

## CURRENT AFFAIRS FEBRUARY 2016 - REGIONAL

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News 1 - Maharashtra announces Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Special Collective Incentive Scheme.



Maharashtra state cabinet has declared on February 03, 2016 that Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Special Collective Incentive Scheme will be constituted for the economically deprived Dalit entrepreneurs.

This scheme will provide special facilities to Dalit entrepreneurs. Under this scheme, 20% plots with Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) for small and medium scale industries will be reserved for the Dalits.

News 2 - MoU between CIPET and Karnataka Government for setting up Advanced Polymer Laboratory in Bengaluru.



The Central Institute of Plastic Engineering & Technology (CIPET) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Karnataka Government on February 03, 2016 to build an Advanced Polymer Design and Development Research Laboratory cum High Learning Centre at Bengaluru.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Ananth Kumar and Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The initiative will improve polymer based industries.

News 3 - Centre Approves Heritage Development Projects in Andhra & Telangana.



The Union Ministry of Urban Development has initiated a heritage development project on February 06, 2016 for improving tourist infrastructure in Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh and Warangal in Telangana.

An Inter-Ministerial National Empowered Committee for the Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY) approved the projects. The project includes a heritage park in Amaravati, development of the 1000 Pillar Temple and Kazipet Durgah and reconstruction of pondat Padmakshi Temple in Warangal city.

News 4 - Union Government to set up National Organic Farming Research Institute in Gangtok, Sikkim.



The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare will build the National Organic Farming Research Institute in Gangtok, Sikkim. By upgrading the existing Regional Centre of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) in Gangtok, the institute will be formed.

This decision was made on February 06, 2016 by the Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh and Sikkim Agriculture Minister Somnath Poudyal in New Delhi.

News 5 - Geographical Indication tag for Basmati Rice of 7 states approved.



The Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) has ordered the Chennai based Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) on February 07, 2016 to issue 'Geographical Indication' tag for basmati rice. This tag will be attached to basmati rice varieties grown in 7 states in the Indo-Gangetic Plains (IGP). These seven states are Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, parts of Uttar Pradesh along with Jammu & Kashmir. This tag is going to preserve the originality and identity of India's aromatic basmati rice in the international markets.

News 6 - Project Sunrise launched for prevention of AIDS in NE states.



Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, J P Nadda has launched Project Sunrise on February 06, 2016 for prevention of AIDS in North Eastern States. This is specially aimed for people injecting drugs in the 8 NE states. This special program on AIDS prevention aims to diagnose 90% of drug addicts with HIV and put them under treatment by 2020.

News 7 - India's first aviation park to come up in Gujarat.





The Gujarat government decided on February 08, 2016 to set up an aviation park in the state. This will be the first ever aviation park in India. It is going to improve research and development in the aviation sector. This park will be equipped with amenities such as an airstrip, training school, helipad and space for setting up small manufacturing units, among others.

News 8 - Karnataka first state to record winter crop failure this year.



On February 10, 2016, Karnataka became the first Indian state to have failure of winter yield this year. The state asked for a Central financial aid of Rs. 1,417 crores after Rabi crops worth Rs. 7,209 crores were ruined. Crops of above 70% of the sown were ruined. Many farmers' suicide incidents have been reported earlier. The losses are going to affect the GDP of the country in the long run.

News 9 - Union Government Releases Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for NE India.



Union Ministry of State for Petroleum and Natural gas (MoPNG) published the Hydrocarbon Vision 2030 for North-East India on February 09, 2016. This report outlines steps to leverage the hydrocarbon sector for social and economic development of the north-east region. The states covered under it are Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Sikkim, Mizoram and Tripura. This hydrocarbon initiative is going to help the NE States economically.

News 10 - India set to get its first bio-fuel refinery in Assam by 2019.





It was announced on February 11, 2016 that India will get its first biofuel refinery in Assam by 2019. Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL), in partnership with a Finland-based company, Chempolis Oy, will take up the Rs. 950-crore project.

It will use bamboo as its feedstock and produce fuel grade bio-ethanol. This initiative is aimed at making Assam a rising force in bio fuels and alternative fuels sectors.

News 11 - UP passes Land Revenue Act, 2015.



The Uttar Pradesh Land Revenue Act, 2015, came into effect on February 12, 2016, which will replace around 39 old land revenue acts. This new act also overtook the pre and post-British-Era Land Revenue Act of 1901 and Zamindari Abolition and Land Reform Act 1950. These land revenue acts are considered the key in deals of land including sale and acquisition of farmers lands for commercialization.

News 12 - Elephanta Island to be electrified before Independence Day.



It was announced on February 11, 2016 that Elephanta Island will get electricity by the Independence Day, 2016. Currently, this island is dependent upon diesel-powered generators for electricity. The Maharashtra Chief Minister has allocated a Rs. 25 crores project to connect the island with undersea power cable network with Mumbai. This initiative will help the island's tourism business and overall economy of the region.

News 13 - Chhattisgarh and Railways Signed a Joint Venture for Infrastructure Development.



The Indian Railways signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chhattisgarh Government on February 09, 2016 to establish a joint venture (JV) for laying tracks and expedite implementation of railway projects. For the Railway Minister, Mr. Suresh Prabhu, it is the fifth such JV setup with states following Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. This also marks a new model of rail infrastructure development in India.

News 14 - Oracle to Setup Its Campus in Bengaluru.



Oracle will set up a campus in Bengaluru and will help more than half a million students in India develop computer science skills. This was conveyed by Oracle's Global CEO, Safra Catz to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 12, 2016. "She apprised the Prime Minister of Oracle's plans for a state-of-the-art campus centered in Bengaluru and an initiative to help more than half a million students in India develop computer science skills through Oracle Academy," a PMO statement said.

News 15 - Maharashtra to get India's first International Arbitration Centre.



Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis declared on February 07, 2016 that India's first International Arbitration Centre is set to come up in Mumbai. This centre is going to provide a variety of arbitrary services to the business community across the world. This will facilitate negotiations on various domains of the industry and will pave a way to do more impactful business in this region.

News 16 - Banaras Hindu University turns 100 years' old.



This Basant Panchami, the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) will turn 100 years old. Founded by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in 1916, BHU is known for special significance, and its contribution is multi-dimensional in India.

It was not established just as a university to disseminate knowledge. It was a university of the people to inculcate the passion for knowledge. Perhaps, that is why the Bharat Ratna was conferred to Malaviya.

News 17 - Homeo Vision 2016 - Inaugurated at Nagpur.





The 24<sup>th</sup> National Homoeopathic Congress Homeo-Vision 2016 was on February 13, 2016 inaugurated by the Minister of State for AYUSH and Health and Family Welfare, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik in Nagpur.

This initiative will help many devotees to the profession of homeopathic treatments, which is considered to be a cost effective way of treating various diseases. It is also considered to have lesser side effects to the human body.

News 18 - Jharkhand to get the First Mega Food Park.



On February 15, 2016 Union Food Processing and Industry Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal and Chief Minister Raghubar Das started the activities of the first mega food park at Village Getalsud, Ranchi in Jharkhand.

This food park will not only be a place for entertainment, but it will also have a much wider impact in research and innovation in the field of food processing and creation.

News 19 - Andhra Pradesh Government and USTDA signs agreement.



A memorandum of understanding was signed on February 12, 2016 between the US Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) and the Andhra Pradesh State Government on developing Visakhapatnam as a smart city.

CM Chandrababu Naidu is renowned for taking such initiatives that help the regions economically. The city of Hyderabad was opened for global investments in his tenure as a CM earlier.

News 20 - BHEL commissions 270 MW unit GVK power plant in Punjab.

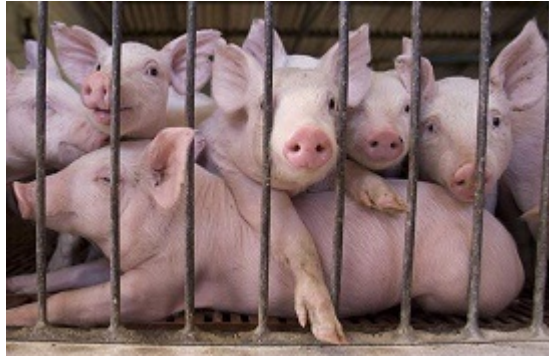


Power plant equipment manufacturer Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) on February 18, 2016 commissioned a 270 MW generation unit in Punjab. The commission was made at the Goindwal Sahib Thermal Power Project.

This power station will erase the much needed gap between supply and demand and can even offer electricity to

neighboring states in case of a special demand.

News 21 - Punjab to sign MoU with British Pig Association.



The Punjab government signed a MoU with British Pig Association (BPA) on February 17, 2016 to develop and promote piggery in the State. Although not seemingly very important, the initiative will have a much wider impact on agriculture and husbandry industries of the region. The State Animal Husbandry department's tie-up with BPA would turn around the stagnant economy of the peasantry and would instill progress in this sector.

News 22 - World Bank extends support to Rajasthan on energy reforms.



The World Bank on February 19, 2016 extended its support to the Rajasthan government on energy reforms. A meeting between World Bank's Country Director in India, Onno Ruhl and Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje brought this deal.

The deal is going to support Rajasthan employ its energy sufficiency initiatives in a better and more profound manner. This can be a boon for a more developed state in the long run.

News 23 - Uma Bharti to Inaugurate Jal Manthan 2016 in New Delhi.



Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Uma Bharti inaugurated an event named "Jal Manthan -2" on February 22, 2016 in New Delhi.

The major aim of this two-day event was Integrated Approach for Sustainable Water Management. Various other water management issues were also discussed in this event. This is especially important since the PM has announced the plans to refine the Ganga and make it pure again.

News 24 - M Venkaiah Naidu led committee to look into Jat Reservation Issue.



To contain the escalating issue of Jat Reservation, a committee under Union Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu was set up on February 21, 2016. The reservation issue took the main stage of a political debate as the Jat community sought reservation in government jobs and other initiatives.

This decision was taken while the Home minister Rajnath Singh met some Khap panchayat leaders. This committee will submit a report to the Central government.

News 25 - India set to sign major power deal with Bangladesh.



India is set to finalize a major power deal with Bangladesh, making it the biggest project by an Indian power firm, BHEL. This plant once made will be bigger than the plant already built in Rwanda or the one proposed in Sri Lanka. BHEL will seal build a \$1.6 billion power plant in Bangladesh, announced on February 22, 2016. This joint initiative will help reduce energy shortage in both countries.

News 26 - Andhra Pradesh saves 421 million units of power in 2015 using LED bulbs.



An independent survey conducted by Andhra University and Engineering Staff College of India - has revealed on February 22, 2016 that the state saved about 421 mn unit of power, in 2015 given the state government's initiative to use LED bulbs. This is for the first time in any Indian state that conservation has been beefed up to such a huge level.

News 27 - MP, Rajasthan set up SPV for implementation of Smart City Plans.







Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan Government have commissioned Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) for the implementation of Smart City Plans. SPVs are in five cities – Jabalpur, Indore and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh and Jaipur and Udaipur in Rajasthan. The PM has announced 100 cities that will be made smart cities with the help and process implementations supported by the central government and these cities are included among the finalists of the list.

News 28 - Vibrant North East event concludes in Guwahati.



The three-day long Vibrant North East event concluded in Guwahati, Assam on February 20, 2016. It was inaugurated by Union Minister Food Processing Industries Harsimrat Kaur.

This event was jointly organized by the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) and ASSOCHAM. It is aimed at improving the infrastructure and investment sectors to make the North East, a vibrant region.

News 29 - 42nd Khajuraho Dance Festival Begins in MP.



The 42nd Khajuraho Dance Festival began in Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh on February 20, 2016. The festival began with Odissi group dance of Ranjna Gauher and others.

Khajuraho is famous for the erotic sculptures that illustrate the science of sex in terms of vedic cultures. The location is a major tourist hub and is well flocked by tourists from both national and international fraternities.

News 30 - President to declare Kerala as the first digital state.



President Pranab Mukherjee recently declared Kerala as the first digital state of the country thereby adding another feather in the cap of the southern state. Kerala was declared the first digital state on account of its high e-literacy rate and mobile penetration (32 m connections). The state is one of the most sought after regions for mobile and internet oriented initiatives.

