIFA U-17 World Cup

Kolkata's iconic Salt Lake Stadium will stage the final of the FIFA U-17 World Cup Soccer on 28th of October. Navi Mumbai and Guwahati have been selected to host the semi-finals of the prestigious tournament which India is hosting for the first time.



The schedules were announced after a week-long inspection tour of the six venues chosen for the FIFA U-17 World Cup India 2017 by FIFA and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC). The tournament will start in New Delhi and Navi Mumbai while the four quarter-finals will be held in Goa, Guwahati, Kochi and Kolkata.

34. Srinagar to get a Football Stadium as per FIFA norms

The Bakshi Stadium will be developed as a modern football stadium as per the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) norms in 12 working months at an estimated cost of Rs 48 crore. The stadium will have flood lights, six entry and exit points, modern pavilion, food court and other state of art facilities.



The Bakshi Stadium is a stadium in Srinagar, Kashmir. The current capacity of the stadium is 30,000 people.

35. Ashwin presented the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy

R Ashwin was awarded the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy in Dharamsala for being named the ICC Cricketer of the Year 2016. Ashwin is the third Indian, and the 12th player overall to win the award. He was presented the honour by Kapil Dev.



Ashwin took 48 wickets and scored 336 runs against his name in eight Tests, and 27 wickets in 19 Twenty20 Internationals during the voting period. The award was judged by a voting academy. They took into consideration performances between September 14, 2015, and September 20, 2016.

36. Srinath Narayanan set to become India's 46th Grandmaster

Chennai's Srinath Narayanan is set to become India's 46th Grandmaster after he defeated Spanish GM David Anton Guijarro at the ongoing Sharjah Masters 2017 chess tournament.



The 23-year-old, who had become India's youngest FIDE-rated player in 2002 when he was just eight, also finished as joint winner in the Under-12 World Championship in 2005 in France. Srinath became an International Master at the age of 14 and crossed the 2500 Elo rating a few months back.

37. Tamil Nadu won the Deodhar Trophy

Tamil Nadu became the first state side to win the Deodhar trophy after they defeated India 'B' or India "Red" by 42 runs in the final in Vizag.



Tamil Nadu scored 303/9 with the help of a scintillating century by Dinesh Karthik and bowled out India "B" for just 261 runs. Karthik scored 126 off 91 balls.

Tamil Nadu completed a domestic double of winning the Deodhar Trophy as well as the Vijay Hazare Trophy.

38. Lionel Messi suspended for four matches

The FIFA Disciplinary Committee handed a four-match ban to Lionel Messi after ruling that the Argentina forward verbally abused a match official in a World Cup qualifying game against Chile. Messi was also fined for 10,000 Swiss francs (\$10,160).



Lionel Messi was found guilty of violating article 57 of the FDC for having directed insulting words at an assistant referee. The first match for which the sanction applied was the fixture in the preliminary competition of the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia between Bolivia and Argentina played on March 28.