JUDGEMENT

Adoption Regulations 2017 Effective From January 16, 2017

i. The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development on January 4, 2017 issued a guideline regarding the Adoption Regulations 2017. These new rules will be effective from January 16, 2017.

RANKING

- India Ranks 92 in the Global Talent Competitiveness Index. The list was topped by Switzerland.
- India Ranks 60th in Inclusive Development Index 2017. The list has been topped by Lithuania among the 79. IDI was prepared by World Economic Forum (WEF).
- Bengaluru Ranked Most Dynamic City in the World. City Momentum Index released by Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL). Hyderabad (5), Chennai (17)
- India Ranks 78th in the Passport Index 2017
- “Getting over GlobalizationReport” - India has achieved a very low rank of 2 among the countries across the world while the list was topped by countries such as US, UK, Japan.
- India Ranks 79th in the 2016 Corruption Perception Index. New Zealand and Denmark jointly shared the first position as the least corrupt nations while Somalia was rated as the most corrupt country in the list.
- India at Sixth Position among Eight Great Powers of 2017 List by American Foreign Policy Magazine

STATE

- Kozhikode Corporation becomes First Elderly-friendly corporation in Kerala
- Mysuru Printing Press Breaks Record by Printing Highest No. of Currency Notes in a Month. RBI Note Mudram printing press is a subsidiary of Reserve Bank of India that was established in 1995
to meet the demand and supply for the bank notes. It has two presses: one at Mysuru, Karnataka and the other at Salboni, West Bengal.

- India Signs Financing Agreement with World Bank for US$ 48 Million for “Nagaland Health Project”
- BHEL Commissions 500 MW Thermal Unit In West Bengal
- Petroleum Conservation Campaign ‘Saksham 2017’ Inaugurated in Nagaland
- ‘Establishment of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)- Jharkhand’.

- Anandam Scheme Launched in Madhya Pradesh to Help Poor - It will help the poor people to get the daily needs like like jackets, sarees, blankets, utensils, school bags from the wealthy people. For this particular place is alloacted in each district to collect this items.

- Asia’s cleanest village Mawlynnong in Meghalaya becomes role model for cleanliness

- Kangra first ever district to geo-tag all assets under MGNREGA- Kangra village in Himachal Pradesh achieved the geo-tag 100 per cent of the assets generated under the MGNREGA. Kangra was the first district in India to achieved this target. It would help people in integrated development of all sectors like agriculture, irrigation, education, health etc.

- Karang Island in Manipur Becomes India’s First Cashless Island

- Karnataka allows sale of white kerosene in open market

- Entrepreneurship Development Scheme inaugurated in Mizoram

- World Bank Sanctions Rs 1,376 Cr For Tripura Power Upgradation

- Centre Sanctions Rs. 2207 Cr Special Assistance to J&K

- Himachal Pradesh Declares Dharamsala as the Second Capital of the State

- Bihar Government Launches ‘Nasha Mukt’ (Addidction-Free) State Campaign with the formation of world’s largest human chain across the state with 11,292 km Human Chain to Eliminate Alcohol

- Himachal Pradesh Found Best State in Learning Outcomes by ASER

- Goa First State to Send Postal Ballots Electronically to Service Voters

- Assam Launches ‘Chief Minister’s Award’ For Performing Districts in Cashless Transaction

- Boeing India Engineering & Technology Centre Launched in Bengaluru
• Madhya Pradesh Announces Total Ban on Polythene Bags from May 1, 2017

• India’s first Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) at Metagalli post office in Mysuru on January 25, 2017. The second POPSK simultaneously opened in Gujarat.

• Jeevan Rakha – New e-Health Scheme Launched in Kerala

• Arunachal launches ‘Dulari Kanya’ scheme to check infant mortality

• Telangana Ranks Second in Walnut’s Cashless Score Card

• Indian Navy’s Theatre Level Exercise, TROPEX 17 Begins. The Theatre Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX), an annual Indian Navy exercise kicked started on January 24, 2017 off the Western Seaboard

• Andhra Pradesh Launches Rs 100 cr fund of funds for Fintech Startups. Fintech is being seen as a promising space to generate job, thus the state has initiated an industry-academia-government partnership to tap and refine skilled talent available at cheaper costs to develop Visakhapatnam into a global fintech hub.

• The Telangana government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with French Aero campus Aquitaine to set up a world-class aero skills academy in the city in collaboration with academia and industry of the state.

• India’s largest startup incubator to be built at Hubballi, Karnataka

• India’s First Multi-Sports Museum Inaugurated in Kolkata

• Meghalaya - Textile Ministry Inaugurates Meghalaya’s First Ever Apparel and Garment Centre at Ampati

• Ministry of Defence to Set up Rs 1500 cr Defence Unit in Madhya Pradesh

• Kurnool – will become the fifth member of Institute of Information Technology Design and Manufacturing (IIITDM)

• Bihar Introduces Third Gender Category in Board Exams. It is for the first time that the Board will conduct the exams for the transgender category in 2017 after it was recognized by Supreme Court in 2014.

• Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence & Surveillance System Launched in Mumbai

• Goa - Distributed Pink Teddy Bears to First-Time Female Voters and first time men voters received pen

• India’s first Center of Excellence for Para Sports to help para athletes in showcasing their skills and talent further both at the national and international level in Gujarat
• Andhra Pradesh Gets its First Smart Police Station

TAMILNADU

• Ordinance for Jallikattu - Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, O. Paneerselvamm has send a draft ordinance to the centre seeking an amendment to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and removal of “bull” from the list of “performing” animals. This will ensure that provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act will not apply to the bull.

• Tamil Nadu assembly under the chairmanship of Chief Minister O Panneerselvam unanimously passed the Jallikattu Bill on January 23, 2017 to replace the ordinance issued on January 21, 2017 to allow the states traditional sport.

• The bill amends the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, making Jallikattu a permanent sport in rural Tamil Nadu.

COMMITTEE

• Amitabh Chaudhry Committee - to review life insurance product norms

• Timothy Gonsalves Committee - Reservation for Girl Students in IITs (Suggests 20 Percent)

• Uma Bharathi Committee - to determine the availability and utilization of waters of the river Mahanadi and its tributaries.

• N.K. Singh Committee - on Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM)

• Vinod Rai Committee - Supreme Court Appointed Vinod Rai as BCCI Committee’s Head. The bench, comprising Justices Dipak Misra, A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud also appointed historian Ramachandra Guha, Vikram Limaye, Managing Director of IDFC and Diana Edulji, former women test cricket captain as the member of the 4-membered committee.

• Afzal Amanullah - to Look into Haj Subsidy Issue

• Dr. H.R. Nagendra Committee - to prepare a Yoga Protocol for Diabetes Control

AWARDS

• The Hindu Prize 2016 - Kiran Doshi for Jinnah Often Came to Our House

• TS Eliot Prize 2016 - Jacob Polley

• Kolkata’s Sitalpati Gets place in UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage

• People’s choice award – Priyanka Chopra (for her TV Series Quantico)

• UNWTO Award for Innovation - ISKCON’s Govardhan eco village

• Golden Peacock Award - Delhi Airport for CSR in Aviation Sector
- First Hugo Chavez Peace Prize - Vladimir Putin
- Nita Ambani’s Philanthropic Work Honored by Metropolitan Museum of Art. Nita Ambani has become the first South Asian to receive the honour

- Damodar Valley Corporation receives NTPC award 2015-16

- **Australia’s highest civilian award** – 3 Indian-origin wise Purushottam Sawrikar, Makhan Singh Khangure, Vijay Kumar

- National Geoscience Award 2016 – 1. Dr. A Keshav Krishna, 2. Dr. N. Purnachandra Rao

- Dr G N Rao inducted to Ophthalmology Hall of Fame

- Madras Engineer Group Adjudged Best Marching Contingent in Services Category during Republic Day Parade – 2017

- Rajasthan and Telangana are bagged the eGovernance awards for Excellence

- 2017 Genesis Prize - Anish Kapoor (Indian origin British Sculptor)

**PADMA AWARDS**

- This year the President of India has approved Padma Awards to 89 persons. Out of these 19 are women, 5 awardees are from the category of foreigners, NRIs, PIOs while 6 are posthumous awardees.

  The Award includes 7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri Awardees.

**PADMA VIBHUSHAN:**

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<th>No.</th>
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<td>Shri K J Yesudas</td>
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<td>Others-Spiritualism</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Prof. Udipi Ramachandra Rao</td>
<td>Science &amp; Engineering</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Late Shrij Sunder Lal Patwa</td>
<td>Public Affairs</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
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<td>Late Shri PA Sangma (Posthumous)</td>
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<td>Prof. (Dr.) Devi Prasad Dwivedi</td>
<td>Literature &amp; Education</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Shri Tehemton Udwadia</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Shri Ratna Sundar Maharaj</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Swami Niranjana Nanda Saraswati</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
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<td>H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (Foreigner)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Late Shri Cho Ramaswamy (Posthumous)</td>
<td>Journalism</td>
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**PADMA SHRI:**

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<td>Smt. Nivedita Raghunath Bhide</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Shri Mariyappan Thangavelu</td>
<td>Sports-Athletics</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Late (Smt.) Suniti Solomon (Posthumous)</td>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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**APPOINTMENTS**

- CEO of Prasar Bharati - Rajeev Singh
- CBI Director - Alok Kumar Verma
- AIFF president Praful Patel becomes a member of FIFA finance committee
- Antonio Tajani (Italy) - President of European Parliament
- President of Gambia - Adama Barrow
- Ajit Pai - FCC chairman appointed by Donald Trump
- Uttam Dhillon - Trump appointed Indian-American attorney to key White House post
- Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar (Father of Indian Supercomputer) – VC of Nalanda University, Bihar
- Dushyant Chautala is elected as youngest president of Table Tennis Federation of India
- Ashok Amritraj Appointed UN in India Goodwill Ambassador for the Sustainable Development Goals. Amritraj is the first Ambassador for the UN in India
- Moussa Faki Mahamat – African Union head
- Anushka - ambassador of Swachh Bharat campaign
- Sanjeev Sanyal - Principal Economic Adviser

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**
• The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Tokyo, Japan for cooperation in the field of outer space.

• Ukraine Gets its First Baby Girl Born Using New ‘Three-Person’ IVF Technique. New technique of three-person IVF called ‘pronuclear transfer’. Three-person IVF was legalised in the UK in 2015. The objective of three-person IVF is to create a child free of mitochondrial disease in cases where parents had one such disease.

• NASA Set to Explore Iron-Rich Asteroid “16 Psyche”
  i. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has given its approval to explore an iron-rich asteroid “16 Psyche” as a part of its mission to learn more about the history and composition of the celestial body.

• Robot Journalist Xiao Nan Writes Its First News Article

• Government Launches Web-Portal ‘ShaGun’ for Monitoring Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

• The US military launched a Space-Based Infrared System (SBIRS) GEO Flight 3 mission on January 20, 2017. Under the mission, Geo-3 satellite has been sent into the space mounted on Atlas V rocket from Florida where it will detect any possible missile attack to meet national security threats.

• INS Vikramaditya Becomes India’s First Warship to Have ATM Onboard

• Scientists Explores Wolf 1061c To Be Next Habitable Planet After Earth

• Scientists Develop Robotic Sleeve to Pump Blood in Weak Heart

• TeamIndus proposes nameplate on the Moon for Rs.500. A Bengaluru start-up TeamIndus proposes nameplate on the Moon for Rs.500. Indians are being offered the opportunity to leave their name on the moon, for a price. Space start-up TeamIndus will get the names of public ‘donors’ micro-engraved on a small-sized aluminium object, which will be placed on the lunar surface when its lander descends on the moon.

• Rubber Soil Information System (RubSIS) launched by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry for Rubber Growers

• Japan Launches First Military Communications Satellite, Kirameki-2

• ISRO Successfully Tests Cryogenic Engine for Upper Stage of GSLV Mk III at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu.

• US Based Scientists Develops Human-Pig Hybrid – Chimra

• INSAT-3DR Satellite to Enable Detecting Farm Fires

• ASTROSAT Captures Rare Act of Vampire Star - Based on a study published in the Astrophysical Journal Letters, an unusual action of a small, six billion old, so called vampire star, has been
captured by ASTROSAT, India’s first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory that was preying on bigger celestial body.

- **China tests missile DF-5C with 10 nuclear warheads** - China has tested successfully a new version of a missile Dongfeng-5C missile which can carry up to 10 nuclear warheads from the Taiyuan Space Launch Centre in Shanxi province

- World’s Smallest Pacemaker Unveiled in US - Oncologists in United States successfully implanted World’s smallest pacemaker, Micra Transcatheter Pacing System (TPS), in a patient in US.

**ENVIRONMENT**

- IMD Reports 2016 as the Hottest Year Since 1901 in India
- Mission 41K - The mission aims to save the Indian Railways’ expenditure of Rs. 41,000 crore on energy consumption over the next 10 years.
- India UK Join Hands to Launch Project to Tackle Delhi Air Pollution Risks
- Bombay Natural History Society launches climate change programme in Central Himalayas
- Qatar Suffers Lowest Ever Temperature of 1.5 Degree Celsius

**SPORTS**

- Khelo India National level Competition - the Khelo India National level Competitions on various sports for Under-14 and Under-17 children launched recently by sports ministry
- Indian Women Boxing Team Placed Third Wins Six Medals At Nations Cup In Serbia
- Kapil Dev inducted into Legends Club Hall of Fame
- Indian Footballer Jayesh Raimalani Joins Spanish Football Team CE JUPITER
- 2020 Euro Cup Football – Russia
- 2017 Women World Cup Cricket - England
- Malaysia Masters Grand Prix Gold 2017 – Saina Nehwal
- U-19 Cooch Behar Cricket Trophy - Bengal
- Virat Becomes Fastest Batsman to Score 1000 Runs as ODI Captain
- ICC Inducts 4 Women Umpires in Panel for Women’s WC Qualifier. Kathleen Cross (NZ), Sue Redfern of England, Claire Polosak of Australia and Jacqueline Williams of the West Indies
• Indian Ace Cueist Pankaj Advani wins 7th National Billiards Championship

• Usain Bolt Loses an Olympic Medal due to Positive Doping of Team-Mate Nesta Carter

• Target Olympic Podium” scheme - to identify and support potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games. Chairman – Abhinav Bindra

• Indian badminton player Lakshya Sen of Uttarakhand has created history after he attained World No. 1 Rank in the latest Junior Badminton World Federation (BWF)

• Pankaj Advani Wins 29th the National Snooker Championship title

• Sharath Kamal wins his 7th national crown at the 11Even Sports Senior Table Tennis Nationals

Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold Title

• Women – P.V. Sindhu
• Men - Sameer Verma
• Mixed Doubles - Pranaav Jerry Chopra and N Sikki Reddy

Australian Open tournament 2017

• Roger Federer won his 18th Grand slam title by the defeating Rafael Nadal
• Serena Williams won her 23rd Grand slam title and her seventh Australian by defeating Venus Williams

OBITUARY

• Zhou Youguang - Famous Linguist known as Father of Pinyin

• Dr. Oliver Smithies - He created the first animal model of cystic fibrosis

• C.V. Vishveshwara - Known as the Black Hole Man of India. He contributed in the physics of black hole even before the word black hole was coined.

• Nakamura - Father of Pac-Man.

• Asim Basu – Theatre Personality

• Pathani Patnaik - educationist and litterateur

DAYS

January 16 - Religious Freedom Day by Barack Obama
January 24 - National Girl Child Day
January 25 - National Voters Day

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January 27  - International Holocaust Remembrance Day
January 29  - National Immunization Day
February 2   - World Wetlands Day
February 4   - World Cancer Day
February 6   - Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

EVENTS


- Literature Festival – Jaipur. Theme - Freedom to Dream: India at 70

- First Strategic Dialogue Between India UAE held in New Delhi

- 2017 World Economic Forum (WEF) annual meeting - Davos, Switzerland

- The Indian postal department released a special stamp cover titled “Golden girls of India – Pride of Nation”. The special covers feature the 2016 Olympic medalist gymnast Dipa Karmakar, shuttler PV Sindu and wrestler Sakshi Malik.

- 68th Republic Day - Theme of 2017 Republic Day is: Skill India and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. This year the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was the Chief Guest at the ceremony. For the first time in the history of Republic Day, a foreign contingent of 179 UAE Soldiers led the annual parade on Rajpath. A contingent of National Security Guards, also known as the Black Cat commandos, took part in the parade for the first time.

- First Edition of the North East Investors Summit Held in Shillong

SCHEMES

- NITI Aayog’s Lucky Draw Scheme - NITI Aayog’s lucky draw schemes namely Lucky Grahak Yojana (LGY) for consumers and Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojana (DVY) for merchants. The top 5 states that had most of the winners under these schemes are Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.

- WCD Ministry releases National Action Plan for Children, 2016. The Plan focuses on four key areas including survival; health & nutrition; education & development; protection & participation.

- E-Paathsala Launches Unique Technology-Backed Services for Educational Institutions in India

- Income Tax Department (ITD) launched Operation Clean Money. To verify the cash deposited in the banks during November 9th to December 30th 2016.
The Budget for 2017-18 contains three major reforms.

1. Presented on February 1, 2017 instead of usual practice of being presented on last day of February.
2. Merger of Railway Budget with the General Budget
3. Abolition of Planned & Non-Planned Expenditure

Agenda of Union Budget 2017-18

i. The agenda for the Union Budget 2017-18 is TEC India, where T stands for Transform, E stands for Energize and C for Clean.

ii. The agenda seeks to transform the quality of governance and life of people; Energize various sections of society especially the youth and the vulnerable to bring out the best in them and Clean the country from the evils of corruption, black money and non-transparent political funding.

iii. The total Budget expenditure allocated for 2017-18 is Rs. 21.47 lakh crores.

10 Pillars of Budget 2017-18

The Budget 2017-18 is based on 10 distinct pillars to meet the TEC India agenda.

1. Farmers
2. Rural Population
3. Youth
4. Poor and the Underprivileged
5. Infrastructure
6. Financial Sector
7. Digital Economy
8. Public Service
9. Prudent Fiscal Management
10. Tax Administration

OTHERS

- Nepal Launches 10-year-plan to Reduce Depending on India for Vegetable Imports
- China Develops World’s Biggest Solar Park
- France Issues First ‘Green Bonds’ With Record Sale of 7 Billion Euro leading a significant way towards establishment of a genuine market in renewable energy bonds to address climate change.
• Poland was the first country to enter the green bond.

• A green bond is like any other regular bond but with one key difference: the money raised by the issuer are used towards financing ‘green’ projects, i.e. assets or business activities that are environment-friendly. Such projects could be in the areas of renewable energy, clean transportation and sustainable water management.

• Indian-origin Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth resigns

• Trump orders 2,000-mile wall to be built on Mexico border

• India and UAE Signs 14 Agreements to Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation on elevating bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

• Surya Namaskar Yajna Recognised in US Congress

• Inheritance Court for Non-Muslims to be Set up in Abu Dhabi

• India’s Foreign Exchange Reserves Rises by $ 932.4 million to $ 360.775 billion

• Trump Banned 7 nations from Entering US on Security Issues. Namely Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

• Iris Mittenaere of France Crowned Miss Universe 2017

• Ireland became the world’s first country to stop investing in fossil fuels

• India Post Payment Bank Begins Pilot Service in Ranchi & Raipur

• World’s Largest Battery Storage Plant Unveiled in California

• Kuwait has banned the Visas for five Muslim majority countries on February 1, 2017 over security issues. The five countries include Syria, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

• Centre of Integrative Oncology inaugurated in New Delhi

• The Qatar Airways has launched the World’s longest scheduled commercial service to ply between Doha to Auckland. The inaugural service of Flight QR920 took off on February 5, 2017 from Doha and will take 16 hours and 20 minutes to travel 14,535 kilometers to reach Auckland in New Zealand.

• Samudra Pavak or “Purifier of the Seas” is the third ship of the Pollution Control Vessel series of the Indian Coast Guard that was indigenously designed and commissioned in January 2016.

Union Cabinet Gives Green Signal to Amend Bill to Modify Scheduled Castes list in Odisha

i. The Union Cabinet under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 1, 2017 gave its approval to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950 Bill to make changes the list of Scheduled Castes in Odisha.
ii. Besides, the cabinet also approved amending the Constitution (Pondicherry) Scheduled Castes Order, 1964 to change the name of the Union Territory Pondicherry to Puducherry.

iii. The amended Bill will be shortly introduced in the parliament under the name Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders (Amendment) Bill, 2017.

iv. Additionally, Sualgiri/Swalgiri caste which is a part of already included Sabakhia caste has been made eligible to be included in the list of SC in Odisha.

Railways Approves Rail Project in Andaman and Nicobar

i. The Railway Ministry is set to develop the first ever railway line in Andaman and Nicobar Island that currently has no rail network.

ii. The Ministry of Railway is set to approve the project that will construct 240-km broad gauge railway line connecting Port Blair with Diglipur, the largest town on Andaman Island. It will connect the two islands with bridges and stations along the coast.
STATE AND UNION TERRITORY NEWS

First Smart Police Station
Andhra Pradesh gets its first smart police station at Nagarampalem in Guntur city in Amaravati

- The smart police stations are fully air-conditioned with a staff room, dormitory, mini control room, a reception chamber and individual enclosures for the Station House Officer and three Sub-Inspectors.
- Besides, the daily uniform of the staff has been changed from the usual khaki uniform to a navy blue trouser and a light blue shirt for men and a light blue sarif for women constables with additional blue blazer for lady receptionists.
- Instead of lock-up for detainees, a custody room with a double bed has been deployed.
- Above all, a closed circuit television camera has been installed in and around the station for closer surveillance of staff behaviour and movement of visitors.

First social innovation centre
Telangana government launches India’s first social innovation centre

- Telangana government has launched India’s first social innovation centre “Kakatiya Hub for Social Innovation” in Nizamabad. It will function like a rural incubator to encourage entrepreneurship at grassroots level. Its purpose is to create a model for promoting entrepreneurs in rural and semi-urban areas in the country.

Goa ranks first in having lesser infant mortality rate

- According to the recent data, infant mortality rate in the country has been registered at 42 deaths of kids per 1000 births while Puducherry was having 11 deaths of children per 1000 births.
- Top 3 states: Goa ranked first, followed by Kerala and Puducherry.

Goa Distributes Pink Teddy Bears to First-Time Female Voters

- The experiment was seen to be a fruitful effort. The 40 themed polling booths got 2 percent more voting than the average polling rate in all the other regular polling booths.
- Goa saw nearly 83 percent voting. Besides, the first time men voters received pens as a gift of appreciation.
Radhanagar beach in Andamans featured in top 10 beaches of World

- Andaman and Nicobar Islands’ Radhanagar beach has featured among the top 10 beaches of the World. The list was released by TripAdvisor, an American travel website company. Radhanagar beach on the Havelock Island in the Andamans has secured 8th position and topped in Asia. The Baia do Sancho Fernando de Noronha in Brazil topped the list.

Government to build 2 crude oil storages in Odisha, Rajasthan

- In a bid to insulate the country from volatility in global oil market, the government will build two more underground crude oil storages at Chandikhol in Odisha and Bikaner in Rajasthan.
- India has already built underground storages in rock caverns at Visakhapatnam (1.33 million tonnes), Mangalore (1.5MT) and Padur (2.5MT).

Bihar Introduces Third Gender Category in Board Exams

- It is for the first time that the Board will conduct the exams for the transgender category in 2017 after it was recognized by Supreme Court in 2014.

Railways Approves Rail Project in Andaman and Nicobar

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- The Ministry of Railway is set to approve the project that will construct 240-km broad gauge railway line connecting Port Blair with Diglipur, the largest town on Andaman Island. It will connect the two islands with bridges and stations along the coast.

India's solar power capacity crosses 9 GW

- Country’s solar power generation capacity was 9,012 MW as on December 31, 2016.
- Tamil Nadu led the chart followed by Rajasthan and Gujarat, Power.

Assam launches Rs 30,000 cr village development scheme

- In a move to bring about paradigm shift towards holistic development of villages in Assam, Chief Minisiter Sarbananda Sonowal launched Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana (CMSGUY).
- Chief Minister Samagra Gramya Unnayan Yojana, a mega mission with a financial outlay of Rs. 30,000 crore will be implemented in all the villages in Assam in the next five years culminating in 2021-22.
Arunachal first NE state to implement e-Cabinet solution
- Arunachal Pradesh became the **first state in the northeast** to implement e-Cabinet solution for the state cabinet members.
- Using this system, the cabinet members can access the cabinet notes before the meeting. The entire business of the Cabinet can be conducted using the e-Cabinet solution.
- “**e-Cabinet** is a powerful tool that the Arunachal Pradesh government plans to use to streamline its decision-making process,”

Gujarat Become India’s First State to Establishes Cashless System for PDS
- **Gujarat** has become the first state in India to establish **Cashless system for distribution of food grain** to the beneficiaries under NFSA (National Food Security Act).

GNFC township becomes India’s first cashless Township
- India’s first cashless township “**Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals (GNFC) township**”

Kerala’s Nilambur teak to get GI tag
- Kerala’s Nilambur teak known internationally for its superior timber quality and elegant appearance will be added to the list of Kerala produces with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag

Dalhousie Road becomes Dara Shikoh Road
- The New Delhi Municipal Council passed a proposal to change the name of Dalhousie Road to Dara Shikoh Road, after the eldest son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan.

- **Andhra Pradesh** Government constitutes 33 member committee for Sagarmala Project

DAE plans to develop uranium deposits in Meghalaya: Government
- The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has planned to develop large deposits of uranium found in Meghalaya to tap its potential to generate substantial nuclear fuel for atomic power plants in the country.

e-Prison Project
- The **Jammu & Kashmir** government launched an **E-Prison project** on to **digitalize the record** about the **jail inmates**. The e-Prison Project will digitize **25 district jails, two central jails and one sub-Jail** across the **State**.

Tejaswini Project

World Bank has signed an agreement with India to provide $63 million loan for Project Tejaswini to empower adolescent girls and young women in state of Jharkhand
Edappadi K Palaniswami Appointed as the New Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

- The Tamil Nadu Governor C. Vidyasagar Rao appointed Edappadi K. Palaniswami as 13th chief minister of the state on February 16, 2017. His appointment is in acceptance of the letter submitted by Palaniswami on February 14, 2017 that he was elected as the leader of the AIADMK legislature party at a meeting of the party MLAs.

J-K govt limits guests, dishes at weddings

- The Jammu and Kashmir government has announced restrictions on the number of guests to be invited and specified the number of dishes that can be served at both public and private gatherings, mostly weddings, in a bid to limit wastage of food and essential commodities in such ceremonies.
- The order will come into effect from April this year.
- While families will be allowed to invite only 500 people for their daughter’s wedding, the number has been restricted to 400 if one’s son is getting married. And only 100 people can be invited for smaller ceremonies like engagements.
- The wedding menu is also likely to be restricted and non-vegetarian dishes cannot accede more than seven with only two servings of fruits and sweets.
- Loudspeakers and firecrackers can not be used in any government or private program.
- Also, giving sweets and dry fruits with invitation cards has been restricted.

Sikkim becomes 22nd State to join UDAY

- India’s first fully organic state Sikkim has joined the union government’s Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) as 22nd state, the so called UDAY will in turn hand it an overall benefit of Rs 356 crore.

Kerala to launch sex offenders registry, first in the country

- The Kerala government also plan to launch the country’s first sex offenders registry which will contain all identification details of sex offenders and would be kept in public domain
- A comprehensive victim relief fund will be set-up by the state government to provide interim relief for victims of sex crimes, both children and adults.

Gujarat Assembly Passes COTP Amendment Bill to Ban Hookah Bars

- The bill seeks to amend the present ‘Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act-2003’ (COTP) and has replaced the Ordinance passed by Gujarat Government in December 2016 for the same.
- Despite restriction, if any hookah bar is found to be operational would be considered as an offence and subjected to punishment ranging from maximum of Rs. 50,000 fine to jail term of up to three years.
Rajasthan Becomes 2nd Largest Crude Oil Producer in India

- The oilfields in the state were producing nearly 90 lakh tones oil annually which accounted for 24 percent of the total domestic crude oil production.
- On the other hand, the Bombay High, an offshore oilfield of Mumbai is the largest producer of crude oil in India which accounts for half of the domestic oil production.

Visa-AP Sign MoU To Make Vishakhapatnam ‘Less-Cash’ City

- The world’s second largest card payment organization Visa has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Andhra Pradesh government to make Vishakhapatnam as India’s first ‘less-cash’ city

4,666 toilets built in 48 hours in Perambalur

- Trichy: In an attempt to equip all rural households in Perambalur district with individual toilets under the Swachh Bharat Mission, the district rural development agency (DRDA) has built a whopping 4,666 toilets in 121 villages in the district, that too in just 48 hours.
- In all, 4,000 construction workers, including those under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), were utilised for construction work which began at 7am on February 13 and ended at 7 am on February 15.

Rare butterfly Varieties spotted in Srivilliputhur Sanctuary:

- Fluffy Tit seen for the first time in the state, Silver Royal found again:
- Ayyanarkoil Falls, which is situated with in the Grizzled squirrel wildlife Sanctuary in Srivilliputhur, is also a habitat for very rare butterfly species.

OTHERS

- Meghalayas first ever Apparel and Garment Centre inaugurated at Ampati
- Madhya Pradesh: Rs.1500 crore defence unit to be set up in Morena district
- India’s first floating elementary school inaugurated on Manipur’s Loktak Lake
- Mamata Banerjee declares Kalimpong as separate district. A new district of Kalimpong was carved out of Darjeeling, which has seen separate statehood demands since 1980s West Bengal
- Haryana Government Imposes Penalty on Liquor Consumption in Public
- Himachal Pradesh Governor Inaugurates Campaign against Drug Addiction
- Bihar Government Prohibits State Officials from Consuming Liquor Anywhere In The World
• Punjab Government prohibits sale of processed, flavoured tobacco & nicotine products for 1 year

• Kerala cabinet Gives In-Principle Approval for Greenfield Airport at Sabarimala

• Tamil Nadu govt announce Rs 2247 cr for drought affected farmers

• Jammu & Kashmir to observe 2017 as Year of Apple

• Online payment of court fees introduced in Goa

India Approves USD 340 million Loan to Nepal for Development Programmes

• Under this programme Mahalaki bridge and 15 roads will be constructed in various parts of Nepal.
• The move is a part of India’s commitment for strengthening infrastructure in Nepal. The completion of infrastructural projects will not only strengthen physical connectivity but also emotional bonding between the people of both the countries.

India and Nepal

• Centre clears Rs 5,700-crore hydro project to Arun-III hydropower project in Nepal for power, coal, renewable energy and mines.

• The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) Okayed revised norms for the Scheme for Development of Solar Parks and Ultra Mega Solar Power Projects with the production target enhancement to 40,000 MW from the present 20,000 MW.

• The Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved investment proposal for generation component of 900 MW Arun-3 Hydro Electric Project in Nepal by state owned SJVN Limited.

India, Rwanda sign MoUs in innovation, aviation and visa requirements

• India and Rwanda have inked three agreements in the fields of innovation, aviation and visa requirements to boost bilateral relations. These agreements were signed in Kigali in the presence of Vice President Mohammed Hamid Ansari and Rwandan Prime Minister Anastase Murekezi during a business forum meet. Vice President is the first Indian leader to officially visit Rwanda. He launched India-Rwanda innovation growth programme.
Agreements

India Signs MoU with Bangladesh to provide financial assistance of Taka 240 mn for development of Sylhet city

India & Sri Lanka signs MoU for multi-ethnic tri-lingual Secondary School

India & Austria Signs Protocol to Amend Bilateral Taxation Treaty

Union Cabinet apprised of India-Vietnam space agreement

India-UK sign MoU to allow more flights to boost tourism and trade
India, Israel to celebrate 25 years of diplomatic ties

- India had established full diplomatic relationship with Israel in 1992 though it had recognised the country in 1950. Both countries have been cooperating each other on many fronts including cooperation in defence and agriculture and achieved milestones in fostering bilateral relationship. Both countries are also committed to further deepening and diversifying the relation in many areas including those of space, science and technology, education and innovation.

India, Japan ink pact on rail safety

- India signed Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with Japan for enhancing railway safety in the Indian Railways with focus on railway track and rolling stock safety. Under this agreement, the areas of cooperation include rail inspection, rail welding, automatic railway track safety inspection, maintenance of rolling stock. Besides, it will also cover any other relevant railway safety matters jointly determined by both sides with the aim to prevent major rail accidents.

India hosts Implementation and Assessment Group Meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT)

- GICNT was launched in 2006 jointly by the Russian Federation and the United States. Presently it has 86 partner nations and five official US
INTERNATIONAL

Donald Trump Bans 7 nations from Entering US on Security Issues

- The new US President has imposed a controversial 90-day ban on travellers from Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.
- The decision aims at protecting United States from the entry of foreign terrorists to keep the nation safe.

China steams past U.S., France to be Germany's biggest trading partner

- China for the first time became Germany's most important trading partner in 2016, overtaking the United States, which fell back to third place behind France.

Kuwait Suspends Visa for 5 Muslim-majority Countries

- Kuwait has banned the Visas for five Muslim majority countries on February 1, 2017 over security issues. The five countries include Syria, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Iran and Russia agree to jointly produce nuclear fuel

- Iran’s Atomic Energy Organization (AEOI) has announced that Russia and Iran have reached an agreement to jointly produce nuclear fuel. The preliminary agreement with Russia on the joint production of nuclear fuel was reached during the nuclear negotiations between Iran and P5+1 nations (major world powers) in 2015. Iran has developed roadmap for the joint production, which will take two years to be implemented. Besides, it will buy 950 tonnes of uranium from Kazakhstan. This purchase is part of Iran’s international nuclear deal known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between Iran and P5+1 nations.

Longest elevated cycle path in the world opens in China

- The world’s longest elevated cycle path has been opened in Xiamen, China which can handle about 2,023 cyclists with a speed limit of 15 miles per hour.

Pakistan’s Senate passes bill to regulate marriages of minority Hindus in country

- Pakistan’s Senate (upper house) has unanimously passed landmark The Hindu Marriage Bill 2017 to regulate marriages of minority Hindus in the country.

EU member states approve visa-free travel for Georgia
DEFENCE

US makes changes in defence export control laws to benefit India

- United States (US) has made changes in its export control laws that will benefit India by facilitating smoother transfer of technologies and arms. These changes have been made in par with recognisation of India’s status as a ‘Major Defence Partner’.

AAD interceptor missile successfully test-fired

- Advanced Air Defence (AAD) interceptor missile dubbed as Ashwin was successfully test-fired from launching complex-IV of Dhamara Abdul Kalam defence base off Odisha coast. The test assed missile’s killing capability by intercepting a target, mimicking an incoming enemy missile in mid-air. The success of test has boosted India’s position in the exclusive club of AAD countries United States, Russia and Israel.

Netra – Early warning system

- The IAF has formally inducted the first indigenously built Airborne Early Warning and Control System Netra developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation at the Aero India exhibition.

Tarini to be Inducted into Indian Navy on 18 February 2017

- The Indian Navy’s second ocean going sailboat Tarini will be inducted at a ceremony scheduled to be held at the INS Mandovi Boat Pool
- The sail boat Tarini is being inducted into the Navy and is slated to be the platform for First Indian All Women Circumnavigation of the Globe expedition of the Indian Navy.

BEL launches communication radio

- PSU Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) has unveiled a new communication radio for the Indian armed forces, called STARS-V Mk III, at the Aero India 2017 show.

Fast Patrol Vessel of Indian Coast Guard Ship ICGS AYUSH Commissioned at Kochi

- Fast Patrol Vessel ICGS AYUSH built by Cochin Shipyards Limited (CSL) was commissioned at the Naval Base in Kochi on February 18, 2017 by the AVSM Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Naval Command, Vice-Admiral A R Karve.
• The ICGS AYUSH is intended to help in **anti-smuggling and search and rescue operations** to secure the Indian waters by patrolling within the Exclusive Economic Zone and also help in fisheries protection.
• With this, the CSL Shipyard has completed construction of **20 Fast Patrol Vessel series for the Coast Guard.**
• The shipyard was awarded the work of constructing 20 Fast Patrol Vessels on October 20, 2010. CSL delivered the first vessel in **September 2013** and subsequently delivered vessels at about two months interval.
• **ICGS AYUSH** is the **20th and the last in the series** of the Fast Patrol Vessel. These vessels are smaller in size as compared to the larger ones that CSL had been building.

**Srinagar Airport Gets Its First Foreign Airline Service**

• **AirAsia** became the first foreign airline to begin its operations from **Srinagar international airport** in Jammu and Kashmir

**India's first dedicated heliport to open in Delhi**

• The capital will soon get India's first dedicated "heliport" for flying in and out of Delhi to nearby areas in choppers.

**Air India’s New Fuel-Efficient Airbus A320 Neo Makes Maiden Flight**

• The Airbus A320 Neo aircraft is fuel-efficient and highly environmental-friendly. It has reduced noise levels and emits 50 percent less carbon.

**Samudra Pavak**

• Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and its UAE counter parts will take part in Joint exercise and sharing of operational expertise in Dubai.

• In the exercise, IGC is represented by Samudra Pavak. The ship will also sail to Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Samudra Pavak or “Purifier of the Seas” is the third of the Pollution Control Vessel series of the ICG. It was indigenously designed and commissioned in January 2016.

**2017 Cobra Gold Exercise Begins in Thailand**

• Cobra Gold 2017 is the **36th edition** of the multinational drill and is co-organized by United States and Thailand. It will expand regional cooperation and collaboration for disaster relief.

**About Cobra Gold Exercise**

• Cobra Gold is an **Asia-Pacific military exercise** held in **Thailand** every year. It is the largest Asia-Pacific military exercise held each year.
The exercise began as a bilateral drill between the United States and Thailand and has now grown into one of the world’s largest multinational exercises, involving some 30 countries.

It is the largest multinational military exercise in which the United States participates. (defence)

INS Sarvekshak

In a first for Indian warships, solar power lights up INS Sarvekshak

For the first time in the country, solar panels have been installed on an Indian warship. The survey class vessel INS Sarvekshak, attached with the Southern Naval command, has been fitted with 18 sheets of solar panels atop its hangar.

India Successfully Test-Fires Home Grown Interceptor Missile in Odisha coast

The successful testing leads India towards achieving a robust two layered Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system. It will strengthen India’s position in the exclusive club of US, Russia and Israel.

The Advanced Air Defence interceptor named as Ashwin has the capability to destroy the incoming enemy missile in the endo-atmospheric region at a low altitude of less than 30 kilometres.

Intech DMLS Launches India’s First Indigenously Developed Jet Engines Series

India’s first Metal 3D printing provider Intech DMLS Limited has launched the country’s first indigenously developed Jet Engine Series under the brand name Poeir Jets.

With this India has become the first country in Asia and the fourth country after the US, Europe and Israel to indigenously develop such an engine in the private space.

India Successfully Test Fires Exo-Atmospheric Interceptor Missile

India successfully conducted a test wherein an incoming ballistic missile target was intercepted by an exo-atmospheric interceptor missile off the Bay of Bengal.

With this commendable scientific achievement, India has crossed an important milestone in building its overall capability towards enhanced security against incoming ballistic missile threats. It has entered an exclusive club of four nations with developing capabilities to secure its skies and cities against hostile threats.

V AJRA launched:
The Department of Science and Technology has launched Visiting Adjunct Joint Research Faculty or VAJRA scheme that enables NRIs and overseas scientific community to participate
and contribute to research and development in India. Under the scheme, an overseas Indian can work for one to three months in an institution in India and that too at good terms.

**US and Japan Successfully Conducts Test Flight of New Ballistic Missile Defence System**

- The **United States** and **Japan** successfully conducted a flight test of a **Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) Block IIA** from the Pacific Missile Range Facility at Kauai, off coast **Hawaii**
- The next-generation SM-3 Block IIA Interceptor has been jointly developed by the U.S. defense firm Raytheon and Japan’s Mitsubishi

**Others**

- **Reliance Defence Signs Master Ship Repair Agreement with US Navy**
- **L&T, European firm MBDA tie up to make missiles in India**
- The 11th biennial edition Aero India 2017 was held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru
- **Pakistan Army Launches Military Operation Radd-ul-Fasaad to Eliminate Terrorism**
- **India Approves Rs 17,000 crore Missile Deal with Israel**
- Pakistan’s naval exercise Aman 2017 begins in Karachi
- **China successfully tests DF-5C missile with 10 nuclear warheads**
ISRO Collaborates with Drishti Lifesaving to Study Killer Rip Tides

- A team of scientists at Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) along with a private lifeguard agency appointed by the Goa government is conducting a new study to understand the phenomenon of ‘killer rip tides’ to safeguard beaches in Goa.
- ISRO Scientists have collaborated with Drishti Lifesaving, a private agency appointed by the state tourism ministry to conduct a study titled Ripex 2017 at Space Applications Centre, ISRO Ahmedabad.
- A Rip Tide is a strong sea current which pulls the water away from the shore often catching unawares swimmers and people too along with it.
- It is one of the most common causes for drowning in the shallow waters off Goa’s popular coastline with a higher rate of incidents especially recorded at Calangute, Baga, Anjuna and Colva beaches.
- The team tested the presence of active rips along some beaches using a specially developed device and the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System and a navigation receiver.

Large Uranium Reserves found in Meghalaya

- Reserves of Uranium have been found in Meghalaya over a large area around Domiasiat, Wahkyn, Lostoin among others.

- The Uranium Corporation of India Ltd. (UCIL) under Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has already made a plan to develop the mineral resources at Domiasiat under the name of “Kylleng Phendengsohiong Mawthabah (KPM) Uranium Mining Project”.
- The project has the potential to generate huge amount of nuclear fuel for the atomic power plants of the country.

TAMRA Portal and Mobile Application for Transparency in Statutory Clearances for Mining Operations

- TAMRA (Transparency, Auction Monitoring and Resource Augmentation) is the portal and Mobile Application for Transparency in Statutory Clearances for Mining Operations.
- TAMRA Portal and Mobile Application aims to enhance the transparency and accountability in the mining sector as a part of the Ease of Doing Business.
- The initiative will speed up mining activity in India and enable all the
• TAMRA provides block-wise, state-wise and mineral-wise information of the blocks to be auctioned; monitors various statutory clearances and also highlights the additional resources generated through e-Auction.

IIT Kharagpur to launch India’s first School on Quality and Reliability

• The **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur** is starting India’s first interdisciplinary **School on Quality and Reliability (Q&R)** in India.
• The main of the establishing the school is to improve the quality of life for the people of India as well as develop quality conscious global citizens.
• Besides quality, the school will also help to improve the trinity of 3Ps namely Process, Planet and People with target on Engineering, Human and Natural systems.

**ISRO Successfully Launches Record 104 Satellites in One Go from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota**

• Setting a new record in the space mission, the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** successfully launched **104 satellites** in one go from the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**, on February 15, 2017.
• The satellites were launched on **Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C37** which marked its **39th flight**.
• The 104 satellite included a **714 kg Cartosat-2 Series satellite** for earth observation, two Indian nano satellites **INS-1A and INS-1B** and **101 international nano satellites**. Of the 101 satellites, 96 of these belong to USA and one each belongs to **Israel, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Switzerland and United Arab Emirates**.
• The two Indian nano satellites INS-1A and INS-1B were developed as co-passenger satellites to accompany bigger satellites on PSLV.
• The 101 international customer nano-satellites are being launched as part of the commercial arrangements between **Antrix Corporation Limited** (Antrix), the commercial arm of ISRO and the international customers.

**ISRO Successfully Tests C25 Engine for GSLV Mark III rocket**

• The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** successfully conducted the final ground testing of its indigenously developed **Cryogenic Upper Stage engine (C25)** for **GSLV Mark III rocket** at ISRO’s Liquid Propulsion Complex at Mahendragiri in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu.
• The completed rocket will take on board the GSAT-19 satellite, which is an experimental communication satellite.

**Vampire star caught in the act by ASTROSAT**

• India’s first dedicated space observatory, ASTROSAT has captured the rare phenomenon of a small six-billion-year-old vampire star preying on a bigger celestial body. The vampire star phenomenon is observed when smaller star sucks material (mass and energy)
out of the bigger companion star, causing its eventual death. It is also called a blue straggler as small star becomes bigger, hotter and bluer, giving it the appearance of being young, while the ageing companion burns out and collapses to a stellar remnant.

First Ever Indian Genomics Beacon Launched in UK

- The Global Gene Corp and Global Alliance for Genomics and Health (GA4GH) launched an Indian Beacon on for Indian genomics data to enable the scientists in developing more effective drug delivery systems.
- A beacon is an online web service that allows researchers to determine whether an institution has particular genomic data in its data set. Genomics is the science that will define healthcare in our lifetime.
- The Indian beacon aims to bridge the gap in lack of shared Indian genomics data and help the scientists to better understand disease to develop more effective drug delivery systems and therapeutics.

Scientists ‘Unmask’ Protein Shielding Superbug Against Antibiotics

- The Scientists from University of Western Australian have mapped the molecular structure of a protein that protects the superbugs from all the antibiotics including Colistin, which is an antibiotic used when all other treatments fail.
- The scientist found that the protein EptA provides resistance to the bacteria even against last resort antibiotic Colistin.
- Using a technique called X-ray Crystallography scientists mapped the three-dimensional structure of EptA.

Government announces expansion of rotavirus vaccine in 5 states

- The Union Government has announced the expansion of rotavirus vaccine in five additional states under Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP).
- They are Assam, Tripura, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.
- The vaccine was first introduced in four states – Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.
- Key Facts The rotavirus is one of the most common causes of severe diarrhoea in children less than 2 years of age. It is one of the biggest killers in children in India.
- It is responsible for nearly 78,000 deaths, 32 lakh out-patient visits and nearly 9 lakh hospitalizations every year.
- The vaccine will prevent Rotavirus diarrhoea in children which accounts for approximately 40% of hospitalizations from diarrhoea in India.
- Rotavirus vaccine supplemented by proper sanitation, hand washing practices, ORS and zinc supplementation will go a long way in reducing the mortality and morbidity due to diarrhoea in children.
- About Rotavirus The Rotavirus is a genus of double-stranded RNA virus in the family Reoviridae.
- It most common causative agent of moderate-to-severe diarrhoea (MSD) among infants below 11 months age group and death among children less than five years of age.
Transmission: The virus spreads from person to person due to bacterial and parasiting agents that are primarily transmitted through contaminated food or water.

Impact on Health: It causes gastroenteritis after it damages the cells that line the small intestine and causes gastroenteritis.

In some cases it causes malnutrition, delayed physical and mental development among children.

About Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) The UIP provide free of cost vaccines to all children across the country to protect them against 11 life threatening diseases. These 11 diseases are Tuberculosis, Pertussis, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, Polio, Pneumonia and Meningitis due to Haemophilus Influenzae type b (Hib), Measles, Rubella, Rotavirus diarrhoea and Japanese Encephalitis (JE). (Rubella, JE and Rotavirus vaccine are given in select states and districts). It is the largest birth cohort in the world vaccinating around 26 million children annually.

Gene editing could help cure cancer:

- It can also Treat Age-Related Blindness
- Gene editing is being touted by scientists across the world as a possible cure for a range of diseases, from blindness to cancer.
- while a new study from south Korea has claimed that the gene-editing tool GRISPR Cas9 may be delivered directly into the eye to treat age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which causes distorted vision and blind spots, a British expert has said that editing genes may also help human beings beat “all inherited diseases” and malignant tumours.
- CRISPR – Cas9 works as a type of molecular scissors that can selectively trim away unwanted parts of the genome, and replace it with new stretches of DNA.
- AMD is one of the most common retinopathies, or diseases of the retina that result in impairment or loss of vision. In such diseases, abnormally high levels of the vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), a protein that promotes the growth of new blood vessels, are secreted.
- Injections of anti-VEGF drugs are the most common treatment against AMD, but at least seven injections per year are required because VEGF is continuously overexpressed by the cells of the diseased retinal pigment epithelium.
- Scientists at the Institute for Basic Science (IBS) in Korea used CRISPR-Cas9 to perform “gene surgery” in the layer of tissue that supports the retina of living mice.
- “The injections tackle the effects, but not the main cause of the problem. By editing the VEGF gene, we can achieve a longer-term cure,” said Kim Jin Soo, Director of the Centre for Genome Engineering at IBS.

Scientists Develops High-Quality Graphene Using Soybean

- A team of Scientists at Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) in Australia have developed the world’s strongest material, Graphene using soyabean to make it commercially more viable.
- The research was published in the journal Nature Communications.
What is Graphene?

- Graphene is a carbon material that is one atom thick. Due to its thin composition and high conductivity, it is used in applications ranging from miniaturised electronics to biomedical devices.
- These properties are also used to make thinner wire connections for providing extensive benefits for computers, solar panels, batteries, sensors and other devices.

About the Research

- Till now graphene production was very costly process. It required highly controlled environment with explosive compressed gases and long hours of operation at high temperatures and extensive vacuum processing for its production.
- However, the CSIRO scientist used a novel “GraphAir” technology which eliminated the need for such a highly-controlled environment thus making the process of the production very cost effective.
- Graph Air transforms soybean oil which is a renewable, natural material into graphene films in a single step.
- The technology grows graphene film in ambient air with a natural precursor, making its production faster and simpler.
- With heat soybean oil breaks down into a range of carbon building units that are essential for the synthesis of graphene.
- GraphAir technology results in good and transformable graphene properties as compared to graphene made by conventional methods.

Zealandia - 8th Continent?

- There is an entire, submerged and unrecognised continent that has been hiding until now according to scientists. Now Zealand is sitting on top of the geological entity, most of which sits underneath the south Pacific and so can’t be seen, according to a major new paper. In a paper published in the Geological Society of America’s Journal, researchers explain that Zealandia measures five million sqkm which is about two thirds of neighbouring Australia.
- The continent – known as Zealandia-is a distinct geological entity and meets all the criteria that are satisfied by the existing seven continents, the researchers said. It is elevated above the area that surrounds it, has its own distinctive geology, the area that it takes up is well defined and has a crust thicker than the regular ocean floor –just like the seven masses we currently class as continents.
- The new continent is 94% under water, according to the new paper. It is made up of three major landmasses: New Zealand’s north and south is lands, and New Caledonia to the north. Scientists said that by classifying it as a continent they would be able to study how they are formed and break up, and that it wouldn’t just be a matter of moving from a total of seven to eight.
- “The scientific value of classifying zealandia as a continent is much more than just an extra name on a list,” the researchers from New Zealand’s official geological body GNS Science
wrote. “That a continent can be so submerged yet unfragmented makes it (useful). in exploring the cohesion and breakup of continental crust”.

- Finding data on the continent has been difficult because so much of it is beneath the sea. “If we could pull the plug on the oceans, it would be clear to everybody that we have mountain chains and a big, high standing continent,” lead author Nick Mortimer told New Zealand TV Station TVNZ.
- Having the continent recognised isn’t a matter of appealing to any official body, and there is no codified list of what continents exist. So it could only change over time if future research accepts Zealandia on par with the rest so that eventually we might be learning about eight, not seven, continents.

The ‘Seven Wonders of the Universe

- It is a discovery that has taken the astronomy world by storm: Seven Earth-like planets in a not-too-distant galaxy which look like they could support life. Nasa’s announcement on Wednesday is a big talking point in the conversation about life out there and future planetary homes for humans. Here’s why the scientists are going gaga over the find

What’s the discovery?

- A Nasa telescope has detected the first known system of seven Earth-size planets around a single star
- This exoplanet system, TRAPPIST-I, is named for the Transiting planets and Planetesimals Small Telescope (TRAPPIST) in Child.

What’s so exciting about it?

- At least three of the planets represent the “holy grail for planet hunting astronomers” as they sit within the “Temperate Zone” and are the right temperature to allow alien life to flourish
- They are in the area around the parent star where a rocky planet is most likely to have liquid water.

Are the planets in the neighbourhood?

- At about 40 light-years (235 trillion miles) from Earth, the system of planets is relatively close to us, in the constellation Aquarius.
- Because they are located outside of our solar system, these planets are known as exoplanets.
- The seven wonders of TRAPPIST-1 are the first Earth-size planets that have been found orbiting this kind of star. It is also the best target yet for studying the atmospheres of potentially habitable, Earth-size worlds.

What has scientists found?

- Based on their densities, all of the TRAPPIST-1 planets are likely to be rocky.
- In contrast to our sun, the TRAPPIST-1 star-classified as an ultra-cool dwarf – is so cool that liquid water could survive on planets orbiting very close to it.
• The seven planets have orbits ranging from 1 to 20 days. If Trappist – 1 were our sun, all these (Above, left) Artist’s conception of the planets. If a person was standing on one of the planets, they could see geological features or clouds of neighbouring worlds plants would fit inside the orbit of Mercury
• The planets may be tidally locked to their star, which means the same side is always facing the star, therefore the two sides would each be in either perpetual daylight or darkness.

What remains to be checked?
• Whether the new planets are rich in water and it any could have liquid water on their surfaces.
• The mass of the seventh and farthest exoplanet has not yet been estimated – scientists believe it could be an icy, “snowball-like” world.

Exoplanets Galore:
• Altogether, astronomers have confirmed close to 3,600 planets outside our solar system since the 1990s, and they think there could be 100 billion or more in total. But barely four dozen are in the potential habitable zone of their stars, and of those, just 18 are approximately the size of Earth.

Chinese Scientists Develop New TB-resistant Cows
• Scientists from China’s Northwest A&F University have developed a genetically modified form of cows that are more resistant to bovine tuberculosis (TB).
• The cloned cattle were created using a genome editing tool known as CRISPR. They inserted a new TB resistance gene called NRAMP1 into 20 cows out of which 11 of survived past the age of 3 months.
• Bovine TB is a risk to cattle in many countries, including parts of the UK, Africa and Asia. The research was published in the journal Genome Biology on January 31, 2017.
• The transgenic animals were more resistant to tuberculosis than animals who were not modified.

Tesla unveils world’s largest battery storage plant in California
• NASA’s Juno spacecraft completes fourth flyby of Jupiter
Juno spacecraft sent by US space agency NASA, orbiting the planet Jupiter has completed a close flyby of Jupiter for the fourth time on February 2, 2017
• Juno is currently in a 53-day orbit and its next close flyby of Jupiter will occur on March 27, 2017
• During this period, Juno is studying the gas giant’s auroras to learn more about the planet’s origins, structure, atmosphere and magnetosphere.
• Juno spacecraft :
• Juno is a NASA space probe which was built by Lockheed Martin and is operated by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.
• The spacecraft was launched from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station on August 5, 2011 (UTC), as part of the New Frontiers program.

Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence & Surveillance System Launched in Mumbai

• UUHDSS has been designed and developed by Israeli Aerospace Industries (IAI) ELTA. It consists of integrated radars, electro-optic cameras and sonars.

World’s Smallest Pacemaker Unveiled in US

• Oncologists in United States successfully implanted World’s smallest pacemaker, Micra Transcatheter Pacing System (TPS), in a patient in US.
• The pacemaker TPS is as much as a vitamin capsule in size and provides the most advanced pacing technology.

Researchers Forms Stable Compound Na2He of Helium and Sodium

• An international team of researchers from China, Russia, and the United States conducted computer modeling to create a thermodynamically stable compound of sodium and the noble gas helium, Na2He, which has a fluorite-type structure and is stable at high pressures.

Scientists Develops Stretchable Rubber Material “Thubber” for Stretchable Machines

• As per the report, the material named as ‘thubber’ is an electrically insulating composite which represents a combination of metal-like thermal conductivity and elasticity. It can stretch over six times its initial length.
• It can be used in applications such as wearable computing and soft robotics, which require mechanical compliance and stretchable functionality.
• The major ingredient in thubber is a suspension of non-toxic liquid metal microdroplets. The liquid state allows the metal to deform with the surrounding rubber at room temperature.

SpaceX Falcon 9 Rocket Successfully Launches From NASA launch Pad

• Space Exploration Technologies Corporation better known as SpaceX is an American aerospace manufacturer and space transport services company.
• It was founded with the goal of creating the technologies to reduce space transportation costs and enable the colonization of Mars.
• It has developed the Falcon 1 and Falcon 9 launch vehicles and the Dragon spacecraft which is flown into orbit by the Falcon 9 launch vehicle to supply the International Space Station (ISS) with cargo.
Russian supply ship launched to International Space Station

- Russia successfully launched an unmanned spacecraft taking food and equipment to the International Space Station after the previous such ship crashed to Earth shortly after launch in December.
- **A Soyuz-U booster rocket** carrying the **Progress cargo ship MS-05 spacecraft** blasted off as scheduled from the Russian-leased Baikonur launch complex in **Kazakhstan**.

NASA to send robotic spacecraft to Sun next year

- NASA is planning to send its first unmanned robotic spacecraft under Solar Probe Plus mission to Sun in 2018 to probe its atmosphere. It will unveil why the surface of the Sun is not as hot as its atmosphere, how solar wind gets its speed and why the Sun occasionally emits high energy particles that are a danger to unprotected astronauts and spacecraft.

World’s first robot table tennis tutor sets Guinness record

- The world’s first robot table tennis tutor named FORPHEUS in Japan has set a new Guinness World Record for its uncanny ability of being able to play the game better than most humans.

ZTE launches world’s first 5G IT baseband unit (BBU) in partnership with Intel

- ZTE has partnered with Intel Corporation for this technology. The architecture of this technology has been provided by Intel. This is the world’s first software-defined network (SDN) or network function virtualisation (NFV) 5G radio access network (RAN) solution.
- This IT BBU is compatible with all 2G, 3G and 4G platforms. It also supports cloud-radio access networks (C-RAN) and distributed-RAN (D-RAN). These technologically advance feature makes a space for future development. Due to the highly advanced algorithms and mechanisms used in the system, the energy consumption will also be reduced.
- The Chinese smartphone giant ZTE also unveiled first Gigabit phone at MWC which is capable of achieving download speeds of up to 1 Gbps.

TNAU to take up mass production of anti-diabetes plants:

- Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) and an Ayurveda and tribal medicine expert have joined hands to increase production of Salacia oblonga, a medicinal plant believed to be effective in treating Type-2 diabetes, obesity and related complications. Saplings of the plant, native to Salem in Tamil Nadu will be multiplied by the university and given to tribals for farming in the hilly regions of the state. The product will also be bought back by pharmaceutical companies through TNAU.

Biologist find cave life that may be 50,000 yrs old

- In a Mexican cave system so beautiful and hot that it is called both Fairyland and hell, scientists have discovered life trapped in crystals that could be 50,000 years old.
First Art Work 3D-Printed in Space

- A ‘laugh star’ – 3D printed representation of sound waves generated from human laughter – created aboard the International Space Station (ISS) has become the first ever piece of art to be produced outside Earth. The artwork was printed using the Additive Manufacturing Facility (AMF), a gravity independent 3D printer, which supports the daily operations of the ISS by producing part, tools and assemblies. The work was conceptualised by Israeli contemporary artist Eyal Gever. Gever thought it fitting that the first ever piece of art created in space be laughter. “A Laugh Star floating in space, above all our head, is my attempt to create a contemporary metaphor for the hanging ‘Sword of Damocles’, a reminder that the beauty of human-lift is so fragile,” he said.

The historically low solar tariffs at Rewa

- Solar energy has become the cheapest it has ever been in India, thanks to historically low tariffs achieved in the reverse auction bid for three units in the Rewa plant in Madhya Pradesh.

OTHERS

- China becomes world’s largest producer of solar power
- World’s first Braille Atlas for visually impaired persons released in New Delhi
- UAE Unveils Plan to Build First City on Mars by 2117
- World’s First Heat-Driven Transistor created by researchers at Linköping University
- MoU between India and Senegal in Health and Medicine
POLICY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Assam to Raise a Wild Sanctuary to Grow Muga Cocoon

- The state government of Assam has decided to set up a Wild Sanctuary to grow Muga cocoon in an effort to give more exposure to Muga, Eri and Silk Products.

Maharashtra Approves Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme

- The state government of Maharashtra has approved a Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme to experiment whether cloud seeding produces sufficient rain.
- Seeding is a technique which involves spraying chemicals into clouds.
- Under the programme, the weather scientists will fly airplanes loaded with silver iodide over clouds above Solapur, Maharashtra during the monsoon 2017 beginning with a three year initial investigation.
- The programme is coordinated by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and will deal to address the frequent drought in Vidarbha.
- Scientists will fly two aircraft and spray dry ice and silver iodide on 100 clouds and compare them with 100 unseeded clouds. Ground radar will track the clouds and verify which ones contributed rain.
- The move is part of a larger experiment of the Earth Sciences Ministry to understand how clouds and aerosols interact and influence climate.

How Cloud Seeding Works

- Silver iodide is released into the atmosphere by a propane flame through jet, rocket or ground propellers.
- The iodide particles rise into the cloud and causes the moisture to freeze.
- The particle act as a base for the water vapour to settle on.
- The water vapour crystallizes and comes down as rain or ice.

Mobile app to monitor tiger reserves launched

- Monitoring of tiger reserves in the country will become much easier, quicker and transparent with the official launch of M-STRiPES (Monitoring System For Tigers-Intensive Protection and Ecological Status) software-enabled mobile app at Corbett Tiger Reserve.

Heat index

- Delhi hot, Mumbai hotter as heat index is on the rise Sees Decadal Surge At the rate Of 0.56° C In Summers. The average heat index in India is increasing significantly per decade at the rate of 0.56 degree C and 0.32 degree C in summer and monsoon seasons respectively.
• Heat index is a measure of the stress placed on humans by increased levels of temperature and moisture. The higher the heat index, the hotter the weather one feels, since sweat does not readily evaporate and cools the skin.

World’s Largest Battery Storage Plant Unveiled in California

• Tesla Motor Inc. and Southern California Edison have jointly launched World’s largest energy storage facilities on January 30, 2017 at the utility’s Mira Loma substation in Ontario, California.
• The facility would reduce dependence on fossil fuels for generating energy and take advantage of wind and sun to deliver clean energy to power homes, businesses among other things.
• It is the largest lithium-ion battery storage project in the world. The batteries charge up when there is more renewable energy than demand, ultimately allowing customers to use clean energy during peak hours.

Ireland became world’s first country to stop investing in fossil fuels

• Ireland has become the world’s first country to completely divest from fossil fuels.

• Earlier in 2015, Norway’s sovereign pension fund had divested from some fossil fuel companies, but not fully.

Science Express’ Train Flagged off to Create Climate Change Awareness in India

• A ‘Science Express’ train named ‘Science Express Climate Action Special’ was flagged off from Safderjung Railway Station in New Delhi on February 17, 2017 on a seven-month journey to spread awareness about climate change.

Israeli firm to contribute in clean Yamuna

• Ayala Water and Ecology Ltd. will focus on a stretch of eight km of sewage which drains into Yamuna River as an initial step towards cleaner water and environment.
• Ayala is also partnering with other Indian cities, including Hyderabad and Chennai, offering Israeli technology to help address water and ecological challenges.
• Israel, in addition to being one of the major exporters of weapons to India, is also contributing in the areas of agriculture and horticulture, among others.
• Israeli drip irrigation technologies are now widely used in India.

India Vetiver Network (INVN) launched in Tamil Nadu

• India Vetiver Network (INVN) has been launched at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore.
• Aim: To **protect the environment** using vetiver
• INVN is a **not-for-profit scientific network** to promote vetiver in India. Vetiver has worldwide application to tackle many environmental issues like soil erosion, mitigation of soil and water pollution.

**World’s First International Zip Line Created to Connect Spain And Portugal**

• In a first of its kind development of a cross-border zip line in the world, an **international zip line** named as **Limite Zero** has been created to connect **Spain and Portugal**.

**Eco System and its functions:**

The concept of eco system was first put forth by A.G. Transley (1935). It is a major ecological unit, having structure as well as function.

The structure is related to species diversity. The more complex is the structure, the greater is the diversity of species. The functions of Eco system are related to the flow of energy and cycling of materials through structural components of the eco system.

**Fungi and Bacteria :**

Fungi and Bacteria are decomposers and transformers. Decomposers attack the dead remains of producers and consumers and degrade the complex organic substances into simpler compounds. The simple organic matters are then attacked by another kind of bacteria, the transformer which change these organic compounds into the inorganic forms that are suitable for reuse by producer or green plants. The decomposers and transformers play very important role in maintaining the dynamic nature of eco system.

**Food Web :**

Food Web – When food chain is not linear but complex shows a relationship between all the living organisms in which element functions are more than one trophic level.

**Ecological Pyramids :**

An ecological pyramid (also trophic pyramid, Estonian pyramid, energy pyramid or food pyramid) is a graphical representation designed to show the biomass or bio-productivity at each trophic level in a given eco system. These are three ways an ecological pyramid can be represented.

**Ecological Pyramid (Trophic Pyramid, Food Pyramid) :**

It is a graphical representation designed to show the biomass at each trophic level in a given eco system.

1. **Pyramid of Numbers**
2. Pyramid of Biomass
3. Pyramid of Energy

Ecological Succession:

Ecological succession is the gradual process by which eco system changes and develops over time. There are two main type of succession primary and secondary.

An ecological succession is a gradual process by which eco systems change and developed over a line. There are two types:
1. Primary Succession
2. Secondary Succession

Primary Succession:

In this the series of community changes which occur on an entirely new habitat which has never been colonized before e.g. a newly quarried rock face or sand dunes.

Secondary Succession:

In this the series of community changes which take place on a previously colonized, but disturbed or damaged habitat for e.g. after falling trees in a wood land, land clearance a fire.

Others

- Bombay Natural History Society launches climate change programme in Central Himalayas
- Scientists Finds Evidence of 2 Billion Years Volcanic Activity on Mars
- Scientists Finds Evidence of Lost-Continent Mauritia Submerged Under Indian Ocean
- NASA Scientists Record January 2017 as Third Warmest January in 137 years

SCHEMES

'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan'

- 'Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan' (PMGDISHA) is to make 6 crore rural households digitally literate by march 2019

- PMGDISHA is expected to be one of the largest digital literacy programmes in the world.
- Under the scheme, 25 lakh candidates will be trained in the FY 2016-17; 275 lakh in the FY 2017-18; and 300 lakh in the FY 2018-19.
- To ensure equitable geographical reach, each of the 250,000 Gram Panchayats would be expected to register an average of 200-300 candidates.

Compensation Fund For Children
• Union Women and Child Development Minister Sanjay Maneka Gandhi has unveiled the setting up of a compensation fund under Nirbhaya scheme to make available financial help to children who are victims of sexual crimes.
• The money for this fund will be drawn from Nirbhaya Scheme and will be watched directly by the Women and Child Development Ministry and on the total amount of money to be set aside for this scheme is yet to be decided.
• In contrary Central Victim Compensation Fund was set up with an initial corpus of Rs 200 crore in 2015 but has not been operating.
• POCSO Act or Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act was formulated in 2012 to address sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. The POSCO victims are now included in the scheme.

Government Allows Tamil Nadu to Raise Number of Workdays under MGNREGA
• The Central government has granted permission to raise the number of workdays under the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee scheme in Tamil Nadu from the existing 100 days to **150 days**.
• The increase in workdays aims to help rural labourers who are facing job loss as a result of the severe drought affecting the state.
• The scheme is being implemented in **12,524** villages of Tamil Nadu. Works like delisting of water bodies in rural areas and maintenance of other rural assets are being undertaken under the scheme.
• In 2016, 33.43 crore man-days of employment have been generated so far under the scheme and Rs 4655 crore has been disbursed. With the increase in workdays, 3 crore more man-days would be generated.

Mahindra Agri launches digital platform MyAgriGuru for farmers
• Mahindra Agri Solutions Ltd (MASL), a part of Mahindra & Mahindra has launched a mobile app ‘**MyAgriGuru**’ for farmers on February 24, 2017.
• It is launched as a part of Government’s target to **double the farmer income by the year 2022**.

Features of ‘MyAgriGuru’ :
• ‘MyAgriGuru’ is 24×7 advisory platform for farmers.
• This app will provide information about **crop**, **agri-buzz**, **market price** and **weather** in **English** and **Hindi**.
• Mahindra is working with Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) to provide weather forecast for a five-day period.
• It has also associated with Commodity Exchange – NCDEX in order to share real-time prices of various mandis across the country.

Minister for Railways Dedicates Coaches of Antyodaya Express to the nation

• The new Antyodaya Rake and dedicated it to the common people of the nation.
• Antyodaya Express are completely Unreserved/General coaches designed by Indian Railways

• The first service will be launch between and Howrah and Ernakulam

Health Secretary launches ‘SAATHIYA’ Resource Kit and ‘SAATHIYA SALAH’ Mobile App

• C K Mishra, Secretary, Health and Family Welfare launched the SAATHIYA Resource Kit including ‘Saathiya Salah’ Mobile App for adolescents, as part of the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKKSK) program.
• One of the key interventions under the programme is introduction of the Peer Educators (Saathiyas) who act as a catalyst for generating demand for the adolescent health services and imparting age appropriate knowledge on key adolescent health issues to their peer groups.
• In order to equip the Saathiyas in doing so, the Health Ministry has launched the Saathiya Resource Kit (including ‘Saathiya Salah’ Mobile App).
• This Resource Kit comprises Activity Book, Bhranti-Kranti Game, Question-Answer Book and Peer Educator Diary.
• The mobile app is also linked to another important piece of cost-effective information platform of a toll-free Saathiya Helpline (1800-233-1250) which will act as an e-counselor.

Ravi Shankar Prasad launches Cyber Swachhta Kendra in New Delhi

• Union Minister of Electronics and IT Ravi Shankar Prasad launched Cyber Swachhta Kendra in New Delhi on February 21, 2017 for Botnet cleaning and Malware analysis as a part of digital India initiative

He also launched two mobile apps
• Mkavach to protect smart phones and tablets from hackers.
• Samvid to protect Desktops from suspicious applications from running

Cyber Swachhta Kendra:
• **Aim**: To create a secure cyber space by detecting botnet infections.
• **Cyber Swachhta Kendra** will operate in close coordination and collaboration with Internet Service Providers and Antivirus companies.
• The centre is being operated by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team.
• The planning of this centre was announced in 2015 with an outlay of **Rs 100 crore**.

Delhi Government Approves 37 Percent Hike in Minimum Wages

• The Aam Aadmi Party led Delhi government approved a hike of around 37% in the minimum wages for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled persons

• Rajasthan Inaugurates Medical Project RAHAT for Prompt Treatment of Heart Disease
• RAHAT programme aims to provide people in remote and rural areas with timely treatment during heart attacks. It has been launched by the private hospitals in the state.
• Under the programme, the patients facing heart attack would be provided with emergency ambulance service and telemedicine service through Eternal Heart Care Centre Hospital.

• Rajasthan has become the second state in India after Tamil Nadu to launch proragmmes against Heart Diseases.
• Rajasthan has launched several initiatives to boost the medical and health sector of the state such as Arogya Rajasthan, new medical colleges and Bhamashah Swasthya Bima Yojana etc.

**Haryana Launches Online Sex Ratio Monitoring System For Panipat**

• The state government of Haryana has set up an online system called the Sex Ratio Monitoring Dashboard to monitor the sex-ratio in Panipat district as part of the ‘Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao’ programme.
• The system will have the data of child sex-ratio collected from all villages by the Health and Women and Child Welfare Departments every month.
• It will also include the data about the critical villages where more attention was required regarding child sex-ratio and important steps needed to be taken to tackle the problem.

**UNICEF Makes $110 Million Appeal for Sudan Children**

• The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has launched a $110 million appeal to help two million acutely malnourished children across Sudan including hundreds of thousands living in conflict areas
• Sudan is home to around 13 percent of all children suffering from acute malnutrition across Africa. Two million children under five in Sudan are acutely malnourished.

**MoU signed for welfare of Handicraft Artisans belonging to Scheduled Castes**

• The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between different Ministry with an objective to improve the earnings of artisans across the country, belonging to Scheduled Castes categories.
• An MoU was signed between Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Ministry of Textiles and National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), a Central PSU under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

**Highlights of MoUs**

• Ministry of Textiles and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment have come together to step up interventions for the economic development of an estimated 12 lakh scheduled caste artisans.

**Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar Adopts Donja Village in Maharashtra For Transformation**

• Indian Cricket Icon Sachin Tendulkar is set to adopt his second village in Maharashtra for transformation after successfully transforming the lives of villagers in Puttamraju
Kandriga in Andhra Pradesh which he adopted in 2016 at an investment of about Rs. 6 crore.

CBEC launches mobile app for GST
- The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has launched a mobile application for Goods and Services Tax (GST) to inform the taxpayers of the latest updates on GST among others
- Taxpayers can also provide feedback and contact CBEC’s 24×7 helpdesk “CBEC Mitra” through a toll-free number or email, at the touch of a button

Chennai to become free of open defecation by 2018
- Chennai will become an open defecation free (ODF) city by next year.
- Four districts including Coimbatore will be declared ODF by March 2017.

Chhattisgarh anganwadi staff to get smartphones
- Anganwadi workers in Chhattisgarh will soon be provided smartphone to improve their job proficiency. Nearly 8,500 anganwadi workers of seven districts will be given smartphones.

Mil Banche programme held in all Government schools in Madhya Pradesh
- Mil Banche (Let read together) programme was held in all the primary and middle government schools in Madhya Pradesh. Under this programme, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, his minister colleagues, public representatives and other dignitaries took classes in these schools to motivate children. Besides them, district administrators, government officials, college students, businessmen, media persons, doctors, engineers, sports persons also took part. They read out portion of Hindi book of their choice. They also motivated children to read other interested books along with textbooks.

KVIC to make khadi Gaon in each state
- Aiming to scale up employment at rural locations and push up the khadi and village industries products from the villages, the khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) has initiated a project named khadi Gaon.
- Under the scheme, Five Khadi Gaon will be established in each state.
The economic survey 2016-17

- The economic survey 2016-17 was presented in the parliament on January 31, 2017.
- The survey was prepared by the finance ministry's chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian.
- The Economic Survey 2016-17 advocates the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) as an alternative to the various social welfare schemes in an effort to reduce poverty.

Here are the highlights of the report:

**GROWTH**
- 2017/18 GDP growth seen between 6.75 and 7.5 percent year on year.
- GDP growth rate at constant market prices for the current year 2016/17 is placed at 7.1 percent.
- The federal statistics office's estimate of 7.1 percent growth for 2016/17 likely to be revised downwards.
- Service sector is estimated to grow at 8.9 percent in 2016/17.
- Industrial growth rate expected to moderate to 5.2 percent in 2016/17 from 7.4 percent in 2015/16.
- The agriculture sector is estimated to grow at 4.1 percent in 2016/17 as opposed to 1.2 percent in 2015/16.

**FISCAL DEFICIT**
- Implementation of wage hike, muted tax receipts to put pressure on fiscal deficit in 2017/18.
- Need for fiscal prudence for both centre and states for fiscal health of the economy.
- Fiscal windfall from low oil prices to disappear in 2017/18.

**INFLATION**
- The average consumer price index (CPI) inflation rate declined to 4.9 percent in 2015/16 from 5.9 percent in 2014/15.
- CPI-based core inflation has remained sticky in the current fiscal year averaging around 5 percent.
- Oil prices, seen rising by one-sixth in 2017/18 over 2016/17 prices, could dampen India's economic growth.

**DEMONESTICATION**
- Remonetisation will ensure that the cash squeeze is eliminated by April 2017.
Supply of currency should follow actual demand and not be dictated by official estimate of desirable demand.

MONETARY POLICY

- Sharp rise in prices in 2017/18 may cap monetary easing headroom. Market interest rates seen lower in 2017/18 due to demonetisation.

GOVERNMENT DEBT

- Government debt to GDP ratio in 2016 seen at 68.5 percent down from 69.1 percent in 2015.

IT Department launches Operation Clean Money

- Income Tax Department (ITD) has initiated Operation Clean Money.
- Initial phase of the operation involves e-verification of large cash deposits made during 9th November to 30th December 2016.
- Data analytics has been used for comparing the demonetisation data with information in ITD databases.
- In the first batch, around 18 lakh persons have been identified in whose case, cash transactions do not appear to be in line with the tax payer’s profile.

Economic Survey backs Universal Basic Income

- The Economic Survey 2016-17 tabled in Parliament has advocated for the concept of Universal Basic Income (UBI) as an alternative to the various social welfare schemes in an effort to reduce poverty. It suggests that a more efficient way to help the poor will be to provide them resources directly, through a UBI. It will be an efficient substitute for a plethora of existing welfare schemes and subsidies.

Labour migration rose to 90 lakh over last 5 years: Economic Survey

- According to Economic Survey 2016-17, the inter-state migration of workers in India has increased substantially to 90 lakh annually between 2011-16 periods compared to the previous years. The estimate of labour migration in India was based analysis of census data of 2011 and railway passenger traffic in the unreserved category and new methodologies including the Cohort-based Migration Metric (CMM).

Fiscal deficit reaches 94% of the budget estimate

Union Budget (2017-18):
Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley presented the Union budget 2017-2018 in Lok Sabha on February 1, 2017. This is the 4th budget by the Narendra Modi government and it is the 1st budget after major changes in Indian economy like GST and Demonetization, in 2016.

Three major reforms:

- Presented on February 1, 2017 instead of being presented on last day of February every year.
- Merger of Railway Budget with the General Budget
- Abolition of Planned & Non-Planned Expenditure

Agenda:

The agenda for the Union Budget 2017-18 is TEC India, where T stands for Transform(The quality of governance and life of people), E stands for Energize(various section of society like youth) and C for Clean (evils like corruption, black money etc.).

The Total Budget expenditure allocated for 2017-18 is Rs. 21.47 lakh crore.

Pillars of Budget 2017-18:

The Budget 2017-18 is based on 10 distinct pillars to meet the TEC India agenda.

1. Farmers
2. Youth
3. Infrastructure
4. Digital Economy
5. Prudent Fiscal Management
6. Rural Population
7. Poor and the Underprivileged
8. Financial Sector
9. Public Service
10. Tax Administration

Highlights of budget across various sectors:

Agriculture sector

- A sum of Rs. 10 lakh crore is allocated as credit to farmers, with 60 days interest waiver.
- NABARD fund will be increased to Rs. 40,000 crore for irrigation corpus from Rs 20,000.
- And fund of Rs.5, 000 crore initial corpus for micro irrigation.
- Government will set up mini labs in Krishi Vigyan Kendras for soil testing.
Rural population

- Targets to bring 1 crore households out of poverty by 2019.
- During 2017-18, five lakh farm ponds will be taken up under the MGNREGA. Over Rs 3 lakh crore will be spent for rural India. MGNREGA to double farmers’ income and ensure participation of women up to 55%.
- Will allocate Rs. 19,000 crore for Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in 2017-18.
- Achieve 100% rural electrification by March 2018.
- Sanitation coverage has gone up from 42% in Oct 13 to 60% now.

Youth

- Will introduce a system of measuring annual learning outcomes and come out with an innovation fund for secondary education. Focus will be on 3,479 educationally-backward blocks.
- Skill India mission was launched to maximize potential and will set up 100 India International centers across the country. Amount of Rs.4000 cr allotted for youth training on Skill knowledge.
- Courses on foreign languages will be introduced.
- Take steps to create 5000 PG seats per annum.

Poor and health care

- Amount of Rs, 500 crore allocated for Mahila Shakti Kendras.
- Under a nationwide scheme for pregnant women, Rs. 6000 will be transferred to each person.
- Due to surplus liquidity, banks have started reducing lending rates for housing.
- Elimination of tuberculosis by 2025 targeted.
- Two AIIMS will be set up in Jharkhand and Gujarat.
- Allocation for Scheduled Castes is Rs. 52,393 crore
- Aadhaar-based smartcards will be issued to senior citizens to monitor health.
- Govt to set up dairy development fund with corpus of Rs 8,000 cr.

Infrastructure & Railways

- A total allocation of Rs. 39, 61,354 crore has been made for infrastructure and Rs. 64,000 crore allocated for highways.
- Total allocation for Railways is Rs.1, 31,000 crore. High speed Internet to be allocated to 1, 50,000 gram panchayats.
- No service charge on tickets booked through IRCTC and by 2019 all trains Will have
- Bio-toilets.
- Raksha coach with a corpus of. Rs. 1 lakh crore for 5 years (for passenger Safety),
- Unmanned level crossings will be eliminated by 2020.
- Coach mitra facility will be introduced to register all coach related complaints.500 stations will be made differently-abled friendly.
- All railway firms to be listed on Stock exchange.

Energy Sector
- Amount of **Rs.1.26,000 cr** for energy production-based investments received
- **Trade infra export scheme** will be launched 2017-18.
- Setting up the strategic policy for **crude reserves**.

Financial Sector
- FDI policy reforms - more than **90% of FDI inflows** are now automated.
- Decided to **abolish** FIPB and foreign investment promotion board in 2017-18.
- **Computer emergency response team** for financial sector to be formed.
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana** lending target at **Rs 2.44 lakh crore** for 2017-18.
- Two new schemes will be promote **Under Digital India - Bhim app**.
- DBT to LPG consumers, Chandiga-h s kerosene free, 84 govt schemes a-s on the DBT platform.
- **Head post office** as the central —ce for rendering **passport services**
- Easy **online** booking system for Army, defense personnel.
- **Donations** for political parties got limited to **Rs.2,000 per donor** in cash mode.
- Amount of **Rs.10,000 cr** is allocated to **recapitalization** of PSB in FY 2017-18.
- National carrier **Air India** will receive **Rs 1,800 crore** as equity infusion in **2017-18** under the government's ongoing financial assistance

Fiscal situation
- **Total expenditure** - **Rs. 21,47,000 crore**.
- Abolition on plan, non-plan expenditure, focus on capital expenditure (Capital expenditure will be 25.4 per cent).
- **Rs. 3,000 crore** under Dept of Economic Affairs for implementing Budget announcements. Defense expenditure, excluding pension, at **Rs 2,74,114 crore**. Expenditure in science and technology — Rs. **37,435 crore**.
- Total resources transferred to States and UTs is **Rs 4.11 lakh crore**.
- Recommended 3% fiscal deficit for three years with deviation of 0.5% of GDP.
- Revenue deficit - 1.9 %. Pegged fiscal deficit of 2017-18 at 3.2% of GDP i:- remain committed to achieving 3% in the next year.

Tax proposals
- **Net tax revenue** of 2013-14 was **Rs 11.38 lakh crore**.
- Rate of growth of advance tax in Personal I-T is **34.8%** in last three quarters of this financial year.
- Holding period for long term capital gain **lowered to 2 years**
- Propose to have carry-forward of **MAT** for 15 years.
- **Capital gains tax** to be exempted for persons holding land from which land was pooled for creation of state capital of Telangana.
- Propose to reduce basic customs duty for LNG to **2.5% from 5%**
- Income Tax Act to be amended. No transaction **above Rs 3 lakh** to be permitted in cash.
Limit of cash donation by charitable trust reduced to Rs 2,000 from Rs 10,000.

Net revenue loss in direct tax could be Rs. 20,000 crore.

India Innovation Index

- The Indian Policy Think Tank, NITI Aayog together with Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has launched a first of its kind online portal, India Innovation Index in India to rank the states on the basis of innovation.
- The Index has been developed by the Indian sides in consultation with the World Economic Forum, the World Intellectual Property Organization, Cornell University, OECD, UNIDO, ILO, UNESCO, ITU and others.
- The Index would rank Indian states as per their innovation capability and provide them necessary feedback to build their respective innovation ecosystems and further instill innovation spirit among institutions and people.
- Google Ranked top Brand among Global 500 Brands

Government to launch Indradhanush 2.0 for Recapitalization of PSBs

- Union Government has decided to launch ‘Indradhanush 2.0’ for recapitalisation of public sector lenders so that the banks remain solvent and fully comply with the global capital adequacy norms namely Basel-III.
- The Indradhanush 2.0 programme will be finalised by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) after completion of Asset Quality Review (AQR) being undertaken and is likely to be completed by end of March 2017.
- Asset Quality Review is being undertaken to recognize the top defaulting accounts as Non-Performing Assets (NPA) and make adequate provisions for them as they have negative impact on banks and their stocks.
- Post AQR, revised programme of capitalisation will be also issued as part of ‘Indradhanush 2.0.
- Earlier in 2015, under Indradhanush roadmap, the government had announced to infuse Rs 70,000 crore for recapitalization in state-run banks over four years while the banks had to raise a further Rs 1.1 lakh crore from the markets to meet their capital requirement in line with global risk norms known as Basel-III.

FDI inflow increases by 18% to $46 billion in 2016: DIPP

According to Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), the India’s foreign direct investment (FDII) has grown by 18% in 2016 to $46 billion. The sectors which attracted the
highest foreign inflows included services, telecom, trading, computer hardware and software, and automobiles. The bulk of FDI came in from Singapore, Mauritius, Netherlands and Japan.

**India to be less affected by global economic shocks: IMF**

- According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Indian economy is in fairly good shape and is likely to be less affected than other emerging economies if there is a further shock to the global economy. This is because India has an inward domestically demand-oriented economy. Earlier, IMF in its annual report had forecasted India’s growth to slow to 6.6% in the 2016-17 fiscal due to temporary disruptions caused by demonetisation. But it held that India’s economic growth will bounce back to its expected growth of more than 8% in the next few years. India is in a much better fiscal position and also is much better in terms of its monetary framework and monetary policy.

**Cabinet Approvals on**

- The Union Government chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on February 15, 2017 approved setting up of Food Legumes Research Platform (FLRP) at Amlaha, Sehore in Madhya Pradesh for meeting the emerging food security challenges.
- The Union Cabinet approved the merger of the State Bank of India with its 5 subsidiary banks namely State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur; State Bank of Hyderabad; State Bank of Mysore; State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore. (National)

**India to be Guest Country at St. Petersburg International Economic Forum**

- India’s first Centre of Excellence in Automation Technology was inaugurated by the Gujarat Technological University

**Trade Facilitation Agreement of WTO Comes into Effect**

- The World Trade Organization’s (WTO’s) Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) came into force on February 22, 2017 which required two-third of the member nation to ratify the agreement to be into effect.
- Ratified by 112 nations including India out of 164 member countries, the agreement is expected to give a boost to global trade with easier trade movement.
- The agreement seeks to enhance the movement, release and clearance of goods across borders.
- It also includes faster clearance procedures, enhanced conditions for freedom of transit for goods improvements, improved appeal rights for traders as well as reduced fees and formalities connected with the import and export of goods.
- The agreement will ease trade processes, bring down barriers to trade and enhance the capacity of the developing nations to better work with the global trading network.
- Besides, the TFA will also give a boost to the global trade in India which has been impacted due to slowdown in the world economy after demonetization period.
For the first time in the world, Microsoft to deploy Azure Stack in Andhra Pradesh

- For the first time in the world, Microsoft Azure Stack will be used to migrate 340 live applications of AP government from Hyderabad State Data Centre (SDC) to Vizag data centre.

Microsoft Azure Stack:

- It consists of three key components includes Data centre – application, server, and the storage – into one physical box and deliver to the client.
- It is a cloud software that is binding the entire stack together in one environment.
- Microsoft is doing proof of concept (POC) with Government of Andhra Pradesh to prove its capability for the first time.
IMPORTANT DAYS

February 2:

Every year World Wetlands Day is observed on 2nd February to marking the date of the adoption of the Convention on Wetlands or Ramsar Convention on 2 February 1971. 2017 Theme: Wetlands for Disaster Risk Reduction.

February 6:

International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation
2017 Theme: “Building a solid and interactive bridge between Africa and the world to accelerate ending FGM by 2030”.

February 4:

World Cancer Day – February 4, 2017

• The theme of 2017 World Cancer Day is We Can, I Can.

February 9 - National Deworming Day

February 11 - International Day of Women and Girls in Science

Theme: “Gender, Science and Sustainable Development: The Impact of Media”.

February 12:

• “National Productivity Day”
• February 12-18 as “National Productivity Week”
• Theme - “From Waste to Profits-through Reduce, Recycle and Reuse”.

February 13: World Radio Day

• 2017 Theme: “Radio is You”.

February 20

World Day of Social Justice – February 20, 2017

• Theme: “Preventing conflict and sustaining peace through decent work”

February 21
International Mother Language Day  International Mother Language Day is announced by UNESCO on 17 November 1999 and it was formally recognized by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution establishing 2008 as the International Year of Languages

Theme: “Towards Sustainable Futures through Multilingual Education.”

February 22
National Biodiversity Congress 2017 held in Kerala

- **Aim:** To identify practical evidence based case studies at regional level to support the plan of action
- **Theme:** “Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Sustainable Development” with four sub-themes.

February 24 - Central Excise Day

- It is also celebrated to commemorate the establishment of the Central Excise and Salt Act on 24th of February in the year 1944.

National Science Day – February 28

National Science Day is celebrated every year on 28th February to mark the discovery of the Raman effect by Sir Chandrashekhara Venkata Raman on 28 February 1928.

- 2017 Theme: “Science and Technology for Specially Abled Persons”

Raman Effect:

- Raman scattering or the Raman effect is the inelastic scattering of a photon by molecules which are excited to higher vibrational or rotational energy levels
2017 National Women’s Parliament held in Andhra Pradesh

- In a first of its kind initiative, National Women’s Parliament was organized by the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly in association with MAEER’s MIT School of Governance at Pavithra Sangamam in Amravati, Andhra Pradesh with an aim to empower women.
- It was based on the theme: ‘Empowering Women — Strengthening Democracy’.
- The vision of the conclave is to provide a platform to enable and encourage social, political and economic empowerment of women in all strata of the society.
- The NWP is set to come out with the Amaravati Declaration on women empowerment at the end of the three-day deliberations on February 12, 2017.

High-Level Consultations on Counter-Terrorism Held Between India & Russia in New Delhi

- A high-level consultation was held between India and Russia on January 31, 2017 in New Delhi to share views on threats posed by terrorism.
- The two sides agreed to comply with the UNSC 1267 Sanctions List processes for blacklisting various terrorists and entities. Besides discussing the threat on the issue, both the nation also shared experiences of successful measures taken to curb terrorism and countering radicalization.
- They shared concerns related to the existence of Af-Pak region as the main centre of terrorism.
- The two leaders emphasized the need to deepen the engagement on counter-terrorism under the UN, BRICS and SCO mechanisms.
- A joint action plan has been agreed upon by the two countries to focus on enhancing capacity building, frequent expert-level meetings, sharing of insights, exchange of best practices in countering radicalisation and curbing terrorism.

17th session of BIMSTEC Senior Officials’ Meeting Held in Kathmandu

- Presently, the BIMSTEC is chaired by Nepal. It was founded in 1997 to bring together Nepal, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

India Decides to Host Counter-Radicalisation Conference with ASEAN

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

- ASEAN is a regional organisation comprising ten Southeast Asian states which promotes intergovernmental cooperation and facilitates economic integration amongst its members.
- Its members include Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar(Burma) and Vietnam.
**UNESCOs Nature Fest held in Himachal Pradesh**

- France based UNESCO organised the two-day Nature Fest at the World Heritage Site **Great Himalayan National Park** (GNHP) at Sairopa in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh.

**Great Himalayan National Park:**

- The Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP), is one of India’s national parks, is located in Kullu region in the state of Himachal Pradesh.
- GHNP was added to the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites on June 2014.

**IMF Launches South Asia Training and Technical Assistance Center in New Delhi**

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** launched its first fully integrated capacity development centre, **South Asia Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC)** in New Delhi.

**India’s First Hill Station Bicycle Path Unveiled in Darjeeling**

- The **20 km long** cycle route is developed at an altitude of over **2,000 metres** and runs through **thick pine forest** and **SENCHAL WILDLIFE SANCTUARY**. The path also provides a view of the third-highest mountain in the world, **Kanchenjunga**.

**International Coin Fair - Thiruvananthapuram**

- It would also feature the collection of **Justin Gilbert Lopez** who holds a Guinness world record for the largest coin collection of nearly 310 countries.

**South Asian Speakers’ Summit Begins - Indore**

- Speakers of six countries include **Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives** and **Nepal** attended the meeting to deliberate on ways to achieve sustainable development goals.

  - With adoption of ‘**Indore Declaration**”

- The speakers discussed ways for achieving sustainable goals, including poverty, development, environment and gender concerns in South Asia, the home to over 25% of the world population.

**BRICS summit's 1st Sherpas Meeting held in China**
• China is hosting the first official BRICS Sherpas Meeting in Nanjing -Jiangsu Province.
• The meeting is focusing on the theme of “Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future” upon considering the current international situation.
• The Sherpas mechanism, as a main vehicle to coordinate and promote the BRICS cooperation, primarily serves to make political preparations for the BRICS Summit.

Others

• 4th BIMSTEC Summit to be Held in Nepal in 2017

• India Joins UN Network to Prevent Maternal, Newborn and Child Deaths by 2030.

• International Ayurvedic Research Institute Planned At Kannur

• AYUSH Minister Inaugurates the World Integrated Medicine Forum on Regulation of Homeopathic Medicine in New Delhi

• Digital Radio Round Table Conference - New Delhi

• India to host the first meeting of national security advisers of BIMSTEC

• Second edition of International Spice Conference - Thiruvananthapuram

• ‘India Pharma 2017’ & ‘India Medical Device 2017’ International Conference inaugurated - Bengaluru.

• India to host counter-radicalisation conference with ASEAN

• International Spice Conference - Thiruvananthapuram

• Indian Seed Congress – Kolkata

• Airbus signs MoU for setting up centre of excellence in Hyderabad
• India’s first multi-sports museum inaugurated in Kolkata

• Indian Panorama Film Festival Begins in Port Blair

• International Conference & Exhibition on Terrestrial & Satellite Broadcasting New Delhi
**RANKING**

**Corruption perception index**
- India Ranks 79th in the 2016 corruption perception index out of 175 countries
- New Zealand and Denmark jointly shared the first position as the least corrupt nations.
- Somalia was the most corrupt nation in the world

**Delhi airport 12th busiest in the world**
- This is the first time an Indian airport has entered the big league of top 15 airports in the world.

**India Ranked 143 in the 2017 Index of Economic Freedom Index**
- India has been ranked **143 out of 186 economies** in the annual **Index of Economic Freedom 2017** released by top US based Think Tank, **The Heritage Foundation**.
- **Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand** are the top three nations in the Index respectively.

**India Ranks 43 Among 45 Nations in International Intellectual Property Index**

**Report Finds India as the World’s Largest Arms Importer in the Last Four Years**
- According to a report released by **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, **India emerged as the world’s largest importer of major arms during 2012-16**.
- As per the report, India accounted for **13 percent** of the global total sales. Major arm suppliers to India include Russia, USA, European states, Israel and South Korea.

**Mumbai Named Richest Indian City with Total Wealth of $820 bn According to New World Wealth Report**
- Mumbai is followed by Delhi at second place with a total wealth of $ 450 billion and having 23,000 millionaires and 18 billionaires.
- Besides, Bengaluru stands at third place with a total wealth of $ 320 billion and houses 7,700 millionaires and 8 billionaires.
- The report estimated about 11,000 millionaires moved to Australia in 2016 which marks the highest such inflow in any country. Besides, 10,000 moved to the US and 3,000 moved to the UK.

**India’s Centre for Civil Society ranked among world’s top 100 think tanks**
• The Centre for Civil Society (CCS), one of India’s premier think tank was ranked among the top 100 think tanks globally in the recently published 2016 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report. The report was published by the Lauder Institute of the University of Pennsylvania (TTCSP). The CCS was ranked 80 which is one lower than its last year’s rank.

India has become the second largest domestic LPG consumer in the world due to the Narendra Modi government’s rapid roll-out of clean fuel for poor households and fuel subsidy reforms. ‘Ujjwala’ scheme for providing LPG connections free of cost to five crore poor households by 2019. The Ujjwala scheme has turned India into an example for energy experts from other emerging economies still struggling to provide clean fuel to their rural folks. No wonder the World LPG Association (WLPGA) – so far focused on developed economies has chosen to hold its Asia summit in Delhi, bringing together 600 experts from 35 countries who want to learn from Ujjwala.

India tops list of countries in ozone pollution deaths

According to the State of Global Air 2017

• India accounts for the highest number of premature death due to ozone pollution, its toll 13 times higher than Bangladesh’s and 21 times higher than Pakistan’s.

Rate of deaths due to air pollution rising fastest in India, says study

• The report claims that the country’s worsening air pollution caused some 1.1 million premature deaths in 2015 and it now rivals China in having among the highest air pollution health burdens in the world.

• Delhi has been ranked 15th among the most affordable cities in the world for students. Mumbai has dropped to 30th after being ranked 2nd till 2016, states a report by Quacquarelli Symonds, compilers of the QS World University Rankings. Paris, which had topped the list since the inaugural ranking of 2012, was replaced by Montreal in Canada for the first time.

Others

• India 12th largest holder of US govt securities

• Mexico City ranked world’s most congested city
SC issues contempt notice to Calcutta HC judge CS Karnan

- The Supreme Court for first in country’s history has issued contempt notice to Calcutta High Court Judge CS Karnam. The apex court by initiating suo motu contempt petition against Karnam, restrained him forthwith from undertaking judicial and administrative work. Decision in this regard, was taken by seven-judge bench headed by Chief Justice J S Khehar.

No need to stand if National Anthem is part of film: SC

- The Supreme Court has clarified that there is no need to stand inside a cinema hall when the national anthem is featured as a part of a film, documentary or a newsreel. This is second clarification issued by SC on its November 2016 order, directing all persons to stand up when the national anthem is sung or played in a cinema theatre.

SC introduces Middle Income Group Scheme

- The Supreme Court has introduced Middle Income Group Scheme, (MIGS) a self-supporting scheme for providing legal services to the middle and relatively lower income groups. Under this scheme, middle class people who cannot afford the expensive litigation in the apex can avail the services of the society for a nominal amount.

- Key Facts MIGS is a self-supporting scheme that will provide legal services to the middle income group citizens whose gross income does not exceed Rs.60,000 per month or Rs. 7,50,000 per annum.
- A case will be registered under the MIG Legal Aid Scheme and forwarded to Advocate-on-Record/ Senior Counsel/Arguing Counsel on the panel for their opinion. If Advocate-on-Record is satisfied that case is fit, then the society will consider that applicant is entitled to legal aid. The view expressed by Advocate-on Record will be final in determining eligibility of the applicant for obtaining the benefit under the scheme.
- A society will be created with Chief Justice of India (CJI) as Patron-in-Chief. Attorney General will be its ex-officio Vice President, Solicitor General its Honorary Secretary and other senior advocates as its members. If an advocate, appointed under the scheme, is found negligent in pursuing the case entrusted to him, he will be required to return the brief together with the fee received by him from the applicant.
- The society will not be responsible for the negligent conduct and the entire responsibility will be that of the advocate. The name of the Advocate will be struck off from the panel prepared under the scheme.

Madras HC orders TN Govt to Enact Law to Eradicate Seemai Karuvelam Trees

- The Madurai bench of the Madras High Court comprising Justices A.Selvam and P.Kalaiarasan directed the Tamil Nadu government on February 27, 2017 to enact a Law with
prohibitory and penal clauses within two months to remove *Prosopis juliflora* (Seemai Karuvelam) trees in the state.

• The bench also directed the State government to release perennial funds to all the district collectors for removing of the seemai karuvelam trees.

• The Judges would make surprise inspection throughout the State and if any lapse is found on removing these trees, stringent actions would be undertaken.

**Prosopis Juliflora (Seemai Karuvelam)**

• Seemai karuvelam trees are an invasive species considered harmful to the environment. They cause environment damage. Its roots are able to grow to a great depth in search of water and lead to depletion of ground water which ultimately affects agricultural activities.

**Lok Sabha Passes Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017**

• The **Lok Sabha** passed the **Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017** on February 7, 2017 which allows for payment of wages digitally or through cheque directly into the account of workers. The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill is in line with the government’s cash-less economy.

• The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017 seeks to amend the Payment of Wages Act 1936. Once the bill is passed by the Rajya Sabha, it will also replace the **Payment of Wages (Amendment) Ordinance 2016** that was promulgated by the President on December 28, 2016.

• The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2017 will enable the employers to pay wages via cheque or bank transfer directly into worker’s account without the need for worker’s written consent for the same.

• Earlier, under the Payment of Wages Act 1936, employers were allowed to use cheque or bank transfers to pay wages only with written authorization from the employee.

• The amended bill will also lead to formalization of workforce and provide them social security benefits like provident fund and health insurance. The data shows that nearly 90 percent of India’s over 472 million labour market is informal where workers are deprived of the benefits of formal employment.

• With the digital payment, the bill will take away the employers ability to cut the wage of workers.

**Centre frames infrastructure policy to check challenges of urbanisation**

The Centre has formulated the infrastructure policy to promote living close to mass public transport corridors like metro, monorail and bus rapid transit (BRT) on February 26, 2017

• Aim: To addressing the challenges of urbanisation.

• The new Policy seeks to promote Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).
The Ministry of Urban Development is also incentivising the TOD under new Metro Policy and Green Urban Mobility Scheme that seeks to create non-motorised transport infrastructure in cities like footpaths and cycle-tracks.

The Ministry’s initiative comes in the context of over 300 km of metro lines being operational in seven cities, while another 600 km of metro line projects being under construction in 12 cities and over 500 km projects under consideration.

TOD policy is being taken up in Ahmedabad, Delhi, Naya Raipur, Nagpur and Navi Mumbai.

What is TOD?

A transit-oriented development (TOD) is a type of urban development that maximizes the amount of residential, business and leisure space within walking distance of public transport.

The densest areas of a TOD are normally located within a radius of ¼ to ½ mile (400 to 800 m) around the central transit stop.

Union Cabinet Gives Green Signal to Amend Bill to Modify Scheduled Castes list in Odisha

Besides, the cabinet also approved amending the Constitution (Pondicherry) Scheduled Castes Order, 1964 to change the name of the Union Territory Pondicherry to Puducherry.

The amended Bill will be shortly introduced in the parliament under the name Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Orders (Amendment) Bill, 2017.

Additionally, Sualgiri/Swalgiri caste which is a part of already included Sabakhia caste has been made eligible to be included in the list of SC in Odisha.

Karnataka passes Bill to allow Kambala and bullock-cart racing

Karnataka Assembly has passed Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Karnataka Amendment) Bill, 2017 to allow kambala, the traditional buffalo race and bullock-cart racing. The bill seeks to exempt kambala and bullock-cart racing from the ambit of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960.

Right to Information Act comes into force in Sri Lanka

AWARDS

Indian-Origin British Sculptor Anish Kapoor wins 2017 Genesis Prize

Lucideus Wins Best IT Startup At National Entrepreneurship Awards 2016

Rajasthan, Telangana bag eGov awards

- Rajasthan and Telangana are bagged the eGovernance awards for Excellence under the state category at the CSI -Nihilent eGovernance Awards held in Coimbatore
- Odisha and Nagaland bagged the Award of Recognition for the year 2016
Ustad Imrat Khan declines Padma Shri

- Noted Sitar and Surbahar player Ustad Imrat Khan has turned down the Padma Shri award as he believes it comes "too late" and is not "parallel" to his "worldwide reputation and contributions".

Alastair Cook Rewarded Top British Honor By Prince Charles

Indian-Origin British Sculptor Anish Kapoor Wins $1 Million Israeli Prize

- Renowned Indian-origin British sculptor Anish Kapoor was honored with the prestigious $1 million 2017 Genesis Prize on February 6, 2017 by Israel for his utmost contribution for Jewish community.

Arunachal Pradesh Launches ‘Arunachal Civil Service Awards’

- The state government of Arunachal Pradesh launched the Arunachal Civil Service Awards in a bid to encourage good governance in the state.
- Through the award, the government aims to improve the work culture and boost the morale of government employees by recognising their hard work and innovation.

GMR Hyderabad Airport Receives CAPA Order of Merit

- GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL), which operates Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, has been honored with the Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) Chairman’s Order of Merit for its focus on environmental sustainability.
- Rajiv Gandhi International Airport was also awarded for becoming the first airport in Asia Pacific to become carbon neutral.

59th Grammy Awards 2017

- Album of the year: 25 - Adele
- Record of the year: Hello - Adele
- Song of the year: Hello – Adele
- Indian tabla player Sandeep Das was part of Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble Sing Me Home that won the Grammy in the World Music category that also included sitarist Anoushka Shankar’s Land of Gold.
British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) awards 2017
• Best film: La La Land
• Best Actress: Emma Stone - La La Land
• Best Director: La La Land - Damien Chazelle
• Best Actor: Casey Affleck - Manchester by the Sea
• Best Supporting Actor: Dev Patel – Lion

Usain Bolt wins Laureus 'Sportsman of the Year' award
• Simone Biles clinched the 'Sportswoman of the Year'.
• Michael Phelps bagged the 'Comeback of the Year' award.
• Formula One champion Nico Roseberg claimed the 'Breakthrough of the Year' award.
• In other categories, Italy's Beatrice Vio clinched the disability award.
• Olympic refugee team won the Laureus Sport for Good award.

India’s ‘Newton’ & ‘Aaba’ Win Big at Berlinale 2017
• Two Indian films at the world renowned Berlin Film festival bagged awards - Amit Masurkar’s Newton and Amar Kaushik’s Aaba.

EDII wins International Mercury Award 2016-17
• The Ahmedabad-based Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) has received the prestigious International Mercury Awards

Indian-Origin British MP Receives Stya Paul Memorial Award
• Virendra Sharma, an Indian-origin British MP was conferred with the first Dr Stya Paul Memorial Award for his outstanding contribution to India-UK ties.

Vivek Chaand Sehgal, Chairman Motherson Sumi Systems Named EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2016
• Vivek Chaand Sehgal, Chairman of auto parts maker Motherson Sumi Systems Ltd, has been named as the Indian Entrepreneur of the Year 2016 by consulting firm, EY formerly known as Ernst & Young.

Japan Creates Guinness Record by Launching World’s First Robot Table Tennis Tutor
• Japan has unveiled the world’s first robot table tennis tutor FORPHEUS (Future Omron Robotics Technology for Exploring Possibility of Harmonised aUtomation with Sinic Theoretics) which has the ability to play the game better than humans.
Complete List of the 89th Academy Award (Oscar Award)

- The 89th Academy Awards commonly referred to as Oscar took place at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles. The award presented by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), honored the best films of 2016 in 24 categories.
- La La Land won the most number of awards at the ceremony totaling to six after being nominated into 14 categories.
- It was followed by Arrival and Moonlight with each being nominated in eight categories.
- Mahershala Ali won the Academy Award for best supporting actor for his portrayal of a drug dealer in Moonlight. With this he became the first Muslim to be nominated and awarded a golden statuette for acting.

- Best picture: Moonlight
- Best director: Damien Chazelle (La La Land)
- Best actor: Casey Affleck (Manchester by the Sea)
- Best actress: Emma Stone (La La Land)
- Best supporting actor: Mahershala Ali (Moonlight)
- Best supporting actress: Viola Davis (Fences)
- Best original screenplay: Manchester by the Sea
- Best adapted screenplay: Moonlight
- Best documentary short: The White Helmets
- Best live-action short: Sing
- Best cinematography: La La Land
- Best score: La La Land
- Best foreign language film: The Salesman
- Best animated short: Piper
- Best animated feature: Zootopia
- Best production design: La La Land
- Best visual effects: The Jungle Book
- Best film editing: Hacksaw Ridge
- Best makeup and hairstyling: Suicide Squad
- Best costume design: Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them
- Best documentary: OJ: Made in America
- Best sound editing: Arrival
- Best sound mixing: Hacksaw Ridge

Shanta Rangaswamy Becomes First Woman to Be Honored BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award

Meghalaya’s root bridge nominated for NIF award

- Meghalaya’s famed root-bridge was nominated for the prestigious National Innovation Foundation (NIF) award for grassroots innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge.
Parag Havaldar Wins Technical Oscar Award:

- IIT Kharagpur alumnus Parag Havaldar won the prestigious Technical Achievement Award, popularly called the Technical Oscar.

Others

- UK’s Bravery Award - Indian-origin Shand Panesar

- B C Roy Award - Hyderabad Surgeon Raghu Ram

- Kayakalp Award - AIIMS, New Delhi Wins First Prize for Sanitation & Hygiene

- Vyas samman award (2016) – Surendra Verma

- Legendary Award by Brand Laureate (2017)- Lata Mangeshkar

- Hindu Prize 2016 - Kiran Doshi
APPOINTMENTS

Rex Tillerson sworn-in as US secretary of state

- Former chairman and chief executive of Exxon Mobil Rex Tillerson was sworn in as Secretary of State of the United States

Neeti Mohan collaborates with United Nations for women empowerment

- Noted Indian singer Neeti Mohan to collaborate with UN for women empowerment project titled “Music To Inspire - Artists UNited Against Human Trafficking” which is managed by the UNODC.

Chad’s Moussa Faki Mahamat named AU Commission Chairperson

- Chad’s Foreign Minister Moussa Faki Mahamat (56) was elected as the new Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission.
- The African Union (AU) is a continental block consisting of 54 countries on the African continent. It was established in 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and was launched in July 2002 in South Africa. African Union Commission is The AU’s secretariat based in Addis Ababa

Achamkulangare Gopinathan re-appointed to UN Joint Inspection Unit

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has re-appointed top Indian diplomat Achamkulangare Gopinathan to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), the only independent external oversight body of the UN system.

Shawna Pandya set to Become Third Indian-Origin Women to Fly to Space

- **Shawna Pandya** an Indian-origin woman will become the third woman after Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams to go into space in 2018.
- A neurosurgeon by profession, 32-year-old Shawna Pandya is one of the only two candidates selected from 3200 brilliant people to fly into space through the Citizen Science Astronaut programme in Canada. She will fly with eight other astronauts in space missions slated to take off by 2018.

UNO ropes in Satinder Sartaaj for campaign against trafficking
• Folk singer from Punjab Satinder Sartaaj (34) has been selected for the awareness project against human trafficking “Blue Heart Campaign” by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
• Sartaaj will work with Indian musicians like AR Rahman and Sonu Nigam to spread awareness about the illegal practice through Music to Inspire album.

Diego Maradona Gets Ambassador Role at FIFA

• The FIFA governing body has named Argentina’s former soccer player Diego Maradona as the new Ambassador of the FIFA on February 9, 2017.

Dr Neelu Rohmetra, First Woman Indian Institute of Management Director

• Dr. Neelu Rohmetra of Jammu University has been appointed as one of heads of IIMs. Now she became the first woman director of Indian Institute of Management Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

Norman Isaac becomes first Indian to be FIBA’s Technical Delegate

• Norman Isaac has become the first Indian ever to be promoted by the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) as Technical Delegate (TD).

Government appoints 5 new judges to Supreme Court

• Five new judges are appointed to the Supreme Court by the President Pranab Mukherjee. Now the total number of judges in the Supreme Court raised to 28 from 23

New Judges are:

• Madras High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul
• Rajasthan HC Chief Justice Naveen Sinha
• Kerala HC Chief Justice Mohan M Shantanagouder
• Chhattisgarh HC Chief Justice Dipak Gupta
• Karnataka HC judge S Abdul Nazeer.

Others

• Tehmina Janjua becomes Pak’s first woman foreign secretary
• Justice Abhay Manohar Spare of the Supreme Court as Chairman of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal

• Frank-Walter Steinmeier elected President of Germany

• Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: Anushka Sharma becomes female face of campaign

• Rex Tillerson sworn-in as US secretary of state

• Sanjeev Sanyal appointed India’s Principal Economic Advisor

• Vikram Limaye named new MD & CEO of NSE

• Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo Elected New President of Somalia

• Sandeep Jajodia Appointed New President of Assocham

• Tehmina Janjua becomes Pakistan’s first woman foreign secretary

• France’s Jean-Pierre Lacroix named new UN peacekeeping chief

• N Chandrasekaran appointed as TCS Chairman

• U.K. named Cressida Dick as first woman to lead Scotland Yard

• Shilpa Shetty -Swachh Bharat Brand Ambassador

• Author Neil Gaiman Named U.N. Goodwill Ambassador
**SPORTS**

**Lakshya Sen of Uttarakhand Becomes World No. 1 Player in BWF Junior Rankings**

- Indian badminton player Lakshya Sen has created history after he attained World No. 1 Rank in the latest Junior Badminton World Federation (BWF) ranking
- The 15-year-old player is the youngest ever player and the first ever from Uttarakhand to win the title at senior level. Earlier, his brother Chirag Sen was ranked number 2 in the world junior badminton rankings.
- Lakshya has outclassed Chia Hao Lee of the Chinese Taipei to attain the World no. 1 ranking.

**2020 Tokyo Olympic Games medals to be made from recycled mobile phones**

- Olympic game medals will be made from recycled mobile phones for the year 2022 to promote sustainability said by 2020 Olympic Games organizers, Japan.

**Pankaj Advani Wins 29th the National Snooker Championship title**

- With this win, Advani has become the only Indian player to win all the national titles in both the long and short formats of snooker, 6-red Snooker and 15-red Snooker.

**Table Tennis**

- Sharath Kamal wins his 7th natl crown at the 11Even Sports Senior Table Tennis Nationals
- Madhurika Patkar won the women’s singles title against six-time national champion Poulomi Ghatak.

**Indian Team Defeats Malaysia to Win Gold in Asian Junior Squash**

- This is the second time that the Indian boys had won the title. Earlier in 2011 they defeated Pakistan in Colombo.

**Wisden Almanack 2017 features Virat Kohli on cover**

- Virat Kohli will feature on the cover of the 2017 edition of the ‘Bible of cricket’, Wisden Cricketers' Almanack after the Indian captain's exceptional performances over the course of 2016.
- Kohli had an exceptional 2016 where he finished as the highest run-scorer with 2595 runs from 41 innings at an average of 86.50 including 7 centuries and 13 half-centuries.
• Apart from Kohli, Sachin Tendulkar is the only Indian to be featured on the cover of Wisden in 2014.
• The Almanack, which was founded in 1864 by John Wisden, is considered the world’s most well-known sports reference book.

Virat Kohli Breaks Record to Become First Indian Captain to score Four Double Centuries in 4 straight series
• Virat Kohli became the first player to score double century in four consecutive Test series while playing against Bangladesh in Hyderabad.
• He also became the second captain to score four double centuries for his country
• Kohli began the trend while playing against West Indies in June 2016 to score his first double century where he scored exactly 200. Second with New Zealand in November 2016. The third record came against England where he scored his third double century and the latest against Bangladesh.
• During the course of this innings, Kohli overtook Virender Sehwag as the top scorer in a single home season for India. Sehwag had scored 1105 runs in the 2004/05.

Virat Kohli first Indian sportsperson to ink Rs 100-cr deal with Puma
• Kohli now join the list of global ambassador for the brand likes of Usain Bolt, Asafa Powell and Thierry Henry.
• Only Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Singh Dhoni have been in the Rs 100-crore club through multi-year contracts with talent management agencies, but they have never been signed by a single brand for such a big amount.

Ravichandran Ashwin becomes the fastest bowler to take 250 Test wickets
• Indian off-spin specialist Ravichandran Ashwin became the fastest cricketer to take 250 wickets in Test matches. He achieved this feat in his 45th test match against Bangladesh,
• Earlier in 2016, Ashwin achieved the feat of taking fastest 200 wicket in Test in his 37th test surpassing Waqar Younis of Pakistan and Dennis Lillee of Australia who took 38 test matches each to take 200 wickets.
• Ravichandran Ashwin has become the sixth Indian bowler to reach 250 test wickets.

R Ashwin Breaks Kapil Dev’s Record to Become Highest Test Wicket Taker in Home Season
• Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin surpassed India’s former legendary allrounder Kapil Dev to become the highest wicket-taker in a home Test season
• Ashwin has scored 67 wickets from 10 Tests in 2016-17 season played in India. Former Indian captain Kapil Dev took 63 wickets from 13 matches in the 1979-80 season.
• Ashwin achieved the feat when he dismissed Mitchell Starc of Australia in their first innings.
IAAF Bans Russia From 2017 London World Athletics Championships

Russia has been barred from international competition since November 2015 following a damaging report alleging that state-sponsored doping was prevailing in the country.

Further, the ban was extended in March 2016 and again in June 2016, preventing Russia’s athletes from competing at the Rio Olympics.

The country again has been banned until November 2017, after recommendations made by the IAAF task force investigating Russia’s efforts at reform following a series of doping scandals recommended.

81st Senior National Badminton Championship

- Sourabh Verma defeated Lakshya Sen 21-13, 21-12 to clinch the Men’s Singles title.
- In the women’s singles category, second seed Rituparna Das beat Reshma Karthik to clinch the championship.

Kheleao: official mascot of FIFA U-17 World Cup unveiled

- The official Mascot for the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup India tournament was.
- A clouded leopard named Kheleao. The clouded leopard is a rare and vulnerable wild cat which can be found in the Himalayan foothills to mainland Southeast Asia.

Sports Ministry Launches Mission XI Million in New Delhi

- The programme has been launched with an aim to make football a sport of choice in India and encourage children to play the football games on regular basis.
- The Mission XI Million has an objective to instill the passion for football in 11 million children from every part of the country.

Mumbai Boy Kush Bhagat Awarded CM Title by World Chess Federation

- Mumbai based Kush Bhagat has been awarded the Candidate Master (CM) title by the World Chess Federation body, FIDE for his outstanding performance in Western Asian Youth Chess championship 2016 at UAE.

Former Sri Lankan Batsman Kumar Sangakkara becomes 2nd Asian to Play 1000 Matches

- Former Sri Lankan cricketer Kumar Sangakkara created record to become 16th player worldwide and 2nd Asian Batsman to play 1000 matches across all forms of Cricket.
- The only Asian to become the first to achieve the feat was former Sri Lankan player Mahela Jayawardene.

Sports Ministry to Organize 1st Gramin Khel Mahotsav in New Delhi
• first **Gramin Khel Mahotsav** will be held from March 25-31, 2017 in **New Delhi**.
• The Khel Mahotsav will have **5 sports discipline** comprising of Athletics, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Volley Ball and Wrestling.
• The festival provide a platform to promote sports in rural areas across the country and encourage rural youths to participate in sports and achieve excellence and adopt healthy life style.

**India Bags All Three Medals At 6th Asian Para-Road Cycling Championship**

• Abhishek from Chandigarh won the **gold** medal, Divij Shah from West Bengal won **silver** and Harinder Singh from BSF bagged the **bronze medal**.

**Saina Nehwal to Represent IOC Athletes’ Commission in BWF**

• Indian Badminton ace Saina Nehwal has been named to represent the panel of International Olympic Committee’s Athletes’ Commission (AC) in the Badminton World Federation (BWF).
• Saina was appointed as a member of the IOC Athletes’ Commission soon after the Rio Olympics in 2016.

**ISSF World Cup: Pooja Ghatkar Clinches Bronze in 10m Air Rifle Event**

• Pooja Ghatkar has clinched the women's 10m air rifle bronze medal with a score of 228.8 in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup.

**10m Air Rifle Bronze**

• Pooja Ghatkar (India) won bronze medal on the opening day of the ISSF World Cup
• It was first World Cup medal for Pooja in her third appearance in a final

**Others**

• Iran Bans U.S. Wrestlers to Compete Freestyle World Cup
• India’s first centre of disabled sportsmen to come up in Gandhinagar
• India Set to Host World Billiards Championship For Next Four Years
• Delhi batsman Mohit Ahlawat becomes first to score 300 in T20s

• Ethiopia’s Genzebe Dibaba Breaks World Record to Win Women’s 2000 Metres

• Cheteshwar Pujara Breaks Record for Most Runs in an Indian first-class season by taking his season tally to 1,605 in just 21 innings.

• India Beat Pakistan to Win T20 World Cup for Blind

• India Bags Silver Medal At The Asian Women’s Rugby Sevens Trophy

• Afghanistan Cricketers Nabi & Rashid Khan to Make Debut in IPL

• India to host 2019 Combined World Cup for shooting

• Indian Badminton Duo Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis Wins Uganda International Series Doubles Title
BOOKS AND AUTHORS

- The Golden House - Salman Rushdie,
- Veerappan, Chasing the Brigand’-K. Vijay Kumar.
- Hema Malini: Beyond the Dream Girl - Ram Kamal Mukherjee
- Amarinder Singh’s Biography ‘The People’s Maharaja.
- Judicial Reforms – Recent Global Trends - Justice Dalveer Bhandari

COMMITTEES

1. Jeddah, Afzal Amanullah Committee - Haj Subsidy Issue

2. Kadiyam Srihari Committee - to Boost Girls’ Education (HRD Ministry Constituted)

3. Dr. H.R. Nagendra Committee - to prepare Yoga Protocol for Diabetes Control (Ministry of AYUSH Constituted)

4. Ashok Kumar Roopanwal Committee – to look into the Rohith Vemula’s Death
OBITUARY

Masaya Nakamura, Father of Pac-Man - He had founded Japanese video game company Namco in 1955. Pac-Man was designed by Namco engineer and video game maker Toru Iwatani in 1980.

Indian National Army Veteran Nizamuddin at 116

- Indian National Army veteran ‘Colonel’ Nizamuddin died in his native village of Dhakwa in Azamgarh on February 6, 2017. **He was 116.**
- Nizamuddin had also served as the driver and guard of **Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.**
- ‘Colonel’ Nizamuddin was one of the most trusted lieutenants of Netaji. He had served in the Indian National Army from **1943-45.**

MRI pioneer and Nobel laureate Sir Peter Mansfield

- English physicist and Nobel laureate Sir Peter Mansfield who had developed Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) is a medical imaging technique used in radiology to form pictures of the anatomy and the physiological processes of the body in both health and disease.
- MRI scanners use strong magnetic fields, radio waves, and field gradients to generate images of the inside of the body.

Veteran Journalist T V Parasuram

- He has authored two books ‘A Medal for Kashmir’, and ‘Jewish Heritage in India’.

Legendary Jazz Singer Al Jarreau

- Al Jarreau was nicknamed as “Acrobat of Scat.”
- won **seven Grammy**

Others

Devdutt - Veteran journalist
Asim Basu - Veteran theatre personality
Pathani Patnaik - Eminent litterateur
Bano Qudsia - Renowned Pakistani Urdu Author
Pandit Dharmsheel Chaturvedi - Eminent journalist and Laughter Persona
Chandra Shekhar Azad’s 86th Martyrdom Day observed

- Chandra Shekhar Azad’s 86th death anniversary or Martyrdom Day was observed on 27th February, 2017

About Chandra Shekhar Azad:

- Azad was an Indian revolutionary who reorganised the Hindustan Republican Association under its new name of Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) after the death of its founder, Ram Prasad Bismil.
- He played a key role in Kakori Rail Dacoity in 1925, the train carried cash that belonged to the British treasury. He was also involved in the killing of assistant superintendent of police John Poyantz Saunders in 1928.
- He was fondly called as ‘Quick-silver’ by his mentor Ram Prasad Bismil for his alertness and restless attitude.
- Azad died on February 27, 1931 at Alfred Park in Allahabad. The park has been renamed as Chandrashekhar Azad Park.

Rail Museum celebrates 40th anniversary

- The National Rail Museum just entered into its 40th year.
- It opened on the 1 February 1977

India’s only volcano active again

- India's only live volcano in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has started spewing smoke and lava again.
- After lying dormant for 150 years, Barren Island volcano erupted in 1991 and has been showing sporadic activity since then, scientists of Goa based National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) said.

Apple acquires Israeli start-up Real Face

- An American multinational technology company Apple has announced to acquire Israel-based start-up “Real Face” for an undisclosed amount on February 20, 2017

Infant Mortality Rate (IMR):
• The infant mortality rate (IMR) is the number of deaths of infants under one year old per 1,000 live births. This rate is often used as an indicator of the level of health in a country.

Aadhaar:
• Aadhaar is a 12 digit unique-identity number issued to an Indian resident based on their biometric and demographic data.
• The data is collected by “Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)”.

Sudarsan Pattnaik creates Guinness World Record by creating 48.8 feet tall sand castle
• The Guinness World Record has recognised sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik’s 48.8 feet (14.84 metre) tall sand castle at Puri beach in Odisha as the tallest sand castle in the world.

Venezuela & Libya Suspended from voting in UNGA over Dues Debts

What is DRM?
• The Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) broadcasting system is specifically designed to allow the new digital transmission system to co-exist with the current analogue broadcasts.

Dubai Gets first Women Commercial Pilot from Royal Family
• Shaikha Mozah Al Maktoum, one of the female members of the ruling family of Dubai, has become the first woman commercial pilot of Dubai.

World’s Oldest Working Steam Engine ‘Fairy Queen’ Ready to Haul Heritage Train Once Again
• The ‘Fairy Queen’, is the oldest surviving functional steam engine in the world is once again ready in this season to haul a heritage train from National Capital Delhi to Rewari, Haryana after a gap of 5 years.

Qatar Airways Launches World’s Longest Flight
• The Qatar Airways has launched the World’s longest scheduled commercial service to ply between Doha to Auckland.
• The inaugural service of **Flight QR920** took off on February 5, 2017 from Doha and will take **16 hours and 20 minutes** to travel **14,535 kilometres** to reach Auckland in New Zealand.

• This makes Qatar Airways to launch the World’s fastest and longest passenger service in terms of flying time.

• Prior to this, emirates launched the world’s longest non-stop scheduled commercial flight with a service from Dubai to Auckland, spanning 14,200 kilometres.

**Others**

• **India aims to bring broadband to every village by 2018**

• US National Security Adviser Michael Flynn resigns over his contacts with Russia
Important Days

March 1 - World Civil Defence Day
March 1 - Zero Discrimination Day
March 3 - National Defence Day
March 3 - World wildlife day
March 3 - World Hearing Day
March 8 - International Women’s Day Observed
March 8 - International Yoga Fest Began in New Delhi on
March 4-10 - 2017 National Safety Week (NSW)
9 March – World Kidney Day
March 25 - Bangladesh declares as ‘Genocide Day’
March 13 - Commonwealth Day
March 15 - World Consumer Rights Day
March 16 - US State Kansas declares as ‘Indian American Appreciation Day’
21st March - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 21 - World Poetry Day

21st March - International Day of Forests

March 22 - World water day
March 24 - World Tuberculosis day
March 23 - World Meteorological Day
March 27 - World Theatre Day
National Archives of India to celebrate its 127th Foundation Day

Ministry of Women & Child Development leads social media campaign #WeAreEqual

- Leading up to International Women’s Day on March 8, 2017, the Ministry of Women and Child Development has initiated a social media campaign - #WeAreEqual - targeted at raising awareness about gender discrimination.
• The campaign will culminate into the celebration of International Women’s Day marked by the prestigious Nari Shakti Award ceremony, in which the Hon’ble President will honour individuals and institutions for their exemplary contribution to women’s empowerment.
• The #WeAreEqual campaign is gaining momentum with the partnership by prominent personalities such as film actors Mr. Amitabh Bachchan, and Ms. Dia Mirza; sportspersons Ms. Mary Kom and Mr. Sangram Singh and ISRO scientists Ms. K Thenmozhi Selvi, Ms. Subha Varier and Ms. Minal Rohit among others.

'Earth Hour' 2017: 25 March

• 2017 Earth Hour was observed worldwide on 25 March 2017.

National, National Symbols

Railway Ministry launches India’s first Antyodaya Express

• Indian Railways launched the country’s first Antyodaya Express between Ernakulam (Kerala) and Howrah (West Bengal). Antyodaya Express is a long-distance, fully unreserved, superfast train service, for the common man to be operated on dense routes. It has facilities like cushioned luggage racks which can serve as seats, LED lights, modular toilets, pleasing interior colour scheme and others. Indian Railways also flagged off the fourth Humsafar Express between Sriganganagar (Rajasthan) and Tiruchirapalli (Tamil Nadu). The new train is fully air-conditioned third AC service with an optional service for meals.

India, Israel celebrated 25 years of diplomatic ties

• India and Israel hold a series of events to celebrate 25 years of establishment of their diplomatic ties.
• India had established full diplomatic relationship with Israel in 1992 though it had recognised the country in 1950.
• India is the largest buyer of Israel’s military hardware and the latter has been supplying various weapon systems, missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles.

100 districts in India Declared ODF under Swachh Bharat Mission

• The Union Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar has informed that the number of ODF (Open Defecation Free) districts in India has crossed 100, making it a milestone achievement under the Swachh Bharat Mission.
• Besides, over 1.7 lakh villages over the country has also become ODF.
• Shri O.P Dhankar, Haryana Minister for Development & Panchayats, and Agriculture declared that Haryana will become an ODF State by November 2017.

Ministry of Women & Child Development Observes Swachhta Pakhwada Throughout India
• The Ministry of Women & Child Development is observing the Swachhta Pakhwada from March 1, 2017 to March 15, 2017 and raise awareness about Swachh Bharat Abhiyan among women and children.

• **Aim:** The Swachhta Pakhwada is observed by various Ministries of Government of India to achieve the goal of universal sanitation, hygiene and ‘open defecation free’ India by 2019.

**Ukraine region to use Russian ruble as currency**

• Ukraine’s self-proclaimed Luhansk People’s Republic, state in eastern Ukraine, will use the Russian ruble as its official currency, along with the Ukrainian Hryvnia.

• The Russian ruble is already being used in pro-Russian territory which serves to stabilise the volatile economic situation in the region.

• The Luhansk’s central bank will announce the value of the ruble against the US dollar, euro, and hryvnia in the near future.

**By 2050, India will have most Muslims in world**

• By 2050, India will be the country with the world's largest Muslim population, said American think tank Pew Research Centre.

• While Islam is currently the world’s second-largest religion after Christianity, it is now also the fastest-growing major religion.

• There were 1.6 billion Muslims in the world as of 2010 - roughly 23% of the global population - according to a Pew estimate.

• Currently, Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population.

**India hoists tallest flag at Indo-Pak border**

• India has just hoisted the nation's tallest flag. Punjab Local Bodies Minister and senior BJP leader Anil Joshi hoisted the flag.

• The 360 feet flag was hoisted at the famous Indo-Pak (Attari-Wagah) border checkpost in Punjab. The new flag can be seen from Lahore in Pakistan. The new flag is 120 feet in length, 80 feet in breadth and is hosted on a pole which is 360 feet high.

**PM Narendra Modi releases Special Commemorative Postage Stamp on 100 years of Yogoda Satsang Math**

• Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a special commemorative postage stamp on 100 years of Yogoda Satsang Math on March 7, 2017

**China overtakes eurozone as world’s biggest bank system**

• According to the Financial Times shows latest analysis, China’s banking system has overtaken eurozone to become the world’s biggest by assets.

• China’s GDP surpassed the EU’s in 2011 at market exchange rates, but its banking system did not take over the top spot until 2016.
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 and its banks.

Top 3 Assets countries at the end of 2016:
1. Chinese bank assets hit $33 trillion against $31 trillion for the eurozone.
2. US assets at $16 trillion
3. Japan assets at $7 trillion.

IISc becomes first Indian university to be ranked among top 10 in world

The Times Higher Education (THE) revealed that India is home to one of the world's best small universities, as it made public the 2017 edition of the rankings.

- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, has been ranked eighth at the 'THE's Best Small Universities in the World 2017'.
- Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, and Savitribai Phule Pune University which were ranked 14 and 18 respectively in the 2016 edition could not retain their spots in the top 20 this time.

India Has Highest Bribery Rate Among 16 Asia-Pacific Nations: Transparency International Survey

- According to the Global Corruption Barometer for the Asia Pacific Region released by Transparency International on March 7, in Berlin for 16 Asia Pacific countries, India tops the list for being the most corrupt nation.
- According to the survey, about 69 percent of the population in India paid bribe to get their work done.
- India was followed by Vietnam (65%), Thailand (41%), Cambodia, Pakistan and Myanmar, each with 40%.
- Besides, China (26%) was one of the least corrupt nations and it was the lowest in Japan (0.2%).

South Korean President Park Geun-hye removed from office

- South Korea’s Constitutional Court voted unanimously to remove the country’s President, Park Geun-hye, from office.
- With the impeachment, Park becomes the first South Korean President to be removed from office.

India’s Largest Floating Solar PV Plant Installed by NTPC in Kerala

- State-run National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has installed India’s largest floating Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Plant at Rajiv Gandhi Combined Cycle Power Plant (RGCCPP) at Kayamkulam in Kerala on March 10, 2017.
The 100 kWp floating solar generation plant has been indigenously developed as a part of ‘Make in India’ initiative.

The Solar panels are mounted on floating boards that hold them in place. Installing solar panels in water bodies saves land as well as are more efficient than the ones installed on land.

These floating platform were indigenously developed by NTPC Energy Technology Research Alliance, the R&D arm of NTPC in collaboration with Central Institute of Plastic Engineering & Technology (CIPET), Chennai and a patent has been applied for.

The system was installed by Swelect Energy Systems Ltd, Chennai with support from NETRA & NTPC Kayamkulam station in a short span of 22 days.

**Benefits of Floating Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Plant**
- Conserves water through reduction of evaporation
- Increased generation due to cooling effect on the panels
- Requires lesser installation time than conventional land mounted ones
- The system could be installed on saline water environments also.

**Pakistan National Assembly passes Hindu Marriage Bill**

- Pakistan National Assembly has passed the Hindu Marriage Bill, 2016 to regulate marriages of Hindus in Pakistan. The bill was passed again by the lower house after amendments were made by the Senate (Upper House) while passing the bill. The law prohibits the marriage of minors and prescribes a minimum age of 18-years for contracting marriage. In addition, it protects the customs and customary rites of the Hindu community. The bill also provides a mechanism for registration of marriage, separation and remarriage. It will help Hindu women get documentary proof of their marriage. The law will be applicable in the provinces of Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

**Japan, US conduct Navy drills**

- The Japanese and United States navies conducted joint exercises in the East China Sea. The exercises involved Japanese destroyers and a US Navy carrier strike group. The drill was aimed at issuing a warning against nuclear-armed North Korea. Recently, the tensions in the Korean peninsula had intensified in the region following North Korea’s missile tests. The exercises were also meant to display the joint Japan-US military presence in the East China Sea, where Japan and China are locked in a long-running dispute over uninhabited islets known as the Senkakus, while China claims them as the Diaoyus.

**Vienna is the world’s nicest city to live in, Baghdad the worst**

- Vienna, Austria's grand capital on the Danube river, has topped consulting firm Mercer's list of cities offering the highest quality of life for the eighth year in a row, while Baghdad is again considered the worst place to live.
- Singapore was the highest ranked Asian city, at 25 while 29th-placed San Francisco was the United States' highest entry. Top of the list in Africa was South Africa's Durban at 87.
Top 3 Global Cities in the List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Country</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vienna</td>
<td>Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Zurich</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
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Tata Steel & Wipro Named Among World’s Most Ethical Companies

- Two Indian companies namely Tata Steel Limited and Wipro Limited have been named in the list of World’s Most Ethical Companies 2017 by American think tank Ethisphere Institute.
- Wipro is one among the two Information technology category firm named in the list. The other firm in that category is US based Xerox Corporation.
- Besides, Tata Steel is also one of the two companies named in the metals, minerals and mining category. US-based Schnitzer Steel Industries Inc is the other company in this segment.
- US based Ford Motor Company has been named one of the World’s Most Ethical Companies for the 8th straight year.
- Make India: The Indian – built INS Khanderi
- Two institutions from Tamil Nadu featured among the top 100 universities in Asia in the Times Higher Education rankings 2017 released on Wednesday. Veltech University, Chennai and IIT – Madras secured the 43 and 62 positions in the rankings.

India ranks 148 in 2017 UN Women in Politics Map

- The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women launched the ‘Women in Politics 2017 Map’ on March 16, 2017 in New York. The Women in Politics 2017 Map is the visual representation of women’s political empowerment in executive government and parliament as on January 1, 2017.
- It was unveiled on the sidelines of the ongoing session of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at United Nations. The CSW is a global organization that focuses on the empowerment and equality for women.
- The theme for 2017 CSW is Women’s Economic Empowerment In The Changing World Of Work.
- As per the report, the top nations that have high representation to women in the government and parliament includes: Rwanda, Bolivia, Cuba, Iceland, Nicaragua, Sweden, Senegal, Mexico, Finland and South Africa.
- As per the Map, India ranked 148 out of 193 UN member nations in representing women in the executive government.

New Zealand’s Whanganui River Granted Legal Status as a Person
New Zealand’s Whanganui River on March 15, 2017 became the first river in the World to get the legal rights as possessed by a human being.

The third largest river of the country has gained its own identity with all the corresponding rights, duties and liabilities of a legal person after a 170-year battle.

The river is a sacred and revered waterway to New Zealand’s Maori Iwi people and the new Bill creates a strong platform for the future of Whanganui River.

New Zealand

- After commissioning the world’s biggest telescope, China is now building one of the largest and most sensitive cosmic-ray facilities, costing about $180 million. Located about 4,410 meters above sea level in the mountainous Sichuan province of China, the Large High Altitude Air Shower Observatory (LHAASO) will attempt to search for the origin of high energy cosmic rays.

Indian-American Sandeep Matharani Ranks 4th Among 25 Overpaid CEOs in US

- An Indian-American CEO, Sandeep Matharani, has been ranked 4th on a list of top 25 overpaid CEOs in the United States, as per the report by US based NGO ‘As You Sow’.
- As You Sow is a non-profit organisation that promotes environmental and social corporate responsibility and takes a close look at CEO’s pay.

NTPC Commissions 2nd Unit of Mouda Super Thermal Power Station

- With this commissioning, the total capacity of Mouda Super Thermal Power Station, NTPC and NTPC group has become 2,320 MW, 41,907 MW and 48,873 MW, respectively.

First fully India-made train flagged off at Dadar station

- The much-awaited made-in-India train, Medha was flagged off from Dadar railway station.
- Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu, via videoconferencing, flagged off the maiden run of the train from Dadar to Borivali, at Lokmanya Tilak Terminus.

Government Set to Launch India’s First Sign Language Dictionary Soon

- The government has planned to soon launch India’s state of the art dictionary depicting the sign languages used by hearing and speech impaired people across the nation to bring uniformity and bridge the communication gap.
- The Indian Sign Language (ISL) dictionary is being developed by the Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) in both print and video format.
- ISLRTC has so far compiled 6,032 Hindi and English words and their corresponding graphic representation of the signs which are used in daily life.
iv. The ISL dictionary consists of graphic representations of popular signs used by the hearing impaired and will also include regional variations along with legal, technical and medical terms.

v. It will promote the use of sign language for hearing impaired students at schools and colleges. It will also enable government officials, teachers, professionals, community leaders and the public at large to learn and use sign language to communicate with the respective class of the people.

About Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC)

- Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre (ISLRTC) is an autonomous organization of the Government of India established under Society Registration Act, 1860 under the aegis of Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan) under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- The main objectives of ISLRTC are to develop manpower for using, teaching and conducting research in Indian Sign Language (ISL), to promote the use of ISL as an educational mode in collaboration with universities, national and international bodies.

Five Indian-Americans among the richest in the US: Forbes

- Five Indian-Americans are among the richest in the US, according to a Forbes list of 400 people.

Indians in Forbes list of US’ richest under-40 entrepreneurs

- Two Indian-origin men have figured in Forbes magazine’s second annual list of wealthiest entrepreneurs under the age of 40, which is topped by Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg.
- Biotech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy has been ranked 24th on ‘America’s Richest Entrepreneurs Under 40 2016’ list with a networth of $600 million, and Instacart co-founder Apoorva Mehta, stands at the 31st spot with a $360-million networth.

Global Health Index 2017: Italy healthiest country

- The Bloomberg in its Global Health Index of 163 countries has ranked Italy as the healthiest country on the planet, with a baby born there expected to live up to more than 80 years.
- Iceland, Switzerland, Singapore and Australia made up the top five most-healthy countries in the index.

Ganga and Yamuna rivers declared living entities

- The Uttarakhand high court has recognized the Ganga and the Yamuna as so-called living entities, giving the rivers that have seen years of damage at the hands of humans, a legal voice.
• It is the first time a court has recognized a non-human as a living entity in India.
• The two rivers thus have the right to be legally protected and not be harmed/destroyed. They can also be parties to disputes.
• The court’s recognition of the rivers comes just days after New Zealand according a living entity status to its third largest river, Whanganui.

India home to 101 billionaires, Mukesh Ambani tops list: Forbes
• India is home to world’s fourth highest number of billionaires with Reliance Industries chief Mukesh Ambani leading the club of more than 100 super rich Indians, according to a new list released by Forbes magazine.

Top three billionaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Asset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bill Gates</td>
<td>Microsoft Co-Founder</td>
<td>$86 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Buffet</td>
<td>Berkshire Hathaway Chief</td>
<td>$75.6 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff Bezos</td>
<td>Amazon</td>
<td>$72.8 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top three Indian billionaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Asset</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mukesh Ambani (33)</td>
<td>Reliance Industries</td>
<td>$23.2 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakshmi Mittal (56)</td>
<td>Arcelor Mittal</td>
<td>$16.4 billion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Azim Premji (72)</td>
<td>Wipro Ltd</td>
<td>$14.9 billion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Essar’s Nand Niketan: India’s first private sector township to go cashless
• Essar’s Nand Niketan at Hazira (in Surat district, Gujarat) became India’s first private sector township to go cashless, using the mobile wallet for performing digital transactions.

4 Indian cities among cheapest globally: EIU
• Four Indian cities are among the cheapest to live in globally, while Singapore has been ranked as the most expensive for the fourth consecutive year, as per a report by Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).
• Bangalore (3rd place), Chennai (6th), Mumbai (7th) and New Delhi (10th) have been ranked by EIU among the 10 cheapest cities in the world.
• Almaty in Kazakhstan has been ranked as the cheapest city in the world followed by Lagos. Karachi was placed 4th, Algiers (5th), Kiev (8th) and Bucharest (9th) rank.

India ranks 131 on Human Development Index
• India came down by one slot and was ranked 131st among 188 countries on Human Development Index (HDI) 2016 released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
• India fell under the “medium human development category” and its HDI, at 0.624, was behind Sri Lanka and the Maldives in South Asia.
• Sri Lanka and the Maldives were ranked 73 and 105 respectively and figure in the “high human development” section.
• The top three countries in HDI were Norway (0.949), Australia (0.939) and Switzerland (0.939).
• Central African Republic ranked last.

India’s longest highway tunnel to be inaugurated on April 2
• India’s longest highway tunnel at Chenani Nashri, between Udhampur and Ramban in Jammu & Kashmir is all set to be inaugurated by prime minister Narendra Modi on April 2.
• The 10.89 km tunnel has absorbed a sum of Rs 2519 crore in its construction.
• The tunnel is the longest highway tunnel in India boasting of features like Integrated Traffic Control System (ITCS), Video Surveillance System and FM Rebroadcast System.

• Lanka gets two more years from UNHRC to deliver war probe: Sri Lanka was given two more years to set up its accountability mechanism to probe alleged war crimes committed during the 37 - year civil war in the UNHRC resolution adopted in Geneva

18th edition of Asia ’s largest convention on the business of media and entertainment “FICCI Frames-2017” Theme: ‘Digital: Divide or dividend’

The World’s Largest Artificial Sun Sets Up in Germany
• Scientists at the German Aerospace Center (DLR) have designed Synlight which they call as the “world’s largest artificial sun” at Julich, a town located 30 kilometers (19 miles) west of Cologne in Germany to produce hydrogen in a carbon-neutral way so as to use them as fuel in cars and airplanes.

SBI Chairman Arundhati Bhattacharya among Fortune's 50 greatest leaders of the world
• SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya and Indian-origin physician Raj Panjabi have been named by Fortune magazine among the world's 50 greatest leaders who are transforming the world and inspiring others to do the same.
• Bhattacharya, Chairman of India's largest bank and the first-ever woman to do so, has been ranked 26th on the list while Panjabi, founder and CEO of Last Mile Health, follows closely on the 28th spot.
• The list has been topped by President of Baseball Operations at Chicago Cubs Theo Epstein, followed by Alibaba Group Executive Chairman Jack Ma on the second spot, Pope Francis (3), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Cochair Melinda Gates (4) and Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos (5).

India Overtakes Japan to Become Third Largest In Domestic Air Traffic
• India has become the third largest aviation market in terms of domestic passenger traffic, beating Japan, an industry report has said.
• India's domestic air passenger traffic stood at 100 million in 2016 and was behind only the US (719 million) and China (436 million), Sydney-based aviation think-tank Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) said in its latest report.
• **UDAN – Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik**: For 50% of the seats on every flight, pay only Rs.2500 per seat for one hour of flight

• **What is a heat wave?**: While there are caveats, the IMD’s dictionary says that if a location’s long-term normal is less than or equal to 40°C, a five-degree rise in temperature counts as a heat wave and seven or more, as a severe heat wave.

**Profile of States**

**Top 3 Cities in the List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thiruvananthapuram</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pune</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kolkata</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kerala Tops Among All Other States In GST Registration**

- Kerala has achieved the maximum number of enrollment and registrations under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime when compared to other states of India. The state has recorded nearly 60 percent registration of an estimated 2.5 lakh traders in Kerala migrating to the new platform.

**TN, UP received most number of domestic tourists in 2016**

- Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh top a list of states visited by Indian tourists last year, Tourism Ministry said.
- As per data released by the Ministry, a total of 344.3 million domestic tourists visited Tamil Nadu in 2016 while 229.6 million Uttar Pradesh.
- Similarly, Madhya Pradesh received 184.7 million tourists, Andhra Pradesh 158.5 million and Karnataka 129.8 million last year.

**Amma Kalviyagam**

- A portal named after late chief Minister Jayalalithaa ammakalviyagam.in occasion of her 69th birth anniversary celebrations.
- The launched portal will a hub of learning, interaction, opportunity, and connection. The portal was based on Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) model.
- This initiative will help students get assistance from reputed teachers free of cost, which reflects Jayalalithaa’s Vision TN 2023, where she had set goals for development in various sectors, including education to make the state as Knowledge hub of the country.

**Official Languages in West Bengal**
• English and Bengali are the two official languages of the state. Besides, the state has also recognized six other languages including Urdu, Gurmukhi, Nepali, Ol-Chiki, Oriya and Hindi.

**Mumbai ranked 21st in City Wealth Index list**

• Mumbai has been ranked 21st, ahead of Toronto, Washington DC and Moscow, in the “City Wealth Index” list in the Knight Frank Wealth Report 2017.
• Delhi has been ranked 35th, ahead of Bangkok, Seattle and Jakarta.
• The report tracked “super-rich population” in as many as 125 cities across 89 countries.

**Himachal Pradesh gets its second capital in Dharamsala**

• Himachal Pradesh state cabinet approved Dharamsala, situated in the snow-capped Dhauladhar range, as the second capital of the hill state.

**Haryana announces Tirtha Darshan scheme**

• Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has announced that the state government had prepared a Tirtha Darshan scheme under which senior citizens of any religion above 60 years of age and of Haryana domicile would be able to go on a pilgrimage within the country at government expense.
• The government would bear the entire cost of the tour of senior citizens belonging to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.
• In case of a couple, the expenses of the spouse belonging to BPL family would also be borne by the government. They would also be able to take along an assistant.
• In case of senior citizens of non-BPL families, the government would bear only 70 per cent of the cost.

**Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah launches “Pratibimba” to project achievements**

• This dashboard will serve as a tool to improve efficiency in governance and allow citizens to track government’s progress. It is available both in English and Kannada.
• After Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka has such dashboard which will help to report, track and measure departmental performance on programmes, projects and promises made.

• **Country’s longest tunnel** connecting Chenani and Nashri in Jammu and Kashmir will be opened for traffic later. Tourted as “Tunnel of Hope” in Kashmir this single structure ensuring all-weather connectivity will reduce the distance between Jammu and Kashmir by 38 km. Tunnel length 9.2 km.

• **Uttarakhand** to get two new tiger reserves. The Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary, which falls under the Terai Arc Landscape spanning across India and Nepal, and the Surai Range in the Terai East division of the Uttarakhand.

**Odisha govt launches 181 helpline for distressed women**
Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has launched 24*7 helpline number 181 to assist women in distress on the occasion of International Women’s Day on March 8, 2017.

A woman from any part of the Odisha can dial 181 to get immediate assistance.

**Arunachal Pradesh Launches Adarsh Gram Yojana for Rural Poor**

- The Arunachal Pradesh government has launched a new scheme Adarsh Gram Yojana that is in accordance with the basic philosophy of the Prime Minister “Sabka Saath Sabka Vikaas” (Collective Efforts Inclusive Growth).
- The scheme aims to reach the poor people in rural areas of the state to serve them better.

**Computing ability**

- Kerala has the highest computing ability at 32.3% in rural areas, while Chhattisgarh has the lowest, 2.9%. In the urban areas, Kerala is in second position, after Delhi.

**Hyderabad best Indian city in living standards: Mercer**

- Hyderabad for the third year in a row has emerged as the best city in terms of living standards among Indian cities.
- The National Capital for the second straight year hit the lowest score among Indian cities for living standards, as per the Mercer’s Quality of Living rankings 2017.

**Telangana launches Rs 605-crore ‘KCR Kit’ scheme for pregnant women**

- Focussing on women welfare and new born, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has come out with an innovative scheme – KCR Kit.
- The scheme is designed to address complications during the time of pregnancy and aimed at reducing infant mortality rate and encourage institutional deliveries.
- The KCR Kit consists of 16 essential things needed for a new-born and will be useful for up to three months.
- The kit comes packed with 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 government proposes to earmark Rs 605 crore for the scheme.

**First Airbus Training Centre in Asia to be set up in New Delhi**

- France based Aircraft maker Airbus will set up Asia’s first training facility for pilots and maintenance engineers in New Delhi.
- The centre will formed by the European aviation major Airbus. It is expected to be operational by the end of 2018.

**Sanjauli Police Post in Himachal Becomes India’s First CCTNS Linked Police Post**
• Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh inaugurated a Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems (CCTNS) in Shimla on March 15, 2017 to connect all the police posts in the state with each other.
• Thus Himachal Pradesh has become the first state in India to link its police posts in various districts with CCTNS.
• The system will facilitate people in lodging online/offline complaints, police verification of job applicants, tenants, character verification and migrant labourer registration.
• Besides, senior citizens, differently abled and women in far-flung areas of the state can lodge First Information Reports (FIRs) through the nearest police post.
• With the linkage of Police Posts with CCTNS, the general public can now file complaints at these posts which earlier were confined only to Police Stations to register complaints.

Bengaluru gets India's first vertical garden

• Bengaluru got its first vertical garden, which it hopes will help in curbing pollution and in beautifying the city.
• SayTrees, an NGO, installed the first vertical garden in the city on one of the pillars of the Hosur Road flyover
• The garden boasts of around 3500 saplings of more than 10 species

Human Trafficking Cases Maximum in West Bengal

• West Bengal topped the list of states with the maximum number of human trafficking cases in 2016 followed by Rajasthan as the two accounted for around 61 per cent of such cases in the country.
• Among the Union Territories, Delhi recorded the maximum number of human trafficking cases in 2016. Of the 75 cases registered among the UTs, 66 were registered in Delhi.

Gujarat first in construction of houses for urban poor

• Gujarat is far ahead of other States in construction of affordable houses for urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) launched by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on June 25, 2015.
• Gujarat is followed by Rajasthan with 10,805 houses constructed so far (13.17% of total), Karnataka-10,447, Tamil Nadu- 6,940 and Maharashtra-5,506 (6.70%).

Defence, National Security and Terrorism

South Korea, US begin large-scale military exercise

• South Korean and United States held large-scale joint military exercise called Foal Eagle to test their defence readiness against the threat from North Korea. It will continue until the end of April 2017.

Joint Military Exercises

• The details of joint military exercises conducted with foreign countries during the last three years and the current year are as under:

Joint Exercises conducted by Army:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>AUSTRÁ HIND</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>SAMPRTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>HAND IN HAND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>SHAKTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>GARUDA SHAKTI</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>PRABAL DOSTYK</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>KHANJAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>EKUVERIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>NOMADIC ELEPHANT KHAN QUEST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>SURYA KIRAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>AL NAGAH</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>INDRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>LAMITIYE</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>AGNI WARRIOR BOLD KURUKHESTRA</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>MITRA SHAKTI</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>MAITREE</td>
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<td></td>
<td>COBRA GOLD (Observer)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>AJEYA WARRIOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>YUDHABHAYAS VAJRA PRAHAR</td>
</tr>
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**Joint Exercises conducted by Navy:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>AUSINDEX KAKADU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brazil &amp; South Africa</td>
<td>IBSAMAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>ADMM+ Exercise (Multilateral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>VARUNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>IND-INDO CORPAT (Bi-annual) Ex KOMODO (HADR) (Multilateral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>ARF DIREx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>IMCOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>Naseem-al-Bahr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>INDRA NAVY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>SIMBEX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>SLINEX IN-SLN SF Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>INDO-THAI CORPAT (Bi-annual)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Joint Exercises conducted by Air Force:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>GARUDA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>EASTERN BRIDGE</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>AVIAINDRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>JOINT MILITARY TRAINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>SIAM BHARAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>DESERT EAGLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>INDRADHANUSH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>RED FLAG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**World Organisation**

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

- India among other countries in the South East Asian Region, which bear half of the global tuberculosis burden, signed a 'call for action' and pledged to scale up measures to end the disease by 2030.
- India reports 2.8 million new TB cases annually and nearly half a million deaths due to the disease.
- In 2015, TB caused nearly 8,00,000 deaths in the region, while an estimated 4.74 million new cases were reported.
- Six of the region's countries -- Bangladesh, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand -- are among the 30 high TB burden nations globally.

**India ranks 87th on energy architecture performance: WEF**

- India has marginally improved its position to 87th place on a global energy architecture performance index, but ranks among the worst for pollution, a survey showed today.
- Switzerland topped the annual list released by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF) and was followed by Norway, Sweden, Denmark and France in the top five.
- India's rank improved three places from 90th last year.
- Bahrain is ranked the lowest at 127th.

**Pact and Summits**

**NMCG Signs MoU with Rotary India for the Success of Namami Gange**

• Aim: To make Namami Gange programme a mass movement through the involvement of more and more voluntary organizations.
• The MoU was signed by Director General, National Mission for Clean Ganga Shri UP Singh and Vice Chairman of Rotary India Shri PT Prabhakar. The MoU shall remain in force for two years.
• Rotary India will support clean Ganga mission through their ‘WASH in Schools’ program in various schools.
• WASH in Schools programme is an initiative of Rotary India to be undertaken in 20,000 targeted Government Schools located along the river Ganga in various states for improving awareness on sanitation by emphasizing the need of practicing positive health behaviors.
• Rotary India would undertake activities and campaigns to create awareness in schools and communities about Ganga rejuvenation and hence make effort on reducing the pollution flowing into the river.

Rotary India

• The Rotary Foundation (India) is a non-profit corporation that supports the efforts of Rotary International to achieve world understanding and peace through international humanitarian, educational, and cultural exchange programs.
• Rotary International is an international service organization that aims to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian services encourage high ethical standards and advance goodwill and peace around the world.

DRDO Signs Deal with JSHL to Manufacture High Nitrogen Steel

• The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) signed a technology transfer agreement with Jindal Stainless (Hisar) Limited (JSHL) on March 1, 2017 for manufacturing High Nitrogen Steel (HNS).
• The “non-exclusive” licencing agreement was signed between the Hyderabad-based Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL) of the DRDO and the JSHL.

High Nitrogen Steel

• High Nitrogen Steel (HNS) has higher ballistic strength than normal steel and currently India largely depends on imports.
• It has good strength in addition to being non-magnetic and corrosion-resistant. Its cost is about 30-40% cheaper than the imported material.
• Due to its strength and characteristics HNS has wide range of application in all armoured vehicles.

Vice President Hamid Ansari to attend IORA Summit in Jakarta

• The summit, with the theme of ‘Strengthening Maritime Cooperation for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Indian Ocean’, will be preceded by a meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials on March 5 and a meeting of the Council of Ministers on March 6.

States Current

President Inaugurates the Centenary Celebrations of Women’s Indian Association
• The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the Centenary Celebrations of Women’s Indian Association at Adyar, Chennai.

10th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance Held in New Delhi
• The 10th edition of the International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (ICEGOV 2017) was held in New Delhi from March 7-9, 2017.
• Theme: Building Knowledge Societies: From Digital Government to Digital Empowerment
• The ICEGOV 2018 will be held in Galway, Ireland.

Kaggle:
• Kaggle is home to the world’s largest community of data scientists and machine-learning enthusiasts.
• It was founded in 2010 by Anthony Goldbloom.

Government Launches Rs. 52000 lakh Mission Fingerling to achieve Blue Revolution
• The Union government has launched Mission Fingerling on March 11, 2017 to achieve Blue Revolution with the holistic development and management of fisheries in the country.
• The Blue Revolution programme focuses on creating an environment that envisages integrated and holistic development and management of fisheries for the socio economic development of the fishers and fish farmers.
• The main motive behind this programme is to enhance the fisheries production from 10.79 mmt (2014-15) to 15 mmt by 2020-21.
• The Department has identified 20 States based on their potential and other relevant factors to strengthen the Fish Seed infrastructure in the country.
• Total expenditure of about Rs. 52000 lakh has been identified by the government for the programme to establish 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.
• The main focus of the programme will be on building relevant infrastructure for the conservation of fisheries with equal focus on management and conservation of the resources through technology transfer to increase in the income of the fishers and fish farmers.
• Besides, productivity enhancement shall also be achieved through employing the best global innovations and integration of various production oriented activities such as: Production of quality fish seeds, Cost effective feed and adoption of technology etc.

Australia Research Institute Signs Agreement with Indian Railways for Infrastructure Support
• Monash University Institute of Railway Technology (IRT), Australia has entered into an agreement with the Indian Railways to support future research and technology development related to critical infrastructure in India.
IRT along with partners, Balaji Railroad Systems Ltd (BARSYL), a leading railway consultant in India, PwC, and Indian Institute of Bombay (IITB) will provide necessary support to Indian Railways.

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).

Brazil:

- Capital: Brasília
- Currency: Brazilian real
- President: Michel Temer

India & Russia Ink Long-Term Support Contract On Sukhoi Su-30MKI

- India and Russia have inked two pacts for long-term maintenance support for Sukhoi-30MKI jets on March 17, 2017 during the India-Russia Military Industrial Conference in New Delhi.
- The agreement was signed by UAC President Yuri Slyusar, UEC Director General Alexander Artyukhov and HAL Chairman Suvarna Raju in presence of Finance-Cum-Defence Minister Arun Jaitley and Russian Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov.
- The objective of having long-term supply agreements is to increase the efficiency of aircraft maintenance support and to ensure licensed production and strengthen the operational availability of the Sukhois.
- The agreement involves long-term supply of spares and rendering technical assistance for five years for Su-30 MKI aircraft at an expected cost of $300 million.
- The agreement will include the after-sales service of 200 Su-30MKI which may be extended to the full contracted 272.

Sukhoi Su-30MKI

- The Sukhoi Su-30MKI super-maneuverable fighter jet is the latest version of the Su-30MK designed and developed by Russia’s Irkut Corporation.
- Indian Air Force has so far inducted 240 Sukhoi-30MKIs of the 272 contracted from Russia at a cost of over $12 billion. The licensed production of the aircraft takes place at HAL’s facility in Nashik, Maharashtra.

Important Defence Agreements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Defence Agreement / MoUs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>MoU between the Coast Guards for Establishment of Collaborative Relationship to Combat Transnational illegal activities at sea and Develop Regional Cooperation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Agreement/Protocol</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>MoU on secondment of Indian Armed Forces Personnel to the Botswana Defence Forces.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>MoU on the Purchase of Rafale.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agreement concerning Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MoU on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges between India and Japan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Agreement on Defence and Military Technical Cooperation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>Agreement on Defence Cooperation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MoU between the Coast Guards in the field of Marine Crime Prevention at Sea.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MoU to cooperate on Maritime Issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>RoK</td>
<td>Agreement on the Protection of Classified Military Information.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Agreement on cooperation in Aircraft Flight Safety.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Helicopter Engineering.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Agreement on supply of S-400 Triumph Air Defence Missile systems to the Republic of India.</td>
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<td>Agreement for Construction of follow-on Ships of Project 11356 in Russia and in India.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>MoU for cooperation in the field of Hydrography.</td>
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<td>Protocol on Sale of Navigational Charts/Electronic Navigational Charts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Agreement on Protection of Classified Information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Memorandum on Defence Cooperation and Exchanges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>MoU on cooperation in the field of Hydrography.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>Agreement on cooperation in the field of defence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>MoU concerning Mutual protection of Classified Information.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MoU on cooperation in the field of Defence Industry.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LEMOA- Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
21. Vietnam

| MoU between Indian Coast Guard and Vietnam Coast Guard for establishment of Collaborative Relationship to Combat Transnational Crime and Develop Mutual Cooperation. |
| MoU on Programme of Cooperation between the Vietnam People’s Air Force and Air Defence and IAF. |

India and ADB Sign $350 Million Loan for 1,500 kms of District Roads in Madhya Pradesh

India, Pakistan to review Miyar project

- India and Pakistan have agreed on redesigning the Miyar Hydroelectric (Himachal Pradesh) project at the end of two-day talks of Indus Water Commissioners held in Islamabad, capital of Pakistan.

Eminent person, places in news

Sex-ratio in urban areas worse than rural areas: Survey

- Urban India fares worse than the rural parts of the country in terms of sex-ratio, both overall and at birth, as per a latest national health survey.
- The overall sex-ratio for the country is 991, while in rural India it was 1009 and in urban areas 956, according to the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4) for 2015-16.
- The sex-ratio at birth in the past five years has improved marginally from 914 to 919 girls per 1000 boys but in urban India it was as low as 899.

Visually challenged singer sets a record:

- Popular Malayalam playback singer Vaikom Vijayalakshmi on Sunday reportedly set a World Record by playing the Gayathriveen for five hours non-stop, at a function here. The visually challenged singer played 67 songs as well as 12 keerthanas on the instrument.

- **Ayesha is making history in air**: Aziz became the country’s youngest student pilot at 16 on receiving a student pilot’s licence in 2011. She has flown single-engine aircraft for 200 hours for training. Ayesha Aziz has her sights on fly the MiG-29 next.

Popular Tamil writer Asokamitran passes away

- Noted Tamil litterateur Asokamitran passed away after a brief illness, aged 85.
- A well known novelist and essayist, he was noted for his subtlety and refreshing creativity in expression.
- Born Thiagarajan, he assumed the pseudonym Asokamitran in the 1960s.
- His work “Appavin Snegithargal”, a collection of short stories won him the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1996.
- He was given the ‘Tiru Vi Ka’ Award in 2014 for his contribution to Tamil literature.

Sports and Games

Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis win Uganda International Series title
• Indian shuttlers Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis have won the men’s doubles gold at the 2017 Uganda International Series. The Indian duo defeated Aatish Lubah and Georges Julien Paul of Mauritius by 21-8, 21-14 score in the final match. The top seeded pair is ranked 55 currently. They had paired up in 2015 and have won three International Series events together till now.

**Jitu Rai wins gold at ISSF World Cup in 50m free pistol**

• Shooters Jitu Rai and Amanpreet Singh has won gold and silver respectively in men’s 50m free pistol at the ISSF Shooting World Cup.
• Jitu’s winning score of 230.1 was a world record, while Amanpreet shot 226.9 to win silver.
• The bronze went to Vahid Golkhandan of Iran, who shot 208.8.

**List of Winners of the ISSF Shooting World Cup 2017**

• The 2017 ISSF World Cup was held at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad in New Delhi from February 22-March 4, 2017. The annual ISSF World Cup is governed by the International Shooting Sport Federation.
• Jitu Rai and Heena Sidhu bagged the first ever gold medal in the newly included 10m pistol mixed event at the ISSF Shooting World Cup.
• Pooja Ghatkar clinched bronze medal in the women’s 10m air rifle event in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup.
• India’s Deepak Kumar gave an impressive performance in the Men’s 10m Air Rifle at the ISSF World Cup in New Delhi.
• Jitu Rai won gold medal in the 50-metre free pistol event on March 1, 2017 in the ISSF World Cup.

**The Winners**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Runner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Singles</td>
<td>Andy Murray (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>Fernando Verdasco (Spain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Singles</td>
<td>Elina Svitolina (Ukraine)</td>
<td>Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Doubles</td>
<td>Netherlands Pair</td>
<td>Rohan Bopanna (India) / Marcin Matkowski (Poland)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Jean-Julien Rojer / Romania Horia Tecău</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Doubles</td>
<td>Ekaterina Makarova (Russia) / Elena Vesnina (Russia)</td>
<td>Andrea Hlaváčková (Czech Republic) / Peng Shuai (China)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Runner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s singles</td>
<td>Sam Querrey (United States)</td>
<td>Rafael Nadal (Spain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s singles</td>
<td>Lesia Tsurenko (Ukraine)</td>
<td>Kristina Mladenovic (France)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Men’s Doubles  Jamie Murray / Brazil Bruno Soares (United Kingdom Pair)  John Isner / Spain Feliciano López, (United States Pair)

Women’s Doubles  Darija Jurak (Croatia) / Anastasia Rodionova (Australia)  Verónica Cepede Royg (Paraguay) / Mariana Duque Mariño (Colombia)

South African Surfer Makes World’s First Atlantic Crossing On Paddleboard
- Chris Bertish, a South African surfer and a sailor became the first person in the world on March 9, 2017 to cross the Atlantic Ocean on a stand-up paddleboard after completing an epic 4,050-mile voyage alone at sea.
- 42 year old Bertish began his journey from Agadir, Morocco 93 days ago on December 6 and arrived at English Harbour, Antigua in the Leeward Islands of the Caribbean on March 9, 2017.

SSP Chawrasia defends Indian Open Title
- He is only the second Indian golfer after Jyoti Randhawa to successfully defend the Hero Indian Open. It was his sixth win on the Asian Tour and overall sixth international victory.

Other Category Winners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Runner</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Single</td>
<td>China’s Tai Tzu-ying 21-16, 22-20</td>
<td>Thailand’s Ratchanok Intanon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Double</td>
<td>Indonesia’s Marcus Gideon and Kevin Sukamuljo 21-19, 21-14</td>
<td>China’s Li Junhui and Liu Yuchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Double</td>
<td>South Korea’s Chang Ye Na and Lee So Hee 21-18, 21-13</td>
<td>Denmark’s Kamilla Rytter Juhl and Christinna Pedersen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Double</td>
<td>China’s Lu Kai and Huang Yaqiong 18-21, 21-19, 21-14</td>
<td>Malaysia’s Peng Soon Chan and Liu Ying Goh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Cheteshwar Pujara becomes first Indian to face 500 balls in Test innings
- India's middle-order batsman Cheteshwar Pujara stormed his way into record books after playing a marathon innings against Australia on fourth day of the third Test match in Ranchi.
- Pujara became the first Indian batsman to face 500 balls in a Test innings by surpassing Rahul Dravid's previous best of 495 balls.
- Pujara scored 202 runs in his 525 balls long innings.

Roger Federer, Elena Vesnina lift singles titles at Indian Wells
- Swiss Roger Federer and Russian Elena Vesnina have clinched singles titles at Indian Wells tournament.
Vidya Pillai wins silver in Women World Snooker
- India's Vidya Pillai produced a spirited performance before settling for silver in the World Women Snooker Championship in Singapore.
- Hong Kong's former World Champion, Ng On Yee, won the gold medal.

2017 Vijay Hazare Trophy: Tamil Nadu crowned champions
- Tamil Nadu regained the Vijay Hazare trophy after beating Bengal by 37 runs in the final of the 2017 edition.
- With this win, they become the only team to win the tournament five times (one of them was shared with Uttar Pradesh in 2004-05).

K T Irfan wins bronze in Asian 20km Race Walk Championships
- National record holder K T Irfan won bronze medal in the 20 kilometre men’s event in the Asian Race Walk Championships held in Nomi, Japan.

R Ashwin breaks Dale Steyn’s record of most wickets in a Test season
- R Ashwin has set yet another record of most wickets in a Test season.
- Ashwin eclipsed Dale Steyn’s tally of 78 which was set in 2007/08.
- On the other hand, Cheteshwar Pujara became India's highest run-getter in a Test season. Pujara, who has scored 1316 runs in the 13 Test matches this home season, went past Gautam Gambhir's aggregate of 1269 runs.

Vettel beats Hamilton to win Australian Grand Prix
- Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel beat Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes in a straight fight as Formula 1's new era started at the Australian Grand Prix.
- This was Vettel's first win since the Singapore GP in September 2015.

Shuttlers Purva Barve, Varun Kapur win international titles at Li Ning-Israel Open
- Indian shuttlers Purva Barve (16) and Varun Kapur have won in their respective age group sections in the Li Ning-Israel Open 2017 badminton tournament held in Israel. 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup: Kolkata’s Salt Lake Stadium named as venue for final

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, Chirag Shetty win Vietnam Open International challenger badminton title
- India’s badminton pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has won $20,000 Vietnam Open International challenger badminton title in men’s double category.

Tamil Nadu beat India ‘B’ to win Deodhar Trophy
- Dinesh Karthik cracked 126 as Tamil Nadu defeated India B by 42 runs in the final to clinch the Deodhar Trophy 50-overs cricket tournament at the ACA-VDCA stadium in Visakhapatnam.

Points to Remember
• The Deodhar Trophy is a List A cricket competition in Indian domestic cricket. It is named after Prof. D. B. Deodhar (known as the Grand Old Man of Indian cricket). Tamilnadu is the winner of 2017 edition.

• The Vijay Hazare Trophy is a limited-over cricket domestic competition involving state teams. It is named after the famous Indian cricketer Vijay Hazare. Tamilnadu is the winner of 2017 edition.

Ravichandran Ashwin awarded Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy
• Indian cricketer Ravichandran Ashwin was awarded Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for the ICC Cricketer of the Year 2016 as well as the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year 2016. With this, he became the third Indian to win this award after Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar. He is also the second cricketer after Rahul Dravid to win the two awards in the same year. The Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy is awarded annually by the International Cricket Council (ICC) to its chosen world player of the year. It was first awarded in 2004 to Rahul Dravid.

• Srinath set to become India’s 46th GM: Local lad Srinath Narayanan is poised to become India’s 46th Grandmaster after he defeated Spanish GM David Anton Guijarro at the ongoing 2017 Sharjah Masters chess tournament. The 23 year old who had become India’s youngest FIDE rated player in 2002 when he was just eight years old, had also finished as joint-winner in the U-12 World Championship in France back in 2005.

• Dipika Pallikal wins arbitration award: An arbitral tribunal at the Madras High Court Arbitration Centre has awarded a claim of Rs.19.48 lakh to Indian squash champion Dipika Pallikal.

Asian Hockey Player of Year – S.V Sunil and Harmanpreet Singh in Awardees list
• Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) on March 30, 2017 named SV Sunil as the Asian Player of the Year 2016 and Harmanpreet Singh as Asian Promising Player of the Year 2016 (Junior team).

Books and authors
‘Number Do Lie’ authored by former cricketer Aakash Chopra
Michael Clarke launches his autobiography ‘My Story’
Coffee Table Book titled “50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution” launched
• The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Shri Radha Mohan Singh has launched of Coffee Table Book titled “50 Years – The Great Indian Milk Revolution” commemorating National Dairy Development Board’s (NDDB) Golden Jubilee year.

Gauri Singh becomes first girl to swim from Sea Link to Gateway of India
• Gauri Singh (14) from Rajasthan became the first Indian girl swim from Sea Link near Worli Koliwada to the Gateway of India in the Arabia Sea.

Awards and honours
Indian Film Lipstick Under My Burkha Wins Audience Award at Glasgow Film Festival
Restricted for release by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC), Indian movie, Lipstick Under My Burkha was awarded the third annual Audience Award at the Glasgow Film Festival 2017 on March 1, 2017.

Rangaswamy First Woman to Be Honored BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award
- The Indian cricket board i.e. BCCI has nominated Shantha Rangaswamy for lifetime achievement award for her contribution to the women's cricket.
- She will be the first women to get this award.

Board of Cricket Control in India (BCCI) awards 2015-16
- Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement award: Rajinder Goel and Padmakar Shivalkar
- BCCI Lifetime Achievement award for women: Shantha Rangaswamy
- BCCI Special awards: V.V. Kumar and the late Ramakant Desai
- Polly Umrigar award: Virat Kohli
- Dilip Sardesai award (India’s best cricketer in the West Indies series, 2016): R. Ashwin

Sahitya Akademi award for Poornachandran:
- His translation of Manu Joseph’s Serious Men, winner of the Hindu Literary Award for best fiction in 2010, has won him the Sahitya Akademi award for translation for 2016. The title of the book is Poruppumikka Manitharkal, it is published by Ethir.

Indian Institute of Science Makes it to Top 10 Best Small Universities in the World Ranking
- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore is the only Indian University to be placed among the top 10 global universities by Times Higher Education (THE).
- As per the THE ‘Best Small Universities in the World 2017’ ranking released on March 7, 2017, IISc has been placed at 8th position among the list of top 10 global universities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>University</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>California Institute of Technology</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>École Normale Supérieure</td>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pohang University of Science and Technology</td>
<td>South Korea</td>
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SERB Fellowship Award To Lalji Singh
- Former director of Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Lalji Singh has been selected for ‘SERB Distinguished Fellow’ award by the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) to support his research.
- Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB):
- The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) is a statutory body established through an Act of Parliament.
• The Tirunelveli Corporation has bagged the national award for source segregation of waste at the door step.
• Four women working in diverse fields from Tamilnadu were honoured with the Nari Shakti Awards by President Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday. Kalpana Shankar, Chair person of Hand in Hand India, on organisation working on women SHGs, livelihoods and child labour; 97 year old yoga enthusiast V. Nanammal; textile designer Kalyani Prmod Balakrishnan, Nandita Shah, who runs ‘Sanctuary’ an organisation that works on improving health and also on ways to reconnect with animals and nature.

**Konkani Writer Mahabaleshwar Sail Receives Saraswati Samman 2016**
• Noted Konkani author Mahabaleshwar Sail has been honored with the 2016 Saraswati Samman for his novel ‘Hawthan’.

**IIT-M solar inverter system wins 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.

**Thai Model Crowned Transgender Beauty Queen Title**
• Thailand’s Model, Jiratchaya Sirimongkolnawin was crowned Miss International Queen 2016 on March 10, 2017 in the 12th edition of the beauty pageant event in Pattaya City, Thailand.
• Miss International Queen began in the year 2004 and has been held annually in Pattya City since then and is considered the largest and the most popular transgender pageant of the world.

**Indian-American teenager wins top science prize**
• Indian-American teenager, Indrani Das, won the top, $250,000 prize in the prestigious Regeneron Science Talent Search competition for her research on treating brain injuries and diseases.
• Another Indian-American, Arjun Ramani, took the third place, which carries a prize of $150,000, for his project on networks using mathematical field of graph theory and computer programming.

**Changi Airport is named World’s Best Airport for the fifth consecutive year**
• Changi Airport Singapore was voted by international air travellers as the World’s Best Airport for the fifth consecutive year at the 2017 World Airport Awards.
• The top 5 rankings for the World’s Best Airport Award in 2017 were:
  • Changi Airport Singapore
  • Tokyo International Airport (Haneda)
  • Incheon International Airport
  • Munich Airport
• Hong Kong International Airport

Major Rohit Suri awarded Kirti Chakra for PoK Surgical Strikes

About Kirti Chakra
♦ Kirti Chakra is the second highest peacetime gallantry award equivalent of the Maha Vir Chakra. It is given for valour, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the field of battle.
♦ It may be awarded to civilians as well as military personnel, including posthumous awards. It comes after Ashoka Chakra and before Shaurya Chakra.

Ed Sheeran to Receive Songwriters Hall of Fame 2017 Award
• The 26 year old English singer-songwriter and record produce Ed Sheeran from UK will be honoured with the Songwriters Hall of Fame’s 2017 Hal David Starlight Award.

Ravish Kumar wins the inaugural Kuldip Nayar Journalism Award
• The first Kuldip Nayar Journalism Award was given to NDTV’s Ravish Kumar.

Six Indian-Americans Named for 2017 Ellis Island Medal of Honour

Anupam Kher receives Kala Ratan Award
• Veteran actor Anupam Kher was honoured with the Kala Ratan Award

Sitaram Swain chosen for Glenfiddich’s Emerging Artist of the Year award 2017
• Odisha-based installation artist Sitaram Swain was chosen as the Glenfiddich’s Emerging Artist of the Year 2017. He will be the sixth recipient of the honour. He will represent India at the Glenfiddich Artists in Residence (AiR) programme at the Glenfiddich Distillery in Scotland with seven artists from around the world.

Cultural panorama

Assam to host river festival ‘Namami Brahmaputra
• Assam Government has decided to host the biggest river festival ‘Namami Brahmaputra’.

Sudan’s Bashir names long-time ally and general prime minister
• North Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir appointed his first vice president Hassan Saleh to the newly created post of prime minister on 1 March 2016.
• The Prime Minister post which was abolished in 1989 after National Umma Party administration that governed then. This appointment makes first time Sudan has had a prime minister since Bashir came to power.
• End of 2019.

Amul Thapar named for top judicial post in US
Indian-American legal luminary Amul Thapar (47) was nominated by US President Donald Trump to a key judicial position on the Court of Appeals. If confirmed by the Senate, Mr. Thapar will be part of the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals. He will be second Indian American on a circuit court of appeal, joining Sri Srinivasan.

BSF gets first woman combat officer after 51 years
- Tanushree Pareek has become the first woman combat officer to be commissioned in the 51-year history of the BSF, the country’s largest border guarding force.
- She will now be posted to command a unit along the India-Pakistan border in Punjab.
- A resident of Rajasthan’s Bikaner, she is the first woman to join the force in the officer rank after she was selected in the all-India exam conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in 2014.

Sima Kamil becomes first woman to head a major Pakistani bank
- Sima Kamil was named the first woman to head a major commercial bank in Pakistan.
- Sima, currently a deputy CEO at the country’s third-largest lender United Bank Limited (UBL), will take charge on 1 June.
- UBL, headquartered in the financial hub Karachi, employs 15,000 people and has branches in 15 other countries, including the US, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Anil Ambani inducted into the Atlantic Council
- Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani has been inducted into the international advisory board of global think-tank The Atlantic Council.
- 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.

Carrie Lam becomes first woman Chief Executive of Hong Kong
- Carrie Lam is set to become the first woman Chief Executive (CE) of the Hong Kong, a special administrative region of China.

Indian Origin Iqbal Surve Appointed Head of SA’s BRICS Business Council
- Dr. Iqbal Surve, an Indian-Origin South African billionaire has been appointed as the new Chairman of BRICS Business Council of South Africa.

Vanaja N Sarna Appointed New Chairman of Central Board of Excise and Customs
- Senior bureaucrat, Vanaja N. Sarna, has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) with effect from March 31, 2017.

Pakistani American Ali Javed becomes first Muslim, to join NYPD Elite unit
- Sergeant Ali Javed, from Pakistani Origin became the 1st Muslim to join in New York City Police Department (NYPD) Emergency Service Unit.

Public awareness and general admin
Lok Sabha Clears Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill, 2016 To Raise Maternity Leave to 26 Weeks

- The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 was passed by the Lok Sabha by voice vote on March 10, 2017 that will benefit about 1.8 million women working in organized sector.
- The bill seeks to increase the maternity leaves to 26 weeks by amending the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 that provides for 12 weeks of maternity leave.
- The Bill will be applicable to the establishments that hire at least 10 or more people. The entitlement will be for only up to first 2 children. For third child, the entitlement will be for only 12 weeks.
- The Labour and Employment Minister Bandaru Dattatreya moved the bill for consideration and passage in Lower House.

Rajya Sabha Passes Enemy Property Amendment Bill

- Rajya Sabha passed a bill on March 10, 2017 by voice vote to amend a 49-year-old law regarding claims of succession or transfer of properties left by people who migrated to Pakistan and China in the 1960s or later.
- The Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016, which amends the Enemy Property Act, 1968, was passed in the Rajya Sabha to vest all rights, titles and interests over enemy property in the Custodian.
- The bill was passed by the Lok Sabha in March 2016 after which the Rajya Sabha had sent it to a select committee, upon whose recommendations the government had moved a number of amendments to it.
- Finally, after the amended bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha it was returned to the Lok Sabha for final passage.

Salient Features of the Bill

- It 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. It does not provide any alternative judicial remedy.
- The bill amends the definition of “enemy” and “enemy subject” to include the legal heir(s) or successor(s) of the enemy, even if the latter is a citizen of India or a non-enemy country.
- According to the new bill, the law of succession will not apply to the legal heir(s) or successor(s) of the enemy.

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

- The 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 on March 14, 2017 to set up a single permanent tribunal to effectively resolve inter-state river water sharing disputes.
- Once the proposed legislation is enacted, the single permanent tribunal known as Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal will do away with all the existing tribunals including those on Cauvery, Mahadayi/ Mandovi, Krishna, Vansadhara and Ravi and Beas rivers.

Features of the Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2017
• The Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2017 proposes to ease the adjudication of inter-state river water disputes and make the present legal and institutional architecture stronger and robust.

• The Bill also proposes a setting up a Single Standing Tribunal (with multiple benches) instead of presently existing multiple tribunals and shall consist of one Chairperson, one Vice-Chairperson and not more than six other Members.

• The term of office of the Chairperson will be five year or till he attains the age of 70 years whichever is earlier. The term of office of Vice Chairperson and other member of tribunal shall be co-terminus with the adjudication of the water dispute.

• The Bill also provides for the appointment of Assessors to provide technical support to the tribunal. They shall be appointed from amongst experts serving in the Central Water engineering Service not below the rank of Chief Engineer.

• The total time 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.

• The Bill also proposes to introduce mechanism to resolve the dispute amicably by negotiations, through a Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) to be established by the Central Government consisting of relevant experts, before such dispute is referred to the tribunal.

• The Bill also provides for transparent data collection system at the national level for each river basin and for this purpose, an agency to maintain data-bank and information system shall be appointed or authorized by Central Government.

Rajya Sabha Passes HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014

• The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014, was passed by the Rajya Sabha on March 21, 2017 by voice vote.

• The Bill was moved in the Parliament by Health Minister JP Nadda and aims to prevent and control the spread of HIV and AIDS by providing treatment and prohibiting discrimination against persons afflicted with it, placing obligations on establishments to safeguard their rights.

Features of the HIV/AIDS (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014

i. The Bill protects such people from specific acts of discrimination by the state, or any other person.

ii. It also lays down penal provisions for any discrimination practiced against a person with HIV/AIDS and breach of confidentiality.

iii. Under the Bill, central and state governments are obliged to provide for anti-retroviral therapy (ART) and management of opportunistic infections (infections that take advantage of weakness in the immune system and occur frequently).

iv. The protection mandated in the Bill will apply in fields of employment, healthcare services, educational services, public facilities, property rights, holding public office, and insurance.

v. It has also adopted “test and treat” policy which means any person testing positive will be entitled for free treatment by the state and central government.
vi. The bill was initially introduced by the UPA government in 2014, however, the amendments to the HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Bill, 2014 were revived by the Modi government in July 2016.

Role of voluntary Org

- Kerala based Ayana Charitable Trust, the new name under which US charity Gospel for Asia is reportedly funding projects in India, has emerged on top of the list of Indian NGOs with the highest foreign funding in 2015-16.

Government schemes

Delhi Govt Extends Midday Meal Scheme for Girls Up To Class 12

- Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led Delhi government has come up with an initiative to extend the mid-day meal facility for the girl students up to class 12 in all Delhi government schools.
- Currently Delhi provides the facility to all the students of government schools including boys up to class 8 only.

Final Draft of Central GST & Integrated GST Approved By GST Council

- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council headed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley unanimously cleared the crucial Central GST (CGST) and Integrated GST (IGST) draft bills on March 4, 2017 during its 11th meeting at Vigyan Bhavan.
- The state had recommended as many as 26 changes regarding CGST and IGST, all of which were accepted by the Centre.
- Under the IGST bill which is related to taxation of inter-state transfer of goods, the legislation has been made for cross empowerment of state and central officers.
- Both Centre and states have agreed to provide a composition scheme for small businesses. Now the small businesses with an annual turnover of up to Rs 50 lakh will pay 5 percent tax (to be shared equally between the Centre and states).

Tamil Nadu CM Palaniswami Launches Rs 1580 cr Housing Scheme

- The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami launched a Housing Scheme on March 9, 2017 for construction of concrete houses for the economically poor section of the society.
- The project is estimated at Rs 1,580 crore and will be implemented by the state government with financial assistance from the Center.

Geographical landmarks

Policy on environmental

Government Bans BBC from 50 tiger reserves for FIVE years

- The global news agency, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has been barred by the Indian Government from shooting in any of its 50 tiger reserves for a period of five years.
- The ban was imposed by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) on February 27, 2017.
• The ban was imposed for allegedly misrepresenting facts in a documentary film “One World: Killing for Conservation” made by BBC about poaching in the Kaziranga National Park in Assam.
• Besides, NTCA’s parent body, the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), is also considering a similar action against the British channel and could prohibit it from its sanctuaries and national parks as well.

**WCCB Conducts 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’ from January 30 to February 19, 2017 to combat illegal trade of wildlife animals in the country.
• The operation was undertaken in coordination with International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL).
• Operation Thunder Bird is the codename for Interpol’s multi-national and multi-species enforcement operation. It aimed to eliminate poaching of wildlife animals of India.
• ‘Operation Save Kurma’ is a turtle specific operation where over 15,000 live turtles were seized.

**Scientists Discovers World’s Oldest Known Fossils in Canada**

• According to research published in the journal Nature on March 1, 2017, scientists have discovered the oldest known fossil in Canada which is believed to be as old as 3.7 billion years old or even 4.3 billion years old.
• Prior to this discovery, the oldest microfossils reported were found in Western Australia which was believed to be 3,460 million years old.

**45% of country’s bird species in Himachal Pradesh: Great Backyard Bird Count**

• According to the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)-2017 report about 45 percent of country’s total bird species were reported in Himachal Pradesh.
• The Great Backyard Bird Count is the first online citizen-science project intended at gathering data on wild birds and to display results in near real-time.
• The survey was launched in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society and conducted every year in February.

**Cyclone Enawo kills at least 3 in Madagascar and 500 homeless**

• Intense Tropical Cyclone Enawo was the strongest tropical cyclone that hit in the northeast of the Madagascar.

**Punjab University Develops 3 Bt Cotton Varieties**

• Ludhiana based Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) has developed India’s first genetically modified varieties of cotton whose seeds could help the farmers in saving the cultivation cost.
• PAU Bt 1 and F1861 were developed by PAU, while RS2013 was developed at Rajasthan Agricultural University (RAU), Bikaner.
• While the PAU Bt 1 was completely developed at PAU, the F1861 and RS2013 were converted to Bt version by Central Institute for Cotton Research, Nagpur.
• All the three genetically modified Bt cotton carry the Cry1Ac gene which produces an insecticide imparting resistance against bollworm complex.
• The Bt Cotton varieties seeds could be reused by farmers with no commercial restrictions resulting in savings on repeat purchases every season.

Four States Jointly to Conduct Elephant Census in May 2017
• The States of Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have decided to jointly conduct a synchronised Elephant census from May 9-12, 2017.

Scientists of CSIR-NIO Finds New Canyon System Close to Kovvada Coast
• A team of scientists at CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) in Visakhapatnam have discovered 3 new canyons in the depths of Bay of Bengal close to Kovvada in Srikakulam district, Andhra Pradesh on March 10, 2017.

Scientists Discovers World’s First Fluorescent Frog in Argentina
• A team of scientists have discovered the world’s first fluorescent frog in Argentina that emits soft green, yellow and red light under normal light, but gives off a bright blue and green glow in the dark.

World’s Oldest Plant-Like Fossils Found In India
• Scientists from Swedish Museum of Natural History have found two kinds of fossils resembling red algae in uniquely well-preserved sedimentary in Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh
• One type is thread-like, the other one consists of fleshy colonies. This algae is 1.6 billion years old which will be the oldest evidence of plant-like life found on the Earth.

World’s largest ‘artificial sun’: German Experiment to Shed Light On New Ways of Making Climate-Friendly Fuel
• The giant honeycomb like setup of 149 spotlight – officially known as “Synlight” – in Juelich, about 30 km west of Cologne, uses xenon short-arc lamps normally found in cinemas to simulate natural sunlight that’s often in short supply in Germany at this time of year.

Current social, economic problem

New economy policy

India & World Bank Signs USD 63 Million Financing Agreement for Tejaswini: Socio-Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women Project
• India has signed a financing agreement of USD 63 million(equivalent) with World Bank on 23rd February, 2017 in Jharkhand for its Socio-Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women Project named “Tejaswini”.
• The World Bank will finance the project through its arm International Development Association (IDA).
• The project will be valid till June 30, 2021.
About Project Tejaswini

- The project aims to empower adolescent girls and young women with basic life skills and provide opportunity to them to complete their secondary education and further acquire market driven skill training
- The project will be delivered in 17 Districts of Jharkhand.

Three main components of the project

- Expanding social, educational and economic opportunities
- Intensive service delivery
- State capacity-building and implementation support.

About 680,000 adolescent girls and young women are expected to benefit from the program in the project Districts.

About Fitch

- Fitch Ratings Inc. is one of the Big Three credit rating agencies designated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in 1975. It is one of the three nationally recognized statistical rating organizations (NRSRO)
- The other two rating agencies are Moody’s and Standard & Poor’s.

SBI launches 'Work from Home' facility for employees

- Country's largest lender State Bank of India has launched a new facility to enable its employees to work from home.
- The Board of the bank has recently approved the 'Work from Home' policy to enable its employees to work while at home using mobile devices to address any urgent requirement they may have, that prevents their travelling to work.

Madhya Pradesh Rewa solar plant to receive loan from World Bank

- An international financial institution, World Bank has agreed to provide loan to develop internal transmission arrangements of the upcoming Rewa Ultra Mega Solar (RUMS) project in Madhya Pradesh.
- RUMS become India’s first solar power project of the country to receive a loan under CTF

RUMS Project:

- Rewa Ultra Mega Solar is a proposed solar power plant in the Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh, with a total installed capacity of 750 MW.
- Project is anticipated to start power production in 2018, it is one of the largest single-site solar power plant in India
- The installation of this solar power project would save Rs 14,000 crore for the state.

Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) to be merged with State Bank of India

- The Government of India has decided to merge the Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) with the State Bank of India (SBI) to ensure greater banking services outreach to a larger number of women, at a faster pace.
• The objectives of affordable credit to women as well as propagation of women-centric products need to be quickly achieved through a wider network and lower cost of funds.

ICICI Bank launches 'Mera iMobile' app for rural customers
• To strengthen digitalisation drive in rural region, ICICI Bank has launched mobile banking app called 'Mera iMobile'.
• ‘Mera iMobile’ will provide rural customers on smartphone with 135 services and in eleven Indian languages, the bank said.

Branches of associate banks to operate as SBI branches from April 1
• All the branches of State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur (SBBJ), State Bank of Hyderabad (SBH), State Bank of Mysore (SBM), State Bank of Patiala (SBP) and State Bank of Travancore (SBT) will function as branches of State Bank of India from April 1, 2017.

Russian company to set up 100 MW solar in Tamilnadu
• Chennai-based Al Ameen Green Energy has tied up with a Russian company Miyota Power for setting up a 100-MW solar power plant near Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu.
• Miyota Power will invest $80 million in the project and will also build the plant on turnkey basis.
• Al Ameen Green was incorporated in 2013 and has paid-up capital of Rs 50.37 crore.

Syndicate Bank opens 40 ‘Ananya’ branches
• Syndicate Bank has digitally inaugurated 40 ‘Ananya’ transformed branches.
• The bank also launched its first micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) hub in Bengaluru.
• The hub is expected to cater to more than 150 branches across the Bengaluru region, and aims to reduce the turnaround time of the loan-sanctioning process.
• The bank embarked upon project Ananya in February 2016, and is operating under four pillars of transformation – business process re-engineering, digital channels, sales and customer relationship management, and HR transformation.

India 170th Country for Anemia among Women, Says Global Report
• Recently Union Health Minister Mr. J P Nadda, informed Lok Sabha about India’s standing on various parameters in Global Nutrition Report 2016 which is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>India’s Rank in the World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anemia among Women</td>
<td>170th out of 185 countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-five stunting prevalence</td>
<td>114th out of 132 countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-five wasting prevalence</td>
<td>120th out of 132 countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

India becomes associate member of International Energy Agency
• India, the world’s third-largest oil consumer has now joined International Energy Agency (IEA) as an associate member.
• Haryana was the first state to implement the 7th Central Pay Commission (CPC) to give the benefit of hiked pay to its employees with effect from January 1, 2016.

Science and Technology

India Successfully Test-Fires Indigenously Developed Supersonic Interceptor Missile
• India successfully conducted the test-fire of its indigenously developed supersonic interceptor Advanced Air Defence (AAD) missile, capable of destroying any incoming enemy ballistic missile at low altitude.
• The missile was test-fired for the second time by DRDO in less than a month and is part of an effort to put in place a multi-layer missile defence system. On February 11, 2017 also DRDO successfully test-fired the missile.
• The testing of ADA missile was done against a target which was a Prithvi missile launched from launch complex 3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur near Balasore in Odisha. The target played the role of a hostile missile.
• Advanced Air Defence (AAD) missile was stationed at Abdul Kalam Island in the Bay of Bengal. It received signals from radars about the incoming target missile. The interceptor was launched and managed to destroy the incoming hostile missile in mid-air.

About the Interceptor ADA Missile
• 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 interceptor missile had its own mobile launcher, secure data link for interception, independent tracking and homing capabilities and sophisticated radars.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
• Founded: 1958
• Headquarters: New Delhi

Navy successfully test-fires anti-ship missile from Kalvari submarine
• The Indian navy successfully test-fired indigenously built Kalvari class submarine an anti-ship missile for the first time, which reflects further bolstering India’s naval prowess.
• The weapon was fired from the first vessel in the series of six Scorpene-class submarines and it successfully hit a surface target during the trial in the Arabian Sea.
• The Mazagon Dock Limited built under Project 75, Kalvari which is the first in a series of Scorpene class submarines being built in India.
• Besides Indian Navy is among a select few nations in the world to have anti-ship missile firing capability from submarines.

Indian Navy’s Oldest Warship INS Viraat, Decommissions on March 6 After 30-Year Service
• Indian Navy’s flagship aircraft carrier, INS Viraat was decommissioned on March 6, 2017 at a solemn ceremony in Mumbai after nearly 30 years of service for Indian Navy.
About INS Viraat

- The ship which is famously known as the ‘Grand Old Lady’, was with the British Royal Navy since 1959 before the Indian government bought it for Rs 6.5 crore in 1987.
- The aircraft carrier which is listed in Guinness Record for the oldest carrier in service was inducted into the Indian Navy on May 12, 1987.
- While the aircraft carrier was with Royal Navy, it was known as HMS Hermes and had serviced for them for 27 years.
- The motto of INS Viraat was ‘Jalamev Yasya, Balmev Tasya’ (One Who Controls the Sea is All Powerful), which was first adopted by the great warrior king, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the 17th century as the guiding principle of his naval-military strategy.
- INS Viraat played a major role in the Operation Jupiter in 1989 in Sri Lankan Peace Keeping operations. She also played a pivotal role in ‘Operation Parakram’ undertaken after the terrorist attack on Parliament by Pakistan in December 2001.
- The ship has a full load displacement of 28,700 tonnes, length of 226.5 metres and width of 48.78 metres. It manned 150 officers and 1,500 sailors.
- INS Viraat has spent nearly 2,250 days at sea and sailed about 11 lakh kms.

Future of INS Viraat.

- After decommissioning, the future of the ship is not decided yet but the warship would be possibly converted into a museum, hotel or will be preserved as a relic of maritime history.
- Possibilities are also that if no buyers are found for the ship in 4 months, it will be broken up and sold for scraps.

Other Flagship Aircraft Carriers of Indian Navy

- At present, INS Vikramaditya is the only serving aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy. The second warship named Vikrant is under construction at Cochin Shipyard Ltd and will commence trials by end-2018 or early 2019.

Data bank of future: Comp OS, movie stored in DNA

Hubble Telescope discover Massive galaxy

- The Hubble Space Telescope (HST) has captured an image of an incredibly massive galaxy dubbed as UGC 12591 that is 400 million light years away from the Earth. It is situated in the westernmost region of the Pisces-Perseus Supercluster, one of the largest known structures in the cosmos. It sits somewhere between lenticular and spiral shapes. The galaxy and its halo together are four times the mass of the Milky Way and several hundred billion times the mass of the Sun. The HST is into low orbit space telescope launched in 1990 by NASA and European Space Agency (ESA). It is named after the astronomer Edwin Hubble and is still in operation.
Vice Admiral Girish Luthra Commissions INS Tillanchang at Karwar

- INS Tillanchang, a Water Jet Fast Attack Craft (WJFAC) was commissioned into the Indian Navy by Vice Admiral Girish Luthra, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command, at Karwar, Karnataka on March 9, 2017.
- INS Tillanchang is the third ship of four follow-on WJFAC built by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Kolkata.
- INS Tarmugli and INS Tihayu are the first two ships of the WJFAC class and were commissioned in 2016 and are based at Visakhapatnam.
- INS Tillanchang will be based at Karwar under the operational control of the Flag Officer Commanding, Karnataka Naval Area.

Features of INS Tillanchang

- The ship is designed to take on both conventional and asymmetric threats.
- INS Tillanchang is about 50 m in length and is powered by 3 waterjet propulsion system which gives it speed of over 35 knots.
- The ship consists of 30 mm main gun and a number of light, medium and heavy machine guns to undertake operations at sea.
- The ship will be manned by 50 personnel and commanded by Commander Adit Patnaik.
- It is projected to be an ideal platform for missions like Coastal and Off-shore Surveillance, EEZ Control, Law Enforcement as well as non-military missions such as Search and Rescue, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief.

Himachal launches mobile app Mera Hunar HP for job-seekers

- Virbhadra Singh led Himacha Pradesh government has launched mobile app and website titled ‘MeraHunar HP’ or ‘My Talent’ to help skilled and semi-skilled workers find jobs.
- The mobile app will connect prospective employers with job aspirants as the latter’s resume will contain addresses and contact numbers.

IBM Researchers Creates World’s Smallest Magnet to Store Single Bit Data

- A team of researchers at IBM has created the world’s smallest magnet using a single atom which can store one bit of data on it.
- Currently, hard disk drives use about 100,000 atoms to store a single bit. The breakthrough was published in the journal Nature on March 8, 2017.
- The ability to read and write one bit on one atom may lead to developing significantly smaller and denser storage devices in future that can store the entire iTunes library of 35 million songs on a device.
- The IBM scientists used a scanning tunneling microscope (STM) to build and measure isolated single-atom bits using the holmium atoms. Then, they used an electrical current to write and read binary data (1s and 0s) on the atom.
- The invention can allow people and businesses to store 1,000 times more information in the same space and one day make data centers, computers and personal devices radically smaller and more powerful.

About IBM

- International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) is an American multinational technology company with operations in over 170 countries.
• The company originated in 1911 as the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (CTR) and was renamed “International Business Machines” in 1924.
• IBM manufactures and markets computer hardware, middleware and software, and offers hosting and consulting services in areas ranging from mainframe computers to nanotechnology.
• Headquarters: New York, United States
• Founder: Charles Ranlett Flint
• Founded: 16 June 1911
• President: Ginni Rometty

List of Government Space Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space Agency</th>
<th>Founded</th>
<th>Headquarter</th>
<th>Administrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)</td>
<td>29 July 1958</td>
<td>Washington D.C.</td>
<td>Robert M. Lightfoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)</td>
<td>15 August 1969</td>
<td>Bengaluru</td>
<td>A. S. Kiran Kumar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Space Agency (ESA)</td>
<td>30 May 1975</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>Johann-Dietrich Wörner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China National Space Administration (CNSA)</td>
<td>22 April 1993</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>Xu Dazhe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)</td>
<td>1 October 2003</td>
<td>Tokyo</td>
<td>Naoki Okumura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federal Space Agency (RFSA or Roscosmos)</td>
<td>25 February 1992</td>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>Igor Komarov</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women Safety app ‘Ammavin Aran’ launched by AIADMK
• The women safety app ‘Ammavin Aran’ which means ‘mother’s fortress’ was launched by the AIADMK Deputy General Secretary TTV Dhinakaran on March 9, 2017 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
• Amma Aran app will give the 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.
• It carries an in-built call recorder and and ‘Tips’ icon to provide life saving information

Kiren Rijiju launches mobile app “MySSB”
• An in-house developed mobile application “MySSB” was launched by Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Shri Kiren Rijiju.
• The Minister lauded the efforts in developing the application and expressed hope that SSB will continue keeping the welfare of its personnel on priority basis.
Venkaiah Naidu Inaugurates India’s Largest Waste-To-Power Plant in New Delhi
• The North Delhi Municipal Corporation launched India’s largest municipal waste-to-power plant at Narela-Bawana in New Delhi on March 10, 2017.
• The project has been developed on public private partnership model by Ramky Group, a Hyderabad-based waste management company, in collaboration with the North Corporation.

India Successfully Conducts Maiden Tests of Extended Version of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile
• India successfully test-fired an extended range version of supersonic cruise missile BrahMos from a test range off the Odisha coast on March 11, 2017.
• The land attack version of the cruise missile was test fired from a mobile launcher from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur near Balasore by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
• The strike range of the missile has been enhanced from 290 km to 450 km and is capable of carrying a warhead of 300 kg.
• The BrahMos missile derives its name from the Brahmaputra and Moskova rivers and was developed by an Indo-Russian joint venture after the two countries signed an agreement in February 1998.
• The missiles can be fired on three different targets simultaneously. The land-based version is also equipped with an inertial navigation system and global positioning system (GPS).
• The technology upgrade to the extended range BrahMos comes after India gained entry into the 34-nation Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in June 2016 which removed the caps on the range of the missile developed with the help of Russia.
• Another version of the missile with a strike range of 800 km is under development.

NASA’s Announces ‘Europa Clipper’ Mission to Explore Jupiter’s Moon
• The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on March 9, 2017 officially announced the name of its upcoming mission to explore the Jupiter mysterious moon.
• The mission to explore the habitability of Jupiter’s icy moon Europa will be called as Europa Clipper. The mission is being planned for launch in the 2020s.
• Europa mission is a high priority for exploration for NASA because it holds a salty liquid water ocean beneath its icy crust.
• The objective of Europa Clipper is to determine whether Europa is habitable and possess all three of the ingredients necessary for life that is liquid water, chemical ingredients, and energy sources sufficient to enable biology.

• The photograph of a terracotta pipe connecting two storage jars from the excavation site of Keeladi

UK grants doctors first licence to create 3-parent babies
• Britain’s fertility regulator has granted first licence to doctors in Newcastle, northern England to create babies using a three-parent IVF technique designed to prevent inherited genetic diseases.
• The technique involves intervening in the fertilisation process to remove faulty mitochondria (tiny energy-generating batteries inside cells) which can cause fatal genetic diseases. The treatment is also known as “three-parent” IVF, as the babies, born from genetically modified embryos, would have DNA from a mother, a father and from a woman donor. Britain’s was the first country to pass law to allow three-parent IVF. The world’s first and so-far only known three-parent IVF baby was born in 2016 in Mexico to a Jordanian couple.

MIT Pune & IBM Jointly Unveils Robot ‘Chintu’
• The final year computer engineering students at Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT) Pune and technology giant IBM have developed a robot named Chintu to assist senior citizens in their everyday tasks.
• Chintu is about 58 cm (2 feet) tall robot, weighing over 5 kilograms.

Arunachal Teen Develops Goggles to Help Visually Impaired
• Anang Tadar, a Class XI student of New Galaxy Academy, Nirjuli, Arunachal Pradesh has invented a unique pair of goggles that uses ultrasound and infrared sensors to help the visually impaired detect obstacles on their path.
• Tadar was awarded the Dinanath Pandey Smart Idea Innovation Award for inventing the gadget named Goggle for Blind (G4B).

About the G4B Goggle
• The technology used to make the gadget is similar to what is used in parking sensors used in cars.
• There are two ultrasound sensors on the left and right of the goggles to detect obstacles while there is an infrared sensor in the middle of the gadget to detect obstacles in case both the ultrasound sensors fail.
• The goggles could be used by visually impaired to detect any obstacles on all sides within a distance of two metres without using a stick.
• When an obstacle is detected, a beep sound is heard through the audio output along with vibration to alert the person. With the intensity of the beep and vibration the person could know how far and near the obstacle is.

• New Wi-Fi system to offer super-fast connectivity
Netherlands Scientists from Eindhoven University of Technology have developed infrared rays based Wi-Fi system which is 100 times faster than the Wireless Fidelity networks.

Scientists at CERN Discovers Five New Sub-Atomic Particles Using Large Hadron Collider
i. The Scientists at CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research), have discovered a new system of five particles all in a single analysis using the world’s largest and most powerful particle accelerator, Large Hadron Collider (LHC).

ii. The scientists said that the discovery is exceptional since observing five new states all at once is a unique event in itself.

iii. The newly discovered particle states have been named as Oc(3000)0, Oc(3050)0, Oc(3066)0, Oc(3090)0 and Oc(3119)0 according to the standard convention.

iv. The numbers indicate their masses in megaelectronvolts (MeV), as measured by LHCb.

**CERN (European Organisation for Nuclear Research)**

CERN is a European research organization that operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world.

The organization is based in a northwest suburb of Geneva on the Franco-Swiss border and has 22 member states. Israel is the only non-European country granted full membership.

CERN’s main function is to provide the particle accelerators and other infrastructure needed for high-energy physics research.

**Keys:**
- Formation: September 29, 1954
- Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- Council President: Sijbrand de Jong

**About GRAPE 3 Telescope**

- The GRAPES-3 experiment (or Gamma Ray Astronomy PeV EnergieS phase-3) located at Ooty in India started as a collaboration of the Indian Tata Institute of Fundamental Research and the Japanese Osaka City University, and now also includes the Japanese Nagoya Women’s University.
- GRAPES-3 is designed to study cosmic rays with an array of air shower detectors and a large area muon detector.
- It has the property to find out the direction of detected particles. It can also measure the intensity of the particles.
- It is important to know the time when plasma will reach the earth, accurately, so that preventive and protective measures can be put into place in case a solar storm were to strike the earth.
- GRAPES-3 is a muon telescope located at Cosmic Ray Laboratory in Ooty run by the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR).

**NASA Plans to Send Futuristic Atomic Clock to Space by 2017 End**

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is set to send its next-generation atomic clock into space by the end of 2017 which is a key advance for safety navigating future human exploration of the solar system.
- As per the report by NASA on March 21, 2017, engineers at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California have completed integration of the instrument, the Deep Space Atomic Clock, with the spacecraft that will take it into orbit later in 2017.
• The NASA scientists stated that timekeeping plays a critical role in spacecraft navigation and the atomic clock will especially important for future deep space missions.

**Feature of the Deep Space Atomic Clock**
• The Deep Space Atomic Clock was developed by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California.
• The Clock will be smaller and lighter with more precise magnitudes than any atomic clock flown in space before.
• The atomic clock will enable “one-way” tracking so the spacecraft does not need to send the signal back to Earth.
• The Deep Space Atomic Clock would also improve the precision and quantity of the radio data used by scientists for determining a planet’s gravity field and probing its atmosphere.

**NGT Suspends Green Nod for Tamil Nadu Neutrino Project**
• The National Green Tribunal’s southern bench, comprising of Justice P Jyothimani and expert member P S Rao, on March 20, 2017 suspended the environmental clearance for the India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) project to be set up in Tamil Nadu for research on high energy and nuclear physics.
• As per NGT, the site of INO project is located near Madhikettan Shola National Park in Idukki district of Kerala which is just 4.9 km from the project site.
• Besides, NGT also informed that the Tamil Nadu-Kerala border was only a kilometer away from the project location which made the project fall in Category A level.
• INO will now verify the claims using GIS-based information system and would obtain further statutory clearances, if warranted.

**About India-based Neutrino Observatory (INO) project**
• The INO Project is a multi-institutional collaboration aimed at building a world-class underground laboratory spanning approximately 1200 metre inside a deep cave for non-accelerator based high energy and nuclear physics research in India.
• INO is a particle physics research project primarily to study atmospheric neutrinos.

**SPITZER SPACE TELESCOPE:** Operated by NASA to detect infrared radiation

**CHILE:** The South American connection was made in astronomers’ use of the Trappist telescope and Very Large Telescope, both in Chile

**LADAKH:** Indian scientists used the Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT), operated by Indian Institute of Astrophysics, near Leh, Ladakh, at an altitude of 4,500 m above sea level to map the orbit of exoplanet Trappist-b

**HAWAII:** On the other side of the globe, in Hawaii, astronomers put to use infrared telescope UKIRT

• **Nano-wafers to prevent brain tumour recurrence:**
**NANO-WAFER**: Made of nano-fibres, is flexible and biocompatible. Will dissolve after releasing drugs for two months.

**DRUG**: The drug will be released in a controlled manner and will kill residual tumour cells in the brain

Nanofibers are made of a combination of nanomaterials

- **Most Spacewalks by a Woman – US Astronaut Peggy Whitson Breaks Sunita Williams Record**
  American Astronaut Peggy Whitson floated outside the International Space Station (ISS), which makes the eighth career Space-Walk by her on March 31, 2017. By this walk, Peggy Whitson broke the record of seven Space-Walks which was previously held by American Astronaut Sunita Williams.

- **El Salvador – the 1st Country to ban Metals Mining**
  Central America’s smallest nation, El Salvador became the first country in the world to ban Metals Mining nationwide. This was made into a law, which was passed by the Law-makers of that country.

**Health science**

- **First Recycled Rocket launched and retrieved after successful mission by SpaceX**
  i. Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) successfully launched it Falcon 9 from space launch complex 39A at Kennedy Space Center, Florida and retrieved it on March 30, 2017. The rocket was used to launch SES communications satellite into space.

  ii. Falcon 9 rocket used a booster that had previously flown cargo to the astronauts living at the International Space Station which makes it as the first ever recycled rocket sent by SpaceX. The booster is reused from the rocket which flown to space in the month of March, 2016.

- **ACT Fibernet Launches 1Gbps Wired Broadband Internet Service in Hyderabad**
  i. Bangaluru based ACT Fibernet has launched a wired broadband internet service having a speed of 1 Gigabit per second with the pilot service in Hyderabad.

  ii. With this, the non-teleco company, ACT Fibernet, has become the first Indian entity to offer such a high speed internet speed to the entire city.

- **Four Lithium Ion (Li-ion) Batteries developed by ISRO**
Dr Jitendra Singh, the Minister of State for the Development of North Eastern Region officially released the information that Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has developed the four types of Lithium ion (Li-ion) batteries. The batteries are used for satellite operation and launching of vehicles into space.

Types of Lithium ion Batteries launched

The four types of batteries that have been developed are – 1.5Ah, 5Ah, 50Ah and 100Ah.

Usage of Lithium ion Batteries

i. 5Ah and 50Ah have been used for space applications.

ii. 5Ah and 100Ah have passed the test and are ready to be inducted in space applications.

iii. 50Ah batteries are supplied to Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) by ISRO.

Mass Media and Communication

March 2
Facebook Launches ‘SheLeadsTech’ to Support Women Founded Startups in India

• Social networking giant Facebook has launched a new initiative named SheLeadsTech to support startups which are founded or co-founded by women population.
• The aim of the program is to encourage more women founders who wish to have their own startup or business.
• The year long program will give the startups access to “FBStart” which will provide tools, resources and mentorship to help overcome some of the barriers they face.
• Under the mentorship programme the women founders will get support and advice from an all-women mentor panel.
• Besides, Facebook will also be expanding its SheMeansBusiness program that supports women-led small businesses.

Others

• Canada to host 9th World Environmental Education Congress

• Hyderabad to host 105th Indian Science Congress

• India ranks 122nd in World Happiness Report
• India becomes associate member of International Energy Agency
• Kerala’s Capital Thiruvananthapuram Ranks Best City in Urban Governance Survey
• Government Panel led by Partha Mukhopadhay Suggests Legal Framework to Secure the Rights of Migrants
• West Bengal Gives Official Status to Tribal Language Kurukh
• Government’s biotech innovation centre to be set up in Bengaluru’s C-CAMP
• First smart tribal village Habbi inaugurated in Jammu and Kashmir
• Punjab Approves 33 Percent Reservation for Women in State Govt Jobs
• West Bengal Has Highest Number of Arsenic Affected Persons in India: Report
• Assam Government Launches Initiatives to make Majuli India’s First Carbon Neutral District & Biodiversity Heritage
• ‘Namami Brahmaputra’ Festival Inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee in Assam
• Pakistan hosted 13th ECO Summit in Islamabad
• G20 Meet of Finance Ministers & Central Bank Governors Began in Germany
• India, Brazil conclude social security agreement

• International Buddhist conference held in Bihar
• Second India-UAE conference on globalisation held in Dubai
• Third meeting of G-20 framework working group to be held at Varanasi
• International Diamond Conference held in Mumbai
• Barack Obama named as winner of ‘Profile in Courage’ award
• Rihanna awarded with Humanitarian Of The Year Award
• Jio-Samsung Win ‘Best Mobile Innovation for Emerging Markets’ Award
• M P Veerendra Kumar Presented Moortidevi Award
• Viola Davis Conferred With Harvard’s Artist of the Year Award 2017
• Raghu Rai honoured with Lifetime Achievement at the National Photography Awards
• Army Chief Bipin Rawat Conferred With Honorary Military Rank By Nepal
• Indian-origin Priti Patel be awarded Pravasi Bharatiya Samman award
• ISKCON’s Govardhan Eco Village gets ‘Water’ award
• S.V Sunil named Asian Hockey Player of Year 2016
• Destination North East 2017 Festival Held in Chandigarh
• International Yoga Fest Began in New Delhi
• Mega Cultural Festival ‘India by the Nile’ Begins in Egypt
• Famous author Neil Gaiman named Goodwill Ambassador of UNHCR
• Donald Tusk re-elected as European Council president
• ICC appoint Sachin Tendulkar as official ambassador of women’s World Cup 2017
• India appoints Manjeev Singh Puri as next envoy to Nepal
• Narendra Kumar Appointed New Chairman of Central Water Commission
• Sunaina Singh Appointed Vice Chancellor of Nalanda University
IMPORTANT DAYS

April 2:  World Autism Awareness Day 2017
Theme for the year 2017 is "Toward Autonomy and Self-Determination".

April 4:  International Mine Awareness Day
Theme for the year 2017 is Needs driven. People Centred.

April 7:  International Day of Sport for Development and Peace

The United Nation proclaimed 6th April as International Day of Sport for Development and Peace on August 23, 2013. The day also coincide with the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896.

April 10:  Yesso Naik inaugurates the International Convention on World Homoeopathy Day
The event is being organized to commemorate the 262nd birth anniversary of the founder of Homoeopathy, Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician, who was a great scholar, linguist and acclaimed scientist. The theme of the convention is “Enhancing Quality Research in Homoeopathy through scientific evidence and rich clinical experiences”.

April 12:  International Day of Human Space Flight

• Every year 12th April is celebrated as International Day of Human Space Flight to mark the day when the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin on 12 April, 1961.
• On April 7, 2011, the day was proclaimed by the UN at the 65th session of the United Nations General.
• This day is observed as Cosmonautics Day in Russia and some other former USSR.

April 15:  Himachal Pradesh celebrating 70th Himachal Day
On April 15, 2017, Himachal Pradesh celebrated its 70th Foundation Day. It came into existence in year 1948 post merger of 30 odd princely states.
18 April:  World Heritage Day
Every year on 18 April, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) celebrates the International Day for Monuments and Sites or World Heritage day, whose establishment was approved by the 22nd UNESCO General Conference in 1983.
In 2017, the theme is “Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism”, chosen in relation to the United Nations International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development and in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sri Lanka to host the 14th Edition of United Nations International Day of Vesak 2017
- The 14th edition of United Nations International Day of Vesak will be hosted by Sri Lanka from May 12 – 14, 2017. The PM Narendra Modi will be the chief guest for UN Vesak Day.

Major Points
- The significance of Vesak lies with the Buddha’s teaching of cessation of suffering and universal peace to all humankind.
- Vesak is associated with three important locations of Buddhist history Lumbini in Nepal, the birthplace of Prince Siddharta, Bodh Gaya (Buddha Gaya) Bihar State in India.
- The Buddha attained the most prominent Enlightenment under a Bodhi Tree and Kushinagar (Kusinara) in Uttar Pradesh, India where The Buddha attained Mahaparinibbna.

UN to issue commemorative stamps for International Yoga day
- The United Nations will be going to issue special stamps commemorating the International Yoga Day on June 21, 2017 said by India’s Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin.

National civil services day: 21 April
- Government of India has taken a decision to observe the 21st of April every year as “Civil Services Day”.
- First such function was held in Vigyan Bhawan on 21/04/06.

Earth Day: 22 April
- Earth Day 2017 will be observed on 22 April across the globe, uniting more than 50,000 partners in nearly 195 countries to diversify, educate and activate the environmental movement worldwide.
• The first Earth Day was held in 1970.
• The theme for 2017 is “Environmental & Climate Literacy”,

• World Book and Copyright Day – April 23, 2017

English Language Day: 23 April

• English Language Day at the UN is celebrated on 23 April, the date traditionally observed as both the birthday and date of death of William Shakespeare.
• The Day is the result of a 2010 initiative by the Department of Public Information, establishing language days for each of the Organization's six official languages.

Commemoration of the National Panchayati Raj Day on 24th April 2017

Key points

• **Significance of the day:** It marks the passing of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect from 24 April 1993.
• Best performing Gram Panchayats are conferred with Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Purskar by the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
• The Kuther Gram Panchayat of Himachal Pradesh will also get this award for its best works.
• This Gram Panchayat was the first to become open defecation free (ODF) and was awarded sum of five lakh Rupees.

• World Malaria Day 25th April ‘End Malaria For Good’

International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day – April 26 2017

• International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day is observed on April 26, 2017.
• An explosion at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in 1986 spread a radioactive cloud over large parts of the Soviet Union Federation.

World Intellectual Property Day: 26 April

• World Intellectual Property Day is observed internationally on every 26 April.
• The observance of WIPD is organised by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).
• The theme of this year’s World Intellectual Property Day is 'Innovation-Improving lives'.

• World Day for safety and Health at work –April 28 2017
• World Day for Safety and health at Work is annually observed on 28 April it has been observed by the Inernational labour ganization (ILO) since 2003.
Indian short film to be screened by UNESCO in Indonesia

- Rahul V. Chittella's short film "Azaad", starring Atul Kulkarni and Sakshi Tanwar, will be screened by UNESCO as part of a World Press Freedom Day event on May 3 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Points to Remember

- World Press Freedom Day is observed on 3 May every year.
- This year’s theme is “Critical Minds for Critical Times: Media’s role in advancing peaceful, just and inclusive societies”.

Barmer Munawab and Piapd Road-Bilar a rail routes – New Green Corridors in India

- Indian railways has announced the 5 Green Corridors under “Swachh Rail – Swachh Bharat” mission.

The five green corridors are
1. Manamadurai – Rameswaram corridor,
2. Okha – Kanalus corridor,
3. Porbandar – W asjaliya corridor,
4. Barmer – Munawab corridor and
5. Pipad Road – Bilar a corridor (Rajasthan)
- Among these corridors Manamadurai – Rameswaram is India’s first green corridor.

Green Corridor
- Green corridor means the railway route on which there will be zero toilet discharge on railway tracks.
- Trains riding in these routes will have Bio-toilets.

Bio toilets
- These toilets are developed by Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO).
- Human waste is discharged into bio digester tank, fitted under every coach.
- Anaerobic Bacteria stored in this tank convert the waste into water and other gases like methane.
- Due to this railwar tracks remain clean and no threat of spreading diseases.
- These Bio-toilets will replace toilets in all the existing trains by 2019.

Myanmar becomes the 7th formal member of SASEC

- South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program of Asian Development Bank (ADB) accepts Myanmar as its 7th member in 2017.
Background

- The SASEC program of ADB was formed in response to the request made by Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal to assist their economic cooperations.
- Sri Lanka and Maldives joined the sub-regional group in 2014.

About South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program

- The SASEC program was formed in 2001 to enhance project-based partnership and to promote regional prosperity by improving cross-border connectivity between the member countries.
- The member countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- Headquartered in Manila, Philippines, Asian Developments Bank (ADB) serves as the Secretariat for the SASEC member countries.

Points to Remember

- SASEC programme was formed in 2001 by ADB. It has seven members now.
- Asian Development Bank was founded in 1966. Its headquarters is in Manila, Philippines.
- Takehiko Nakao is the President of Asian Development Bank.

e-Challan, m-Parivahan mobile apps to report traffic violations

- The government has launched two mobile apps, e-challan and m-Parivahan, that provide access to various services and information, and enable citizens to report any traffic violation or road accident.
- **e-Challan** is an integrated enforcement solution to manage traffic violations through an Android-based mobile app.
- **m-Parivahan** is an empowering app for the citizen which provides access to various services, information and utilities related to the transport sector.

- **Singapore blocks visas for Indian IT professionals.**

Fawcett is first woman to get statue in Parliament Sq

- Britain for the first time is honouring a woman with a statue in Parliament Square: Suffragist Millicent Fawcett, a leader of the campaign to win women the right to vote.

Moreno wins Ecuador presidential race

- Ruling party candidate Lenin Moreno was declared the winner of Ecuador’s Presidential runoff.
- But his rival, conservative banker Guillermo Lasso

Record Capacity Addition of Wind Power of 5400 MW in Last Fiscal
• Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has set another record in the wind power capacity addition by adding over 5400 MW in 2016-17 against the target of 4000 MW.
• This year’s achievement surpassed the previous higher capacity addition of 3423 MW achieved in the previous year.
• The leading States in the wind power capacity addition during 2016-17 are Andhra Pradesh 2190 MW, followed by Gujarat 1275 MW and Karnataka 882 MW.

Global initiative launched to fight fake news
• A global alliance of tech industries and academic organisations have unveiled $14-million The News Integrity Initiative to combat the spread of “fake news”, improve public understanding of journalism, promote news literacy and build trust in journalism.

Connaught Place world’s 9th most costly office location
• Delhi’s Connaught Place is the world’s 9th most expensive office location with annual prime rent of USD 105.71 per sq ft, says property consultant CBRE.
• Mumbai’s Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) is at 19th position while the central business district (CBD) of Nariman Point is at 30th place in the CBRE’s Global Prime Office Rents report.
• With annual prime rent of USD 264.27 per sq ft, Hong Kong (Central) is the world’s most expensive office Market.

Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar Releases ‘India Rankings 2017’
• List of top 3 India Rankings 2017 is as follows:

  Overall:
  • Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore
  • Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
  • Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

  Engineering
  • Indian Institute of Technology, Madras
  • Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
  • Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur

  Management
  • 1. Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad
  • 2. Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore
  • 3. Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta

University
- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore
- Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- Banaras Hindu University

Colleges

- Miranda House, Delhi,
- Loyola College, Chennai
- Shri Ram College of Commerce, New Delhi

Pharmacy

- Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi
- National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research, Mohali
- University Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Chandigarh

London becomes first city of levy charge on polluting cars

- London has become the first city in the world to announce an ultra-low emission zone to tackle air pollution, under which the drivers of the most polluting cars will have to pay an extra charge

Pink Star' sells for record $71.2M

- The 59.3 carat ‘Pink Star’ diamond has sold for $71.2 million at an auction in Hong Kong, setting a new record for any diamond or jewel, according to the auction house.

Iceland to make equal payment law for men and women

- Iceland's parliament has presented a bill that would require public and private businesses to prove they offer equal pay to employees, in what would be the first such requirement in the world.
- Iceland ranks first on the World Economic Forum's 2015 Global Gender Gap Index, followed by fellow Nordic nations Norway, Finland and Sweden.

Centre sets up National Board of Electric Mobility

- The Centre has notified the constitution of the National Board of Electric Mobility (NBEM).
- It also nominated six members of eminence and expertise from the automobile industry into it, including Vikram Kirloskar (Toyota Kirloskar Motors), Vinod Dasari (Ashok Leyland), Pawan Goenka (Mahindra & Mahindra and Sudarshan Venu (TVS Motors).
- The nominated members will have a tenure of two years or until further government order, whichever is earlier.
• The Board will be chaired by the Secretary, the Department of Heavy Industry, and will comprise senior bureaucrats as members.

**India ranks 3rd for third year in a row in world doping chart**

• India has been ranked third for the third year in a row in a doping violation report published by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for 2015, with 117 athletes from the country being punished after testing positive for banned substances.

• India followed the Russian Federation (176) and Italy (129) in the chart, the same position as in the reports of 2013 and 2014.

• All the violations by the Indians came from urine samples.

**Points to Remember**

• The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is a foundation initiated by the International Olympic Committee to promote, coordinate and monitor the fight against drugs in sports.

• WADA was founded on November 10, 1999. Its motto is Play True.

• Craig Reedie is the President of WADA which is headquartered in Montreal, Canada.

**Germany becomes first NATO member to launch cyber command unit**

• Germany became the first North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member country to launch a self-contained cyber command unit dubbed as Cyber and Information Space Command (Kdo CIR). It has been designed to shield IT and weapons systems from growing attacks.

**Morocco King Launches Final Stage of Largest Solar Plant in the World**

• The final stage of the world’s largest solar plant of Noor Quarzazate has been inaugurated by Mohammed VI, king of Morocco in Quarzazate.

• The plant is based on photovoltaic (PV) technology, which spanned over an area of 137 hectares (1.37 square km). The cost of this plant is nearly 75 million U.S. dollars.


• Project Cost: Rs. 5369 Crore, Length: 1620 km.

• Multimodal Terminals to be set up at Varanasi, Sahibganj, Haldia and IWT Terminals at Ghazipur and Kalughat.

• State-of-the-art Navigational Lock and River Information System at Farakka.

• Employment Potential of 1.5 lakhs.

**Sahibganj Multimodal Terminal**

• Project Cost: Rs. 280 Crore Cargo handling capacity of 22.4 Lakh Tonnes per year.

• Date of completion: June 2019.

• Facilities of berthing for two vessels, stockyard, conveyor belt and barge loaders.
Thailand’s King Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun signed the country’s new military-backed Constitution on Thursday. The charter could allow free elections but limit the authority of politicians taking office.

**Uruguay to become first country to fully Legalize Marijuana**

- Uruguay is set to become the first country to allow recreational marijuana to be sold in pharmacies in July. The country is trying for nearly four years to legalize the production, sale and consumption of marijuana.
- Uruguayan citizens and permanent residents who must be 18 or older will be allowed to purchase marijuana from a pharmacy.

**North India to get DNA bank for wildlife**

- North India is all set to get its first DNA bank for wildlife.
- Scientists at the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) in Bareilly are in the process of collecting DNA samples of all wild animals to set up the bank.
- It is expected to help in research and also in bringing down poaching.
- At present, the Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) in Hyderabad is the only such facility in the country.

**NMCG approved 26 projects worth Rs. 2,154.28 cr for “Namami Gange project”**

- The National Mission for clean Ganga (NMCG) has approved 26 projects worth Rs. 2,154.28 crore under the Centre’s Namami Gange’ programme, focusing to reduce the river’s pollution.
- NMCG will set up sewage treatment plants (STPs) and develop sewage network in four Ganga basin states: Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Delhi.

**“Nakshe” Portal launched by Dr. Harsh Vardhan on 250th Anniversary of Survey of India**

- A new web portal “nakshe” was launched by the Union Minister for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr. Harsh Vardhan in New Delhi, on the occasion of 250th anniversary of Survey of India(SoI).
- Topographic maps or Open Series Maps (OSM) containing natural and man-made geographical features including terrain or topography are prepared by the SoI since its inception in 1767 and is in conformity with the National Map Policy-2005.
- These OSM maps have been made available for free download from “nakshe” web portal in pdf format on 1:50,000 scale through Aadhar enabled user authentication process, in line with Digital India programme of the Government of India.

**Dynamic fuel prices to be introduced in UT and 4 cities from May 1.**
• Public sector oil companies will start with a pilot project of dynamic fuel pricing in Chandigarh, Puducherry, Visakhapatnam, Udaipur and Jamshedpur from May 1, 2017.
• It will involve a daily revision of both petrol and diesel prices like other commodities that reflect daily rate.
• The companies involved are Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. They together own 95 percent of the 58,000 fuel stations in the country.
• The companies state that a daily revision will be less volatile and more accurate.

First rail freight service to China departs UK

• The first rail freight service from UK to China has departed on a journey of 7500 mile from Essex.
• The service is a part of China’s One Belt, One Road programme of reviving the ancient Silk Road.
• “DP World London Gateway, one of the UK’ largest logistics hub.
• The train will pass through the seven countries which include France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

100 years of Gandhi’s Sabarmati Ashram Celebrated in London

• The Hundredth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’s Sabarmati Ashram was celebrated in London to retell Gandhi’s story with some interesting visual elements to the Internet generation.

Saudi Arabia raises $9 billion in first global Islamic bond issue

• Saudi Arabia raised $9 billion in its first global Islamic bond issue. The sale of Islamic bonds known as Sukuks.

Pakistan bids to legalise CPEC- Constitutional Status to Gilgit-Baltistan trips on UN Resolution

• Pakistan’s bid to alter status of Gilgit-Baltistan region which falls under PoK is said to face many legal hurdles due to UN resolutions on geographical entity which was earlier part of J&K princely state which acceded to India in 1947.
• GB region has been generally remained undefined in Pakistani constitutions since 1947 and only recently Islamabad has taken the initiative to bring it under the Constitution of CPEC.

President gives his approval for all speeches to be in Hindi

• President Pranab Mukherjee has accepted the recommendation of Committee of Parliament on Official Languages for all speeches by the dignitaries to be only in Hindi if they can read and speak the language.
• The decision has come after six years after the committee made 117 recommendations to make Hindi more popular language.

China to launch its first cargo spacecraft

• China is set to launch its first cargo spacecraft between April 20 and 24. The Tianzhou-1 has been transferred with a Long March – 7 Y2 carrier rocket from the testing centre to the launch zone ub Wenchang, Hainan province, said the office of China’s manned space programme. China will become the 3rd country besides Russia and US to master the techniques of refuelling in Space.

Australia visa cut to hit Indian IT workers
Delhi stunned as ‘457’ scheme scrapped

• Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull announced that he was scrapping the Australian “457” visa programme that allowed Australian companies to hire Indians in a number of skilled jobs.

India jumps to 8th place on Global FDI Confidence Index

• India ranked at 8th position in the 2017 A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index. In 2016 edition of this index, India ranked at 9th position. US has topped. A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index for the fifth year in a row.

Top 5 Countries on 2017 A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

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India develops National Action Plan to combat Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

• ‘Inter-Ministerial Consultation on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Containment’ was held on April 19, 2017 in New Delhi.
• ‘Delhi Declaration’ for collectively strategizing to containAMR was signed by all the ministers present at the meeting.
• AMR is the evolutionary ability of microbes such bacteria, virus and parasite to become resistance to medicines which treat the diseases caused by them.
China to host BRICS Film Festival in June

- The 2017 BRICS Film Festival will be held in Chengdu, southwest China’s Sichuan Province from June 23 to 27.
- There will be 30 films from BRICS countries screened during the festival.
- The first BRICS Film Festival was held in New Delhi, India, last September.
- This year’s festival would be held ahead of the BRICS summit to be held in September this year in China’s Xiamen city.

AIR INDIA Lowers senior citizen age limit

- Air India has lowered the age limit of senior citizens from 63 to 60 with immediate effect. As per the revised limit, passengers above 60 will be entitled to avail themselves of 50% discount on base fare.

- 2 TN airport receive 6% of tourists with e-visas

UK set for first coal-less day

- Britain’s National Grid says Friday may be the first full 24-hour work-day since the Industrial Revolution in which the nation doesn’t depend on electricity generated from coal.

India contributes $250,000 to UN election assistance programme

- India has made a 250,000 dollar contribution to the UN programme for helping countries to hold elections and develop their electoral systems.
- This is the second Indian contribution of $250,000 to the programmes for electoral assistance and capacity building.
- The first was made in 2012.
- Through the Election Assistance Division set up in 1991, the UN has helped over 100 countries with their elections.

Cuba and Morocco re-establish diplomaticties after 37 years

- Cuba and Morocco has signed an agreement to re-establish diplomatic ties after a time period of 37 years. The two governments have also agreed to forge political, economic and cultural cooperation.

“Quality Mark” Award Schem for Dairy Cooperatives initiated by NDDB

- “Quality Mark” Award Scheme for dairy Cooperatives has been initiated to promote and encourage enhancement of safety, quality and hygiene of milk and milk products manufactured by dairy cooperatives.
- The National Diary Development Board (NDDB).
India becomes 2nd largest importer of LPG

- India toppled Japan as the world’s second-largest importer of liquefied petroleum gas as Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s pledge to provide cooking gas cylinders to the poor and wean them off polluting fuels, drove up consumption.
- Imports of LPG, mostly used as cooking fuel, soared 23 percent during the financial year that ended March 31.
- Japan’s imports slipped 3.2 percent during the same period.
- China remains the world’s top importer.

Embraer, Air India to set up MRO facility in Secunderabad

- Brazilian aerospace major Embraer has partnered with state owned Air India to maintain its brand of private and business jets in the entire South east Asian region.

India is now world's fifth largest military spender

- India's military expenditure grew around 8.5 per cent in 2016, making it the world's fifth largest spender at $55.9 billion.
- According to figures by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), India spent $55.9 billion on its military in 2016.
- US remains the world's largest military spender registering a growth of 1.7 per cent between 2015 and 2016 to $611 billion.
- China was second largest spender in 2016.
- The third largest military spender was Russia, while Saudi Arabia dropped to fourth position in 2016 from third in 2015.

India’s first sea ropeway to link Mumbai and Elephanta island

- India's first and longest ropeway will connect Mumbai with the Elephanta Island in the Arabian Sea.
- The proposed 8-km long ropeway will be constructed by the Mumbai Port Trust.
- The proposed ropeway will start from Sewri in Mumbai’s east coast and end at Raigad district's Elephanta Island.

Belgium opens honorary consulate in GIFT City

- Belgium has become the first country to open an honorary consulate office in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).
- Besides the Belgian Embassy in New Delhi, two Consulates-General in Mumbai and Chennai, and an honorary consulate in Kolkata, Belgium has expanded its diplomatic representation in India with this new office in Gandhinagar.
- Hari Sankaran was nominated as Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Belgium to the state of Gujarat.

Somnath Temple, Charminar among new places chosen for Swachh iconic places initiative
• The government has announced the names of ten new Iconic places under the Phase II of Swachh Iconic Places initiative. Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) is an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission.

Press freedom rankings: India slips 3 places to 136

• India slipped three places in the 2017 world press freedom rankings to 136th among 180 countries
• In the index, India was ranked just three places above Pakistan and was one place below violence-torn Palestine.
• India was ranked 133 last year.
• Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark took the first four positions in the rankings respectively.
• China was 176th among 180 countries and was described as the “world’s leading prison for citizen journalists”.
• North Korea was at the bottom of the index.

Centre Takes 10 New Swachh Iconic Places under Swachh Bharat Mission Phase II

• The second quarterly review meeting on the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP), an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission, was held in Katra, Jammu and Kashmir.
• On this occasion, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar announced ten new Iconic places to be taken under the Phase II of Swachh Iconic Places initiative.

Points to Remember

• The campaign was officially launched on 2 October 2014 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
• The government is aiming to achieve an Open-Defecation Free (ODF) India by 2 October 2019, the 150th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi.
• Slogan:- One step towards cleanliness

Air India, Boeing to launch training centre for AMEs

• In collaboration with the aircraft maker Boeing, the public sector airways carrier Air India will soon start a training centre for Aircraft Maintenance Engineers (AME).

US places India once again on IPR ‘priority watch’ list
• The US Trade Representative’s (USTR) office has once again placed India on the ‘priority watch’ list in this year’s Special 301 report despite the country rolling out National IPR Policy last year.

India ranks 4th in cyber threats
• As the risk of cyber threats looms over enterprises going digital, a Symantec study reveals that India rank fourth when it comes to online security breaches, accounting for over 5% of global threat detections. The US and China occupy the top two slots and together make for almost 34%, followed by Brazil and then India.

India to surpass Germany as 4th largest economy by 2022: IMF
• India will surpass Germany as the world’s fourth-largest economy by 2022 and push the UK out of the fifth rank in 2017, according to an analysis of growth projections by the International Monetary Fund.

India’s Maternity Leave Longest among BRIC countries, but halfway by OECD standards
• Parliament recently approved the increase of paid maternity leave in India from 12 weeks to 26, the highest among BRIC countries.
• It will, however, cover less than 10% of the total women workers because it benefits only employees in the organised sector. A comparison with advanced economies shows that this move is only a small step in retaining women in the workforce.

PROFILE OF STATES

Gangotri Yamunotri glaciers declared ‘living entities’
• Declared the rivers Ganga and Yamuna as “living entities”, Uttarakhand high court declared the glaciers from where the two rivers originate, Gangotri and Yamunotri respectively, as legal entities as well.
• The order delivered by Justices Rajiv Sharma and Alok Singh, who had also passed the order on the two rivers on March 20.

TN Ranks 6th in Child Trafficking
Number of Children Trafficked in 2016
• West Bengal – 3113
• Rajasthan – 2519
• Uttar Pradesh – 822
• Gujarat – 485
• Karnataka – 332
• Tamil Nadu – 317

“Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana” launched in Andhra Pradesh
Union Information & Broadcasting Minister M Venkaiah Naidu launched the ‘Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana’ in Vellore, Andhra Pradesh on April 1, 2017.

“Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana” is a scheme for providing physical aids and assisted-living devices to senior citizens belonging to BPL category.

The ambitious scheme, first of its kind in the country, is expected to benefit 5,20,000 senior citizens over a period of the 3 years.

Agriculture Min Radha Mohan Singh inaugurates ICFMD in Odisha

Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh has inaugurated International Centre for Foot and Mouth Disease (ICFMD) at Argul which will work towards protecting livestock from foot-and-mouth disease virus (FMDV).

Union Textiles Minister launches PowerTex India

The Government has launched PowerTex India, a comprehensive scheme for powerloom sector development, simultaneously at over 45 locations in the country.

Launching the scheme in Bhiwandi, Thane district, Maharashtra

First bio-gas bus launched in Kolkata

A city based company has launched the first bio-gas fuelled bus in Kolkata keeping a flat fare of just Re 1.

Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission to go paperless

Himachal Pradesh Public Service Commission (HPPSC) is all set to launch e-Governance Project to start paperless functioning, making it the first PSC of the country to do so.

Hyderabad becomes first ‘Giga-enabled’ city in India

Hyderabad became first ‘Giga-enabled’ city in India after The Atria Convergence Technologies (ACT) Fibrenet launched 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) wired broadband internet service in the city.

Mizoram becomes 27th state to join UDAY scheme

Mizoram became 27th state to join Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) scheme meant for revival of debt-stressed discoms.

Madhya Pradesh government launches app to provide municipal services online

e-nagarpalika’ - The Madhya Pradesh government has launched an app to provide various municipal services online.

J&K bans polythene manufactured below 50 microns
Jammu & Kashmir Government has banned the usage of polythene bags below 50 microns in the state. Violator will be liable for punishment up to one month in jail or fine of Rs 5000 or both. The new guidelines and regulations will facilitate proper recycling of plastic waste, reducing its impact on ecology.

Haryana to provide one-time grant of Rs. 21,000 to families for third girl child

- Haryana Government has decided to provide one-time grant of Rs 21,000 to all those families whose third girl child was born on or after August 24, 2015 under the ‘Aapki Beti, Hamari Beti’ scheme. Under the scheme, the eligible families will receive the amount irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, income and number of sons. Its purpose is to combat the problem of declining child sex ratio and promote girls’ education in the state.

The states with the highest percentage of women in the assemblies are mostly those with poor sex ratio.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Women MLAs as % of Sex Ratio</th>
<th>Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puducherry</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>931</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>948</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conversely, six of the eight states with the fewest women MLAs have higher than national average sex ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Women MLAs as % of Sex Ratio</th>
<th>Sex Ratio (females per 1000 males)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>J &amp; K</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>973</td>
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<td>Manipur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Himachal</td>
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<td>Goa</td>
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<td>973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>1084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A.P. BPL families to get free power up to 75 units

- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu had announced a new scheme – Babu Jagjivan Ram Jeevan Jyothi – under which BPL households would not be charged for 75 units of power consumed. He announced it at the 110th birth anniversary celebrations of Jagjivan Ram on Wednesday.
Delhi road named after Mujibur Rahman
- The Park street here will now be known after Bangladesh’s founder, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, with the New Delhi Municipal Council approving its renaming.

Deendayal Rasoi Yojana launched in 49 districts of MP
- Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has launched subsidized meal scheme at Rs.5 in Gwalior. This scheme helps people to get economical nutritious and good quality food under the Deendayal Rasoi Yojana at cheaper rates. It is launched in 49 districts across the state.

MP govt. to launch Hindu priesthood diploma course Purohityam – religion no bar
- The Madhya Pradesh Government-run Maharshri Patanjali Sanskrit Sansthan plans to launch one year diploma course from July 2017 known as “Diploma in Purohityam” for teaching priesthood.

PM Narendra Modi lays foundation stone of multimodal terminal in Jharkhand
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of a multi-modal terminal and a four-lane bridge on the Ganga river in Jharkhand’s Sahibganj district. The multi-modal terminal is an important component of the development of the National Waterway-1 (NW-1) from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh to Haldia in West Bengal, a distance of 1,390 km. The four-lane bridge on the Ganga river will be connecting Sahibganj to Manihari in Bihar’s Katihar district.

Sex ratio in Haryana touches 950 mark for first time
- The sex ratio in Haryana for the first time in the history has touched the 950 mark in March, 2017.

West Burdwan declared as 23rd district of Bengal
- After Jhargram, West Burdwan has declared as 23rd district of West Bengal by West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee as a “Bengali New Year gift to the people.

WB gets India’s largest coal mine
- Bengal is set to develop the country’s largest coal mine in Birbhum district, with the Centre allotting the development rights for the Deocha-Pachami coal block to the state under the government route.

Chhattisgarh’s Raman Singh announces phased liquor ban
- Chhattisgarh CM announced and imposes a ban on liquor. He made the announcement in Munger.
- Chhattisgarh has now become the second state to declare a ban on alcohol.
• Currently Bihar and Gujarat are the only states that have a total ban on alcohol.

**Piyush Goyal launches ‘Urja Mitra’ mobile app**

- Power Minister Piyush Goyal has launched the ‘Urja Mitra’ mobile application and Rural Feeder Monitoring Scheme on April 111 2017 in New Delhi.
- Urja Mitra provides a central platform in the form of web portal as well as mobile app for state power distribution utilities to disseminate information on outages to urban and rural consumers through SMSes, emails or push notifications.
- While Urban Jyoti Abhiyaan (Urja) app which was launched in June 2016 to monitor service delivery to consumer in towns.
- According to Urja app data Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan top the list in supplying uninterrupted power supply.
- The Rural Feeder Monitoring Scheme will help to track quality of power supplied in rural areas.

**Karnataka unveils mobile app “Suraksha” and Pink petrol for women’s safety**

- Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah launched a Mobile App ‘Suraksha’ for the safety of women in the city.

**Key Points**

- The app, that can be downloaded free on smartphones, help women in distress to alert police for help.
- It is linked with the Police control room and Patrolling vehicles in the city.
- In Suraksha app one can list at least 2 contacts in case of emergency, along with the police when the power button on the app is pressed 5 times.
- The police have identified various places like colleges, offices, temples, shopping malls, and theatres where Pink Hoysala will be placed.
- Police will conduct review meetings at regular intervals to measure crime graph.
- The vehicles are equipped with GPS (Global Positioning System) and camera for the staff at the police control room to monitor the video.

**Haryana launches e-sewa app to provide info about welfare schemes**

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched a mobile application to inform people about various welfare schemes and programmes of the state government.
- In the first phase, information about more than 250 schemes and programmes of 30 different departments had been made available on the e-Sewamobile app.

**Karnataka unveils mobile App for women's safety**
Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has unveiled mobile app ‘Suraksha’ for the safety of women in the city.

Launched by the Bengaluru police, the integrated personal app is aimed at helping women for their safety and security in emergency.

The app has an option to register two more numbers of persons the user wants to inform during an emergency.

**Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu launches Adarana**

- The 191st birth anniversary of social reformer Mahatma Jyotirao Phule. It is being celebrated for the first time as a state function. Andhra Pradesh CM relaunches Adarana.
- Chandrababu Naidu announced the re-launch of ‘Adarana’, a scheme for improving traditional occupations.
- It includes modern tools, technology, marketing, and financial support that are for the artisans.
- It also provides employment in the rural areas those pursuing traditional occupations to raise their income levels.

**Andhra to introduce ‘Ammaku Vandanam’ in Schools**

- A unique programme “Ammaku Vandanam” will be launched by the Andhra Pradesh in the government schools to pay tribute to mothers.

**Key Points**

- Under this programme the school children will take the blessings of their mothers and also do ‘paada pooja’ (washing her feet) called Mother Worship.
- The government also decided to implement the programme in 5,000 high school across the state from academic year 2017 – 18.
- Under this programme the mothers would be invited to the schools on a specific day every year for the special function.

**After UP’s Anti Romeo Squad Haryana launches Operation Durga**

- Haryana announced the launch of Durga Vahini – police squads it aims to stop harassment of women on public spaces.
- Strong actions will be taken against “eve-teasers”.

**PM launches GNFC’ casheless/less cash to township model across 12 States**

- On April 14, 2017 during his Nagpur visit, PM Narendra Modi launched a less cash township model, developed by Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd (GNFC), across 81 township in 12 States.
- The less-cash model across the States has been facilitated by GNFC under the auspices of NITI Aayog. It is to be noted that GNFC’s township at Bharuch in Gujarat became India’s first 100 percent cashless township.

**AP CM lays foundation stone for Rs 100-cr Ambedkar memorial park in Amaravati**
• On April 14, 2017, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu laid the foundation-stone for Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Smriti Vanam (memorial park) in state’s defacto capital Amaravati.

**Lucknow likely to host Yoga Day event this year**

• Lucknow is likely to host the main event of the International Day of Yoga (IDY)

**Punjab CM bans names of Minister MLAs on inaugural stones**

• Punjab CM Captain Amarinder Singh announced the prohibition of the names of any Ministers, MLAs on the foundation stone.

**Bhopal to have India’s first privately run Railway station**

• For the first time in Indian Railway’s history Habibganj station in Bhopal has been handed over to private firm to be operated by it.

**Maharashtra to stage special drive for transgenders to register as voters for the first time**

• Maharashtra has become the first state to launch a special awareness drive to ensure that transgenders in the state register as voters in large numbers. On April 15, 2017, the state branch of the Election Commission of India (ECI) launched a special drive for this purpose.
• It is to be noted that 15th April is celebrated as ‘Third Gender Day’ to commemorate Supreme Court judgement in 2014 to recognise transgenders as ‘Third Gender’.
• Maharashtra is home to more than 10 lakh third genders. As per ECI data only 1700 are registered voters.

**Suresh Prabhu flags off train run of “Vistadome Coaches”**

• Suresh Prabhu flagged off the train run of new glass roof coaches of Vistadome between Vishakhapatnam and Arakuon on April 16, 2017.
• These coaches are specially designed for wide view to passengers.
• Cost of these coaches is Rs. 4 crore for 4 coaches.
• It is equipped with LED lights, rotatable seats and GPS based information system.
• The coaches include Lounge, infotainment system, wide side door for physically disable and automatic sliding compartment door.
• The feature of glass roof is it has electronically controlled opalescence that will give a transparent outside view.
• It will give scenic beauty to foreigners at destination as well along with the journey.

**Kerala government to give pension to circus artistes**

• The CPI(M)-led LDF government in Kerala has decided to provide pension to former circus artistes in state.
• Kannur district which is considered to be the cradle of Indian circus.
Maharashtra announces scheme to increase farmers’ income

- Amidst demands of farm loan waiver in Maharashtra, the State government has announced ‘Advanced Farming – Enriched Farmer’ scheme.
- The aim is to increase farmers’ income by cutting production cost and increasing the output.

Bengal government introduces Social Security Yojana converges 5 beneficiary schemes

- The Bengal government has launched the scheme for unorganized sectors and self-employed people.

Schemes

- State Assistance Scheme for Provident Fund for Unorganised Sector.
- West Bengal Unorganized Sector Worker’s Health Security Scheme.
- Social Security scheme for Construction Workers.
- West Bengal Transport Workers Social Security Scheme.
- West Bengal Bidi Workers Welfare Scheme are being converged.

UP government renames Gorakhpur and Agra airports

- The Yogi government has renamed the Gorakhpur and Agra airports.

Major Points

- The Gorakhpur Airforce Station has been renamed as Maha Yogi Goraknath Airport. It was named after the founder of the Nath monastic movement.
- The Agra Airport will be renamed after RSS ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay airport.
- The Department of Disabled Welfare will now be known as ‘Divyang Jan Vikas Empowerment.
- The Yogi government also decided to name the Civil Terminal named Maha Yogi Gorakhnath, at Gorakhpur Air Force Base.

HRD ministry forms committee to review UGC recommendations on 7th Pay commission in education Institutes

- On implementation of 7th pay commission in educational institutions after teachers associations the HRD ministry forms a committee headed by Higher education secretary, Kewal Kumar Sharma.

Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad Launched Probono Services, Legal Aid Schmes, Nyaya Mitra
• On April 20, 2017 Union Law Minister, Ravi Shankar Prasad launched following (3) three initiatives for providing legal aid to marginalised and vulnerable.

• Probono legal service is a web-based initiative through which lawyers who want to volunteer for ‘Probono’ services can register on the Justice department website. doj.gov.in.

• Tele Law litigants from marginalised communities can avail legal advice from expert panel of lawyers stationed at State Legal Services Centre (SLCA) by video conferencing through the common service centres (CSCs).

• ‘Nyaya Mitra’ Scheme aims to reduce pendency in lower courts of selected districts. Cases which have been pending more than 10 years will be accorded priority.

Delhi’s Gaint Lead in Internet Access
• As of December 2016, India had more than 391 million internet subscribers, around 40% of them networked on narrowband and the rest on broadband on both fixed and mobile devices. Telecom circle data on broadband penetration (subscribers per 100 persons) shows that Delhi is at a different level when access to the Net is concerned. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, in contrast, have less than 10% broadband penetration.

• 9 of every 10 Individuals in Delhi have access to internet.

• Delhi has 55 percentage point lead over Kerala, the states with record highest internet access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Broadband Penetration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>27.5</td>
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<td>Himachal</td>
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<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>24.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andhra</td>
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<td>Haryana</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All India</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Haryana extends Accidental insurance cover to all residents
• One of the most prominent schemes of Modi government Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) has been implemented by the Haryana government.

UP government to set up 40 Yoga wellness centers in 40 districts
• Uttar Pradesh has decided to set up 40 Yoga wellness centers in 40 districts across the state in this current year. The International Yoga Day (IYD) is celebrated across the world on 21 June.

• The Centre is implementing National AYUSH Mission as a Centrally Sponsored Schem

• The date 21st June was selected because it is the longest day in the Northern Hemisphere which has special significance in many part of the world.
The idea of celebrating the International Yoga Day was pitched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2014.

In December 2016, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had formally inscribed Yoga its representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

**First digital village inaugurated in Arunachal Pradesh**
- Nirjuli village-1 in Papum Pare district was declared as the first digital village of Arunachal Pradesh.

**Andhra Pradesh sets up welfare board for transgenders**
- Andhra Pradesh has now established a welfare board for transgender persons in the state.
- Andhra Pradesh has launched Hijra Transgender Welfare Board at the Sri Venkateshwara University in Tirupati.
- Other states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal have set up welfare boards and policies for transgender persons.

**UDAN**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) scheme from Jubbarhatti, an airport on the outskirts of Shimla. ‘Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik’ means ‘the common man flies’. He flagged off the first UDAN flight under Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) on Shimla-Delhi sector. UDAN flights on Kadapa-Hyderabad, and Nanded-Hyderabad sectors were also flagged off.

**Govt to set up Central University for differently abled**
- Central Government will set up a Central university for Divyangs in Uttar Pradesh.

**e-SOT, e-PRAN cards launched for Atal Pension Yojana users**
- The subscribers of Atal Pension Yojana (APY) can now have online access to their statement of transaction (e-SOT) and Permanent Retirement Account Number (e-PRAN).
- Atal Pension Yojana is a guaranteed pension scheme, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 9, 2015. It became operational from June 1, 2015.

**Haryana Ballabgarh is now Balramgarh**
- The Haryana Chief Minister ‘Manohar Lalkhattar’ has announced to change the name of Ballabhgarh to Balramgarh.

**E-taxi trial run to begin in Nagpur**
- The country’s first electric taxi trial in the country would be launched in Nagpur from May 24. The first project of its kind will be undertaken by Nagpur Municipal Corporation. Mahindra and Mahindra is set to provide 200 taxis for the initiative.

**Karnataka Is The Most Corrupt State In The Country, Reveals Survey**
• People in Karnataka faced corruption the most in accessing public services, a think-tank has claimed, based on its survey in 20 states.
• According to the survey, “77% of respondents” in Karnataka said they experienced corruption in accessing public services.
• "This is followed by Andhra Pradesh (74%), Tamil Nadu (68%), Maharashtra (57%), Jammu and Kashmir (44%) and Punjab (42%)."

Country's first digitalised Panchayat ward in Kerala
• A ward in the Kottayam district of Kerala has became India's first digitalised panchayat ward.
• Union minister of state for social justice and empowerment Krishan Pal Gurjar inaugurated the website of the first digitalized Panchayat ward number 15 of Aymanam Grama Panchayat.

Puducherry government to give free power supply to farmers
• The government of Pondicherry announced that the farmers in the union Territory will be getting free power supply for pump sets used for irrigation purpose.

DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

Israeli firm signs $2 bn defence deal with India
• State-owned Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) has truck a deal worth almost $ 2 billion to supply India’s Army and Navy with missile defence systems, the company said on Thursday, describing it as Israel’s largest-ever defence deal.

12th Indo-Mongolian Joint Military Exercise Nomadic Elephant held in Vairengte
• 12th “Iteration of Indo-Mongolian Joint Military Exercise Nomadic Elephant is presently under way at Vairengte from 05 April 2017 till 18 April 2017.”
• Vairengte in Mizoram houses the elite Counter-Insurgency and Jungle Warfare School of the Indian Army.

Nepal and China to conduct Sagarmatha Friendship
• First ever Joint military exercise begin between Nepal and China named Sagarmatha Freindship 2017 in Kathmandu.
• Sagarmatha is the Nepali name for Mount Everest which stands in between both the countries.

Navy successfully tests BrahMos Missile
• In a boost to the precision-strike capability of hitting land targets from the sea, the Navy successfully tested the supersonic BrahMos land-attack cruise missile from a stealth frigate in the Bay of Bengal on Friday.
• The BrahMos missile, which last month was tested with an extended range of 450km from the earlier 290km, was fired from frigate INS Teg.
India, France carry out joint naval exercise
- The Indian Navy has began a joint maritime exercise with the French Navy at the Mediterranean Sea to further deepen combat coordination between the two navies.
- Guided missile destroyer INS Mumbai, stealth frigate INS Trishul and fleet tanker INS Aditya are taking part in the 'Varuna' exercise which will continue till April 30.

Points to Remember
- The 'Varuna' series of exercises began in 2000 and have grown into an institutionalised form of interaction between the two navies.
- Bilateral exercises such as 'Garuda', 'Shakti' and 'Varuna' have been a regular feature between the two nations.

India's first book village to come up in Maharashtra's Bhilar
- Bhilar village located near Panchagani in Maharashtra is all set to embrace the tag of India's first 'village of books'.
- The initiative is being inaugurated by Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on May 4.

PACT AND SUMMITS

Bangladesh is organising World parliamentarians conference

About Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is a global inter-parliamentary institution established in 1889 by Frederic Passy from France and William Randal Cremer from United Kingdom.
- Headquarter: Geneva, Switzerland.
- President: Saber Hossain Chowdhury.

Malaysia to set up technology park in Andhra Pradesh
- A Malaysian company has agreed to help set up a technology park in Andhra Pradesh that’s expected to attract private sector investment of $100 million in the first phase.

President of India inaugurates first NIMCARE World Health Day Summit 2017
- The slogan of the first NIMCARE World Health Day Summit is, ‘Unite for a Healthy Mind’.

'TB-free India’ drive held in Dharamsala
- The “TB-free India” campaign to eradicate the disease from India by 2025 was launched at a national level summit was held in Dharamsala.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate 'Bharat ke Veer' web portal
• Home Minister Rajnath Singh will launch a “Bharat ke Veer” web portal and mobile application that will enable donors contribute towards the families of soldiers who lost their lives in the line of duty.

PM Modi launched special digital exhibition marking 100 years of Champaran Satyagraha

On April 10, 2017, an exhibition titled “Swachhagraha – Bapu Ko Karyanjali – Ek Abhiyan, Ek Pradarshani” inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi at National Archives of India (NIA) in New Delhi.

This exhibition has been organised to mark 100 years of champaran Satyagraha, which was Mahatma Gandhi’s first experiment in using non-violence and non-cooperation as methods to protest.

M Venkaiah Naidu – Minister for Information & Broadcasting, released the three books to mark 100 years of Champaran Satyagraha – ‘Gandhi in Champaran’, Romain Rolland and Gandhi Correspondence’ and “Mahatma Series (8 volumes)”.

G-7 foreign ministers meeting held in Lucca, Italy

Points to Remember
• The Group of 7 (G7) is a group consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The European Union is also represented within the G7.
• The 42nd G7 summit was held in Japan in May 2016. 43rd G7 summit will be held in Taormina, Italy in 2017.

G20 Digital Ministerial Meeting held in Germany

Gridhar Malviya committee submits its report to Uma Bharti
• The committee constituted to prepare draft Ganga Act submitted its report to the Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation to Uma Bharti New Delhi.

BRICS special envoys on Middle-East meet held in Vishakhapatnam

Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh inaugurates India Steel 2017 in Mumbai

First India, Indonesia Energy Forum’ held in Jakarta

Singh inaugurates two-day National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign-2017
• The National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign – 2017 is being organised on 25th and 26th April, 2017 at New Delhi.
India to host 18th World Road Meeting

- The International Road federation (IRF) has named India to be the host of the 18th World Road Meeting (WRM 2017). WRM 2017 will be held on November 13, 2017. The theme of this year’s WRM is ‘Safe Roads and Smart Mobility: The Engines of Economic Growth’.

International Road federation (IRF)

- The International Road Federation is a global not-for-profit organization founded in 1948. Its motto is “Better Roads. Better World”. It is headquartered in Washington DC.

India, Sri Lanka sign energy pact

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between India and Sri Lanka, both sides will collaborate in a host of energy and infrastructure projects across the island.

Kerala hosts country’s first ever transgender athletic meet

- Kerala has conducted the country’s first-ever transgender one-day athletic meet in Thiruvananthapuram.

Global mobile mobile internet conference held Beijing

- The Global Mobile internet conference (GWC) held from 27th April to the 29th April 2017 at the China National convention Center (CNCC) in Beijing, China.

Google introduces 'Solve for India' campaign

- Google has announced the new “Solve for India” initiative, especially for tier-2 cities such as Pune, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Kochi, Indore, Nagpur, Nashik, Madurai, Kanpur, and Chennai.
- This program will aim to support entrepreneurs and developers of the country.
- Entrepreneurs will now have the opportunity to learn directly from Google engineers who will share product usage insights.

EMINENT PERSON, PLACES IN NEWS

K. Prithika Yashini

- K. Prithika Yashini has created a record of sorts by joining the Tamil Nadu Police Force as a trainee sub-inspector- the first transgender to achieve this distinction in the country.
- She was posted to Dharmapuri after the completion of one-year intensive training in Chennai.

Manobi Bandopadhyay

- Manobi Bandopadhyay became India’s first transgender college principal when she took charge of Krishnagar Women’s College, West Bengal, in 2015. In 1995, she had published the country’s first transgender magazine, ‘Ob-Manab’ (sub-human).
Prof. David R. Syiemlieh takes Oath as Chairman of UPSC
- Prof. David R. Syiemlieh took the Oath of Office and Secrecy as Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC).
- Shah Rukh Khan becomes first Indian actor to speak at TED Talks in Canada Bollywood actor shah Rukh Khan became the first Indian actor to deliver TED speech in Vancouver, Canada.

SPORTS AND GAMES

Three World records held by Jepkosgei at Prague Half Marathon
- Joyciline Jepkosgei of Kenya broke three world records by winning the Prague Half Marathon in Czech Republic.
- The reward for P.V. Sindhu was more than just a first Yonex India Open title.
  - Sindhu, who had lost to Marin in Rio, produced an inspiring performance and won the final in straight sets 21-19 21-16.

Roger Federer downs Rafael Nadal to win Miami Open Men’s Title
- Roger Federer defeated long-standing rival Rafael Nadal 6-3, 6-4 to win the Miami Open and continue his outstanding start to the year.

Johanna Konta beats Caroline Wozniacki in Miami Open Women’s final
- Johanna Konta of Great Britain won the biggest title of her career when she beat Caroline Wozniacki 6-4, 6-3 in the final of the Miami Open.

India rises to 101 in FIFA rankings, best-ever in two decades
- After two decades, the Indian football team has risen to 101st from 132nd in the latest FIFA rankings which was released on April 6, 2017 Brazil retained its top position.
- Indian team also ranked 11th in Asia and the list is topped by Iran which has placed 28th position in overall ranking.

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<th>Rank</th>
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<td>Chile</td>
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<td>Colombia</td>
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Keys
- President : Gianni Infantino

158 | Page PH: 24339436, 42867555, 9840226187
• Indian Football team coach: Stephen Constantine (UK)  
• Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland.

• Rio Olympics silver medallist P V Sindhu achieves a career-best world number two ranking in the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings list.  
• Badminton World Federation rankings as Chinese Taipei’s Tai Tzu Ying stayed at first position while Sindhu moved up three places to become second.

**NBA Launches India’s first Basketball School In Mumbai**  
• US based National Basketball Association (NBA) has launched its first basketball school in Mumbai.

**Boxer Shyam Kumar wins gold medal at Thailand International**  
• Indian boxer K Shyam Kumar has won gold medal at the Thailand International Tournament in the 49-kilogram category held in Bangkok.

**IOA grants affiliation to Boxing Federation of India**  
• The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has granted affiliation to the Boxing Federation of India (BFI), ending a long-standing impasse between the two bodies.

**Lewis Hamilton wins Chinese Grand Prix**  
• Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton dominated the Chinese Grand Prix to take his first win of the year and move into a share of the championship lead.

**Advani wins Asian billiards title**  
• Advani won his seventh Asian title by defeating Sourav Kothari 6-3 in an entertaining final of the Asian billiards Championship in Chandigarh.

**Sai Praneeth Wins Singapore Open Badminton**  
• Sai Praneeth has won the Men’s Single at Singapore Open Badminton Championship. Srikanth is the first Indian town a Superseries title after defeating K Srikanth in Singapore.  
• For the first time in history of the game the two Indians will clash for the title in Super Series event. It was Organized by the Singapore Badminton Association.

**Sebastian Vettel beats Lewis Hamilton in Baharain Grand Prix**  
• Sebastian Vettel (Ferrari) won a Baharain Grand Prix by defeating Lewid Hamilton (Mercedes). It was held at Baharain International circuit Baharain.

**Pullela Gopichand’s daughter Gayatri wins twin crown in Jakarta**

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Pullela Gopichand a National Badminton coach daughter has won both single and double crown at the Pembangunan Jaya Raya Junior Grand Prix in Jakarta.

Visually impaired Indian runner Sagar Baheti completes historic Boston Marathon
- India’s Sagar Baheti on 17 April 2017 became the first visually impaired India runner to complete the historic Boston Marathon.

Video gaming to be featured at 2022 Asian Games
- Video gaming will be featured as a full sport at the 2022 Asian Games, with competitors in electronic sports set to receive medals for their digital prowess.
- The Olympic Council of Asia says it will introduce e-sports to the official program of the Asian Games at Hangzhou, China.
- It will also be a demonstration sport at the 2018 Asian Games in Palembang, Indonesia.

Cricket and Sambo removed from 2018 Asian Games

Nadal wins Men’s Singles and Bopanna and Cuevas Lift men’s doubles in the Monte Carlo Masters
- Rafael Nadal has won the Men’s Singles title of Monte Carlo Masters Tennis tournament on April 23, 2017. He defeated Albert Vinolas in Monaco.

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<th>S.No</th>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Runner Up</th>
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<td>Rafael Nadal</td>
<td>Albert Vinolas</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Men’s Double</td>
<td>Rohan Bopanna</td>
<td>Arneodo and Hugo Nys</td>
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<td>Pablo Cuevas</td>
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Haryana Champion in National Youth Athletics
- Haryana beats Kerala at the National Youth Athletics Meet at Hyderabad. Kerala was at the top place for the last five years but now Haryana emerged champions with 166.5 points.

MCC offers life membership to former India captain Sandhya Agarwal
- The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has offered honorary life membership to Sandhya Agarwal, former captain of the Indian women’s Test team.

Valtteri Bottas wins his first F1 title in Russia
- Finland’s Valtteri Bottas celebrated the first Formula One victory of his career at the Russian Grand Prix.

Gul Panag first Indian woman to drive Formula E racing car at a racetrack
• Actress Gul Panag has become the first Indian woman to drive a Formula E racing car. She drove the M-4Electro at the circuit de Calafat in Catalonia, Spain.
• The M4Electro is a Mahindra fourth generation Formula E race car.

Jehan Daruvala becomes 1st Indian to take pole in FIA F3 European Championship
• 18-year-old driver Jehan Daruvala became the first Indian to take pole in the FIA F3 European series, securing the top spot on the starting grid for Race 1 of the second round of the championship in Monza, Italy

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

“Portuguese India and Mughal Relations 1510-1735”: A book by Luis de Assis Correia
• Goa-based author Luis de Assis Correia has released his book “Portuguese India and Mughal Relations 1510-1735” recently.

Veerappa Moily presents copy of his new book to President
• Former Union minister and senior Congress leader M Veerappa Moily presented the first copy of his book ‘The Flaming Tresses of Draupadi’ to President Pranab Mukherjee.
• The book Chronicles the epic character of Mahabharata, Draupadi.

VP receives the book ‘Hope in a challenged democracy; An Indian narrative’
• The Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari has received the first copy of the Book titled ‘Hope in a challenged democracy; An Indian narrative’ authored by Shri Ashwini Kumar

Asha Parekh’s autobiography ‘The Hit Girl’ launched by Salman Khan
• Salman Khan has launched the biography of yesteryears actress Asha Parekh’s autobiography ‘The Hit Girl’, for which he’s written the Foreword as well.
• Authored by celebrated film critic and author Khalid Mohamed

Dalai Lama releases book ‘Ocean and Blue Mountains’
• Dalai Lama also released a book titled ‘Crossing of the Frontiers’

Arjun Gaind launches His Book ‘Building the land of five rivers’
• The author Arjun Gaind launched his book on Punjab, Building the land of five rivers.

PM Modi releases book penned by LS Speaker Sumitra Mahajan
• Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book ‘Matoshree’, based on life of Maratha Queen Ahilyabai Holkar, authored by Lok Sabha SpeakerSumitra Mahajan.
Dawit Isaak awarded UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize 2017

- Dawit Isaak, an imprisoned Eritrean-Swedish journalist, has been chosen to receive the 2017 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

Inventor of WWW win a computing ‘Nobel’ prize

- Tim Berners-Lee, 61, is this year’s recipient of the AM Turing Award, computing’s version of the Nobel Prize.

Eleven Madison Park in N.Y. named world’s best restaurant

The awards are considered the ‘Oscars of the food world’

Kohli named Wisden Leading Cricketer

- Indian captain Virat Kohli was on Wednesday named Wisden’s Leading Cricketer in the World for 2016, adding another feather to his cap.

Kirti Chakra for Gorkha Martyr

- Kirti Chakra, the second highest peacetime gallantry award, was posthumously conferred on Lance Havildar Prem Bahadur Resmi Magar of Gorkha

National Film Award

- Bollywood actor Akshay Kumar won his first National film award for his role in the much-acclaimed courtroom drama Rustom, while Marathi film Kaasay was adjudged the best feature film overall.
- Best popular film – Sathamanam Bhavathi, Telugu.
- Best direction – Rajesh Mapuskar (Ventilator, Marathi)
- Best actor – Akshay Kumar (Rustom, Hindi)
- Best actress – Surabhi Lakshmi (Minnaminungu, Malayalam)
- Best supporting actress – Zaira Wasim (Dangal, Hindi)
- Best children’s film – Dhanak (Hindi)
- Best child artist – Adhish Praveen (Kunju Daivam, Malayalam), Nur Islam (Sahaj Pather Gappo, Bengali), Manohara (Railway Children, Kannada)
- Best music direction – Babu Padmanabha (Allama, Kannada)
- Best male playback singer – Sundharayyar (Joker, Tamil)
- Best female playback singer – Iman Chakraborty (Praktan, Bengali)
- Best screenplay (original) – Syam Pushkaran (Moheshinte Prathikaram, Malayalam)
- Best screenplay (adapted) – Sanjay Patil (Dashakriya, Marathi)
- Sound designer – Jayadevan C. (Kaadu Pookunna Neram, Malayalam).
- Product design – 24 (Tamil).
- Best environmental film – Loktak Lairembee (Manipur)
- Special Jury award: Mohanlal [Pulimurugan (Malayalam), Janatha Garage (Telugu) and Munthirivallikal Thalirkkumbol (Malayalam)]
- Best stunt – Peter Hein (Pulimurugan, Malayalam)
• Best feature film on social issues – Pink (Hindi)

**Hema Malini and S P Balasubramanyam win NTR National Awards**
• NTR National Film Award for the year 2012 and 2013 were announced at the Film Development Corporation office in Hyderabad by Andhra Pradesh government.

• ‘The Most Film Friendly State Award’ has been included. This inaugural award will be presented to State of Uttar Pradesh. State of Jharkhand also got ‘Special Mention’ for State Govt.’s overall efforts in fostering the growth of film industry.

**UP govt to build music village in Bismillah Khan’s honour**
• The Uttar Pradesh government led by Yogi Adityanath has given its approval to building a music village named ‘Bismillah Khan Sangeet Gram’ to honour of legendary Shehnai player Ustad Bismillah Khan.

• This project planned to develop at Varanasi, it will be evolved by Padma Shri Soma Ghosh, the adopted daughter of the legendary Shehnai player.

**British-Indian educationist named ‘Asian Businesswoman of the Year’**
• Bihar-origin Asha Khemka, who arrived in the United Kingdom with her family in 1978 without English language skills and went on to change the lives of thousands as an educationist, was named “Asian Businesswoman of the Year” at an event in Birmingham.

**Judge Tej Bahadur Singh Family Court Judge created Guinness world record 6065 cases in 327 days**
• Tej Bhadur Singh has set a Guinness World Record for disposing of 6065 cases in just 327 working days.

**IIM-Tiruchi gets top Institution award**
• The Indian Institute Management – Tiruchi was ranked seventh among all IIMs and 13th in the category of management institutions in the national Institutional Ranking Framework assessment for 2017.

**Pulitzer’s Prize 2017: Winners List**
**Journalism**
• Public Service: The staff of the New York Daily News and ProPublica.
• Breaking News Reporting: The staff of East Bay Times.
• Investigative Reporting: Eric Eyre, the Charleston Gazette-Mail.
• Explanatory Reporting: The Panama Papers, by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, McClatchy and the Miami Herald.
• Local Reporting: The staff of The Salt Lake Tribune.
• International Reporting: The staff of The New York Times.
Letters, Drama And Music

- Fiction: The Underground Railroad, by Colson Whitehead.
- Drama: Sweat, by Lynn Nottage.
- Biography or Autobiography: The Return, by Hisham Matar.
- Poetry: Olio, by Tyehimba Jess.
- Music: Angel's Bone, by Du Yun.

Haldia Port Tops the List in the First Ever Ranking of Ports on Sanitation

- For the first time ever, the twelve major ports under the Ministry of Shipping have been ranked on sanitation parameters, based on the efforts undertaken by them to counter waste generating sources with respect to port operation, office area, township area and the response to incoming ships.
- While Haldia and Vizag ports bagged the first and second ranks respectively, almost all ports have achieved the benchmark for cleanliness or are well above it.

Abdulqadir Rashik wins prize at UN challenge for open source tools

- An Indian software engineer Abdulqadir Rashik has won the top prize at a global challenge for an open-source tool.
- Abdulqadir Rashik, also an entrepreneur, won the ‘Unite Ideas UNGA Viz Textual Analysis and Visualisation Challenge’ ‘for his Global Policy’.

Dilip Kumar honoured with Living Legend Lifetime Award by Punjab Associate

Himachal bags Krishi Karman Award 2015-2016

- The Union Ministry of Agriculture has selected Himachal Pradesh for the Krishi Karman Award 2015-16 for increase in food grains production.

T.N. bags Krishi Karman award
Produced a record 130 lakh tonnes of foodgrains in 2015-16

- The Central government has chosen Tamil Nadu for the Krishi Karman award for the State’s record performance in the production of food grains during 2015-16

India-born engineer Dr. Arvind Sinha gets American Helicopter Society award
• American Helicopter Society (AHS) International has awarded ‘World’s Outstanding Aerospace Engineer Leadership Award’ to Dr. Arvind Sinha – an India-born aeronautics engineer, currently based in Australia.

Indian Engineer Tirupati Jain Wins ‘Career Women’s Initiative Award’
• Tirupati Jain is an environmental engineer who won a Career Women’s Initiative Award. She has chosen by an Independent International Jury. The Awardee will receive $100000 prize money.

Hanchinal receives 6th M.S. Swaminathan Award
• The 6th edition of M.S. Swaminathan Award for honouring outstanding contribution in the field of agriculture has been given to Rayappa Ramappa Hanchinal – Chairperson of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority.

Shah Rukh Khan honoured at San Francisco Film Festival
• Bollywood Superstar Shah Rukh Khan was honoured with a tribute at the ongoing 60th San Francisco International Film Festival (SFIFF) in USA.

BEML bags Hindustan PSU award
• BEML, a defence public sector, has received the Hindustan PSU Award under the category ‘Fastest Growing Organisation – Miniratna’.

Shambhavi Puraskar for Hari Shankar Rout
• The prestigious Shambhavi Puraskar, 2017 was presented to Hari Sankar Rout for his outstanding contribution towards social change.
• The Shambhavi Puraskar was instituted in 2014 by Bansidhar and Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF).

Pakistan Hindu Youth selected for prestigious US award
• Raj Kumar, a Hindu youth from Pakistan has been selected for the prestigious ‘Emerging Young Leaders Award’ given by the US State Department for the positive role played by youngsters in building sustainable peace.

One Part Woman bags Sahitya Akademi award

Vasudevan wins honour for translation of Mathorubhagan
• The English translation of writer Perumal Murugan’s novel Mathorubhagan (One Part Woman) has won the Sahitya Akademi’s award for translation in English.
Saira Banu, Jackie honoured with Raj Kapoor Awards

- Veteran Bollywood actress Saira Banu and actor Jackie Shroff have been named by Maharashtra State Govt. for Raj Kapoor Lifetime Achievement Award and Rak Kapoor Special Contribution award respectively.

UNESCO Peace Prize goes to Italy’s Mayor Glusi Nicolini

- The Giuseppina (Giusi) Nicolini has awarded the peace prize by UNESCO. She is the mayor of the Italian island of Lampedusa.
- Glusi has been awarded for her commitment to saving the lives of migrants and refugees.
- The UNESCO on 19 April 2017 also awarded the Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize to Giuseppina Nilcolini as well as to the nongovernmental organization SOS Mediterranee (France).

Victoria Beckem gets royal recognition

- British Pop singer turned fashion designer, Victoria Beckham has been made an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

Aamir Khan, Kapil Dev to get Dinanath Mangeshkar Award

- Actor Aamir Khan and cricket icon Kapil Dev will receive the 75th Master Dinanath Mangeshkar Awards, at a ceremony on April 24.

GNFC wins Golden Peacock Award

- The Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilizers & Chemicals Ltd (GNFC) won the prestigious Golden Peacock Award in the category of Innovative Product/Service for pioneering a cashless township transformation model.
- The Golden Peacock Awards were established by the Institute of Directors (IOD) in India in 1991.

Dr. Bhakti Yadav, first woman doctor from Indore receives Padma Shri Award

Hema Malini, Aishwarya Rai Bag Dadasaheb Phalke Awards

- These are not Dadasaheb Phalke Awards presented by the Government of India, these are the Dadasaheb Phalke Film Foundation Awards which started around three years back and from then on, have been organised every year in Mumbai to honour the contribution of various artists to Indian cinema.

Goldman Environmental Prize for Prafulla Samantra

- 65 year-old social activist, Prafulla Samantra has been announced as one of the six Winners of 2017 Gold man Environmental Prize.
PC Chandra Puraskar awarded to Kailash Satyarthi

Rajkummar Rao’s ‘Newton Wins Best Film At The Hong Kong International Film Festival

Govt names winners of Tamil New Year awards

- Maanavar Mandram has been chosen for Tamil Thai award, carrying a cash prize of Rs. 5 lakh, a memento and a certificate.
- LK Agriputhiran has been chosen for Kabilar award, M A Venkatakrishnan for U Ve Sa, Jeyaraj for Kambar, B Manikandan for Sollin Selver, Vaideki Herbert for G U Pope, M Abdul Kader for Umarupulavar, N Nanjundan for Ilangoadigal, Hamsa Dhanogopal for Amma Itakkiyan and Nagalakshmi Shanmugam, A Zakir Husain, Allah Pitchai, Mohd Parista, Uma Balu, K Chellappan, V Chaitanya, C Murugesan K Balasubramanian, S Arumugan Pillai and K S Subramanian for Transkation, while Selva Murali has been selected for Kanini Tamil award.
- Tamil Semmal awards will be presented for the year 2015 to Tamil scholars from each district, the statement said, It carries a cash award of Rs. 25,000 and a certificate.

K. Viswanath Wins Phalke award

- Reowned filmmaker and actor Kasinadhuni Viswanath, best known for his award-winning movies in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi, has won the Dadasaheb Phalke award for the year 2016 for his outstanding contribution to the film industry.
- He will be the 48th recipient of the award, the highest recognition in Indian cinema, which consists of a golden lotus, a cash prize of Rs.10 lakh and a shawl.

Vani Jairam gets Ghantasala national award

Yes Bank receives prestigious Golden Peacock Award 2017 for innovative product

Indian businessman Yusuff Ali wins Queen's Enterprise Award

- A prominent Indian businessman's food processing plant in Britain has won the prestigious Queen's Enterprise Award 2017 for its exceptional contribution to the UK's trade, industry and economy.
- Yusuff Ali M.A, 61, said the recognition for his Birmingham-based Y International (UK) Ltd will spur his Abu Dhabi headquartered Lulu Group International to further expand business interests in the UK.

RDPR bags e-Puraskar

- The Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) Department of Karnataka has bagged e-Puraskar Award for the best performance in empowering panchayats by using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools, for 2016-17.
- Kerala bagged the second prize, while West Bengal secured third prize in the category of ICT tools.
• The cash prize for the first position is Rs. 2 crore, Rs. 1 crore for second position and Rs. 50 lakh for third position.

**Bhubaneswar: First Indian city to win Pierre L’enfant Awards-2017**

• Bhubaneswar has become the first Indian city to win Pierre L’enfant International Planning excellence award-2017 instituted by the American Planning Association (APA). Bhubaneswar has been chosen for its good and advanced town planning and engaging its residents in the planning process.

**Poet, critic Sankha Ghosh bags Jnanpith Award for 2016**

• Veteran Bengali poet and literary critic Prof Shankha Ghosh was conferred the 52nd Jnanpith Award by President Pranab Mukherjee.

• Srishti kaur wins Miss Teen Universe Pageant Srishti Kaur of India has been crowned **Miss Teen Universe 2017** at Managua.

**Former Minister Ashwani Kumar named for Japanese honour**

• Japan has selected former Union Minister Ashwani Kumar for this year’s ‘Order of the Rising sun award for his contribution to strengthening of bilateral ties between Japan and India.

**CULTURAL PANAROMA**

**Three-day children’s film festival begins**

• The second National Children’s Film Festival took off on a colourful note in Visakhapatnam.

**India's first-ever micro-drama festival held in Delhi**

• Named after Thespis of Icaria, believed to be the first actor in Greek drama (6th century BC), the day-long event ‘Thespis’ saw screening of 28 independent plays at the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Art.

• Organised by theatre group ‘Vriksh’, the festival marks the debut of the micro-drama concept in India.

**Leather Institute’s research centre to celebrate 70 years**

• The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) - Central Leather Research Institute (CLRI) will celebrate 70 years of service in ‘Enabling Leather’.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Indira Banerhee is new CJ of Madras High Court**

**Second woman to hold this post**

• Justice Indira Banerjee, currently a judge of the Delhi High Court, has been appointed by the President as the Chief Justice of Madras High Court. Ms. Justice Banerjee would be the
second woman after Justice Kanta Kumari Bhatnagar (June-November 1992) to head the chartered court.

Justice Pradeep Nandrajog sworn in as Chief Justice of Rajasthan HC

Vanaja Sarna appointed as Chairman of CBEC
- Vanaja N. Sarna was appointed the new chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC).

Rajiv Kumar Chander appointed as India's Ambassador to the UN

Vipul takes charge as new Consul General of Dubai
- Diplomat Vipul, a 1998 batch Indian Foreign Service officer took up the charge as the new Consul General of Dubai.

Leftist Lenin Moreno wins Ecuador presidential election
- Ecuadorean leftist Lenin Moreno has won 2017 Presidential election

Malala Yousafzai to be United Nations Messenger of Peace

Donald Trump nominates Indian-American Neomi Rao as his regulatory czar
- US President Donald Trump has nominated prominent Indian-American law expert Neomi Rao as Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) (regulatory czar).

Donald Trump nominates Indian-American Vishal Amin as his IP czar
- US President Donald Trump has nominated Indian-American Vishal Amin as Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator in the Executive Office of the President (IP czar).

Anuja Ravindra Dhir becomes first non-white circuit judge at Old Bailey
- Anuja Ravindra Dhir is the youngest circuit judge currently working at Central Criminal Courts in London. She is an Indian origin woman becomes 1st non-white judge at London Old bailey Court.

Mukta Dutta Tomar appointed India's Ambassador to Germany

Sunita Sharma, B Venugopal appointed MDs in LIC

Bhajji named ambassador for CT 2017
- Veteran off-spinner Harbhajan Singh was named one of the eight ambassadors for the ICC Champions Trophy scheduled in England from June 1 to 18.
- Pakistan’s Shahid Afrid, Bangladesh’s Habibul Bashar, England’s Ian Bell, Newzealand’s Shance Bond, Australia’s Mike Hussey, Kumar Sangakkara of SriLanka and Graeme Smith of South Africa were unveiled as the other ambassadors for the tournament.
UN Chief Guterres names Achim Steiner as new administrator of UNDP
• Achim Steiner was become the new administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) by the UN chief Antonio Gueterres.

Sheela Patel named by the UN chief to panel on Urban development
• Sheela Patel is a director of SpARC and a global expert of Urban Poverty Alleviation for Slum dwellers has been named by the UN chief to panel on urban development.

New Chief of Chennai Smart City Limited
• Raj Cherubal will take charge as the Chief Executive Officer of Chennai Smart City Limited, the special purpose vehicle formed to implement projects under the Smart Cities Mission.

Himanta Biswa Sarma becomes interim BAI president
• BJP leader and Assam Badminton Association President Himanta Biswa Sarma was appointed Badminton Association of India's interim head during its executive council meeting.

Mridul Gehlot elected president of kabaddi federation
• Mridul Gehlot and Dinesh Patel were elected unanimously president and general secretary of Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI).

Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed new Director General of CRPF
• Senior IPS officer Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar was appointed as the new Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

Nita Ambani part of two IOC panels

• India’s first woman International Olympic Committee member Nita Ambani has made it to two important commissions of the global sports governing body, including the prestigious Olympic channel.

Syrian Olympic swimmer Yusra Mardini becomes UNHCR ambassador

• Syrian refugee and Olympic athlete Yusra Mardini has been appointed UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Goodwill Ambassador.

India and Bangladesh Sign 22 Agreements

• Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is on a visit to India. She held bilateral talks with Indian counterpart Narendra Modi.
• Twenty-two agreements were signed in the area of defence, nuclear energy, cyber security and media, though the two leaders witnessed the signing of only four pacts – on the
judicial sector, a $4.5 billion development assistance line of credit, on outer space and on passenger and cruise services.

Kristin Davis appointed UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador

- UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, announced the appointment of internationally acclaimed actress and philanthropist Kristin Davis as its Goodwill Ambassador.
- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), also known as the UN Refugee Agency, is a United Nations programme mandated to protect and support refugees.
- Its headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland, and it is a member of the United Nations Development Group.
- The UNHCR has won two Nobel Peace Prizes, once in 1954 and again in 1981.

India-Australia launch Sports Partnership in Mumbai

- India and Australia has launched Sports partnership in Mumbai aimed at increasing cooperation in sports.

LATEST COURT VERDICT

In a first, court to send summons via WhatsApp

- With technology revolution communication, a financial commissioner (FC) court in Haryana – a quasi-judicial body – has ordered that summons in a partition suit be served via WhatsApp.
- It is for the first time that this would be done in the country.

Section 139AA – Aadhaar to be mandatory for IT returns, getting PAN from July 1

- The government is making Aadhaar mandatory for filing income tax returns as well as to getting PAN card through amendments to the finance bill 2017.
- The Finance Act, 2017 introduced Section 139AA of the Income-tax Act, 1961 which states that mandatory quoting of Aadhaar/Enrolment ID of Aadhaar application form, for filing IT returns and application for allotment of Permanent Account Number (PAN) with effect from July 1.

Lok Sabha passes 123rd Constitution Amendment Bill 2017

- On April 10, 2017, Lok Sabha passed 123rd Constitution Amendment Bill, 2017 with 360 members voting in favour and two members voting against it. This amendment bill seeks to grant constitutional status to National Commission for Socially and Educationally Backwards Classes.
- The amendment bill was introduced in Lok Sabha by Union Social Justice and Empowerment Minister, Thaawarchand Gehlot on April 5, 2017.
• The amendment bill seeks to insert Article 338B in the Indian Constitution. This article will list out the structure and functions of the proposed National Commission for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes.

Bill on Equal Rights to HIV patients passed in LS
• The Bill gives equal rights to persons suffering from HIV and AIDS in getting treatment or admissions in educational institutions and jobs.
• The Bill defines the grounds on which discrimination against HIV-positive persons and those living with them is prohibited and any non-compliance will amount to legal penalty.

Arasu Cable gets DAS licence
• The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has issued a Digital Addressable System (DAS) licence to Tamil Nadu Arasu Cable Corporation Ltd, the first such instance where a licence has been given to a State-run multisystem operator.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Government reduces number of centrally sponsored schemes to 28
• The Government has reduced the number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) from 66 to 28 and effective from the financial year 2016-2017.

National Park & Wild Life Sanctuary in Bihar
• Valmiki National Park, Bhimbandh Wild Life Sanctuary, Guatam Budha Wild Life sanctuary,
• Udaipur Wild Life Sanctuary, Pant (Rajgir) Wild Life Sanctuary and Nagi Dam Wild Life Sanctuary.

North India to gets India’s first wildlife DNA bank
• India’s first DNA bank for wild animals will be setup by the Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) at Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh.

Earth-like planet has an atmosphere
• Scientist have found a planet that looks like Earth- and, for the first time, has its own hazy atmosphere.
• The detection of an atmosphere around the super-Earth GJ1132n marks the first time that an atmosphere has been detected around an Earth-like planet other than Earth itself.

Wind power industry is in the news. Why?
• For the first time, wind power installations (wind-mills) crossed the 5 Gigawatt mark, to reach 5,400 MW in 2016-17. The earlier record was 3,472 MW in 2016-17. The current year might see installations of 6 GW.

Newly discovered exoplanet LHS 1140b could host alien life
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A temperate rocky ‘Super-Earth’ planet has been discovered. Temperate planet known as LHS 1140b is 39 light years from Earth.

Major Points

- The planet is around 1.4 times the size of Earth but is more than seven times heavier.
- It is probably made of rock with a dense iron core. Its temperature and chances of surface water make it a prime candidate for life.
- The newly discovered super-Earth LHS 1140b orbits in the habitable zone around a faint red dwarf star, named LHS 1140, in the constellation of Cetus.
- The exoplanet passes in front of its parent star as it orbits, making it one of the most exciting future targets for atmospheric studies.
- The exoplanet is an important target for future characterization of planets in habitable zone than Proxima b or TRAPPIST-1.
- Last month was the hottest March on record in the absence of the warming effect caused by the natural El Nino weather system, US Government scientists have revealed.
- This was the second highest figure for March since global records began in the 1880s, behind the 1.23°C recorded in March last year.

Ameenpur Lake gets biodiversity heritage tag

- The Ameenpur Lake in Hyderabad has become the first ‘biodiversity heritage site’ in an urban environment in India under the Biological Diversity Act, 2002. After the rejuvenation of water bodies, Ameenpur has become home to 251 rare species of birds prompting the government to declare it as biodiversity heritage site.

Wax Worm caterpillar (Galleria mellonella) will eat plastic shopping bags

- Scientist Federica Bertocchini and his colleagues of the Institute of Biomedicine and Biotechnology of Cantabria in Spain have found that a caterpillar commercially bred for fishing bair has the ability to biodegrade polyethylene.

NEW ECONOMY POLICY

RBI holds policy rate, raises reverse repo rate

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept the key policy rate, the repo rate, unchanged in the first bimonthly policy review of 2017-18 but narrowed the policy corridor by 25 bps by raising the reverse repo rate to 6% from 5.75%.

FRBM Panel for 3% fiscal deficit target

- The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) committee has made recommendations of a fiscal deficit target of 3% by 2020.
- The Committee was headed by NK Singh.
Budget Session ends with passage of landmark Bills
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill, 2017 passed
- Bills passed in both the Houses of Parliament are as follows:
  - The Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill
  - The Specified Bank Notes (Cessation of Liabilities) Bill
  - The Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill
  - The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill
  - The Mental Health Care Bill
  - The Employee’s Compensation (Amendment) Bill
  - The Taxation (Amendment) Bill

SEBI or Securities and Exchange Board of India set to block P-note route for NRIs
- The regulator is considering completely barring NRIs from subscribing to Participatory notes to prevent money laundering.

One Group, One Tax likely under GST
- Government is planning to propose one rate for each product group to avoid complexities in tax structure.
- Most economies have single tax rate whereas India has a four-tier tax structure of 5%, 12%, 18% and 28%. 18% will be applicable on most products. GST Council is yet to decide which rate will be applicable to which product.

RBI to set up computer emergency response unit
- The Sub-Committee of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) discussed the setting up of a Computer Emergency Response Team for the Financial Sector (CERT-Fin), the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.
- The sub-committee reviewed the major developments on the global and domestic fronts that impinge on the financial stability of the country.

India will grow at 7.2% this year: World Bank
- A World Bank report said that the Indian economy is expected to grow from 6.8% in 2016 to 7.2% by 2017.
- It said growth is expected to further gather momentum by 2019.
- The report also confirms that South Asia remains the fastest-growing region in the world.

ICICI Data Centre gets India’s first CII-IGBC Platinum rating
- ICICI Bank Data Centre in Hyderabad gained the unique distinction of becoming India’s first Platinum rated project to be rated under IGBC Green Data Center Rating System.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Full Multi-Crore Heavy Duty Satellite to be made by Private sector – ISRO
For the first time, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on April 2, 2017 assigned a task of making two Full Multi-Crore Heavy Duty Satellites to Alpha Design Technologies, a private sector high-tech defense equipment supplier.

**Background**
- The NAVIC or the Swadeshi GPS system is fully functional. But to be on a safer side, ISRO needs two spare satellites on the ground for a quick launch in case something went wrong. So this project is carried out.
- This decision was made by ISRO after almost 150 missions and three decades of space explorations, seeking help from a private industry to make a full navigation satellite.

**MP E-Nagarpalika App launched Madhya Pradesh to provide Municipal Services Online.**
- The Madhya Pradesh government has launched mobile application MP e-Nagarpalika to provide various municipal services online.
- The mobile app is the part of Rs. 225-crore e-nagarpalika project, under which all municipal services would be made available on a unified web platform.

**ISRO and Indian Agriculture Ministry Team Up To Geo-Tag Agricultural Assets**
- The Government is going to geo-tag all the agricultural assets in the country for better land and crop management.
- Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh is going to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), ISRO, for geo-tagging the agriculture land created under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVA) in the country.
- Geo-tagging used to provide us a real-time status of agricultural assets, which helps to monitoring, utilizing and also useful in formulating schemes for development in the agricultural sector.
- The implementation of space technology would help farmers get access to pesticide testing labs, storage infrastructure, and market-related

**NASA’s Kepler space telescope discover Venus twin around dim star, Kepler-1649**
- NASA’s Kepler space telescope have discovered a Venus-like planet orbiting a dim star and located 219 light-years away.
- This new planet is slightly larger than Earth, and it tightly embrace its low temperature star called kepler-1649, encircling it every nine days.
- The orbit causes the flux of sunlight reaching the planet to be 2.3 times as great as the solar flux on Earth the solar flux on Venus is 1.9 times the terrestrial value.

**Scientists all set to drill World’s Highest Glacier**
- Scientists are headed towards Himalayas to become the first team to drill through the highest glacier in the world in the foothills of Mt. Everest.
- The team is slated to spend 6 weeks on the Khumbu glacier to be able to drill 200 m in the ice to study the internal structure and measure its temperature.
Comb Jellies were the earliest animals: study

- The delicate marine predators called comb jellies were the earliest animals – not sponges as had long been thought, claims a new genetic analysis.

**GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast Bomb**

- (MOAB), also known as ‘Mother of all Bombs

**Why MOAB?**

- MOAB was first tested in 2003, but if used in urban warfare its impact will be huge.
- It’s a concussive bomb designed to explode above ground and create a massive blast.
- The blast is big enough to reach deep into areas that other conventional bombs cannot.
- In Nangarhar’s mountainous region, where is fighters are using bunkers, tunnels and caves “to thicken their defence, this is the right weapon to reduce these obstacles,” says Gen. John W. Nicholson, commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan.

**Manipur CM launches web applications to check corruption – DARPAN**

**Digital Application for Review by Public and Nation (DARPAN):**

- This web application would upload details of projects right from the initial stage till sanction of fund and photos of work-in-progress from sites. As per CM Biren Singh, it will stop the corrupt culture of non-completion of developmental projects after release of funds.

**US conducts successful field test of new B61-12 nuclear bomb**

- The National Nuclear security Administration (NNSA) and US Airforce have conducted a test of a modification of the B61 atomic bomb.
- B61 – 12 was tested without a nuclear warhead.
- The Bomb was dropped from the F-16 fighter bomber on the Nellis test site, Nevada.
- It was conducted to extend the B61’S operational life by upgrading its nuclear and non-nuclear components and to improve the reliability of its security systems.
- It was the first test of the B61-12 with the usage of the F-16.

**Google launches Aero for hyper local services in India**

- Google has launched an app named Aero in India to cater to restaurant delivery and home services.
- This is the first time that Google is entering the business of food delivery and home services in India.

**Prakash Javadekar launches Portal and Mobile App of RUSA**
• Union Minister of Human Resource Development Prakash Javadekar has launched the unique portal and mobile app of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), a body under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in New Delhi.
• The portal is a one-stop for States Higher Education Plans, decision of the States Higher Education Councils and details of the resources under this scheme. Also, the gallery is a rich repository of the projects initiated under RUSA.

INS Chennai dedicated, Chennai to become hub of Naval activities
• INS Chennai a P 15A Guided Missile Destroyer of Indian Navy was dedicated to the city of Chennai on April 17, 2017. The ship has a complement of about 45 officers and 395 personnel.

Gupshup launches bot-to-bot communication platform ‘InterBot’
• Leading bot platform Gupshup has announced the launch of ‘InterBot’, a first of its type platform that enables bot-to-bot communication. Ability to communicate will give bots human-like capabilities to transact, co-ordinate, compete, collaborate and negotiate with each other.

Malaysia Airline has become the first to use new satellite-based real-time global aircraft tracking
• Aireon and Flight aware announced that Malaysia Airlines will be the first SITAONAIR airline customer to benefit from a revolutionary flight-tracking partnership.
• This service will have access to minute-by-minute, 100% global, flight-tracking data, delivered by SITAONAIR’s AIRCOM® Flight Tracker.
• Aireon, SITAONAIR, and Flight Aware are the three companies will be operated the satellite tracking system. It uses a constellation of 72 communication satellites operated by US firm Iridium.
• The flights will be tracked using an industry-wide standard known as “automatic dependent surveillance – broadcast” or ADS-B, which usually shares data on flight location via ground-based receivers.

Hayana launches mobile app Kilkari to create awareness among pregnant women
• The National Health Mission (NHM) in Haryana has launched a mobile-based application.
• It has been developed to create awareness among pregnant women, parents and health workers.
• From the second trimester of pregnancy till the child is one-year-old, the application will deliver 72 time appropriate audio messages to registered mobile numbers on pregnancy, child and child birthcare every week.

INS Darshak conducting joint survey of Sri Lankan bay
• INS Darshak, the Indian Navy’s hydrographic survey ship is one a two-month deployment in the Sri Lankan.

New types of blood cells “Dendritic cells’ discovered
• Team of scientists, have identified new types of blood cells in the human immune system.

Northeast India’s largest IT hub opens in Tripura
• Northeast India’s largest Information Technology (IT) hub has been inaugurated in Tripura’s capital city Agartala on April 24, 2017. It is the sixth IT hub in the Northeast region.

NASA’s Super Pressure Balloon Takes Flight From NZ
• The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has successfully launched a super pressure balloon to conduct near space scientific investigations.

Joint operational doctrine for army, navy, airforce unveiled

• A “joint doctrine” envisaging deeper operational synergies among the army, navy and airforce was unveiled on April 25, 2017. The three defence services will now follow a unified approach to deal with all possible security challenges including conventional and proxy wars.
• This document is the second edition. First edition was released eight years ago.

ISRO develops “Solar calculator” android app

ISRO has launched a solar calculate or app that can calculate the benefits of installing solar panels in different regions of the country.

NASA’s Cassini space craft successfully travels between Saturn and its rings
• NASA’s Cassini space craft completed its final close of Saturn’ moon Titan and has now started its final set of 22 orbits before jumping in to Saturn on September 15, 2017 and completed its 20-year long journey.

Iceball ‘planet Discovered Through Miceolensing
• NASA scientists have discovered a new planet – OGLE-2016 BL G-1195lb- that has the same mass as Earth and orbits its star from the same distance as Earth orbits the sun.

HEALTH SCIENCE

Indian firm’s Zika virus vaccine 100% efficient in animal trials’
Study shows that it works against both Asian and African strains of virus
• The Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech’s killed Zika virus vaccine’ using an African strain has shown 100% efficacy against mortality and disease in animal studies, a study has shown. A ‘killed virus vaccine’ contains virus that has been grown in culture and then killed using physical or chemical processes.
World Immunization Week: 24-30 April 2017
- World Immunization Week, celebrated in the last week of April, aims to promote the use of vaccines to protect people of all ages against disease.
- This Year’s theme is VACCINES WORKS.
- Immunization saves millions of lives and is widely recognized as one of the world’s most successful and cost-effective health interventions.
- Today, there are still 19.4 million unvaccinated and under-vaccinated children in the world.

State to introduce rotavirus vaccine to combat diarrhoea
- 9th Vaccine for children in Tamil Nadu

IIT Kharagpur to introduce Vastu Shastra
- The country’s oldest IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) is going to introduce Vasthu Shastra classes for its architecture students.

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IMPORTANT DAYS

International Workers' Day: 1 May
• It is the day to pay tribute to the labourers. In India, the first Labour Day, or May Day, was celebrated in 1923 in Chennai.

Ganga Cleanliness Pledge Day: May 2
• The National Mission for Clean Ganga observes Ganga Cleanliness Pledge Day on May 2 at various places in the rivers basin states to spread awareness and ensure public participation for the programme.
• The government will spread the message through rallies, shramdaan (labour donation), tree plantation, etc.

UN Observed First World Tuna Day: May 2
• The United Nations is marking the first World Tuna Day with calls to conserve one of the globe’s most popular fish to be caught and eaten.
• It is a saltwater fish that belongs to the tribe Thunnini, a sub-grouping of the mackerel family (Scombridae).

World Press Freedom Day: May 3
• to pay tribute to those journalists who lost their lives while working on stories they’re passionate about.

World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day: 8 May
• World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day is an annual celebration of the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
• This date is the anniversary of the birth of Henry Dunant (born 8 May 1828), the founder of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the recipient of the first Nobel Peace Prize.
• This year’s theme is “Less Known Red Cross Stories”.

World Migratory Bird Day: 10th May

• Aims to highlight the interdependence of people and nature, and more specifically people and migratory birds, as they share the same planet and the same limited resources.
• The theme of WMBD 2017 is “Their Future is Our Future – A Healthy Planet for Migratory Birds and People”.

National Technology day – May 11

• The National Technology Day 2017 was observed on 11th of May, 2017 in India.
• 2017 theme is Technology for inclusive and sustainable growth.
• The day is commemorated to mark the anniversary of pokharan nuclear tests of 1998 (operation Shakthi)

International Nurses Day - May 12

• This year, the theme is “Nurses: A Voice to Lead, Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals”.

International Mother’s Day: May 14

• Every year, second Sunday of May is celebrated as Mother’s Day across the world to honour the mother to honour mothers and motherhood.
• 2017 theme: “Every Mother Knows”.

International Day of Families –May 15, 2017

National Dengue Day: 16 May

• National Dengue Day is observed on 16th of May every year by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India.
• The aim of this day is to control the Dengue through create awareness, initiate preventive actions and continue till transmission season is over.

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day: May 17

• Theme - “Big Data for Big Impact”.

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International Museum Day: 18 May
• The theme of 2017 is “Museums and contested histories: Saying the unspeakable in museums”.

World Metrology Day: May 20
• The theme for World Metrology Day 2017 is “Measurements for transport”.

National Anti-terrorism Day: 21 May
• The National Anti-Terrorism Day is celebrated every year on May 21 in India to raise awareness among all sections of people, about the danger of terrorism, violence and its dangerous effect on the people, the society and the nation as a whole.
• On this day, in 1991, the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated by a suicide squad of Liberation of Tamil Tigers Eelam (LTTE), while attending a rally in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development: May 21

World Biological Diversity Day: May 22
Theme for the year 2017 is “Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism”.

World Turtle Day: May 23

International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers: 29 May
• The theme for the 2017 International Day of UN Peacekeepers is “Investing in Peace Around the World.”

NATION

World’s highest rail bridge taller than Eiffel tower on Chenab to be completed in two years
• World’s highest railway railway bridge that is expected to be 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower will be built on Chenab River in Jammu & Kashmir within next two years.
• 315 km long bridge will connect Bakkal (Katra) and Kauri (Srinagar).

Rajnath Singh launches Mobile Application for CAPF personnel
• The Union Home Minister also launched BSFMyApp on the occasion.
• This has given a ‘Digital Option’ to jawans to lodge their grievances and he is just one click away from jawans, the Home Minister said.
• Rajnath Singh said that he will review the dashboard of the App every month and check the status of redressal of grievances. The MHA will intervene, wherever required, he said.

India plans to replace Maitri with a new permanent research station
India has decided to replace the Maitri research station in Antarctica with a new one in the next three to four years.

**e-Krishi Samvad**

- e-Krishi Samvad is internet-based interface and is a unique platform that will provide direct and effective solutions to the problems faced by farmers and stakeholders in the agriculture sector.
- People can directly connect to the ICAR website and get the appropriate solutions from the subject matter specialists and institutes through web or SMS.

*Department of telecom launches ‘Tarang Sanchar’ portal for information on mobile tower radiation*

- **Department of Telecom (DoT), Ministry of Communications has launched Tarang sanchar. It is a web portal for information sharing on Mobile Tower and EMF Emission Compliances.**

India to give Rs 35 cr to children of freedom fighters in Bangladesh

- India will give Rs. 35 crore rupees to children of freedom fighters in Bangladesh under the new ‘Muktijodha scholarship’ scheme in the next five years.

Prime Minister to attend UN Vesak Day Celebrations in Sri Lanka

Prime Minister Modi will travel to Sri Lanka to attend the Buddhist festival ‘Vesak Day’ (Buddha Jayanti) that commemorates birth, enlighten and death of Buddha.

**Facebook Launches ‘Express Wi-Fi’ in India**

- Facebook has launched its “Express Wi-Fi” commercially in India and the service is now available via 700 hotspots across four states of Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Meghalaya.
- Express Wi-Fi is a part of Facebook’s global initiative to expand internet connectivity.

**HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launched Vidya-Veerta Abhiyan and ‘Wall of Valour’ in Educational Institutions**

- Union Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar launched Students for soldiers - a nationwide VIDYA VEERTA ABHIYAN and ‘Wall of Valour’ - to encourage Universities to display portraits of Param Veer Chakra (PVC)-decorated soldiers. The aim of this Abhiyan is to instill a sense of patriotism and nationalism among students.
- It is just to revive the patriotic feeling in our youth.

**Election Commission of India Launches National Contact Centre**

- The Election commission of India has launched National Contact Centre.
- The National Contact Centre is operated on a National Grievance Redressal System software.
• This software is a single window platform to manage complaints and feedback received through calls, emails, SMS and website access in an integrated and time-bound manner.
• Each state and Union Territory will also soon setup and operationalize dedicated state Contact Centre (SCC) and District Contact Centre (DCC).
• It will ensure Seamless flow of information across the contact enters for handling issues /query from citizens.

LIC HFL launches ‘Griha Siddhi’
• India’s premier housing financing company has announced launch of its new home loan product ‘Griha Siddhi’.

Base year of WPI, IIP revised to 2011-12
• The government has revised the base year of wholesale price index (WPI) and index of industrial production (IIP) to 2011-12 from 2004-05.
• A base year is the year used for comparison in the measure of a business activity or economic index.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates National Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction
• The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the two-day second meeting of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) in New Delhi.
• The theme of the Second meeting of NPDRR is “Disaster Risk Reduction for Sustainable Development: Making India resilient by 2030”.
• The NPDRR is a multi-stakeholders National Platform headed by the Union Home Minister and it promotes participatory decision making in disaster management, and strengthens federal policy of our country.

eVIN Project of Health Ministry becomes Global best practise in immunisation
• eVIN (Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network ) project of Union Health Ministry has become global best practise in immunisation.
About eVIN (Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network):
• It is an indigenously developed technology system that digitizes vaccine stocks and monitors the temperature of the cold chain through a smart phone application.

Ahmedabad to host biggest ever International yoga Day event on June 21
• Ahmedabad is going to host biggest ever International yoga day event on 21st June.

Dalits, Adivasis Muslims worst off, says Indian Exclusion Report
• As per 2016 Indian exclusion Report (IXP) released by the Centre for Equity studies (CES) in New Delhi on May 10, 2017 Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims continue to be the worst-hit communities in terms of exclusion from access to public goods.
Jordan’s Azraq becomes world first clean energy refugee camp

- Azraq has become the world’s first refugee camp powered by renewable energy.

PM Modi to inaugurate Asia’s longest bridge in Assam

- Asia’s longest bridge on Brahmaputra, which will reduce travel time between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh by four hours.
- 9.15km long Dhola-Sadiya bridge, capable of withstanding the weight of a 60-tonne battle tank, will improve the movement of civilian and military vehicles to strategic locations up to Anini in Arunachal Pradesh.

India’s ‘Ujala’ to light up homes in United Kingdom

- India has launched the process to export ‘Ujala to the United Kingdom with affordable ‘Made in India’ LED bulbs.

Cabinet approves setting up of IARI in Assam

- Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in Assam.
- IARI-Assam would be a Post-Graduate Institution of higher learning in Agricultural Education.

India Ranks Third Highest Globally In Internal Displacement Numbers: Report

- Nearly 2.4 million people in India were internally displaced due to conflict, violence and disasters in 2016.

Centre bans sale of cows for slaughter at animal markets, brings restrictions on cattle trade

- As per new rules notified by the Environment Ministry, Government has banned the sale of all kinds of cattle for slaughter at animal markets across the country. This new rule has been notified under Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act of 1960.

Mumbai, Kota among world's most crowded cities

- Two Indian cities - Mumbai and Kota - have been named among the world's most crowded in a list topped by Dhaka, said the World Economic Forum (WEF), citing UN-Habitat data.

Construction Of India's First Underwater Rail Tunnel Finishes
• Boring of India’s first underwater rail tunnel running under the Hooghly river has finished before its scheduled deadline of July.

India Ranked 2nd In EY Renewable Energy Attractiveness Index

• Indian has ranked 2 among 40 countries on ‘Renewable Energy Country Attractiveness Index’ 2017 released by Ernst and Young (EY).

India unanimously elected to head UN-Habitat

• UN-Habitat - promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements across the world.

Health Minister J P Nadda launches new pneumococcal Conjugate vaccine for pneumonia

• Under Phase-1, this vaccine has been launched in entire state of Himachal Pradesh as well as 6 districts of Uttar Pradesh and 17 districts of Bihar.

About pneumococcal Vonjugate Vaccine (PCV):

• It has been launched under Indian Government’s Universal Immunization Programme (UIP).
• This vaccine will help health department to control pneumonia and child mortality rate.
• It will provide protection against 13 types of Pneumococcal bacteria.
• It is to be noted that, every year, around 1 lakh children in India die due to Pneumonia.

Cabinet approved SAMPADA Scheme

• The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) for the period 2016-20.
• The objective of SAMPADA is to supplement agriculture, modernize processing and decrease agri waste.

Points to Remember :-

• This scheme will be launched under the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI).
• SAMPADA is an umbrella scheme incorporating on going schemes of the Ministry like Mega Food Parks, Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, etc.
• It is also new schemes like Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages, Creation / Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities.

“One IP- Two Dispensaries” and “Aadhaar Based Online Claim Submission” launched:

• Under One IP- Two Dispensaries scheme ESIC has given an option to an Insured Person (IP) to choose two dispensaries, one for self and another for family through an employer.
Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP):

- To provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special points referred to as Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Jan Aushadhi Kendra.
- These Kendras will provide generic drugs, which are cheaper as compared to branded drugs but are equivalent in quality and efficacy.

India's Healthcare Ranks Below Bangladesh And Sri Lanka: Study

- India ranked at 154 with an score of 44.8 in the list of 195 countries.

Amitabh Bachchan led Toilet Usage Campaign, ‘Dar waza Band’, launched

- For promotion of toilet usage across the country.
- The objective of the campaign is to encourage behaviour change in men who have toilets but are not using them.

Mission XI Million picks Chandigarh girl Ananya Kamboj

- Ananya Kamboj, 8 standard student from Chandigarh has been selected as a young journalist at the global Football for Friendship (F4F) Social Programme in Russia.

SBI launches national hackathon ‘Code For Bank’

- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a national hackathon for developers, start-ups and students to come up with innovative ideas and solutions for the banking sector.

Invisible laser walls to bolster security along border with Pakistan in J-K by Border Security Force (BSF). It is made-in-India technology called Kavach (KVX) series laser walls and is a notch higher than the existing laser walls.

Turbo Megha Airways first private airline to get UDAN licence

- Turbo Megha Airways has become the first private airline to get a licence to fly under UDAN, the government scheme for subsidized regional flights.

Piyush Goyal launches ‘SEVA’ App

- SEVA is a part of ‘Digital India’ initiative, which is aimed at increasing the Consumer Connect as well as the Transparency and Accountability in Coal dispatch.

PM inaugurates hospital in Dickoya

- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has inaugurated a hospital in Dickoya in Central Province of Sri Lanka
MoUs signed between India and Palestine
• Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas is on a 4-day visit to India.
• After the restricted talks India and Palestine sign five agreements.
• These were MoU on visa exemption for diplomatic passport holder, agriculture cooperation, cooperation in field of IT & Electronics, health sector and cooperation in the field of youth affairs and sports.

National Green Tribunal Bans Open Defecation and Waste Dumping on Yamuna Floodplains
• NGT Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar

Cyclone ‘Mora’ spins up over Bay, eyes Bangla coast for landfall
• It is a second cyclone in the Bay of Bengal after cyclone Maarutha (April).

BSF begins operation 'Garam Hawa' along international border in Rajasthan
• The BSF has started operation 'Garam Hawa' in the western sector in Rajasthan, under which vigil along the international border with Pakistan has been stepped up.
• The operation is being conducted as chances of infiltration across the border increase during intense heatwave conditions.
• Main aim is to reinforce and strengthen the BSF's vigil along the border during the summer.

IT Department Launches Operation Clean Money
• Income Tax Department (ITD) has initiated Operation Clean Money to investigate tax evaders. As a part of the operation, the government has launched a website on ‘Operation Clean Money’ operation.

Salient Highlights
• The Operation Clean Money’ portal has been designed by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).
• Initial phase of the operation involves identification of around 18 lakh persons who have made large deposits or purchases between 9th November to 30th December 2016, which do not appear to be in line with the tax payer’s profile.
• The provision of online verification of these transactions is aimed at reducing the compliance cost for the taxpayers while optimising the resources of the Income Tax department.
• The PAN holders can view the information in the portal. The taxpayers would be allowed to submit online explanation without the need to visiti the Income Tax Office. As a reminder, e-mail and SMS will also be sent to the taxpayers for submission of online response on the portal.

Others
188 | Page PH: 24339436, 42867555, 9840226187
Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flags off high-speed Tejas Express between Mumbai-Goa

RBI to observe financial literacy week from June 5-9

Madhav Chitale Committee Recommends Measures for De-silting Ganga

India second most attractive renewable energy investment destination: EY

Manipur declares Dailong village Biodiversity Heritage Site

Traveller’s Choice Top 10 Global Landmarks – 5th place to Taj Mahal.

India to Organise Cultural Festival in Egypt to mark Tagore’s 156th Birth Anniversary

Jaipur Literature Festival kicked off in London

WHO confirms India's 1st Zika virus cases in Ahmedabad

India becomes second largest steel producer.

India ranks 120th among 131 nations in women workforce, says World Bank report

India jumps up 73 places in ease of getting electricity.

India elected as President of UN-Habitat

India, Chile Trade agreement to come into force from May 16.

Naitin Gadkari inaugurates India Integrated Transport and Logistics summit 2017 in New Delhi

Home Ministry asks States to Link Prisons with Courts via Video Conferencing

India retains world's highest FDI recipient crown

Rajnath singh chairs Northern Zonal Council Meeting in Chandigarh

India jumps 73 spots to 26 rank in World Bank’s electricity accessibility list

Mukesh Ambani leads Forbes list of Global Game Changers.

Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge appointed New Chairman of Public Accounts Committee.

India to be first in world to run all government ports on green energy
PM Launches Narmada Seva Mission for Conservation of Narmada

STATES

Nagapattinam Panchayat School gets ISO certificate

- In December 2004, the panchayat union middle school in Keechankuppam, a small fishing hamlet in Nagapattinam, was ravaged by the tsunami. Thirteen years later from the verge of being shut down, the school has now received an ISO certification that even private schools in the vicinity cannot boast of.

Goa bans thin plastic bags to tackle garbage

- The Goa State government has decided to ban buying and selling of plastic bags below 50 microns.

Country’s first ornamental fish park to come up at Chennai

- India’s first Aquatic Rainbow Technology Park (ARTP) will be set up in Chennai.

Country’s first bio refinery plant inaugurated in Pune

- for renewable fuels and chemicals at Rahu in Pune district of Maharashtra.

Fadnavis launch Samwad Sabha to reach out to farmers

- Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has launched a ‘Shivar Samwad Sabha’ to reach out to farmers in the state and to address their issues.

Haryana announces pension scheme for journalists

- On May 27, 2017, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced following incentives for journalists at the “Swarna Jayanti Journalists’ Meet” in Panchkula.

In a first, transgenders get jobs at Kochi Metro

- Kochi Metro Rail Ltd has announced to employ 23 members from the transgender community.
- It is the first time in the history of India that government has appointed members of the transgender community.

Uttar Pradesh: An Ambulance Service for Cows Flagged-Off
• Under the ‘Gauvansh Chikitsa Mobile Vans’ service, initially, 5 ambulances were flagged off to cover Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Mathura and Allahabad. In addition, a “gau seva toll-free number” has also been released to enable common people to come forward to help the cows.
• A similar initiative to save cows was initiated in Khargone district of Madhya Pradesh a few days ago.

**Odisha to introduce boat ambulances in four districts**
• The boat ambulance service will be available in the districts of Koraput, Malkangiri, Kendrapara and Kalahandi where people face problems in availing 108 ambulance service due to intervening large water bodies in the form of rivers and dams disrupting road communication.

**UP CM forms ‘Maa’ committee to keep an eye on mid-day meals served to students**
• In the primary schools of Uttar Pradesh to ensure that they get nutritious food prepared in hygienic conditions.
• It will be a committee of six mothers, from all sections of society, whose students are studying in that school.
• From cleanliness in kitchen, to quality of food being served to children, they will keep an eye on minute details.

**Maharashtra bans junk food in school canteens**
• Maharashtra Govt. has imposed a ban on the sale of junk food in school canteens.

**Telangana hosted first Videsh Sampark**
• Telangana has hosted the first outreach programme of the Ministry of External Affairs ‘Videsh Sampark’, to engage the State governments to create awareness about various programmes of the Ministry.

**Maharashtra CM inaugurates automatic weather station in Nagpur**
• Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis has inaugurated the State’s first automatic weather station at Dongargaon in Nagpur.
• This is one of the unique projects in the country, which will measure wind direction, wind speed, air temperature, relative humidity and record amount of rainfall.
• This information will be shared with farmers who can then manage sowing in a much better and planned way as per the weather conditions.

**MP first to switch to Jan-Dec fiscal year**
- **Madhya Pradesh become the first state in India to switch to the January-December financial year from existing April-March cycle.**

**Prabhu Flags Off Ahmedabad –Chennai Humsafar Express**
- **Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flagged-off Western Railways’ first Humsafar Express (completely 3-tier AC sleeper trains) between Ahmedabad and Chennai.**

**Chhattisgarh auctions India’s most expensive limestone block**
- **The Kesla-II limestone block in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh**

**Odisha’s Sualgiri and swalgiri communities notified as scheduled castes**
- **Odisha’s Sualgiri and swagiri communities have been notified as Scheduled castes. It is followed by the President Pranab Mukhajee’s assent to a new law.**

**World’s Highest Railway Bridge to Come up Over Chenab River**
- World’s highest railway bridge which will be 35 metres taller than the Eiffel Tower is to come up over the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir.
- The bridge will connect Bakkal (Katra) and Kauri (Srinagar).
- The bridge is expected to contribute to the economic development of the state and improve its accessibility.

**Vishakhapatnam, Beas cleanest railway stations. The Darbhanga railway station in Bihar was the dirtiest among the busiest stations.**

**Madhya Pradesh Assembly declare s Narmada living entity**
- **Madhya Pradesh government has passed a law in the state to give recognition to Narmada River.**
- **It provides all legal rights of a person or a Person or a living entity to ensure “conservation of aquatic bio-diversity linked with the purity and continual flow of the river”**.

**Shankar Acharya Committee:**
- The central government had constituted a high-level committee under former Chief Economic Advisor Shankar Acharya to examine “desirability and feasibility” of having a new financial year (Jan – Dec).

**Indore is the most Swachh city, Gonda the dirtiest**
- **Indore and Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh have emerged as the cleanest cities in the country as per a massive cleanliness survey commissioned by the Union Urban Development Ministry.**
- **The dirtiest city, according to the survey, is Gonda in Uttar Pradesh.**
The survey, Swachh Survekahan-2017, was carried out by the Quality Council of India across 434 cities and includes the feedback of 28 lakh respondent. The top 10 cleanest cities are Indore, Bhopal, Visakhapatnam, Surat, Mysuru, Tiruchi (6), New Delhi Municipal Conucil area, Navi Mumbai, Tirupati and Vadodara.

India’s First Bio Refinery Plant inaugurated in Pune
- For producing ethanol from a variety of biomass.

Bengaluru ranked world’s most affordable tech city
- As per Savills Tech Cities 2017 rankings, Bengaluru has been adjudged as the most affordable city having the lowest cost of living out of 22 tech cities across the world.

First Videsh Sampark held in Telangana
- First outreach programme of the Ministry of External Affairs, ‘Videsh Sampark’ was hosted in Telangana. The conference was held on May 13, 2017 in Hyderabad.
- During this Videsh Sampark conference, Telangana also become first state in India where Ministry of External Affairs’ pilot ‘e-Sanad’ project for online attestation of documents was rolled out.

PM Inaugurates Country’s Longest Bridge in Assam
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated India’s longest river bridge – the Dhola-Sadia Bridge in Assam. The construction of the bridge began in 2011. The cost of the project is about Rs 2056 crores.

Salient Features
- Dhola-Sadia Bridge is a three lane bridge stretching 9.15 kilometre built over river Lohit, which is a tributary of the Brahmaputra river.
- The bridge will connect Sadia, which is 540 Km from Guwahati and Dhola, situated 300 Km from Itanagar.
- The bridge has been designed to withstand the weight of 60-tonne battle tanks.
- This will be the only bridge in the region that will be strong enough to withstand the travel of tanks to Tinsukia, a place from where Indian troops usually enter Arunachal.

Significance
- Road connectivity between Dhola to Sadia will boost overall economic development of the areas north of Brahmaputra in upper Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.
- The bridge will cater to the strategic requirements in border areas and will facilitate troop mobilization much more quickly in Arunachal Pradesh, the state which is claimed in its entirety by China.

'No school bag' on Saturdays in Uttar Pradesh schools
• Students of Class 1-12 studying in schools recognised by Uttar Pradesh government will not have to bring their school bags on Saturdays.
• In an effort to promote extra-curricular activities among students, the Yogi Adityanath government has decided to make Saturday a 'Funday' by involving children in creative activities.

Aadhaar not mandatory for PAN, ITR in J&K, Assam, Meghalaya

• The Finance Ministry notification gives the exemption to “an individual who does not possess the Aadhaar number or the enrolment ID” who is residing in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir and Meghalaya.

Kerala tops, Bihar last in public affairs index

• Kerala and Tamil Nadu have secured first and second rankings for the second year in a row in 2017 public affairs index (PAI) in governance in States. Bihar – last place.

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad to go 100 per cent LED-lit

• The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad has become South India’s first airport to go 100% LED-lit.

Naidu announces 24x7 DD channel for Jharkhand

• Venkaiah Naidu a Union Information and Broadcasting Minister has announced around-the-clock Doordarshan channel for Jharkhand.

Bengaluru Airport to Go green

• The Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) inaugurated solar farms at the Kempegowda International Airport premises.

Others

• Nagpur to get India’s first electric radio cabs (first city with electric mass mobility system)
• The Madhya Pradesh government has announced a total ban on sand mining in Narmada River.
• Plastic Park to be set up in Panipat and Pharma Park in Karnal
• Bengaluru Tops List of World’s Most Affordable Tech Cities
• Punjab govt makes Aadhaar cards mandatory for all financial assistance schemes
• AP government’s efforts bear fruit as Banganpalle mangoes secure Geographical Indication tag
• Telangana first state to have logo for vehicles driven by persons with hearing impairment

• 19th Session of India-Italy Joint Commission for Economic Cooperation held in Rome.
• IIT Kharagpur collaborates with British Geological Survey to turn Varanasi into smart city
• Venkaiah Naidu, Tamil Nadu CM inaugurated 7.4 km long stretch of Chennai Metro Train service
• Madhya Pradesh bans Sand Excavation in Narmada River.
• Mumbai crowned world’s busiest single-runway airport with 1 flight in 65 seconds.
• Railway station survey – Andhra’s Visakhapatnam cleanest, Bihar’s Darbhanga dirtiest
• West Bengal makes Bengali Mandatory in all Schools
• Iowa varsity to set up Mega Seed Park in Andhra Pradesh.
• In Maharashtra, 'Good Morning' Squads To Monitor And Prevent Open Defecation
• UP government to celebrate UP Diwas on January 24

WORLD

Cannes (France) Film Festival 2017: Winners
• Caméra d’Or (best first feature): Jeune Femme
• Best short film: A Gentle Night
• Jury prize: Loveless
• Best actress: Diane Kruger
• Best actor: Joaquin Phoenix
• Best director: Sofia Coppola

WHO declares Ebola outbreak in Congo
• World Health Organization (WHO) has declared an Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

First women’s TV channel launched in Afghanistan
• The first-ever women television channel “Zan TV (or Women’s TV)” has started in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Dubai becomes First City in World to gets its Own Microsoft Font

International Permaculture conference to be held in Hyderabad
• The 13th International Permaculture Convergence (IPC) experts will be held on November 27 to December 2, 2017 in Hyderabad.
• The primary objective of IPC 2017 is to provide Indian farmers an opportunity to get inspired and learn how their current challenges can be solved using permaculture principles.

Turkey, Russia and Iran sing ‘safe Zones’ deal for Syria

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Turkey, Russia and Iran has signed ‘safe zones’ deal for Syria to encourage an agreement between the Syrian government and the rebel forces.

China to organise OBOR summit on 14 May

- China is organising a grand two-day summit from May 14 to showcase its plans to build a network of trade routes—One Belt, One Road (OBOR)—that will connect Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.
- Nearly 65 countries are taking part in the summit though only 20 heads of state will attend.
- China plans to issue a joint statement at the end of the two-day summit to showcase a wide approval of its ambitious project.
- India and Japan have shown reluctance to attend the summit. While Japan will send a delegation, India has refused to send any representative.

OBOR

- OBOR is an ambitious China’s ambitious development strategy and framework that aims to boost its connectivity and trade that will that will connect Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.
- It was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.
- It comprises two components viz. the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road.
- OBOR initiative is part of China’s revived 21st century Silk Road diplomacy that seeks to push it to take a bigger role in global affairs as a major global power.
- It is basically investment and trade promotion scheme aiming to deepen economic connections between China and rest of the world.

India and Palestine Inks 5 Agreements

- During the 4 day visit of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to India. These 5 MoUs signed were on visa exemption for diplomatic passport holder, agriculture cooperation, cooperation in field of IT & Electronics, health sector and cooperation in the field of youth affairs and sports.

Rajnath Singh inaugurates 2nd NPDRR meeting in Delhi

- Rajnath Singh (Home Minister) inaugurated the second meeting of National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (NPDRR) in New Delhi on 15 May 2017.

Nepalese woman breaks world record for most Everest summits

- A44-year-old Nepalese mountaineer Lhakpa Sherpa has broken her own world record for the most Everest summits by a woman after scaling the world’s tallest peak for the eighth time.
G20 Labour & Employment Ministers’ meet held in Germany

- G20 Labour and Employment Ministers’ Meet was held in Bad Neuenahr, Germany from 18-19 May 2017.

2017 Arctic Energy Summit (AES) held in Finland

- The 2017 Arctic Energy Summit (AES) will be held in Helsinki, Finland from September 18-20 2017.

52nd Annual General Meeting of African Development Bank (AfDB)

Held at Gandhinagar in Gujarat from May 22-26, 2017. This is for the first time that this meeting is being held in India. India is a non-African member country for this bank.

Henderson Island: World Heritage-listed site most polluted place on planet

- Henderson Island is a remote place in the South Pacific that has been found to be the most polluted place on the planet.

2017 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit held in Belgium

- The 28th edition of NATO summit has started in Brussels, Belgium.
- The 2018 NATO summit will be held in Istanbul, Turkey.

G7 Summit begins in Italy

- The two-day G7 Summit, that will focus on issues surrounding security and growth, began on 26 May in Italy.
- G7 countries viz. US, UK, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Canada.
- The theme of the Italian G7 presidency in 2017 is “Building the foundations of renewed trust.

Scotland yard gats its first bi gender officer

An UK police officer has been issued both male and female identifications, marking her Scotland yard’s first bi-gender recruit. The officer has been named only as Callum, or Abi if using a female identity. It is different from transgender, when a person transition from male to female or vice versa, and involves surgery. The move was announced as part of a project titled ‘Bring your Whole self to Work’. “Abi is a part of me that exists and I want that part to be recognized and validated.

70th edition of World Health Assembly (WHA70) held in Geneva
• 70th World Health Assembly (WHA70) was held from 22 to 31 May 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland.

World Health Assembly elects new WHO Director-General
• Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus as the new Director-General of WHO.

OTHERS:
• Taiwan court backs (made legal) - same-sex marriage
• Japan world leader in life expectancy: WHO

• Nauru (world’s smallest republic) ratifies International Solar Alliance Framework Pact.
• Exhibition of Global Mobile Internet Conference held in Beijing.

• India-Pacific islands conference held in Suva, Fiji.
• 15th edition of WFH International Musculoskeletal Congress (IMC) held in Seoul

DEFENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Indian Army successfully test-fir advanced Block-III version of Brahmos cruise missile

About Brahmos:
• Brahmos missile is developed by a joint-venture between India’s Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia’s Mashinostroyenia.
• BrahMos is a Blended name coned from Brahmaputra River of India and Moskva River of Russia.

THAAD missile defense system now operational in South Korea
• Terminal high Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system is now operation in South Korea.

Jordan, US launch major military exercises “Eager Lion”
• The 7,400 troops from 20 nations are taking part in Eager Lion military drills. It is the largest and most complex until now.

CRPF Command Shifted from Kolkata to Chhattisgarh
• The strategic anti-Naxal operations command headquarters of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has been shifted back from Kolkata to Raipur.

Philippines, US begin smaller-scale joint military exercises
• It major focus will be on disaster response, humanitarian assistance and counter terrorism.
• Named “Balikatan” or “Shoulder-to-Shoulder” 12 day military exercises.

Indian Navy Decommission Minesweepers-INS karwar and INS Kakinada
• Decommissioned at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai in Presence of Indian Navy Chief Sunil Lanba.

Rajnath proposes ‘Samadhan’ for Naxal violence

• Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh addressed at the meeting of the chief ministers of Left-wing-extremism (LWE)-affected states.
• The Home Minister coined an acronym to counter Naxal violence — “SAMADHAN” — with “S” for Smart leadership; “A” for Aggressive Strategy; “M” for motivation and training; “A” for actionable intelligence; “D” for dashboard-based KPIs (key performance indicators) and KRAs (key result areas); “H” for harnessing technology; “A” for Action plan for each theatre and “N” for no access to financing.

Norway to build first self-sailing ship

• Norway plans to launch the first autonomous and fully electric cargo ship next year.

Justice Mudgal in line to head FIFA governance panel

• Justice Mulul Mudgal is set to head Fifa’s governance committee after his name was proposed on Wednesday by the Fifa council during the congress currently on in Bahrain.

CASO’ to be Reintroduced as Part of Counter Terrorism Operations

• Indian Army has planned to re-introduce cordon and search operations (CASO) as a part of its counter terrorism operations after a gap of 15 years.
• The major objective behind the reintroduction of combing operations is to bring the situation in the Kashmir Valley under control.

BSF to use Invisible Laser Wall Kavach to Secure Border

• BSF is presently pilot testing the Kavach walls along the Samba sector border in Jammu and Kashmir.

Simbex-17 Commences Between Indian & Republic Of Singapore Navy

• SIMBEX is an acronym for “Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercises”.
• This year’s edition of SIMBEX-17 being held in the South China Sea.

Joint HADR Exercise commences at Naval Station Karwar

• Joint HADR Exercise commences at Naval Station Karwar. The Annual Joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise began on 18 May 2017.
• It is named as ‘Karavali Karunya’, at Karnataka.
INS Ganga placed in non-operational category

- Indian Navy frigate INS Ganga is placed in non-operational category from 28th May 2017, followed by decommissioning, after 32 years of service.

OTHERS:

- Centre declares entire Assam as Disturbed area under AFSPA for three more months

- India test-fires ‘Spyder’ surface-to-air missile from Odisha test range

- Cabinet approves Faculty Exchange between National Defence College, New Delhi and National Defence College, Dhaka

- ‘Second-tallest’ flag post comes up in Kolhapur, Maharashtra

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Science Express Climate Action Special (SECAS II)

Science Express

- The Science Express is 16 coach AC mobile train science exhibition of Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- The objective of the Express is to arouse interest of the young people in the field of science and technology.
- Since its inception, the programme is being managed by Vikram A Sarabhai Community Science Centre (VASCSC).
- The Science Express was launched from Delhi Safdarjung Railway station on October 30, 2007. The Express has so far completed 8 phases by travelling.
- Thus, it is has become the largest, longest running and the most visited mobile science exhibition with six entries in the Limca Book of Records. Since its inception, over 1.61 crore people had visited Science Express.

India’s first uterine transplant performed. Pune doctors retrieve woman’s uterus and fit it into daughter’s body to enable to conceive

- A team of 12 doctors at the city’s Galaxy care Laparoscopy Institute (GCLI) successfully completed the highly complex procedure of India’s first uterine transplant on a woman from solapur district.

IIEST creates India's first smart grid project

- The Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IIEST) has successfully created the country's first smart grid project, which will generate power from renewable sources of energy.
• The smart grid will be synchronised to generate power from solar, wind and vegetable waste resources, depending on the weather conditions and availability of waste products.
• It is the first of its kind in the country.

Indian Teen Team from Tamil Nadu develops the world’s smallest satellite for NASA

• A 18-year-old boy from Tamil Nadu has created the world’s smallest satellite named ‘KalamSat’.

**Key Points:**
• It is developed by Riftah Sharoook and his team. KalamSat weighs only 64 grams and is named after former President APJ Abdul Kalam. The main role of the satellite will be to demonstrate the performance of 3-Dprinted carbon fibre. The project was funded by an organisation called ‘Space Kidz India’.

ISRO and NASA collaborate to build Earth – imaging satellite NISAR

• NASA and ISRO will collaborate to build Earth – imaging satellite NISAR.

**Key Notes:**
• It has launched the world’s biggest and most expensive earth imaging satellite.
• It total cost $1.5 billion.
• The satellite has been named NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR).
• It will this is two frequency RADAR, it is an L-band 24 centimetre RADAR and Sband 13 centimetre.
• The satellite will take weekly snapshots of earth, using the two radars.
• It will provide time lapse images of the motion of tectonic plates, ice sheets and changes in vegetation over land in agriculture and forests.

BSNL launches satellite phone service

• State-owned BSNL has started satellite phone service through INMARSAT which will be initially offered to government agencies and later opened for others citizen in phased manner.
• The service will cover areas where no networks are present and will be provided by INMARSAT which has 14 satellites.

NASA’s Juno Spacecraft Discovers Earth-Sized Storms on Jupiter

• NASA’s Juno spacecraft has discovered the Earth-sized cyclones at the poles of the Jupiter.

Scientists at IIT Kharagpur Develop New Technology to Manufacture Biofuel

• new technology known as ‘soil-to-soil’ manufacturing technology.

Super-Earth’ found 21 light years away may host alien life
‘Super-Earth’ found 21 light years away may host alien life Scientists at Astrophysics Institute in the Canary Islands have found a planet which may be habitable and can host liquid water.

Proxima B likely to have Water and Support Alien Life

- An Earth-Like Planet called Proxima B orbiting the closest neighbouring Star, Proxima Centauri.

Railways to acquire EoTT system to run trains without guards

- The Indian Railways will float global tenders worth over Rs 100 crore for acquiring sophisticated equipment to run 1,000 trains without guards.
- The End of Train Telemetry (EoTT) equipment is used to establish communication between the locomotive driver and the last wagon of the train to ensure that the train is running with all coaches/wagons as a complete unit.
- The equipment is designed to do the guard’s job by giving indication to the loco driver in case of parting of coaches or wagons from the rear side of the train.
- Each set of EoTT device is estimated to cost approximately Rs10 lakh.

Google introduces ‘Solve for India Campaign’

- Google has announced the new “Solve for India “initiative for tier-2 cities.
- It aims to learn about the latest Google technologies and get access to direct mentoring and support from Google.

Railways to use radio-frequency tags to track wagons, coaches

- The Indian Railways is set to make use of the Radio-Frequency Identification tags (RFID) for tracking of wagons, coaches and locomotives.

Space X launches Intelligence Mission Falcon 9

- US based rocket manufacturing company SpaceX successfully launched and landed a rocket carrying NROL-76 for US intelligence from the kennedy Space Centre in Florida on May 1, 2017.
- It is the Space X’s first recycled rocket flew last month

China Simulates Lunar-like Environment

- China has set up a 160-square-meter (1,720-square-foot) laboratory — dubbed as “Yuegong-1”, or “Lunar Palace” for simulating a lunar-like environment. Four Postgraduate students from the Beijing’s aeronautics research university will live in the laboratory for up to 200 days in a bid to prepare for China’s long term goal of putting humans on the moon.
NASA detects Signs of Water in a distant Neptune Sized Planet

- Scientists have detected “a strong water signature” in the atmosphere of a distant Neptune-sized planet called HAT-P-26b.

‘WannaCry’ ransomware cyber attack causing havoc worldwide

- On May 12, 2017, a massive ransomware cyber attack dubbed ‘WannaCry’ hit hospitals, major companies and government offices in 99 countries.
- About ‘WannaCry’: ‘WannaCry’ is a ransomware which locks down all the files on infected computer and asks the computer’s administrator to pay ransom in order to regain control of them. Affected machines have six hours to pay ransom and every few hours the ransom goes up.

**PERSONS & PLACES IN NEWS**

Govt appoints MDs, CEOs of seven public sector banks

The new appointments are:

- R Subramaniakumar : Indian Overseas Bank (IOB).
- Rajkiran Rai G : Union Bank of India.
- Usha Ananthasubramanian : Allahabad Bank.
- Dinabandhu Mohapatra : Bank of India.
- R A Sankara Narayanan : Vijaya Bank.

Najma Heptulla appointed as Jamia chancellor

- Jamia Millia Islamia, first woman to hold the top post in the varsity’s history.

First ever transgender appointed as lecturer in Quaid-i-Azam University

- A lecturer from transgender community Aisha Mughal has been appointed as lecturer in Quaid-i-Azam University in Islamabad.

Anshu Jamsenpa: First Indian Women to scale Mount Everest Four Times and also twice within 5 days

- Anshu Jamsenpa, a native of Bomdila in Arunachal Pradesh has scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to scale Mount Everest for the fourth time.
- Edmund Hillary of New Zealand and Tenzing Norgay of Nepal were the first climbers to conquer Mount Everest.
In tribute to Kalam, NASA names new species after him

- Scientists at NASA have named a new organism discovered by them after former president and scientist APJ Abdul Kalam.
- Till date, the new organism—a form of a bacteria—has been found only on the International Space Station (ISS) and has not been found on earth.
- Researchers at the NASA for work on inter-planetary travel, discovered the new bacteria on the filters of the International Space Station (ISS) and named it *Solibacillus kalamii* to honour the late president.

Tezpur University Faculty Selected for INSA Young Scientist Medal

- Sanjay Prather has been chosen for the prestigious Indian National Science Academy (INSA) medal for the Young Scientist Award for year 2017.

Pawan Kumar Chamling conferred with first BS Shekhawat award by President

- Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling was conferred with the first Bhairon Singh Shekhawat Life time Achievement Honour in Public Service By President Pranab Mukherjee.

Adiyogi bust’ declared world’s largest by Guinness Book of World Records

- The 112 feet tall ‘Adiyogi’ Lord Shiva steel statue has been declared the World’s largest bust by the Guinness Book of World Records.
- It is situated in Coimatore at the Isha Yoga Centre.

Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports to Initiate “Adopt A Slum” Campaign in Delhi

- A new campaign to mark completion of three years of the Government.
- Minister said that the idea is to initiate developmental work in these slums and help the slum-dwellers in resolving various issues.
- A slum Yuva Daud/Marathon will mark the beginning of this campaign on May 26.

OTHERS:

- *PM Narendra modi releases stamp on Ramanujacharya’s 1000th birth anniversary of saint Ramanjacharya on May 1, 2017 in New Delhi.*

- *Leila Seth, first woman judge of Delhi High Court, dies*
• Renowned Pakistani sitarist Ustad Raees Khan passes away

• India to Organise Cultural Festival in Egypt to mark Tagore’s 156th Birth Anniversary

    Jhulan Goswami named Highest Wicket-Taker in Women’s One-Day Internationals

• Mukesh Ambani tops Forbes list of Global Game Changers

• Immanuel Macron to be France’s youngest President

• Sir Roger Moore (UK), James Bond actor, dies aged 89

• Dhola-Sadiya bridge named after iconic singer Bhupen Hazarika

SPORTS AND GAMES

Oorja - Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)’s Talent-hunt inaugurated in Jharkhand

Aizawl FC win I-League title

• They have won the I-League title in their second season, becoming the first club from the Northeast to bag the title.

Joshna Chinappa wins historic Asian squash title

• Joshna Chinappa scripted history by becoming the first Indian to clinch the Asian Squash title with a thrilling win over compatriot Dipika Pallikal Karthik in the women’s final in Chennai.

Mark Selby retains Snooker World Title

• England’s Mark Selby produced a magnificent comeback to beat John Higgins 18-15 in the final of the World snooker championship and win the global crown for the third time.

Sports to be included in the national youth awards

• The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Vijay Goel, announced a wide spectrum of fields including sports that would fetch the national youth awards.

Olive Ridley to be mascot of Asian Athletics

• Odisha capital Bhubaneswar is gearing up for hosting the 22nd Asian Athletics Championship at the Kalinga Stadium scheduled in July, the endangered Olive Ridley turtle will enhance the attraction of the mega event.

NBA opens its first academy in India
• The National Basketball Association (NBA) has opened its first academy in India, confident that it will help the sport grow in the country at Greater Noida.

India Claim 2 Medals at World Para Athletics Grand Prix

• Ramudri Someshwara Rao, became the fastest Indian blade runner in the recently-concluded 17th National Para Athletics Championships at Jaipur, won a gold medal in the 200m race at World Para Athletics Grand Prix, Beijing.
• Shot putter Hokato Sema who also won gold at 17th National Para Athletics Championships at Jaipur, won bronze at World Para Athletics Grand Prix, Beijing.

Amul to sponsor New Zealand cricket team for Champions trophy

• In the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy that starts on June 1 in England.
• The Blackcaps would sport a new jersey with the Amul logo on its chest during the tournament.

VVS Laxman named an Honorary Life Member of MCC

• Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) on 11 May 2017.
• Laxman is the fifth Indian to receive the honor, after Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Sourav Ganguly and Zaheer Khan.

Hamilton wins Spanish Grand Prix

• Lewis Hamilton won the Spanish Grand Prix from pole position to cut Sebastian Vettel's overall lead in the Formula One championship to six points with a quarter of the season completed.
• Ferrari’s Sebastian Vettel finished second.

Arjun Maini becomes First Indian to Win a GP3 Race

• The 19-year-old Motorsports’ Indian driver Arjun Maini, who drives for Jenzer Motorsport, has become the first Indian to win a GP3 Series (a feeder series to GP2) race at the Circuit de Catalunya in Barcelona.

Harikrishna posts first win in Moscow FIDE Grand Prix

• Indian Grandmaster Pentala Harikrishna registered his first win at the Moscow FIDE Grand Prix.

Laxman wins All India Open Rapid FIDE Rating chess meet

• R.R. Laxman of Integral Coach Factory won the All India Open Rapid World Chess Federation (FIDE) Rating Chess Tournament.

13-year-old Indian girl wins Asia yoga championship
• Thirteen-year-old Vaishnavi of India beat hundreds of competitors to win the first Asia Level Yoga Competition.

IPL10: Mumbai Indians lift trophy beat Rising Pune Super giant

Asian Wrestling Championship:
• Bajrang Punia wins India's first gold
• Vinesh, Sakshi, Divya win silver medals at Asian Wrestling Championships.
• Harpreet Singh wins bronze medal at Asian Wrestling Championship.

Italian Open 2017 –Overview
• 74th edition of the Italian Open tennis took place at Rome’s Foro Italico form 10-21 May, 2017.

Italian Open 2017- Winners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Runners-up</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Singles</td>
<td>Alexander Zverev</td>
<td>Novak Djokovic</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Germany)</td>
<td>(Serbia)</td>
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<td>Women’s Singles</td>
<td>Elina Svitolina</td>
<td>Simona Halep</td>
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<td>(Ukraine)</td>
<td>(Romania)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Doubles</td>
<td>Pierre-Hugues Herbert</td>
<td>Ivan Dodig</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(France)</td>
<td>Marcel Granollers</td>
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<td>Nicolas Mahut</td>
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<td>Women’ Doubles</td>
<td>Marina Hingis</td>
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<td>(Switzerland)</td>
<td>E Vesnina</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ychan (Taiwan)</td>
<td>(Russia)</td>
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Bhavani bags sabre gold
• C.A Bhavani Devi won the sabre gold in the Tournoi satellite International fencing tournament in Reykjavik, Iceland, on Saturday. Bhavani defeated Sarah Jane-Hampson of Great Britain 15-13 in the final.

OTHERS:
• Leander Paes wins Tallahassee Challenger Men’s Doubles title
• Rafael Nadal beats Dominic Thiem to win Madrid Open
• Harsh Malhotra Committee on Scouts and Guides Submits Report to the Sports Ministry
• Ashwin is the CEAT International Cricketer of the year
• Sweden beat Canada to win ice hockey world title

• Lionel Messi wins fourth Golden Shoe, ties record with Cristiano Ronaldo

• Harmanpreet Kaur becomes the first Indian women cricketer to play in England’s T20 league

• *Indian boxer Shiva Thapa wins silver at Asian Boxing Championships*

• N’Golokante named Football Writers’ Association Footballer of the year

**BOOKS AND AUTHORS**

*Aamir launches Asha Parekh’s autobiography ‘The Hit Girl’*

*Hero - A biography of Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar: By Devendra Prabhudesai*

*Book titled “Metaphysics, Morals and Politics” - Author Prof Amal Kumar Mukhopadhyay.*

"Winning like Virat: Think & Succeed like Kohli" - by Abhirup Bhattacharya

*Union Home Minister releases the book ‘India 2017 Yearbook’*

‘Mapping with respect to Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups in Tripura’ – by Lincoln Reang, is being published by the Tribal Research and Cultural Institute.

‘Marching with a Billion- Analysing Narendra Modi’s Government at Midterm’ - Uday Mahurkar.

*NBT to host book fairs in panchayats*

• The National Trust (NBT) has launched Panchyat Pustak Mela. Its aim is to organize regular book fairs in rural areas across the country.

*Book titled “India’s Indira: A Centennial Tribute” launched*

• President Pranab Mukherjee has also written a chapter in the book, Senior leader Anand Sharma has edited the book.
PM releases 2 part book series on M.S. Swaminathan

- The series is titled - M.S. Swaminathan: The Quest for a world without hunger. Praising the dedication and commitment of Prof. Swaminathan, the Prime Minister described him as a “Kisan Vaigyanik” – Farmers’ Scientist; rather than just a “Krishi Vaigyanik” – Agricultural Scientist.

Mann ki Baat, now a book

- Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has written the preface for Mann Ki Baat - A Social Revolution on Radio – written by Rajesh Jain.

Kiren Rijiju unveils world's first philosophical novel on God

- Book titled "Confessions of a dying mind: the blind faith of atheism" by an young Indian IAS officer, Haulianlal Guite from Manipur.

Thirukkural’s Korean version

- Chief minister Edappdi K Palaniswami on Tuesday released the Korean translation of the Tamil classic Thirukkural at a function held at the secretariat.

AWARDS

Sudarsan Pattnaik wins gold medal at 10th Moscow sand art championship

- Recently, Pattnaik had created world's tallest sand castle at Puri beach.

Ashwani Kumar (former union minister for Law and Justice) to be conferred with Japan's top honour - Spring Imperial Decorations, for his contribution to strengthening of the bilateral ties and promotion of friendship between Tokyo and New Delhi.

Sanjay Pratihar bags INSA Medal for Young Scientist

- Ascientist at Assam’s Tezpur University, has been selected for the prestigious Indian National Science Academy (INSA) medal for the Young Scientist Award, 2017, for his contribution to “multi-metal complexes, theoretical understanding, selective sensing of Hq2+ions and important applications in agriculture”.

Padma Venkataraman Bestowed With Avvaiyar Award - 2017

- About “Avvaiyar Award’: Instituted by late Chief Minister J Jayalalitha in 2012 to honour women actively working in the areas of social reform, women’s development, culture, media, inter-faith.

Keralite sets new record in Kunckle push-ups

- Chakknanth pradeep from pookkottumpadom, near Nilambur in Kerala, set the world record for ‘knuckle push-ups’ by scoring 99 in a minute.

Kashmir based Saqib Majeed has bagged 2016 Wisden-MCC Cricket ‘Photograph of the Year’ Award
• Kashmir based freelance photographer has bagged prestigious 2016 Wisden-MCC (Melbourne Cricket Council) Cricket ‘Photograph of the Year’ for capturing a stunning image of boys playing cricket at the Nishat garden in the outskirts of Srinagar. With this Saqib Majeed has become the first Kashmiri and second Asian after Atul Kamble to receive the prestigious award.

Loin’ actor Sunny pawar named Rising star at Asian Awards

• London child actor Sunny Pawar has been chosen for the Rising Star Award.

Emma Watson bags lst genderless award

• MTV’s move to remove gender qualifiers for its Movie and TV Awards.

Presidential awards for classical Tamil presented

• Awards for Classical Tamil were instituted by Central Institute of Classical Tamil functioning under the aegis of Ministry of Human Resource Development.
• These awards are present to distinguished scholars who have made outstanding contribution to classical Tamil language and literature.

Konkona bags Best Director and Best Actress awards at New York Indian Film Festival

• Konkona Sensharma has begged the best director for her debut film ‘A Death in the Gunj’.
• Konkona had also bagged the best actress for ‘Lipstick Under My Burkha’ at 2017’s New York Indian Film Festival (NYIFF).

ISKON’s Govardhan Eco Village wins Smart Village Award

• for being a sustainable project in rural Maharashtra.

Indian-American student wins National Geographic Bee contest

• A 14-year-old Indian-American student, Pranay Varada has won the prestigious National Geographic Bee competition.
Assam’s Purnima Barman & Karnataka’s Sanjay Gubbi Win The Prestigious ‘Green Oscars’ Award

- Two wildlife conservationists from India, Sanjay Gubbi of Karnataka and Purnima Barman of Assam are among the six winners of this year’s prestigious Whitley Awards, which are popularly referred to as ‘Green Oscars’

Indian scientist Shrinivas Kulkarni wins Dan David Prize

- Indian scientist Shrinivas Kulkarni has won the prestigious Dan David prize for his contribution in the field of astronomy.

David Letterman Wins Mark Twain Prize

- For American Humor, the award granted annually by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Prestigious Whitley Award for Sanjay Gubbi and Purnima Barman

- Sanjay Gubbi of Karnataka and Purnima Barman of Assam have won the prestigious Whitley Award, popularly known as Green Oscars, for their efforts in wildlife conservation.

Indian Prashant Ranganathan wins top intel science award in US

- An Indian boy Prashant Ranganathan has won the top Intel Science Award in US. It is the world’s largest pre-college science competition in the US.

Deveshwar, Soumitra Chatterjee conferred Bengal’s highest civilian award

- Thespian Soumitra Chatterjee and India’s longest serving boss Y.C. Deveshwar have been conferred with the Banga Samman.
- It is the West Bengal’s highest civilian award, by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Jacqueline Fernandez wins UK humanitarian award

- Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez received the International Humanitarian Award.

Young Indian cartoonist wins top conservation award

- Rohan Chakravarty, a wildlife and environment cartoonist from India, has won this year’s International President’s Award for his efforts to change attitudes towards nature.

Pranab Mukharjee presented the Dr. Ambedkar National Awards

- Dr. Ambedkar National Awards has been given for outstanding contribution to the promotion of social understanding and for the upliftment of weaker sections of the society.
• 2017 winners: S K Thorat (well-known scholar), Samta Sainik Dala (non-political organization founded by Dr. Ambedkar), Amar Sewa Sangam (an institution working in the field of empowering differently abled persons) and Shri Babulal Nirmal (a social activist from Rajasthan).

Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar for Satyabrata Rout

• It is an award given by the Sangeet Natak Akademi. The award is the highest Indian recognition given to practicing artists. The awards are being presented in the categories of music, dance, theatre, other traditional arts and puppetry.

OTHERS:

• ICICI Bank Chief Chanda Kochhar receives ‘Woodrow Wilson Aaard’ for global corporate citizenship

• Shabana Azmi awarded in Houston Film Festival for the Hollywood film “The Black Prince”.

• Two Indian peacekeepers Brijesh Thapa and Private Ravi Kumar to be honored posthumously with UN medal

• Reliance Jio gets ‘Digital Service Innovator of the Year Award’ by acquiring 90 million customers in four months.

• Cochin Port Trust bags Best Performance Awards from Ministry of Shipping.

• Taj Mahal only Indian monument to figure in top 10 global landmarks.

• Paradip Port gets Shipping Ministry award.

• V.O. Chidambarnar Port (Tuticorin) clinches award for special Achievement in Maximum capacity Addition

• Pune police bagged smart policing award 2017.

• Author Jhumpa Lahiri wins 2017 PEN/Malamud award - for Excellence in the Short Story.

OTHERS

• Chairman of the Tea Board of India - Prabhat Kamal bezboruah
• Chairman of the Coffee Board of India - M S Boje Gowda
• Amitabh Bachchan appointed as Goodwill Ambassador for Hepatitis in South-East Asia Region
• Justice Mukul Mudgal elected head of FIFA Governance Committee
• Anurag Tripathy Appointed as Secretary of CBSE.

• Tapan Ray to be the next Economic Affairs Secretary

• Chairman of National Commission of Minorities - Syed Ghayorul Hasan Rizvi.

• Nepal’s first woman chief justice – Sushila Karki
  • UN humanitarian chief – Mark Lowcock
  • South Korean elected President – Moon Jae-in (Democratic Party)
  • France Prime Minister – Edouard Philippe.
  • Hassan Rouhani wins second term as Iran president.
  • Pakistan’s new envoy to India - Sohail Mahmood
  • India’s ambassador to Netherlands - Venu Rajamony
  • India’s ambassador to France - Vinay Mohan Kwatra
  • India’s ambassador to Philippines - Jaideep Mazumdar
  • India’s ambassador to Finland - Vani Sarraju

Real Estate Act comes into effect
Salient Provisions
• Buyers and developers of real estate property can seek relief by approaching Real Estate Regulatory Authorities against violation of the contractual obligations and other provisions of the Act.
• The act provides for the mandatory registration of projects and real estate agents.
• The act mandates depositing 70% of the funds collected from buyers in a separate bank account for construction of the project. The funds could be withdrawn only for construction purposes.
• The act prescribes penalty on developers if the project is delayed. The project developers are required to disclose the project details on the website of the regulator and need to provide quarterly updates on construction progress.
• Under the act, the Regulatory authorities are required to dispose of complaints in 60 days and Appellate Tribunals will be required to adjudicate cases in 60 days.

Significance
• The act will ensure transparency and accountability in the real estate sector. It will enhance the consumer confidence and will benefit the whole sector. It will help to attract more investments into the real estate sector and may also open gates for FDI. This act will aid in the effective implementation of projects such as Hosing for All by 2020 and Smart City.
First World Pest Day: June 6

- The first World Pest Day was launched in Beijing, China. It aims at reduction and elimination of pest borne diseases.

World Oceans Day: 8 June

- Theme for the year 2017 is ‘Our Oceans, Our Future’

World Day against Child Labour: 12 June

- 2017 theme - “In conflicts and disasters, protect children from child labour”.

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World Blood Donor Day (WBDD) : 14 June


International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict: 19 June

- 2017 Theme: “Preventing Sexual Violence Crimes through Justice and Deterrence”

World Refugee Day : 20 June

- Dedicated to raising awareness of the situation of refugees throughout the world.

UN Public Service Day: 23 June

- Designated by the United Nations General Assembly's resolution to “celebrate the value and virtue of public service to the community”.

International Olympic Day: 23 June

- A day for the world to get active, learn about Olympic values and discover new sports.

Day of the Seafarer: 25 June

- This year’s theme is "Seafarers Matter".

Government to observe anti-Emergency day on Jun 25-26

- The government has observed anti-Emergency day on June 25 - 26 and asked all its ministers to hold programmes across the country to remind people how Emergency was clamped by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975.

International Day against Drug Abuse & Illicit Trafficking: 28 June

- Aims to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.
- Theme for 2017: "Listen First - Listening to children and youth is the first step to help them grow healthy and safe."

National Statistics Day: 29 June

- In recognition of the notable contributions made by Late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics, statistical system and economic planning.
- The objective of celebration of this Day is to create public awareness about the importance of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation, to acknowledge the contribution of Prof. Mahalanobis and to pay homage to him.
‘Administrative Statistics’ is this year’s theme for the Statistics Day.

INDIA & WELFARE SCHEMES OF INDIA

NITI Aayog launches SATH Program

• SATH—‘Sustainable Action for Transforming Human capital’ with the State Governments for furthering the agenda of cooperative federalism.

Salient features:

• NITI Aayog under the SATH initiative plans to identify and build three future ‘role model’ states for health systems.

• It will help in designing a robust roadmap, develop a program governance structure, establish monitoring and tracking mechanisms, and provide support to the state institutions to achieve the end objectives.

• SATH program will be implemented by NITI Aayog along with McKinsey & Company and IPE Global consortium.

HRD Ministry Constitutes K. Kasturirangan Panel to Frame National Education Policy

• The HRD ministry has constituted a new nine-member panel headed by space scientist K Kasturirangan to frame a new National Education Policy (NEP). The other members of the panel include chosen experts and educationists from wide-ranging backgrounds.

Background

• In 2015, Narendra Modi Government had set up a committee under former Cabinet Secretary TSR Subramanian to chalk out a new education policy. This committee had submitted its report in May 2016. The other important past committees in Education includes Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) on higher education; Mudaliyar Commission (1952) on secondary education and the Kothari Commission (1964-66). The Kothari Commission’s report was used to formulate the Education Policy of 1968.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation adopts 2 Ganga Grams in collaboration with Faith Organisations

• Two villages in the bank of River Ganga, Veerpur Khurd in Dehradun and Mala in Pauri Garhwal have been taken by the Ministry to make them model Ganga villages, in collaboration with GIWA. The ministry in collaboration with State governments, has the mandate to make villages on the bank of River Ganga open Defecation free (ODF).
NALSA has launched Web Application for Legal Services to Prisoners

- NALSA (National Legal Services Authority) has launched a web application for free Legal Services to Prisoners at the conference held at Indian Law Institute, New Delhi.

NSDC signs MoU with BIRD ACADEMY for skilling of unemployed youth

- An MoU was signed between National Skill Development Corporation and Bird Academy on the 1st of June 2017 in New Delhi, with regards to skilling of unemployed youth in the aviation and aerospace Sector.

Dr Jitendra Singh announces “Hill Area Development Programme” for Northeast

- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region, Dr Jitendra Singh announced the launch of, “Hill Area Development Programme” (HADP) for Northeast in Imphal (Manipur).

- Elaborating on the new scheme, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the hilly areas of Manipur, Tripura and Assam have a distinct geo-physical entity and are lagging in socio-economic development.

- As a result of peculiar topography, he said, there is a wide gap between the hill and valley districts in terms of infrastructure, quality of roads, health and education etc.

Government to implement India’s first Rural LED Street Lighting Project in Andhra Pradesh

- This is the first project for rural LED street lighting in the country under the Government of India’s Street Lighting National Project (SLNP).

1st Indian Railways Human Resources Round Table Conference

- Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu inaugurated Indian Railways' 1st HR Round Table Conference in New Delhi.

Thaawarchand Gehlot Inaugurates ‘Eastern Regional Conference’

- Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated the “Eastern Regional Conference of Eastern Region States on issues relating to Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities”.

Election Commission joins hands with Facebook to Launch First Time Nationwide “Voter Registration Reminder”
• To launch nationwide voter registration reminder aimed at reminding eligible Indian voters to register themselves on the electoral rolls. The initiative aims at enrolling left-out voters with a particular focus on first-time electors.

India has 31% of world’s poor kids: report

• According to a new report by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) about 31% of the world’s “multidimensionally poor” children live in India.
• Of the country’s 217 million children nearly 50% endure multi-dimensional poverty, says Oxford survey

IIT-Delhi, IIT-Bombay, IISc among world’s top 200 universities

• With this, India, for the first time, is home to three of the top 200 universities in the world. Topped by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for the sixth consecutive year.

NSE launches international exchange at GIFT city:

National Stock Exchange (NSE) launched its International exchange in the Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT city) on 5th on June, 2017.

NTPC sets up electric vehicle charging stations in Delhi, Noida:

The National Thermal Power Corporation Limited (NTPC) has set up electric vehicles at Delhi and Noida, and will soon expand this to other location across the NCR region.

‘SPARROW-ITS’ launched to fill ‘Annual Performance Appraisal Report’ in online

• The government launched ‘SPARROW-ITS’ (Smart Performance Appraisal Report Recording Online Window) on May 31 2017. The purpose of above service is to enable the Indian Trade Service (ITS) officers to fill their Annual Performance Appraisal Report (APAR) online for the year 2016-17 onwards.

UNCTAD: India among Top FDI Destinations

• According to UNCTAD’s (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) World Investment Report 2017, India continues to remain as a favourite destination for FDI even though tax related concerns remain as a deterrent for the foreign investors.

Indian Railways to introduce "book now, pay later" option

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• Railways have decided to provide the 'buy tickets now and pay later' service for any Express trains. IRCTC has collaborated with a Mumbai-based firm ePayLater for adding the new service option. Through this service, a passenger can book a ticket five days prior to the journey with a service charge of 3.5 per cent and pay it in the next 14 days.

Modi government to replace UGC, AICTE with one higher education regulator

• The Modi government is all set to scrap the UGC and AICTE and replace them with one higher education regulator, tentatively christened Higher Education Empowerment Regulation Agency (HEERA).

Piyush Goyal Launches Energy Conservation Building Code 2017


• ECBC 2017 prescribes the energy performance standards for new commercial buildings to be constructed across India.

• The updated version of ECBC provides current as well as futuristic advancements in building technology to further reduce building energy consumption and promote low-carbon growth.

Govt ropes in Amitabh Bachchan to promote GST

• The Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) will be making the 74-year-old Bachchan brand ambassador for GST. Ace badminton star PV Sindhu was previously the GST ambassador.

Union Government launches VAJRA scheme to attract Indian scientists abroad

• VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research) Faculty scheme would be launched by the Department of Science and Technology.

Salient highlights

• Under this scheme, foreign researchers abroad of Indian origin or otherwise can collaborate with faculties in public funded Indian institutions.
• The researchers would receive endowments at par with those in their own countries.
• The scheme would promote broad areas of research like energy, health, and advance material among others.
• Public funded academic institutions and national laboratories will be eligible for hosting the VAJRA Faculty.
The VAJRA faculty can reside in India for a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 3 months a year.

Government announces 30 new Smart Cities

- Tirunelveli, Thootukkudi and Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu

National Seed Diversity Festival 2017 (NSDF)

Held from June 9 to 11 at College of Engineering in Guindy, where more than 3000 traditional seeds will be on display. The festival will bring together 100 seed savers from across the country to discuss issues endangering indigenous varieties.

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Venkaiah Naidu inaugurates “Saath Hai Viswaas Hai, Ho Raha Vikas Hai” Exhibition

- M. Venkaiah Naidu Minister for Information & Broadcasting has inaugurated the “Saath Hai Viswaas Hai, Ho Raha Vikas Hai” Exhibition in New Delhi., which would showcase the achievements of the Government in the last 3 years in various sectors.

Rajdhani, Shatabdi trains set for revamp under 'Operation Swarn'

- The Railway Ministry is set to launch "Operation Swarn" to improve services in Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express trains.

Priyanka Chopra to endorse Skill India campaign

- Priyanka will use her celebrity status to motivate youngsters to sharpen their abilities through a media campaign.

- Earlier, Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli, batting legend Sachin Tendulkar, Bollywood actors Sidharth Malhotra and Shabana Azmi and singer Mohit Chauhan had also become goodwill envoys for Skill India.

Kalraj Mishra Launches Digital MSME Scheme

- The Digital MSME Scheme is revolving around Cloud Computing which is emerging as a cost effective and viable alternative in comparison to in-house IT infrastructure installed by MSMEs.
• The United Nations has declared 27th June as the UN Day for MSMEs.

**Mumbai Metro collaborates with Google Maps for geographic details**

Mumbai Metro has collaborated with Google Maps for geographic details. It has partnered with Google to display its services in Google Maps application.

**Rajnath to inaugurate conference on disaster management:**

• Rajnath Singh has inaugurated a two day national level conference on “Capacity Building of DFRF – 2017” on 6th of June, 2017 at New Delhi

**Key Notes:**

(i) The conference was organised by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).
(ii) The meeting would hold discussions to develop a synergy and to strengthen the response capabilities of State Disaster Response Forces (SDRF).
(iii) During the conferences, various agenda points like streamlining the training process of SDRF’s and conducting it in a planned and coordinated manner would be discussed.
(iv) Some more points would also be discussed in the meetings like integrations of operational efforts between NDRF and SDRF, requirement and creation of training infrastructure in each State, creation of a pool of instructors, sharing of best practices, improving response time by SDRF’s.

**Shri J.P. Nadda launches “Skill for Life Save a Life”:**

(i) Union Government has launched a Skill for Life, Save a Life initiative on 6th of June.
(ii) Its aim is to promote skill development in the health sector.
(iii) Under this initiative, various courses will be initiated targeting specific competencies for health care professionals as well as for general public.
(iv) Its objective is to upscale the quantity and quality of trained professionals in the health care system.

**Delhi to host India's maiden Mobile Congress from September 27**

• The IMC will be held in September this year for the first time. Then on, it will be an annual event.

• The event to be held from September 27 to 29 will be organized by telecom industry body Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) with support from the Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

• The Ministry of Skill Development will also be part of the endeavor, will be organized at New Delhi.
TRAI launches three apps for tracking call and data quality:

MySpeed App:
(i) It will help users to measure 3G and 4G speeds and will come with automated testing of data speeds free of charge.

Do not disturb 2.0 App:
(i) Trai has also upgraded its “Do not disturb” app with new features like an intelligent spam detection engine and updates about action taken on complaint within the app.
(ii) The app will identify senders and warns them from sending further messages.

World’s first hybrid ‘aero boat’ made by Indo – Russian JV unveiled:
(i) An Indo-Russian joint venture was unveiled in Moscow on 6th of June.
(ii) It is capable of travelling on land, water, snow and sand.

K Kasturirangan heads panel on National Education Policy
• The committee for preparation of final draft of National Education Policy has been constituted under the Chairmanship of eminent Scientist Padma Vibhushan Dr K. Kasturirangan.
• The council will start its work from immediate effect.
• In an exhaustive democratic exercise carried for last 30 months the HRD ministry has received thousands of suggestions from, educationists, teachers, experts, students and other stakeholders from across the country.

Ministry of AYUSH launches awareness drive to increase popularity of Yoga through life-size Mascots
• The Central Council for Research in Yoga & Naturopathy (CCRYN) has initiated this drive. Yoga Awareness Drive through Mascots and Flash Mobs (YogMob).

Ministry of Railways launches Mission Retro-Fitment
• Minister of Railways Suresh Prabhu has launched Mission Retro-Fitment to enhance the passenger experience by upgrading the existing fleet of coaches.

Quality of Life: Government launches Index to Rank 116 Cities
• The urban development minister M. Venkaiah Naidu has launched its first liveability index which will rank the country’s 116 major cities on the basis of the quality of life.

Salient Highlights
• The index named ‘City Liveability Index’ will cover cities with a population above one million, including the capital cities.
• The index will help cities to analyse where they stand in terms of the quality of life.
• It will help them to come up with interventions required to improve it.
• The index will assess cities based on a comprehensive set of 79 parameters such as availability of roads, education, healthcare, mobility, employment opportunities, emergency response, grievance redressal, pollution, availability of open and green spaces, cultural and entertainment opportunities etc.

IMD to release Malaria and Chikungunya Alerts

• The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has announced that it is working on a forecasting system that will give a 15-day warnings on the likelihood of a malaria or chikungunya outbreak across different regions of the country.

AYUSH Minister to inaugurate National Health Editors’ Conference

• The theme of this year’s conference is “Yoga for Health and Harmony”.

• The aim of the conference is to give insight to the journalists about the scientific aspects of yoga & its benefits for human health.

National Human milk bank:

• A national human milk bank and lactation counselling centre known ‘Vatsalya – Maatri Amrit Kosh’ has opened at Lady Hardinge Medical College in New Delhi, on June 6.
• Vatsalya – Maatri Amrit Kosh will collect, pasteurize, test and store milk donated by lactating mothers and available for infants in need.

India has 14.4 million children with obesity

• India has the second highest number of obese children in the world after China, according to a study that found that 14.4 million children in the country have excess weight.

Aadhaar not valid for travel to Nepal, Bhutan, says Home Ministry

• Aadhaar is not a valid identification document for Indians travelling to Nepal and Bhutan, the Union Home Ministry has said.
• Indians can travel to Nepal and Bhutan—countries for which they don't need visas—if they possess a valid national passport or election ID card issued by the Election Commission.
• Moreover, to ease travel, persons over 65 and below 15 years of age can show documents with photographs to confirm their age and identity. These include PAN card, driving license, Central Government Health Service (CGHS) card and ration card but not Aadhaar.

PM Modi inaugurates Centenary Celebrations of Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad
• The Prime Minister has also released the coin and postal stamp in the honour of Shrimad Rajchandraji on his 150th birth anniversary at Abhay Ghat. Shrimad Rajchandraji was the guru to Mahatma Gandhi.

Sabarmati Ashram

• Sabarmati Ashram otherwise called as Gandhi Ashram, Harijan Ashram, or Satyagraha Ashram is located on the banks of the River Sabarmati.
• Sabarmati Ashram served as one of the residences of Mahatma Gandhi for twelve long years.
• The ashram has been declared as a national monument by the Indian government.
• Gandhiji started the Dandi march also called as Salt Satyagraha from Sabarmati Ashram on 12 March 1930.

Shrimad Rajchandraji

• Shrimad Rajchandra is a Jain poet, philosopher, scholar and reformer born in the year 1867 in Vavania near Morbi. His mother was a Jain and father a Vaishnava Hindu. He was the spiritual guide to Mahatma Gandhi. He is known for his teachings on Jainism. He has written a large number of letters and commentaries and also translated some religious texts. He got into fame by performing Avdhan, a memory retention and recollection test which gained him popularity.

EC partners with Facebook for voters registration for the first time

• Aim: To move in the direction of Commission’s motto that ‘NO VOTER TO BE LEFT BEHIND’.

• In order to reach out to maximum eligible voters, the ECI is collaborating with Facebook to launch first Nationwide “Voter Registration Reminder” on 1st July, 2017.

• On 1st July, a notification of the “voter registration reminder” will be sent to people on Facebook in India who are eligible to vote.

• The reminder will be sent out in 13 Indian languages - English, Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Assamese, Marathi and Oriya.

This is the first time Facebook's voter registration reminder has been rolled out across India. In 2016 and 2017, Chief Electoral Officers made such efforts at state level during their respective state elections.

Bank of India conducts ‘Star Mahotsav’
• Bank of India conducted a mass-contact programme, ‘Star Mahotsav’, across its branch network.

• The thrust was in contacting every customer at their doorstep for recovery of bad loans, disbursement of retail loan, including housing and vehicle loan, disbursement under MSME and agriculture, and promotion of its products including debit/credit cards, PoS machines, internet banking, etc.

Centre approves modifications to ‘Kambala’ Bill

• The Bill proposes to exempt ‘Kambala’ from the ambit of the the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Karnataka Amendment) Bill 2017 to pave way for organising ‘kambala’ in the coming season.

• The approval by the President will help in the smooth conduct of ‘kambala’ (the traditional slush track buffalo race) in Dakshina Kannada.

Pranab launches ‘Selfie with Daughter’ app

• President Pranab Mukherjee on Friday launched the ‘Selfie with Daughter’ mobile application.
• Aimed at raising awareness of female foeticide and sex selection.
• The campaign’s aim is to motivate society to feel proud to be parents of a girl child, which in, turn, will result in improving the child sex ratio.

Dr Harsh Vardhan and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurate Swasth Saarthi Abhiyaan

• The Swasth Saarthi Abhiyaan (SSA) is a two month long mega campaign focusing on providing preventive healthcare to the auto, taxi and bus drivers of the region.
• The SSA event is a unique initiative to address the major issues being faced by public transport drivers of the region, with almost all of them being users of CNG.

Survey for world's highest rail track to commence in Leh

• The Railways will kick off the final location survey of the 498 km long Bilaspur-Manali-Leh line at Leh in Jammu and Kashmir.
• Coming up at a high of 3,300 metres, the strategically important rail project is touted to become the highest rail track in the world, overtaking China's Qinghai-Tibet Railway.
• The all-weather Leh rail network is one of the four important railway connectivities identified by the defence ministry along the China border.

Dr. Jitendra Singh launches new training programme ‘COMMIT’
• Comprehensive Online Modified Modules on Induction Training (COMMIT) for State Government officials.
• The objective of this training programme is to improve the public service delivery mechanism and provide citizen centric administration through capacity building of officials who interact with the citizens on day-to-day basis.
• Dr. Jitendra Singh said that the new training programme will supplement the earlier training programme and the advantage of COMMIT is that it is cost effective and has the potential to cover about 3.3 lakh officials annually, compared to 10,000 officials under existing 12-Day Induction Training Programme (ITP).

India's largest container port JNPT hit by ransomware

• The government has confirmed that one of the terminals at the Jawahar Lal Nehru Port has been impacted by the latest malware attack.

POSOCO-IMD Weather Portal & Web Portal ‘MERIT’ launched

• Union Minister of State for Power, Coal, New & Renewable Energy and Mines Piyush Goyal has launched Weather Portal for Power Sector & Web Portal ‘MERIT’ (Merit Order Despatch of Electricity for Rejuvenation of Income and Transparency).

POSOCO-IMD Weather Portal

• The weather portal has been developed in association with POSOCO and IMD. The portal will have information regarding weather forecast to the state Discoms (distribution companies).

MERIT

• MERIT (Merit Order Despatch of Electricity for Rejuvenation of Income and Transparency) has been developed by Ministry of Power in association with POSOCO and Central Electricity Authority. The Web portal provides information regarding the merit order of Electricity procured by States.
• The information includes daily state-wise marginal variable costs of all generators, daily source-wise power purchases of respective states/UTs with, energy volumes and purchase prices. The Portal will help state Discoms in optimising their power procurement more efficiently and will help in lowering the cost of power to consumers.
• The main advantages of the portal: Empowerment of consumers and facilitates participative governance; Disseminates information pertaining to marginal variable cost and source wise purchase of electricity transparently; Promotes economy and efficiency in operations; Optimization of the power procurement costs; Demystifies the utility portfolio and its complexity; Facilitates renewable integration and handling of the variability and uncertainty of renewables; and Indication of supply side reliability, adequacy, and cost of power procurement.
• Power System Operation Corporation Limited (POSOCO), it is a wholly owned subsidy of power grid corporation of India Ltd.
India - Rankings

Social Progress Index 2017: India ranks 93

- India which is ranked at 93rd (out of 128) position performs within the expected range on a relative basis.
- Denmark ranked first, followed by Finland and Iceland.
- India ranks 74 in internet data speed, below Pakistan, Sri Lanka

Global Peace Index 2017: India ranks 137

- India has ranked 137 out of 163 countries on Global Peace Index 2017 published by The Institute of Economics and Peace. This is the eleventh edition of the Global Peace Index (GPI). Topped by Iceland.

IMD’s World Competitiveness list: India ranks 45

- India has been ranked 45th, in terms of competitiveness in the annual rankings compiled by the International Institute for Management Development's (IMD) World Competitiveness Center. Hong Kong topped the list.

Global retail index: India ranks 1

India has overtaken China and has ranked as the top country in the 2017 Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) released by A.T. Kearney.

STATES & WELFARE SCHEMES OF STATES

Kolkata to get India's first underwater Metro

- It will pass through tunnels several feet under the Hooghly. The Kolkata Metro transportation tunnel is unique to India because never before in the history of the country has a tunnel been made under a flowing river.

Metro Rail app to provide real – time information soon

- The Chennai Metro Rail plans to provide real – time information of train services on its mobile app in three months. Neither the Delhi or Bengaluru Metro Rail’s apps have this facility as yet.

Varanasi will get the country's first 'freight village' spread over around 100 acres.

- A 'Freight Village' is a specialized industrial estate which attracts companies that require logistics services and can cluster to improve their competitiveness. Will be developed by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
Bihar’s ‘Project Jal Sanchay’ Chosen for National Award

- ‘Project Jal Sanchay’, a water conservation model (Nalanda model) which is successfully adopted in Nalanda district of south-central Bihar, has been chosen for the national award for excellence in the Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee programme (MGNREGP) by the Ministry of Rural Development.

Bengal’s Kanyashree initiative wins United Nations Public Service Award at The Hague.

- Kanyashree Prakalpa, the scheme launched by Mamata Banerjee in October 2013.
- This initiative was named first in the Asia-Pacific group for the category: ‘Reaching the Poorest and Most Vulnerable through Inclusive Services and Participation’.
- Kanyashree aims to improve status of adolescent girls from disadvantaged families through small cash transfers.

Uttarkhand gets award of excellence at international meet

- Uttarakhand was conferred with the award of excellence at the 2nd Global Skill Development Summit held in Paris recently for innovations and extensive use of IT for skilling the state's youth.

Madhya Pradesh government launches farmers’ debt relief scheme

- Madhya Pradesh government has launched a new debt relief scheme “Krishi Rin Samadhan Yojana” for farmers. The interest rate on loans would be less, which would in turn also help defaulting farmers get loans.

Telangana government to launch its own ‘T-Wallet’

- ‘T-Wallet’, the official digital wallet of Telangana State was launched on June 1, 2017.

Maharashtra govt launches Mahaswayam portal for job seekers

- This service will be provided to job seekers, employers, entrepreneurs, and training institutes who can fetch details regarding skill development and employment.

Inauguration of MiTS Mega Food Park at Rayagada, Odisha.

- Union Minister of Food processing Industries, Harsimart Kaur Badal inaugurated first Mega Food Park in the state of Odisha M/s MITS Mega Food Park Pvt. Ltd. at Rayagada district.
• Mega Food Parks create modern infrastructure facilities for food processing along the value chain from farm to market with strong forward and backward linkages through a cluster based approach.

Country’s First Automatic Coastal Warning for Disasters to come up in Odisha

• From July, Odisha will commission the ambitious Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) to warn the vast population residing along its 480 km-long coast in the event of the occurrence of natural disasters like a tsunami or a cyclone.

Indore India’s first city to use robot to control unruly traffic

• This commercial capital of Madhya Pradesh has reportedly become the first city in India where robot is being used on an experimental basis to control its ever growing and unruly traffic.

Free education for girls in Punjab from Nursery to Ph.D

The Punjab Government has announced free education for girls in government schools and colleges from Nursery to Ph.D.

UP govt to name Mughalsarai railway station after Deendayal Upadhayay

• The Yogi Adityanath cabinet in Uttar Pradesh decided to rename Mughalsarai railway station near Varanasi after RSS ideologue Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.

• Upadhyay had died under mysterious circumstances while travelling in a train at Mughalsarai station on February 11, 1968. Mughalsarai is one of the busiest stations of the Eastern Railway.

Kerala Government implements Green Protocol for making Weddings more Nature Friendly

• Kerala State government has come out with a green protocol to make the weddings in the state more nature-friendly.

• Salient Highlights: As per the protocol, plastic and other non-biodegradable articles including disposable glasses and plates and thermocol decorations will not be permitted to be used in wedding ceremonies. Instead of these non-biodegradable articles, the marriage parties would be persuaded to use tumblers, plates and other utensils made of glass and environment-friendly metals. The protocol has been released as a part of the government’s anti-plastic drive and Green-Kerala Mission.

Maharashtra government to launch ‘My Plant’ mobile app on tree plantation

Odisha to become First State in the Country to Open a Blood Bank for Cattle

Telangana launches single – woman pension scheme, first in India:
On June 4, 2017, Telangana State Government launched single woman pension scheme across the State, thereby becoming the first State in India to launch such scheme.

India’s first public bicycle sharing project launched in Mysuru:

CM Siddaramaiah has launched a public bicycle sharing system in Mysuru. A total of 450 bicycles can be borrowed for a nominal fee from 48 automated docking stations.

You may travel by electric MTC bus soon

- The first electric bus made in the country was test-driven by the manufacturer Ashok Leyland for the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) in Chennai city on Monday. The bus was operated between Chennai Central railway station and the lighthouse.

Madhya Pradesh government launches farmers’ debt relief scheme, allocates Rs1,000 crore

- Madhya Pradesh government has launched a new debt relief scheme “Krishi Rin Samadhan Yojana” for farmers.
- The cabinet has allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the scheme.
- Under this scheme, the interest rate on loans would be less which would in turn also help defaulting farmers get loan.

IOB launches retail mart in Thiruvananthapuram

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), the Lead Bank for Thiruvananthapuram district, has launched the Retail Mart, a retail lending concept, in Kerala’s capital city.

Anuyatra campaign launched in Thiruvananthapuram

- Anuyatra, a campaign of the Kerala government for persons with special needs, was launched by Vice-President Hamid Ansari.
- The innovative initiative is aimed at transforming the state to a disabled-friendly one and empower differently-abled children by bringing them to the forefront of the mainstream society.

First rural LED street lighting project to take off in Andhra Pradesh:

- Central Government will be retrofitting 10 lakh conventional street lights with energy efficient LED lights in Gram Panchayats of 7 districts in Andhra Pradesh. This will be India’s first rural LED Street Lighting Project.

India’s biggest municipal bonds programme launched in Maharashtra
• To finance its 24x7 water supply project, the Pune Municipal Corporation launched India’s biggest municipal bonds programme.

• The project looks to raise Rs 2,264 crore in five years.

• Municipal bonds are debt instruments through which a corporation or municipality raises money from individuals or institutions.

India's first single-wallet contactless, Open Loop Metro Card launched

• Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank in association with Kochi Metro Rail Corporation (KMRL) has launched KMRL Axis Bank 'Kochi1' Card.

• This is India's first open loop EMV contactless metro card that would make travel a convenient and hassle free experience for commuters in Kochi.

• Axis Bank has partnered with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) in developing this transit EMV contactless specification on interoperable open standards.

Air ambulance services from Chennai

• Apollo Hospitals has extended its air ambulance services from Chennai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru to Tier II cities like Madurai, Karaikudi, Karur and Trichy and Mysore. The helicopter is manned by a medical crew trained to handle emergency victims and critically ill patients.

Mangrove forests to be declared bird sanctuary:

• Spadework for the declaration of the Chettuva Mangrove forests in Thrissur district as bird sanctuary has been completed. The green signal for the formal declaration is expected to be given by the State Board for Wildlife on June 21.

Tamil Nadu Govt. signs MoU with Aviation Ministry for implementation of UDAN Scheme:

• Low cost flight services are set to be in towns like Hosur, Salem and Neyveli in Tamil Nadu in the first phase of implementation of the Centre’s UDAN (“Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik”) scheme to promote regional air connectivity.

TN to set up Rs. 2,350 cr solar photovoltaic power park

• The Tamil Nadu government has proposed a series of new initiatives in various sectors, including energy and power, running into many thousands of crores of rupees.

• Among the announcements made in the energy sector, the chief minister said the government will set up an Ultra Mega Solar Photovoltaic Power Park in Ramanathapuram district at an estimated cost of Rs. 2,350 crore.
China is Building The World's 1st Vertical 'Forest City'

- China is building a forest city covered in tree to act like one giant air filter.
- The complex will span about a kilometre along the Liujiang River, with office buildings, apartments, schools, and hotels, all engulfed by around 40,000 trees and more than a million plants.
- The aim is to have the green towers soak up the air pollution in the area and produce clean oxygen, encouraging the growth of other local flora in the process.

Germany legalises Same-Sex Marriage

- Germany has legalised same-sex marriage in line with a host of other European countries.

Denmark revokes 334 year old blasphemy law:

  Denmark has finally repealed its 334 year old blasphemy law despite warnings that such an act could lead to an increase in hate crimes and terror attacks. (Blasphemy - the action or offence of speaking sacrilegiously about God or sacred things).

Qatar Airways voted best airline in the world

- Qatar Airways has been named Best Airline in the World for 2017 by leading consumer aviation website Skytrax.

Second Mission Innovation (MI) Ministerial held in Beijing, China

- The Second MI Ministerial (MI-2) is to be held in Beijing, China from 7-8 June 2017.

China has launched its Biggest Naval Destroyer

- China has launched its most powerful naval destroyer, the Type 055, at the Shanghai port. The naval destroyer is one among the largest warships in the world.

Second Mission Innovation Ministerial to be Held 7-8 June 2017 in Beijing

- On 7–8 June 2017, the second Mission Innovation Ministerial (MI-2) will take place in Beijing, China. MI-2 will bring together energy ministers and other representatives from MI member countries to share knowledge and collaborate on priorities for clean energy innovation.

Sher Bahadur Deuba elected Nepal’s Prime Minister for fourth time:
• Sher Bahadur Deuba elected Nepal. This will be Deuba’s fourth stint as PM of the Himalayan Country.

Google fined record 2.42 billion euros by European Commission

• The European Union has slapped a record 2.42 billion euro fine on Google for breaching the anti-trust rules with its online shopping service.

China launches record-breaking drone swarm

• China has launched a record breaking swarm of 119 fixed-wing unmanned aerial vehicles on 11 of June, 2017.

UN holds first ‘Ocean Conference’

• The United Nations has held its first ever summit on protecting the world's seas and waterways. It was co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden.

Estonia to open the world’s first data embassy in Luxembourg

• The world’s first ever data embassy is set for launch next year after the Estonian government signed a deal with Luxembourg,

• Estonia is planning to keep backup files of its vital information on servers in order to guarantee country's digital continuity.

UNESCO: Paris Agreement Only Way to Save Coral Reefs

• A report by UNESCO has concluded that cutting down emissions and delivering the Paris Climate agreement to be the only ways out to save coral reefs the world over.

World’s First ATM celebrates its 50th Birthday

• The ATM machines were the brainchild of Scottish inventor Shepherd-Barron. The first ATM was opened on June 27, 1967, by Barclays Bank in Enfield, north London.

• To commemorate the 50th anniversary, Barclays Bank has transformed the first ATM that it commissioned at its Enfield branch into gold.

G7 Environment Ministers’ Meeting held in Bologna, Italy

• Italy holds the G7 presidency for 2017.

UNESCO names Sharjah as World Book Capital
• UNESCO has named Sharjah as the World Book Capital for 2019. Sharjah was chosen for its efforts to make books accessible to its entire population. 2003 – New Delhi was the world book capital.

**UN General Assembly elects five non-permanent UNSC members**

• The UN General Assembly has elected Cote D'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kuwait, Poland and Peru as the non-permanent members of the Security Council for a two-year term beginning January 1, 2018.

• The powerful UN Security Council is made up of 10 elected members and five permanent veto-wielding powers– the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia

**UK Elects its First Female Sikh and First Turban Wearing Sikh as MPs**

• In a first **Preet Kaur Gill** has become the first Sikh to be elected to the British Parliament’s House of Commons. Similarly, **Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi** has become the first turban-wearing Sikh to be elected to the House of Commons.

**Indian-origin Leo Varadkar to be next Ireland PM**

• Indian-origin doctor Leo Varadkar, was elected as Prime Minister of Ireland by country’s governing Fine Gael party. Country’s youngest-ever and first homosexual Prime Minister.

**China unveils world’s first train that runs on virtual tracks**

• China has unveiled the world's first 'railless' train - a train that runs on virtual tracks. The train can move at a maximum speed of 70 km/hour.

• The new train is part of China's attempts to develop "intelligent rail express system". Instead of railway tracks, the train runs on rubber tyres.

**Sachin to become part of the UN Campaign Highlighting Role of Father’s in Child’s Development**

• Sachin Tendulkar will join other global celebrities like Dravid, Beckham, Novak Djokovic, Academy Award winning American actor Mahershala Ali, British Formula One racing driver Lewis Hamilton and Australian actor Hugh Jackman for UNICEF’s ‘Super Dads’ campaign that highlights the critical role played by fathers in children’s early development.

• The initiative is aimed at celebrating fatherhood and highlights the importance of love, play, protection and good nutrition for the healthy development of the brains of the young children.

**70th World Health Assembly held in Geneva**
• The 70th World Health Assembly (WHA) was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 22 to 31 May 2017.

• Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Cerebro Spinal Meningitis (CSM) epidemic in Nigeria, prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and election of a new President of the World Health Organisation (WHO) were the agenda of the Assembly.

• The WHO Executive Board announced Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus for the post of WHO Director-General.

WHO revises antibiotics protocol:
• In an effort to curb antibiotic resistance, World Health Organization (WHO) has divided the drugs into three categories viz. ‘access’, ‘watch’ and ‘reserve’ and has specified utilisation norms for each category.
• This is considered as the biggest revision of the antibiotics section in the 40 year history of the essential medicines list (EML).

US to declare China among Worst Human Trafficking Offenders
• The United States is set to declare China as one among the world’s worst offenders on human trafficking in its annual Trafficking in Persons Report. The report will be unveiled by the Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to the US Congress.

US designates Hizbul chief Syed Salahuddin as global terrorist
• The US has designated Hizbul chief Syed Salahuddin as a global terrorist.
• Salahuddin joins the likes Lashkar chief Hafiz Mohammed Saeed and Dawood Ibrahim in the list.
• Designations of terrorist individuals and groups expose and isolate organizations and individuals, and result in denial of access to the US financial system.

INDIA AND WORLD

Finance Minister to attend AIIB annual meets in Korea
Mr. Arun Jaitley will attend the annual meeting of China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to be held in mid-June in South Korea. This year's meeting is being co-hosted by the Bank and Korea, and will be held in Jeju Island.

Points to Remember

- AIIB aims to promote economic development of the region by supporting major infrastructure projects. India is the second largest shareholder of AIIB with 7.5 per cent stake after China.

India, Pakistan to become full SCO members at Astana summit

- India and Pakistan’s admission as full members to the Beijing-backed Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) will be formalised at the political and security grouping’s summit in Astana, Kazakhstan.

- 2017 SCO summit is based on the theme “Future Energy”.

- Shanghai Cooperation Organisation headquartered in Beijing.

- On June 9, 2017, PM Modi attended the SCO Summit and also attended this year’s World Exposition which is hosted by Kazakhstan.

- It is mainly aimed at military cooperation between the members and involves intelligence-sharing, counter-terrorism operations in Central Asia.

- The presence of world’s two most populous countries, China and India in the grouping would make SCO as the organisation with the largest population coverage.

- The summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is being held in Astana, Kazakhstan, June 8 - 9.

- Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Russian President Vladimir Putin will attend the summit among others.

- In the course of the summit, India and Pakistan will be formally admitted into the SCO.

Punjab, UK join hands to promote skill development

- The Punjab government and the United Kingdom decided to join hands for imparting skill training and technical education to the youths of the state in order to provide those better employment opportunities abroad.

US to sell C-17 Globemaster Transport Aircraft to India
• US has decided to sell one C-17 transport aircraft to India. US and India have built a close defence relationship in recent years. The US along with Russia and Israel has emerged as a top three arms supplier to India.

UP govt signs pact with ADB for strengthening of roads

• Uttar Pradesh Government has signed an agreement with Asian Development Bank ADB for a loan of 1950 crore rupees for strengthening of roads in different district. ADB President - Takehiko Nakao.

India and Portugal sign 11 pacts

• India and Portugal have signed 11 pacts after in-depth talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa in areas like counter-terrorism, space and climate studies. This is the first-ever bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Portugal.

India and Netherlands sign 3 Agreements

• India and the Netherlands have signed three MOUs after the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Dutch counterpart Mark Rutte in Hague the Netherlands. Prime Minister’s visit to the Netherlands has come at a time when both the countries are celebrating 70 years of diplomatic relations.

Agreements

• In total three agreements were signed: MOU on Cultural Cooperation, MOU on Water Cooperation Agreement on Amending Social Security Arrangement.

VK Singh to attend BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet

• Minister of State for External Affairs Gen VK Singh will attend the two-day BRICS Foreign Ministers Meet beginning in Beijing on June 18. The Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) Summit will be held in September in Xiamen.

US approves sale of 22 Guardian drones to India

• The US has cleared the sale of 22 unmanned Guardian drones to India, a deal being termed as a “game changer” ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Washington for his maiden meeting with President Donald Trump. UAVs operate without a human pilot. UAVs are commonly used in both the military and police forces in situations where the risk of sending a human piloted aircraft is unacceptable, or the situation makes using a manned aircraft impractical.

First air corridor between India and Afghanistan inaugurated
• Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has inaugurated the first Afghanistan-India air corridor during a ceremony at the Kabul International Airport—a direct route that bypasses Pakistan and is meant to improve commerce.

India-Russia Signs Roadmap for Defence Cooperation

• During the 17th India-Russia intergovernmental commission on military-technical cooperation held at Moscow. India and Russia had signed a protocol that aims to enhance cooperation between both the countries in the field of political and military dialogue, exercises, exchange of visits, military cooperation and training.

India to be Co-Partner Country in ANUGA 2017

• Minister of Food Processing Industries Smt Harsimrat Kaur Badal addressed a Joint Press Conference with the organizers of ANUGA - an international business platform for Food Industry to be held in Cologne, Germany.

India offers $100,000 to UN Tax Fund

• India has contributed $100,000 to the UN Trust Fund for International Cooperation in Tax Matters (the UN Tax Fund).
• The fund is aimed at helping the developing countries to actively participate in the discussion of tax issues.
• India has also earned the distinction of becoming the first country to make a voluntary contribution to the UN tax fund.

Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Costa launch unique Start-up portal

• Prime Minister Modi and Portuguese Prime Minister Costa launched a unique startup Portal - the India-Portugal International StartUp Hub (IPISH) - in Lisbon.
• This is a platform initiated by Startup India and supported by Commerce & Industry Ministry and Startup Portugal to create a mutually supportive entrepreneurial partnership.
• IPISH hosts a range of tools and will provide information on the start-up hotspots of Bangalore, Delhi and Lisbon; and on associated subjects, such as policy, taxation, and visa options. It will develop a Go-To-Market Guide to support start-ups.
DEFENCE, NATIONAL SECURITY AND TERRORISM

INS Kalvari to join Navy by July. It is the first of the six French Scorpene submarines being built in India

- Under technology transfer from France, Kalvari is named after a deep-sea tiger shark.
- Six Scorpene submarines are being built under project-75 by Mazagon Docks Ltd. with technology transfer from DCNS a French naval shipbuilder.

Exercise Australia-India (AUSINDEX)

- AUSINDEX-17 will be the second overall bilateral drill between Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy.
- Indian warships INS Kamorta, the INS Shivalik (first stealth warship built in India), and oiler INS Jyoti, will take part in the exercise. The exercise will be held between June 17 and 19, at Australia’s port city of Freemantle.

Indian Army to rethink on its Sahayak System

- Indian Army is considering doing away with the colonial-era Sahayak System and considers recruiting civilian staff in peace stations.
- Sahayaks or buddy system is a system in which a soldier is attached to officers to help them carry out their responsibilities. The duties of Sahayaks include protecting the officers, maintaining their weapons and equipment among others. The Sahayak System was evolved during the colonial rule.

Indian Army gets Modern Bullet Proof Helmets

- After decades of wait, the Indian Army has finally received its first batch of bullet-proof helmets. The helmets were manufactured by Kanpur-based MKU Industries at the cost of Rs 180 crore.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India successfully fires heaviest launch vehicle - GSLV MKIII places heaviest satellite GSAT-19 into orbit

- India on 5 June 2017, leapfrogged into a select group of nations having their own indigenous cryogenic engine technology, when ISRO successfully launched its heaviest launch vehicle, GSLV MKIII-D1, and placed the country’s heaviest satellite till date, GSAT-, in to a precise orbit.
- The GSAT-19, a communication satellite, expected to enhance India’s communication infrastructure, was placed into a geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO), 16 minutes after launch,
with a perigee (closest point to Earth) 170 km and apogee (farthest point from Earth) 35,975 km. It will take about two to three weeks to be placed in its intended orbit.

- The satellite weighs 3,136 kg. This successful launch will enable India to launch 4-tonne class satellites from India. These were earlier launched from launch pads abroad.

**PSLV-C38 Successfully Launches 31 Satellites in a Single Flight**

- ISRO’s Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle PSLV-C38 successfully launched the 712 kg Cartosat-2 Series Satellite along with 30 co-passenger satellites from Satish Dhawan Space Centre SHAR, Sriharikota.

- This is the thirty ninth consecutively successful mission of PSLV.

- The total number of Indian satellites launched by PSLV now stands at 48.

- One of the 30 co-passenger satellites carried by PSLV-C38 was the 15 kg NIUSAT, a University/Academic Institute satellite from Nurul Islam University, Tamil Nadu, India.

- The remaining 29 co-passenger satellites carried were 14 international customer satellites from USA (10), United Kingdom (3), Belgium (3), Italy (3), Austria (1), Chile (1), Czech Republic (1), Finland (1), France (1), Germany (1), Japan (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (1) and Slovakia (1).

**ISRO successfully launches GSAT-17 Satellite**

- ISRO has successfully launched GSAT-17 communication Satellite onboard the Ariane-5 launch vehicle from the Guiana Space Center at French Guiana on June 28. GSAT-17 will be the ISRO’s third satellite that is launched within a span of three months.

**Salient Highlights**

- The 3,477-kg GSAT 17 communication satellite will be placed in the geostationary orbit and will have a mission life of 15 years.

- The satellite will be an addition to the current fleet of 17 Indian communication satellites that are already providing services from space.

- Apart from providing communication services, the satellite will provide meteorological and satellite-based data to help rescue services which were earlier provided by geostationary satellites called Indian National Satellite System (INSAT).

- GSAT-17 will provide continuity of services of operational satellites in C, extended C and S bands.

- In addition, GSAT-17 will also launch communication satellite Hellas Sat 3-Inmarsat S EAN.

- Hellas Sat 3 will provide directly to home television and telecom services across Europe, West Asia and South Africa.

- Inmarsat is set to provide in-flight Internet facilities for European airlines.

**Launch Vehicle**

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• As ISRO is yet to have a launcher that is capable of lifting payloads above 2,000 kg. ISRO has just started testing the GSLV-Mark III for this purpose. GSAT-17 will be the 21st Indian launch for the Arianespace. ISRO’s upcoming GSAT-11 which will weigh more than 5,000 kg will also be launched by Arianespace.

India to have its own GPS system from 2018

• India will be having its own GPS system. 'NavIC' will be operational early 2018.

• The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) with an operational name of NavIC is currently being tested for its accuracy and is most likely to be available in the market for public use early next year.

• NavIC the name given by PM Narendra Modi after the launch of IRNSS - 1 G, is designed to provide accurate position information to users within the country. India will be having its own GPS system. ‘NavIC’ will be operational early 2018.

Mongolia’s first university satellite flies into space from US:

• First University Satellite of Mongolia named after the Mongolian Gobi bear Mazaalai. It was sent off into space in the United States on 4th of June, 2017.

Petya Ransomware Cyberattack

• Petya Ransomware is part of a new wave of cyber-attacks and has infected computer servers across the world. All across Europe, Ukraine and Russia are the worst affected countries.

Petya ransomware

• Petya is a ransomware, similar to the Wannacry ransomware. However, it is a variation of the WannaCry cyber-attack. It follows the WannaCry’s pattern and locks up the computer data and cripples the Enterprise services in the corporate sector. Researchers are yet to find who is responsible for this attack. The ransomware demands $300 Bitcoins as ransom to unlock computer’s files. The attack is believed to have originated against an update used on third-party Ukrainian software called MeDoc. This explains why Ukraine is the worst affected.

Indian Girl Sahithi Pingali to get Planet Named after Her

• Sahithi Pingali, a twelfth grader from Bengaluru will get a minor planet in Milky Way named after her as a reward for developing an integrated mobile phone app and lake monitoring kit to monitor pollution in water bodies.
China launches world’s largest floating solar farm

- China has launched the world’s largest floating solar farm. The 40-megawatt power plant has 160,000 panels resting on a lake that emerged after the collapse of a coal mine in central Anhui province. China’s solar capacity more than doubled in 2016.

Dubai’s First robot cop to patrol streets

- A robotic policeman which can help identify wanted criminals and collect evidence has joined Dubai’s police force and will patrol busy areas in the city, as part of a government programme aimed at replacing some human crime fighters with machines.

NASA launches World’s Lightest Satellite designed by Indian Student Team

- NASA has launched world’s lightest satellite weighing only 64 grams designed by 18-year-old boy Rifath Sharook and his team from Tamil Nadu. The tiny satellite has been named as KalamSat after the former President APJ Abdul Kalam. The tiny satellite was launched into space on a sounding rocket from NASA’s facility in Wallops Island.

Salient facts

- KalamSat is a 3-D printed satellite. This is the first time that 3-D printing technology is used to make satellites.
- By using the concept called BalloonSats, the group created a Near Space Launch Vehicle (NSLV) to launch KalamSat. BalloonSats are designed to carry lightweight experiments into near-space.
- The tiny satellite weighs only 64 grams which is lighter than a smartphone. The satellite has been made of reinforced carbon fibre polymer.
- The satellite was operated for 12 minutes in a micro-gravity environment of space after its flight. The purpose behind the launch of KalamSat was to demonstrate the performance of 3D-printed carbon fibre.

NASA launches Rocket to produce Colourful Artificial Clouds

- The NASA has successfully launched Terrier-Improved Malemute sounding rocket that created colourful artificial clouds visible in the skies of the US. The rocket was launched from its Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia.

ISRO’s Satellite-based chips for Unmanned Rail Crossings

- ISRO’s satellite-based chips are set to alert people at unmanned rail crossings

Salient Facts:

- Satellite-based chip systems developed by ISRO will be used to alert road users at unmanned level crossings about approaching trains.
- These chips will also help the railways in tracking train movement on a real-time basis.
• The satellite based system will also be used for tracking trains about their movement on real time basis.
• It will be useful to passengers as at present the movement of trains are tracked manually.

India’s Contribution to Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) Project

• Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) is the world’s biggest telescope which would facilitate astronomers to observe the intricacies of the universe from earth.

Salient Facts

• Thirty Metre Telescope (TMT) is a multi-million dollar project being developed by an international consortium of Five countries including India. The other four countries are Canada, China, Japan and the U.S.
• The ambitious next-generation telescope would be built at a cost of USD 1.47 billion. India will spend Rs 1,300 crore on the project. India’s contribution to the project will be more in terms of hardware than money.
• The telescope which was expected to be started at Mauna Kea, Hawaii was stalled following protests by locals. The project site is still being finalised by the consortium of countries involved in the project. Hanle in Ladakh is one among the new sites that are being explored for the construction of the telescope.
• The telescope is expected to be ready by 2020. The telescope when ready would offer astronomers with unparalleled power to observe the universe.
• TMT will be the first ground-based telescope to incorporate the technology of Adaptive Optics (AO) as an integral component of the telescope. India’s contributions will include fabrication of edge sensors, which sense relative displacement of segments due to gravity and temperature while tracking objects in the sky. India also has the responsibility to build the entire actuator system to provide the best possible image of objects in the sky.

Astronomers find hottest giant planet KELT – 9b :

According to a study published in the journal Nature the planet called KELT – 9b is hotter than most stars

Fact Box: Hottest Known Planet in Universe

• Scientists have discovered the hottest known exoplanet, designated KELT-9b which is warmer than most stars in the universe. The study has been published in the journal Nature.
• Exoplanet is a planet that does not orbit the Sun and instead orbits a different star, stellar remnant or brown dwarf. They are also called as extrasolar planet.
NASA has selected 12 new astronauts including an Indian-American, Lt Col Raja “Grinder” Chari, from 18000 applications. He belongs to Iowa. His father is from India.

Swiss plant to suck CO₂ from air, resell it

- The world’s first commercial facility that can extract carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and resell it for commercial use has opened in Switzerland. The company Climeworks said it could help reduce one per cent of global fossil fuel emission by 2025. The facility has been built between a waste incineration plant will provide the heat and renewable electricity needed to run the facility.

Third gravitational wave merger detected

- The Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO) detectors in the U.S. have detected yet another of two black holes on January 4, 2017.
- Named GW170174, this signal marks the third confirmed detection of gravitational waves by LIGO in 2015 (GE150914) it was not known that such massive black holes could exist.

India successfully test-fires 1st all weather tracked-chassis QR-SAM

- India has successfully test-fired its first all-weather tracked-chassis Quick Reaction Surface-to-Air Missile (QR-SAM) on 4 of June.

Wildlife Board okays Andaman’s Rutland Island for DRDO’s missile testing project:

- Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife has given clearance for Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO’s) long-range missile test facility at South Andaman’s Rutland Island. This clearance was pending since year 2012.
- Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park is in the Island is very rich in marine life and was once home to the indigenous Andamanese group ‘Jangil’ or Rutland Jarawa.

Solar Probe Mission renamed to Honor Pioneering Physicist Eugene Parker

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will launch Solar Probe mission in year 2018, which will be humanity’s first mission to Sun. This mission has been renamed as Parker Solar Probe in honor of astrophysicist Eugene Parker.

The world’s biggest plane

- Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen unveiled Stratolaunch, the world’s largest plane capable of launching satellite toting rockets into space, in California’s Mojave desert on Wednesday.

**PERSONS & PLACES IN NEWS**

‘Kavikko’ Abdul Rahman passes away

- Tamil poet S. Abdul Rahman was passed away in Chennai on June 2, 2017
• He was popularly known as ‘Kavikko’ Abdul Rahman received several awards and honours includes ‘Kalaimamani’ title in 1989, and ‘Agni Akshara’ Award in 1992.
• He also received the Sahitya Akademi award in 1999 for his collection of poems, Aalapanai, it was a “poetic irony.”

Nepal’s first woman Chief Justice retires

• Sushila Karki, first woman Chief Justice of Nepal Supreme Court retired after attaining the age 65 years.

PMO steps in, puts Metro Man on list of VIPS:

• As per the revised list Metro Man E Sreedharan.

One of Soolamangalam sisters passed away

R. Jayalakshmi of the famous Soolamangalam Sisters passed away in Chennai. She was 80. Along with her younger sibling R. Rajalakshmi, she became famous for several songs on Lord Muruga, including Skanda Sashti Kavacham and Skanda Guru Kavacham. The sisters were one of the earliest pairs of women Carnatic vocalists and were recipients of the Tamil Nadu government’s prestigious Kalaimamani Award.

Kaushik Basu takes over as IEA president

• Former chief economic advisor Kaushik Basu has taken over as president of the International Economic Association (IEA).

Vidya Balan to be the ambassador of Indian Film Festival of Melbourne

• To be held from August 10 to 22.
• The Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) is one of the largest Indian film festivals being hosted outside India.

Chaddha may be 1st Indian woman on int’l sea tribunal

• India is preparing to send its first woman as member of the International Tribunal of ‘the Law of the see (ITLOS), the top body to rule on issues relating to a crucial international law where India has growing stakes.

Unicef names 19-year-old Syrian refugee as youngest goodwill ambassador

• The UN children’s agency announced the appointment of its youngest goodwill ambassador — 19-year-old Syrian refugee and education activist Muzoon Almellehan. Muzoon is the first goodwill envoy with official refugee status.
Sikh woman is Canada’s 1st turbaned judge – Palbinder Shergill

- An Indian origin Sikh woman human rights activist has been appointed a Judge of the Canadian Supreme Court of British Columbia, the first turbaned Sikh to be appointed to the judiciary of the country.

Eminent Bengali Singer Sabita Chowdhury passes away.

**SPORTS AND GAMES**

Srinivas Gokulnath becomes First Indian to Solo finish Race Across America

- Race Across America (RAAM) in the solo 18-59 age category. RAAM is considered as the toughest cycle race in the world.

West Indies cricket team’s official name changed to WINDIES

B Sai Praneeth wins Thailand Open (Badminton)

- Indian shuttler B Sai Praneeth lifted his maiden Grand Prix gold title by defeating Indonesian Jonatan Christie in the men's singles final of the Thailand Open.

Ganeshan Neelakanta Iyer first Indian to be inducted in ITTFURC

- Ganeshan Neelakanta Iyer has become the first Indian to be nominated as a member of the Umpires and Referees Committee (URC) by International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF).

Bopanna-Dabrowski clinches French Open mixed-doubles title

- Rohan Bopanna lifted his maiden Grand Slam title by winning the French Open mixed doubles trophy with Canadian partner Gabriela Dabrowski, becoming only the fourth Indian ever to clinch a Grand Slam.

Murali first Sri Lankan to be inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- Muttiah Muralitharan, the most successful bowler in Tests cricket, was inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame.
### Category Winner Runners-up

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Winner</th>
<th>Runners-up</th>
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<tr>
<td>Men’s Singles</td>
<td>Rafael Nadal (Spain)</td>
<td>Stan Wawrinka (Switzerland)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s Singles</td>
<td>Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia)</td>
<td>Simona Halep (Romania)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Doubles</td>
<td>Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) &amp; Rohan Bopanna (India)</td>
<td>Anna-Lena Grönefeld (Germany) &amp; Robert Farah (Colombia)</td>
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**Michael Venus-Ryan Harrison clinches French Open men's doubles title**

**ISSF World Cup: Jitu Rai-Heena Sidhu Clinch Gold Medal**

- Indian shooters Jitu Rai and Heena Sidhu have clinched the gold medal in mixed team 10m air pistol event of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup held at Gabala, Azerbaijan.

**Kutwal wins gold at world chess championship for differently-abled**

- Shashikant Kutwal has won the gold medal at the 17th World Individual Chess Championship for differently abled.

**Dhanya-Sanmay win U-14 Asian junior tennis title**

- Dhanya Shah and Sanmay Gandhi have won the Under-14 doubles title of the Asian Junior Tennis Championships.

**Virat Kohli only Indian in Forbes top 100 paid athletes:**

2017 Forbes list of “The World’s highest paid athletes”:

(i) Virat Kohli, ranked 89th on the 2017 Forbes list of “The World’s highest paid athletes”.

(ii) The list has been topped by soccer star Christiano Ronaldo with a total pay of $ 93 million.

(iii) Serena Williams ranked at 51st She is the only female sports person in the top 100 list.

**Kavita Devi first Indian woman ever to appear in WWE**

- Former Indian powerlifter and South Asian Games gold medal winner, Kavita Devi will be making history as she becomes the first Indian woman to appear in WWE.

**ISSF Junior World Rifle/Pistol Championship: Yashaswini Deswal and Anish Bhanwala Wins Gold**
• Indian shooters Yashaswini Singh Deswal and Anish Bhanwala has bagged gold in the Women’s 10m Air Pistol and Men’s 25m Standard Pistol competition respectively in the Junior World Rifle/Pistol Championship held in Germany.

K Srikanth Wins Australian Open Super series Title

• The world No.11 Kidambi Srikanth has sealed his second successive Super Series win by defeating reigning Olympic champion Chen Long in the Australian Open summit clash in Sydney.

India finish second in Junior Shooting World Championship

• The Indian shooting squad finished a creditable second at the ISSF Junior World Championship with three gold, two silver and three bronze medals in Suhl, Germany.
• China topped the tally in the rifle/pistol tournament with 19 medals, including eight gold.

Bhumika Sharma wins Miss World Bodybuilding Title

• Dehradun girl Bhumika Sharma has won the World Bodybuilding Championship in Venice.

Jeje Lalpekhlua wins AIFF player of year award

• Mohun Bagan and Chennaiyin FC striker Jeje Lalpekhlua has been nominated as the ‘2016 All India Football Federation (AIFF) Player of the Year.

Dhanraj Pillay to be awarded with Bharat Gaurav

• Former India hockey captain Dhanraj Pillay will be awarded with East Bengal football club’s highest honour – Bharat Gaurav on their foundation day.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

'Ministry of Utmost Happiness' authored by Arundhati Roy launched

Ramesh’s book on the naturalist in Indira Gandhi launched

• The book “Indira Gandhi – A life in Nature”, was launched by Congress president Sonia Gandhi at the Indira Gandhi Memorial. Jairam Ramesh, has authored the book

Ex-Uttarakhand CM Pokhriyal authors book on Vajpayee
Mr. Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, who credited Vajpayee for his debut in politics, said the 450-page book titled 'Yug Purush, Bharat Ratna, Atal ji' will be officially unveiled soon.

"The Crisis within Knowledge and Education in India" authored by Ganesh Devy released

Israeli writer wins Man Booker International:

- David Grossman, author of “A Horse Walks into A Bar” and translator Jessica Cohen will share the prize money of € 50,000.
- Israeli author David Grossman has won the Man Booker International Prize, sharing the 50,000 award with translator Jessica Cohen.

Lone Fox Dancing: Ruskin Bond’s autobiography

Naidu launches book ‘The Emergency-Indian Democracy’s Darkest Hour’, written by A. Surya Prakash, Chairman Prasar Bharati Board.

President receives first copies of book ‘Lalan Shah Fakir Ke Geet’

- The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee received the first copies of book ‘Lalan Shah Fakir Ke Geet’ written by Prof. Muchkund Dubey. Lalan Shah Fakir - a great saint, poet and social reformer.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Indian girl bags Little Miss Universe Internet 2017 crown

- 12 year old Padmalaya Nanda from Odisha has created history by becoming the youngest girl to bag the “Little Miss Universe Internet 2017” and “Little Miss Actress” crowns at the Little Miss Universe 2017 at port city of Batumi in Georgia.

City doc bags award:

- Senior cardiac transplant surgeon Dr K R Balakishnan, director of cardiac sciences at Fortis Malar was given the ‘Double Helical National Health Award 2017’ in recognition of his pioneering contribution in the field of Cardiac Transplant in New Delhi.

Authors Neelakantan, Satpathy to be honoured with Kalinga Awards

- Popular writer Anand Neelakantan, Odia poet Haraprasad Das and author Paramita Satpathy were announced winners of the Kalinga Literary Awards.
The Kalinga International Literary Award, Kalinga Literary Youth Award and Kalinga Karubaki Award will be conferred upon Neelakantan, Das and Satpathy respectively.

**Author Jhumpa Lahiri Wins 2017 PEN/Malamud Award**

- Indian American author Jhumpa Lahiri has been announced as the recipient of the 2017 PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in the Short Story.

**AP’s Vizianagaram bags MGNREGA National Award**

- For effective implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act during 2015-16.

**APQN Quality Award to NAAC for International Co-operation in Quality Assurance, ceremony held in Moscow, Russia.**

- National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) of India has received prestigious International Award of Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN) titled “APQN Quality Award 2017 for International Co-operation in Quality Assurance.”

- APQN Quality Award are among the most prestigious International Awards in quality assurance of higher education.

**BEML bags Raksha Mantri’s award**

- Defence public sector BEML Ltd has bagged the Raksha Mantri’s Award for Excellence for design and development of 180-tonne electric hydraulic excavator BE1800E.

**Polish poet, author Zagajewski wins Spain’s prestigious award**

- Adam Zagajewski, one of the most pre-eminent contemporary Polish poets, novelists and essayists has won Spain’s prestigious Princess of Asturias Award for Literature.

**Soumitra Chatterjee to get France’s Legion of Honour**

- Veteran Bengali film actor Soumitra Chatterjee has been conferred with the highest French civilian honour, the Legion d’ Honour.

**Atwood to get Lifetime Achievement Award:**

- Margaret Atwood will receive a lifetime achievement award from one of the World’s oldest literary organisations. PEN Center USA has announced that the 77 year old author of more than 40 books of fiction, poetry and essays will accept the honour at the group’s annual Literary Awards Festival on October 27 in California.

**Netravali gets Marconi Prize for digital video:**
• Engineer scientist Arun Netravali, who grew up in Mumbai and pioneered work on video compression standards, has been awarded the prestigious Marconi Prize.

Agri. Microbiologist Dr Shrihari Chandraghatgi gets Japan Award

• Indian Agricultural Microbiologist Dr Shrihari Chandraghatgi, President & CEO, EcoCycle Corporation, has been conferred with Ministry of Environment Award in Japan for developing cutting edge technologies to address environmental problems. Dr Shrihari is the first foreigner to win this award in environmental sector in Japan.

Intellecap CEO Nisha Dutt gets social entrepreneur of year award

• Nisha Dutt, Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad-based Intellecap has been honoured with the “Social Entrepreneur of the Year” award at The 7th Asian Awards in London. She is the first Indian woman leader to have been conferred with this recognition.

Vijaya Bank bags nine Skoch Awards

Dr. Akinyumi gets 2017 World Food Prize.

• The 2017 World Food Prize was awarded to Dr. Akinyumi A Adesina, President of African Development Bank Group.

• It is regarded as the Nobel Prize in Food and Agriculture and for his contributions both to Nigeria and to all other countries in Africa in the area of agricultural advancement and sustainable food and livelihood security.

Haryana girl Manushi Chhillar is Femina Miss India World 2017

• The 54th Femina Miss India World 2017 winner is Manushi Chhillar from Haryana, while the first runner-up is Sana Dua from Jammu and Kashmir and the second runner-up is Priyanka Kumari from Bihar.

Sultan Wins Best Action Movie Award At Shanghai International Film Festival

• Salman Khan’s Sultan, which released during Eid last year, has won the Best Action Movie award at the Shanghai International Film Festival and is the first Indian film to win this honour.

SIERRA ODC building in Coimbatore receives World’s Second Highest Green Rating
• SIERRA ODC building has been recognised as the world’s second highest ranking Green Building. The building has scored 103 points out of 110 under LEED certification.

Ankit Kawatra bags Queen’s Young Leaders Award for 2017

• The Queen’s Young Leaders Award recognises exceptional work towards solving hunger and malnutrition in India. Ankit Kawatra is the founder of Feeding India, an organisation which works towards eradicating hunger and food wastage in India. The award was established by The Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Trust, the Royal Commonwealth Society and Comic Relief.

Hyderabad-based TS Vineeth Bhatt conferred with the 'best astrologer of world' award

• Astrologer and numerologist TS Vineeth Bhatt (Kerala) has been conferred with the 'Best astrologer of the world' award at the 'Russian-Indian economic dialogue' round-table meet held in Moscow.

ENVIRONMENT

India’s biodiversity riches increases by 499 species

• According to the Animal Discoveries 2016, New Species and Records, brought out by the Zoological Survey of India and Plant Discoveries 2016, by the Botanical Survey of India, 499 new species have been discovered from various parts of the country last year.
  • Animals: The new species are known to occur in the four biological hotspots of the country, namely, the Himalayas, the northeast, the Western Ghats and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
  • Plants: The new species of the plant were discovered in the Western Ghats (17%), followed by the Eastern Himalayas (15%), the Western

A new cast of crabs in Western Ghats: Scientists elated as they discover Karkata, a fresh genus, and six from Kerala

• The Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot is in the spotlight once again, as scientists have discovered a new genus and six new six species of freshwater crabs in these mountainous forests.

Paddy embankments
• One new species, Cylindrotelphusa longiphallus, came from deep burrows along paddy field at Kuzhikattusseri, Thrissur. The name is derived from the Latin ‘longi’ for long and
the Greek ‘phallus’, a reference to long male gonopods of the animal. Another new
discovery, Cylindrotelphusa breviphalhus, is from Ponmudi in Thiruvananthapuram.

World’s oldest fossil mushroom discovered

- The world’s oldest fossil mushroom has been discovered in Brazil—dating back to about 115
  million years.

New Species of flying squirrel, a ‘surprising’ discovery:

- Scientists have discovered a new species of flying squirrel in North America that had been
  hiding in plain sight for hundreds of years. It is known as Humboldt’s flying squirrel.

Mangrove forests to be declared bird sanctuary:

- Spadework for the declaration of the Chettuva Mangrove forests in Thrissur district as bird
  sanctuary has been completed. The green signal for the formal declaration is expected to be given
  by the State Board for Wildlife on June 21.

Green Buildings

- Green Buildings are designed and operated to reduce the overall impact of the built
  environment on human health and the natural environment.
- The green buildings efficiently use energy, water, and other resources, protects occupant
  health, improves employee productivity, and reduces waste, pollution and environmental
  degradation.
- Besides a Green Building has tremendous environmental benefits and provides a better
  place for the occupants to live and work in. So the main challenge of a green building is to
  achieve all its benefits at an affordable cost.
- The aim of a green building design is to minimize the demand on non-renewable
  resources, maximize the utilization efficiency of these resources, when in use, and,
  maximize the reuse, recycling, and utilization of renewable resources.

OTHERS

- Current base year 2011-12.
- Montenegro becomes 29th and newest NATO member.
• Tapan Ray to take over as Economic Affairs Secretary.
• SEBI clears Vikram Limaye as the MD and CEO of NSE.
• Hoshiar Singh appointed as Chief of Copyrights Office.
• Dr. Manoj Soni takes Oath as UPSC Member
• Rajiv Gauba to be next Union Home Secretary
• Imran Khawaja appointed as ICC deputy chairman
• Rajeev Shukla to head BCCI Special Committee

• Union Government appoints Shri Rajesh V. Shah as chairman of NIFT (The National Institute of Fashion Technology)
• Ruchira Kamboj appointed next High Commissioner of India to Republic of South Africa.
• Param Jit Mann appointed as India’s Ambassador to Slovenia.
• Senior diplomat Shamma Jain was appointed as India's ambassador to Greece.
• Indian-American, Krishna R Urs appointed as US Ambassador to Peru
• Indian – American Raja Chari selected by NASA among 12 new astronauts
• Austria to ban burqas from October
• Serbia’s new President will be Aleksandar Vucic.
• Kenneth Juster to be new US ambassador to India.
• Russian diplomat Vladimir Voronkov to be first UN counter-terrorism chief

• RBI Issues New Rs500 banknotes with inset letter ‘A’
• India's population to surpass that of China's around 2024 – according to UN report
• Panama forges Diplomatic ties with China and breaks away with Taiwan

• RCom-Aircel merged wireless company to be called Aircom
• Chennai among top 10 investor targets in Asia Pacific region.
• Oldest fossils of Homo Sapiens found in Morocco.
• Mihai Tudose appointed as Prime Minister of Romania.

• Indians become second largest group of migrants in Australia
• Kaushik Basu has taken over as president of the International Economic Association (IEA).
• India is world’s third largest Aviation Market – says Minister of State for Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha
• Slovakia's Miroslav Lajcak to be UN General Assembly’s next President

• J-K Governor N N Vohra appointed as president of the India International Centre (IIC) - one of the premier cultural institutions in the country.

Most literate child workers in TN, Kerala:

Child labour and Literacy

• Out of the total 4.4 million child workers in India, 65.3% were literate.

• Kerala and Tamil Nadu have the highest proportion of literate child workers.

• Jharkhand and Jammu and Kashmir have the lowest percentage of literate child workers.

• Telangana reported the highest number of child workers (6.2%) having completed matric and above.

NITI Aayog Selects CCMB as Incubation Centre for Biotech Start-ups

• NITI-Aayog has chosen the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad for hosting the 10-crore Atal Incubation Centre for biotechnology start-ups.

Salient Facts

• The centre will identify promising start-ups and create facilities for them to succeed in the field of biotechnology. The CCMB is one of the 10 organisations that have been identified to host the ‘Atal Incubation Centre’.

• The CCMB is a constituent laboratory of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). It is the only one in the States of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to be chosen as an incubation centre under Atal Innovation Mission (AIM).

Background

• Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under NITI Aayog is aimed at promoting a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship in the country.

• It aims to create high-class incubation facilities with necessary infrastructure in terms of capital equipment and operating facilities, coupled with the availability of sectoral experts for mentoring the start-ups. The scheme is known as Atal Incubation Centre scheme.

• The incubation centres would support and encourage start-ups in the sectors like manufacturing, transport, energy, health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation etc.

• The scheme focuses on the establishment of incubation centres in underserved and unserved areas to support inclusive growth. Under the scheme, Atal Incubation Centre
can be established either in publicly funded institutions or Private sector funded institutions or in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

**Trump pulls US out of Paris pact**

- President Donald Trump announced his decision to withdraw the US from the Paris Agreement on climate change and renegotiate the deal that was agreed upon by over 190 countries during the previous Obama administration.

- Arguing that countries like China and India are benefiting the most from the Paris Agreement, Trump said that the agreement on climate change was unfair to the United States, as it badly hit its businesses and jobs.

**About the Paris Climate Agreement**

- The United States was one of 195 nations that had agreed to the accord in December 2015.
- It is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that deals with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020.
- As of June 2017, 195 UNFCCC members have signed the agreement, 148 of which have ratified it.
- Under the pact, countries both developed and developing agreed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases generated by burning fossil fuels, a major cause of global warming.

**Objectives of the Agreement:**

- To limit the global average temperature to below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels.
- To take necessary steps to conserve and enhance reservoirs of greenhouse gases including forests.
- To limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels so that it will be possible to reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.

**Government awards Contracts for completion of Kaladan project in Myanmar**

**Salient features**

- Kaladan multi modal transport projects was the first major project undertaken by the Indian government in Myanmar.
- India has finished constructing Sittwe port in the trouble-prone Rakhine state of Myanmar. Also, the extension of the Aizawl-Saiha National Highway by 90 km to the international border at Zorinpui at the Indian side is nearing completion. In addition, four-laning of the 300 km Aizawl-
Tuipang highway to ensure faster movement of goods between Sittwe and Aizawl is also nearing completion.

**KMTT**

- KMTT is essentially a multi-modal transport project having three different stretches involving shipping, Inland Water and road transport stretches. The longest among them is Shipping segment from Kolkata to Sittwe port in Myanmar.
- Government of India is funding this project and it is considered as an important investment of India in its neighbourhood.
- The cargo will start from Kolkata port and reach Sittwe port in Myanmar by ship. The Sittwe Port would be linked to Lashio (also in Maynmar) via the Kaladan river transport route. Lashio would be connected to Mizoram via road transport (National Highway 54).
- As per the terms of the framework agreement, India should also set up an SEZ at Sittwe.

**Significance**

- The completion of KMTT project will play a major role in economic development of the North-East India and it will improve the bilateral relations between India and Myanmar.
- When completed, the KMTT will shorten the current time taken to transport goods from Kolkata to Mizoram by three-four days, and the distance by around 950 km. KMTT is hailed as “Future gateway to South East Asia”.
- The setting up of SEZ at Sittwe is important to promote Indian investment in the region which has overwhelming Chinese influence.

**GST TIMELINE (30 YEARS TO GST):**

- **1986-87:** FM V P Singh introduced Modvat, sets stage for VAT, a first step towards GST.
- **1991-96:** FM Manmohan Singh introduces Service Tax.
- **2005-06:** VAT from April in most States, P. Chidambaram proposes GST from April 2010.
- **2008:** GST structure finalised. Consensus on dual GST, including Centre and States, separate legislation, levy and administration.
- **2010:** FM Pranab Mukherjee nearly pulls it off. Opposition States, including Gujarat, led by then CM Narendra Modi, foil bid.
- **2011:** Man Mohan Singh alleges BJP blocked GST after Amit Shah’s 2010 arrest. Modi bins charge, Mukherjee introduces Constitution Amendment Bill.
- **2012-13**: UPA clears GST Network for IT architecture. State FMs reject plan to include petroleum products.

- **2014**: FM Arun Jaitley introduces revised Constitution Amendment Bill.

- **2015**: Lok Sabha passes it. In Rajya Sabha, Congress stalls Bill, demanding to include its suggestions.

- **2016-17**: Govt. drums up support for GST, Parliament, States clear bills; rates and rules finalised.

### GST - BENEFITS

#### COMMON MAN FRIENDLY
1. Huge number of items are either tax exempt or in 5% tax bracket.
2. Maximum benefits to the poor & the common man.
3. Will ensure that the poor get their due.
4. Level playing field for small traders in any part of the country.

#### ADVANTAGES FOR TRADE & INDUSTRY
1. Common procedures for registration, duty payment, return filing and refund of taxes.
2. Seamless flow of tax credit from manufacturer/supplier to user/retailer to eliminate cascading of taxes.
3. More efficient neutralization of taxes to make our exports more competitive internationally.
4. Benefit of exemption/composition scheme for a large segment of small scale suppliers to make their products cheaper.

#### BENEFITS TO ECONOMY
1. To create a unified common National Market.
2. To make India a manufacturing hub.
3. To boost investments and exports.
4. To generate more employment by increased economic activity.

#### SIMPLIFIED TAX STRUCTURE
1. Reduction in multiplicity of taxes now leviable on goods and services, leading to simplification.
2. Simpler tax regime with fewer exemptions.
3. Harmonization of laws, procedures and rates of tax across the country.
4. Common system of classification of goods and services to ensure certainty in tax administration.

CREATING ONE ECONOMIC INDIA
1. Freedom of movement of goods and services.
2. Consumers to benefit by increased competition.
3. Level playing field for producers and consumers across the country.
4. Strengthening the sense of nationhood and unity.
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