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Current Affairs April 2017

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

Audience

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

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

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Appointments

1. Professor Sunaina Singh appointed as the Vice-Chancellor of Nalanda University

President Pranab Mukherjee has appointed Professor Sunaina Singh, Vice Chancellor, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad as the next Vice Chancellor of the Nalanda University for a five-year term from the date on which she enters upon office. She has replaced George Yeo.



Professor Sunaina Singh also holds the position of the Vice President of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR). She has the distinction of being the first Indian woman to head as the President of Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute.

2. Vanaja N Sarna appointed as the Chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs

Ms. Vanaja N Sarna, presently holding the charge as Member (Administration), has been appointed as the Chairman of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC). She is taking over on superannuation of Shri Najib Shah.



Ms. Vanaja has served Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) in several capacities over the last 36 years. She was also Additional Director General in Directorate General of Revenue Intelligence, New Delhi. Prior to becoming Member, CBEC, she held the charge of Director General of Vigilance and Chief Vigilance Officer of the Department.

3. Rajiv Kumar Chander appointed as India's Ambassador and permanent representative to the UN

Rajiv Kumar Chander has been appointed as Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Offices in Geneva.



Mr. Chander is an IFS officer of the 1983 batch. He is currently posted as the Consul General, Consulate General of India in Vancouver. He was the deputy permanent representative with the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations, Geneva, between 2006 and 2009.

4. Indira Banerjee appointed as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court

Justice Indira Banerjee has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court. She is presently a judge of the Delhi High Court. She was appointed permanent judge of Calcutta High Court in 2002 and was transferred to Delhi High Court in August 2016.

Justice Banerjee will replace the then Chief Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul who was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court in February 2017.



5. Raman Roy appointed as the new Nasscom Chairman

National Association of Software and Services Companies appointed Raman Roy as its Chairman for 2017-2018 replacing CP Gurnani. Prior to this appointment, Raman Roy was member of Nasscom's Executive Council and was the vice-chairman for 2016-17.

There was also appointment of Rishad Premji, Chief Strategy Officer and Member of the Board, Wipro Limited, as the Vice Chairman of Nasscom for 2017-18. Appointments were announced to work towards further strengthening various sectors and focus on enhanced member outreach and involvement.



6. Smita Sandhane appointed as the MD of Saraswat Bank

Smita Sandhane has been appointed as the Managing Director of Saraswat Co-operative Bank with effect from April 1. She is the first woman chief of India's largest urban co-operative bank.

Sandhane joined the bank in 1982 and prior to this appointment, she was the Joint Managing Director of the bank. She has replaced S.K. Banerji who retired from his services. During her tenure in the bank, she has served as Head - Wholesale Banking Department and Head - Planning, Accounts and Stressed Assets.



7. RBI appointed Malvika Sinha as new Executive Director

The Reserve Bank of India has appointed Smt. Malvika Sinha as Executive Director (ED) consequent upon appointment of Shri B P Kanungo as Deputy Governor.

Smt. Sinha joined Reserve Bank in 1982 and as a career central banker served in the areas of regulation and supervision, foreign exchange and Government and Bank Accounts in the Bank. Prior to being promoted as ED, Smt. Sinha was Principal Chief General Manager, Department of Co-operative Banking Supervision in the Reserve Bank.



8. Mukta Dutta Tomar appointed as India's Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany

Mukta Dutta Tomar has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Federal Republic of Germany. She is an IFS officer of the 1984 batch.

Ms. Tomar will succeed Gurjit Singh. She is expected to take up the assignment shortly.

Tomar is presently working as the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). She has been Consul General of India in Chicago.



9. Kristin Davis appointed UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has appointed the internationally acclaimed actor and philanthropist Kristin Davis as its Goodwill Ambassador.

Davis started her journey with UNHCR by travelling to Northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, meeting South Sudanese refugees and hearing their stories. UNHCR Goodwill Ambassadors are celebrity representatives of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) who use their talent and fame to advocate for refugees.



10. Dr. Mukulita Vijayawargiya took charge as the Whole Time Member of IBBI

Dr. Mukulita Vijayawargiya took charge as Whole Time Member, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India in New Delhi. She will look after Administrative Law Wing. She will also look after Information Technology, Limited Insolvency Examination, National Insolvency Examination, Finance, Accounts, and Communication.



Dr. (Ms.) Vijayawargiya was a member of Bankruptcy Law Reforms Committee (BLRC) based on which, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 has been framed.

11. UN General Assembly confirmed Achim Steiner as their new UNDP Chief

The United Nations General Assembly confirmed the appointment of Germany's Achim Steiner as the head of the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Mr. Steiner was nominated by Secretary-General António Guterres following consultations with UNDP's Executive Board. Mr Steiner has been appointed for a period of four years.



Mr. Steiner was the head of the UN Environment Programme (UN Environment) and Director-General of the UN Office in Nairobi. He is currently director of Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford.

12. Vinay Shah joined the LIC Housing Finance as its MD & CEO

LIC Housing Finance appointed Vinay Shah as the new Managing Director and Chief Executive Director, replacing Sunita Sharma.

Smt. Sunita Sharma had been elevated to Managing Director of its mortgage loan department and listed entity LIC Housing Finance. Prior to this appointment, Vinay Shah was executive director marketing in the product department of LIC housing finance.



LIC Housing Finance Limited (LIC HFL) is one of the largest Housing Finance companies in India having its Registered and Corporate office at Mumbai.

13. Shri Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar appointed as DG, CRPF

The Government has appointed Shri Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar, IPS (UP 1983), Director General, Narcotics Control Bureau to the post of Director General, Central Reserve Police Force. The paramilitary force was headless for nearly two months after the retirement of K. Durga Prasad on February 28, 2017.



Also, senior IPS officer R.K. Pachnanda has been made DG of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police force. Mr. Pachnanda is a 1983 batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre. He will take charge after the retirement of Krishna Chaudhary in June-end.

14. T Krishnakumar is Coca-Cola India's new chief

Coca-Cola India announced that TKK Krishnakumar would take over as President of the company's India and South West Asia operations from Venkatesh Kini.



Krishnakumar is currently Chief Executive Officer and South West Asia regional director of Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Pvt. Ltd, the company-owned bottling unit.

Ms. Christina Ruggiero, Chief Procurement Officer for Coca-Cola System in North America and President and CEO for Bottler's Sales & Services, will replace Krishnakumar.

Awards

1. Bob Dylan accepted the Nobel literature award

Bob Dylan has finally accepted his 2016 Nobel Prize for Literature. He received his medal at a private event in Stockholm. The academy handed Dylan the prize "for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition".

A man with multi talents, Dylan is an American songwriter, singer, painter, and writer. In May 2012, Dylan received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama. He has also received numerous awards including eleven Grammy Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and an Academy Award.



2. President Pranab Mukherjee presented Gallantry Awards

President Pranab Mukherjee presented Gallantry Awards and Distinguished Service Decorations. The awards included One Kirti Chakra, thirteen Shaurya Chakra, fifteen Param Vishist Seva Medal, one Bar to the Ati Vishist Seva Medal, two Uttam Yuddh Seva Medal and 27 Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

Lance Havldar Prem Bahdur Resmi Magar was conferred on Kirti Chakra. Jammu and Kashmir Police Head Constable Sanjewan Singh, Naib Subedar Kankara V Subba Reddy and Naik Gawade Pandurang Mahadev of Rashtriya Rifles, Lt Col. Niranjan EK of NSG, Jammu and Kashmir was awarded Shaurya Chakra.



3. The 64th National Film Awards, 2016 announced

The 64th National Film Awards 2016 were announced on Feature Films, Non Feature Films, Best Writing on Cinema and Most Film Friendly State Award. Some of the prominent winners in various categories for this year National Film Awards included –

- Best Feature Film – Kasaav
- Best Non-Feature Film - Fireflies in the Abyss
- Special Mention Award – Sonam Kapoor
- Best Actor award – Akshay Kumar
- Best Actress – Surabhi
- Best Direction - Rajesh Mapuskar (movie- Ventilator)
- Special Jury Award in the Non-Feature category- 'The Cinema Travellers'
- Special Jury Award in the Feature category – Mohanlal



4. National Hindi Sevi Samman Awards announced

Central Hindi Institute Director N.K. Pandey announced name of 26 writers for Hindi Sevi Samman Awards, which will be presented by President Pranab Mukherjee in May 2017.

Around 14 scholars receive this award in seven different categories every year for their contribution in the field of Hindi language and literature. Awardees receive Rs. 5 lakh each, a citation and a shawl from President Pranab Mukherjee.



Some of the major awardees were –

- For Hindi journalism - Rahul Dev and Baldev Bhai
- Foreign Hindi writers - Fujii Takeshi (Japan) and Gabriela Nik (New York)

5. President of India presented the Padma Awards

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented 7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri awards.

- **Padma Vibhushan** – Sharad Pawar, Murli Manohar Joshi, Sunder Lal Patwah, P.A. Sangma, K.J.Yesudas, Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev and Udipi Ramachandra Rao.
- **Padma Bhushan** - Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Devi Prasad Dwivedi, Tehemton Udwadia, Ratna Sundar Maharaj, Swami Niranjana, H.R.H. Princess Maha and Cho Ramaswamy.



- **Padma Shri** – Kailash Kher, Virat Kohli, Dipa Karmakar, Balbir Dutt etc.

6. Himachal Pradesh won Krishi Karman Award 2015-16

Himachal Pradesh has won the Krishi Karman Award 2015-16 for commendable increase in food grains production. Himachal Pradesh has been selected for this award for the third time. The award carries a trophy, citation and cash prize of Rs. 1 crore.

During last five years, the total food grains production has increased from 14.94 lakh tone to 16.34 lakh tone. The Agriculture Department has extended technological inputs and services to the farmers, which resulted in increase in food grains production.



7. Indian software engineer won top prize at the UN Challenge for an Open Source Tool

Rashik won the 'Unite Ideas #UNGAViz Textual Analysis and Visualisation Challenge' for his 'Global Policy'. Rashik's prototype will be made public and shared with United Nations bodies and member states. Rashik will also receive recognition from the Department of State and the Office of Information and Communications Technology.



The first runner-up position was awarded to Maximiliano Lopez, an IT consultant from Argentina, and the second runner-up was Thomas Fournaise, an information technology manager from France.

8. RR Hanchinal honored with the M.S. Swaminathan Award

M.S. Swaminathan Award, given to the people for their contribution in the field of agriculture, was honored to Rayappa Ramappa Hanchinal, Chairperson of Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers Rights Authority. He was honored for his tremendous work in the field of crop improvement under very hot dry environments, seed production technology and intellectual protection rights in plant varieties.



M.S. Swaminathan Award is instituted by retired Indian Council for Agricultural Research Employees' Association and Nuziveedu Seeds Limited. Winner receives cash prize of Rs. 2 lakh, a medal and citation.

9. Environmental engineer Trupti Jain received ‘Cartier Women’s Initiative award’

46 years old Indian environmental engineer Trupti Jain was honored with prestigious ‘Cartier Women’s Initiative Award’ for providing women working on farms with water management solutions and protecting small farmers against droughts and flash floods. Six winners were selected for Asia-Pacific laureate from a pool of nearly 1,900 applicants from over 120 countries.



Winners were felicitated with USD 100,000 prize money as well as a year of mentoring. Trupti Jain and five other winners were from countries Latin America, North America, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa.

10. Gururaja Bhat Award conferred on Historian A.V. Narasimha Murthi

Dr. Paduru Gururaja Bhat Memorial Award 2017 was conferred on historian and archaeologist A.V. Narasimha Murthi his contribution to Indian Archaeology, Ancient History and Numismatics. The award carries a citation and a cash prize of ₹ 50,000.



Mr Murthi is the Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Mysuru and former Head, Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Mysore. Paduru Gururaja Bhat was a teacher, historian, and researcher par excellence.

11. Chief of Naval staff honored Naval Gallantry and Non Gallantry Award winners

Naval Investiture Ceremony, an annual event for the Indian Navy, held at Command Parade Ground, Eastern Naval Command Visakhapatnam. Admiral Sunil Lanba PVSM, AVSM, ADC, Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), conferred Gallantry and Non Gallantry Awards to their recipients on behalf of the President of India at an impressive ceremonial parade.



Vikash Kumar Narwal, Neeraj Kumar, Veer Singh Chief and Rakesh Kumar Hull Artificer-4 were awarded Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) for their indomitable courage. Other awards presented included eight Nao Sena Medals for Devotion to Duty and 16 Vishisht Seva Medals.

12. Minister of State (IC) for Labour & Employment presented the NSCI Safety Awards

Minister of State (IC) for Labour & Employment presented the National Safety Council's – 'NSCI Safety Awards' for the year 2016 in New Delhi.

In the Manufacturing Sector – IOCL – Digboi Refinery; National Fertilizers Ltd, Panipat and NPCIL, Kaiga Generating Station 3 & 4, Kaiga, Karnataka under Group A, Group B and Group C respectively.

In the Construction Sector – L&T Ltd., Rawatbhata, Chittorgarh for NPCIL Atomic Power Project, Rajasthan and Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd. and in the MSME Sector – Electricals & Electronics, Thane, Maharashtra have won Sarva Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar for the year 2016.



13. Giuseppina (Giusi) Nicolini won the UNESCO Peace Prize

Giuseppina (Giusi) Nicolini won the UNESCO Peace Prize for her commitment to saving the lives of migrants and refugees. She is the mayor of the Italian island of Lampedusa.

Ms. Nicolini was honored for her effort that saved thousands who fled across the Mediterranean often on unseaworthy boats to find a better and peaceful life. According to the International Organization for Migration, 649 migrants died or went missing in the Mediterranean in the first three months of 2017 alone.



14. GNFC wins Golden Peacock Award

The Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilisers & Chemicals Limited (GNFC) won the prestigious Golden Peacock Award in the category of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for pioneering a cashless township transformation model. The case study presented in the awards entry and ceremony focused on the Neem Project.

The Golden Peacock Awards were established by the Institute of Directors (IOD) in India in 1991. They are considered as a benchmark of corporate excellence worldwide.



15. Moushumi Chatterjee honored with the BFJA Lifetime Achievement Award

Veteran actor Moushumi Chatterjee was honored with the lifetime achievement award at the 80th Bengal Film Journalists' Association (BFJA) awards. Ashish Vidyarthi was honored for his contribution to Indian Cinema.



Other winners in various categories:

- Best Actor Award: Prosenjit Chatterjee for "Sankhachil" along with Chiranjeet Chakraborty for "Chotushkone"
- Best Actress Award: Rituparna Sengupta for "Rajkahini" along with Paoli Dam for "Natoker Moto"

16. 'Newton' won the best film honor at the Hong Kong International Film Festival

Bollywood movie 'Newton' has won the Jury Prize for Best Film at the Hong Kong International Film Festival. The Rajkummar Rao-starrer movie is directed by Amit Masurkar. It is a political black comedy, which revolves around a clerk placed on election duty in a conflict-ridden area of Chhattisgarh.



The film had also won the International Federation of Art Cinemas (CICAIE) award for the Forum section at its world premiere at Berlinale during the 67th Berlin Film Festival. The film also went to 16th Annual Tribeca Film Festival.

17. Shri Kasinadhuni Viswanath to be conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2016

Renowned Film Director & Actor Shri Kasinadhuni Viswanath was conferred the 48th Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2016. The Information & Broadcasting Minister, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu approved the recommendation of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award committee.



This Award is conferred by the Government of India for outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian Cinema. The Award consists of a Swarn Kamal (Golden Lotus), a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakhs and a shawl.

18. President of India presented the CII president's Award

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee presented CII President's Award for Lifetime Achievement to Mr. Rahul Bajaj and CII foundation Woman Exemplar Award in New Delhi. CII Foundation Woman Exemplar Award in 2005 is a welcome initiative to promote women's empowerment at the community level by discovering and recognizing those who have, against all odds, excelled and contributed significantly to the development process in India.



An event was organized by a dedicated CII Foundation.

19. Dileep K Nair won the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Foundation Award

Dileep K Nair has won the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar International Foundation Kerala State award for the year 2016-17. He is currently the Chancellor of the North East Frontier Technical University (NEFTU) in Arunachal Pradesh and is the youngest ever chancellor of any university in the nation.



Nair started his career at the age of 24 and has around 12 years of experience in various Educational Projects. He is also the founder of The Automobile Society (India) and The Engineer's Outlook Magazine.

20. Environmental activist Prafulla Samantara selected for Goldman Environmental Prize from the Asia region

Top environmental activist Prafulla Samantara has been selected for Goldman Environmental Prize or Green Nobel from Asia region for leading a historic 12-year legal battle that affirmed the indigenous Dongria Kondh's land rights and protected the Niyamgiri hills from a massive, open-pit aluminum ore mine.

The winners of 2017:

- Wendy Bowman, Australia
- Rodrigue Mugaruka Katembo, Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Mark Lopez, United States
- Uroš Macerl, Slovenia
- Prafulla Samantara, India
- Rodrigo Tot, Guatemala



The Goldman Environmental Prize is a prize awarded annually to grassroots environmental activists, one from each of the world's six geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands and Island Nations, North America, and South and Central America.

21. The 52nd Jnanpith award conferred in New Delhi

President Pranab Mukherjee conferred the 52nd Jnanpith Award on eminent Bengali poet Professor Sankha Ghosh at a function in New Delhi. He was awarded for his outstanding contribution in the field of literature. Adim lata -gulmomay, Murkho Baro, Samajik Noy, Baborer Prarthana are some of his classic creations.

Professor Ghosh was awarded with the Sahitya Akademi in the year 1977 and 1999. He was also honored with Padma Bhushan in 2011.



Books & Authors

1. Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu released a Book Titled “Indian Railway – The weaving of a National Tapestry”

Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu released the book titled “Indian Railway n– The weaving of a National Tapestry” jointly authored by Shri Bibek Debroy (Member, NITI Aayog) Shri Sanjay Chadha (Joint Secretary, Ministry of Commerce) & Ms. Vidya Krishnamurthi.



The book traverses the timeline from 1830-1947 and is written in a storytelling manner. The theme of this book is the historical development of railways in India, organized into chapters dealing with different periods of development in chronological order.

2. PM Modi released a book titled Matoshree

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book Matoshree authored by Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan in Parliament House. The book covers the life and times of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar. After the release of the book, a play based on the book was staged in Balayogi Auditorium.



The play was organized by Avirat group of Indore, Madhya Pradesh and was directed by Rajan Deshmukh. The play Matoshree depicted the struggles, predicaments and qualities of Devi Ahilyabai Holkar with great sensitivity.

3. Colson Whitehead won Pulitzer Prize for ‘Underground Railroad’

Author Colson Whitehead won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction for his blockbuster novel The Underground Railroad. He also won the 2016 National Book Award for the same novel. The novel depicts the journey of a young woman escaping from slavery via a fantastical train system.

Other Major winners under various categories:

- **Drama:** Sweat, by Lynn Nottage
- **History:** Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy, by Heather Ann Thompson (Pantheon)
- **Poetry:** Olio, by Tyehimba Jess (Wave Books)



4. ‘Hope in Challenged Democracy’ book penned by Ashwani Kumar

The Vice President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari received the first copy of the Book titled ‘Hope in a challenged democracy; An Indian narrative’ authored by Shri Ashwani Kumar, from the former Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh.



The principal themes of the book, in the author’s own words, are firstly on the ‘incestuous relationship between wealth and power’ and its impact on the credibility and moral authority of the government, and secondly on what he describes as ‘an insufferable atmosphere of intolerance. Ashwani Kumar has formerly served as the Minister of Law and Justice.

5. President released book on Draupadi by Veerappa Moily

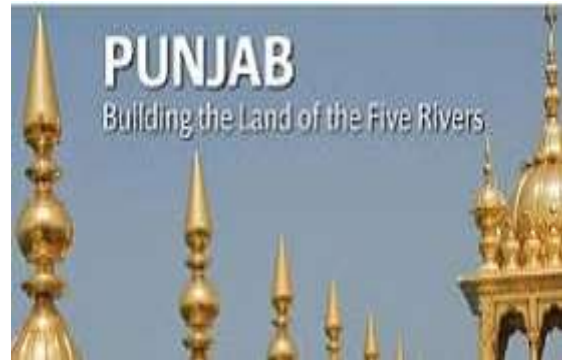
President Pranab Mukherjee released a book on Draupadi, "The Flaming Tresses of Draupadi," at Rashtrapati Bhawan. The book is an English version of the original book written in Kannada by senior Congress leader M Veerappa Moily. It was translated into English by D A Shankar. The book is published by Rupa.



The book traces the life and journey of Draupadi from her birth to her marriage to the five Pandava brothers to the great battle of Kurukshetra.

6. 'Punjab: Building the Land of Five Rivers' launched by Arjun Gaiind

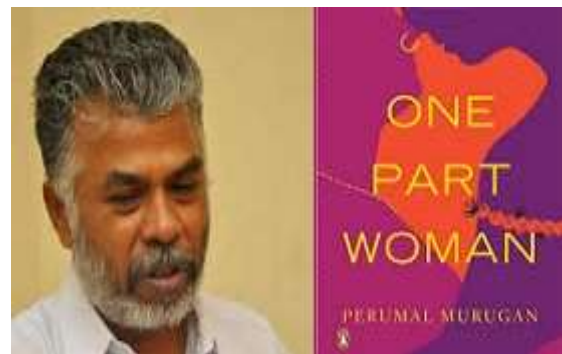
Author Arjun Gaiind released his latest book, 'Punjab: Building the Land of Five Rivers', in Mumbai. The book reveals story about how Partition left Punjab scarred and how Punjabi conversations between strangers still begin with their hometown history before partition. Book is edited by Abha Narain Lambah and supported by journalist Siddharth Bhatia.



Arjun Raj Gaiind is one of India's best-known comic book writers and graphic novels. Some of such novels are Empire of Blood, Reincarnation Man, and A Very Pukka Murder, etc.

7. 'One Part Woman' bagged the Sahitya Akademi Award 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. The award carries an engraved copper plaque and a cash component of ₹50,000.



The prize is awarded to books first published during five years immediately preceding the year of the award.

The translation was done by Aniruddhan Vasudevan and the book was published by Penguin. The title describes Lord Shiva in his avatar as a combination of man and woman.

Committees

1. Government sets up inter-ministerial committee to monitor UDAN

The government has set up an inter-ministerial committee to monitor the regional air connectivity scheme UDAN, which seeks to make flying affordable by connecting unserved and under-served airports.

Airports Authority of India Chairman, representatives from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security apart from officials of airlines and states concerned will also be part of the panel.



Committee will be chaired by Civil Aviation Secretary. The committee will be responsible for overall monitoring of the schemes of promotion of regional connectivity by way of revival of unserved and under-served airports.

2. Government sets up a panel to take stock of Virtual Currencies

The government constituted an inter-disciplinary committee to recommend an action plan for dealing with virtual currencies, including bitcoins, and suggest measures to deal with issues like money laundering as well as consumer protection concerns.

The committee will be chaired by Special Secretary (Economic Affairs) with representatives from the departments of revenue and financial services. The committee will also include experts from the RBI. The panel has been asked to submit its report within three months.



3. A high-level committee headed by the Finance Secretary Ashok Lavasa submitted a report to FM

The high-level committee headed by Finance Secretary Ashok Lavasa submitted its report to Finance Minister Arun Jaitley. The committee was set up in June 2016 to study the recommendations of seventh Pay Commission on allowances to Central government employees.



In its recommendation, the Pay Commission had asked abolition or subsuming of several allowances. The Committee has taken into account representations made by various stakeholders. The report would now be examined by the empowered committee of secretaries and after that, it would be placed before the Cabinet for its approval.

Deaths

1. BBC radio broadcaster Brian Matthew passed away at 88

Brian Matthew, the veteran broadcaster who hosted Sounds of the 60s on BBC Radio 2, has passed away at the age of 88. His death was followed by the announcement that he is stepping down from the program because of ill health.

He started his broadcast career in 1948 and trained as an actor at RADA before joining the BBC in 1954. He had given Sounds of the 60s since April 1990. Mr. Matthew was one of Radio 2's first DJs.



2. Veteran scriptwriter Ajey Jhankar passed away

Veteran author and filmmaker, scriptwriter of Marathi novel 'Ajey Jhankar' passed away at the age of 57. Ajey Jhankar produced Marathi novel "Sarkarnama", Jhankar in 1998, which had bagged many awards. He has also been co-screenwriter for the Hollywood movie Singularity made by filmmaker Roland Joffe. He was also awarded for lyrics.

Ajey Jhankar was writer of novel 'Drohparv'. His contribution in marketing venture 'Market Missionaries' has also been appreciated.



3. Famous classical vocalist Kishori Amonkar died at 84

Kishori Amonkar passed away at the age of 84. She was famous for her classical singing. Amonkar was recognized as one of the foremost singers in the Hindustani tradition folk singing and as an innovative vocalist of the Jaipur gharana. She has performed the lighter classical thumri, bhajan, devotional songs and film music.

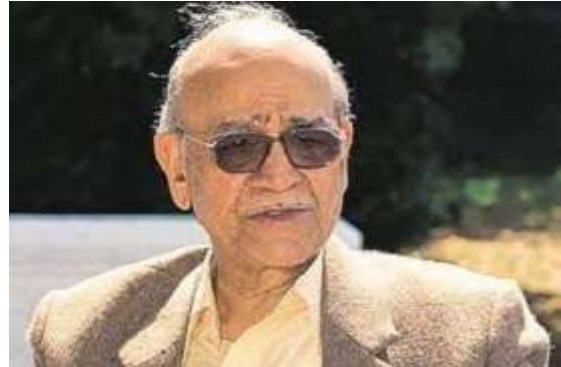
One of her most appreciated factor of her voice is that she added the emotional appeal of the more popular styles into the comparatively rigid classical tradition.



4. Former J&K Governor Girish 'Gary' Saxena passed away

Former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Girish Chandra Saxena passed away at the age of 90 years. He was lovingly called Gary. He took charge as the Jammu and Kashmir Governor for the first time on May 26, 1990 and continued in the post until March 13, 1993. He was re-appointed in 1998.

Mr. Saxena is an IPS officer of the 1950-batch of the Uttar Pradesh cadre. He also headed country's external intelligence agency RAW. Saxena served as an advisor to the then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi until January 1988.



5. Former AP Minister Devineni Rajasekhara died

The 63-year-old Telugu TDP leader and former Andhra Pradesh minister Devineni Rajasekhara died of cardiac arrest. He was founder of United Students Organisation and won the state elections in 1985, 1989 and 1994 as a TDP candidate from Kankipadu constituency in Krishna district. He served as MLA from Kankipadu in 1985, 1989 and 1994 and as a minister in the NT Rama Rao cabinet.



He also served as an Education Minister in the NTR Cabinet in 1994. He has also served as an MLA from Kankipadu in 2004.

6. World's oldest person passed away at age 117

Emma Morano, the world's oldest person, born in the 1800s and last survivor of the 19th century passed away at the age of 117 years. She belonged to Italy and was a musical performer. She was presented the Guinness World Record titles for oldest living person and oldest living woman.

She joined the list of hall of fame in 2016. The Oldest male person living remains Holocaust survivor, Israel Kristal, who celebrated his 113th birthday in 2016.



7. Internet Pioneer Robert Taylor Passed Away

The Pioneer of modern internet, Robert Taylor, passed away at the age of 85 years. Taylor led the development of the Arpanet in 1966, which is considered as the precursor to today's internet. Arpanet was a computer network that initially linked together four US research centres.

Taylor also helped in the development of the mouse and graphical user interface, two features that made personal computers such as Windows and Mac possible.



8. Veteran Journalist Nora Chopra passed away

Veteran journalist, Nora Chopra, passed away at the age of 64 years after a prolonged illness.

She was widely admired and respected for her journalistic skills. She was considered a passionate, spirited and combative journalist.

Ms. Chopra had started her career with the Pioneer in Allahabad, and later she worked for Northern India Patrika, the Asian Age and Tehelka.



9. Veteran Actor Vinod Khanna passed away

Veteran Bollywood actor, politician and former union minister Vinod Khanna passed away at the age of 70 years. He was seen in 141 films between 1968 and 2013. He was a sitting Bharatiya Janata Party MP from Gurdaspur district of Punjab.

He won the Filmfare Best Supporting Actor Award for Haath Ki Safai in 1975. He won Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999. In 2005, he was honored with Stardust Awards – Role Model for the Year. He received Zee Cine Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2007.



10. Oscar-Winning Director Jonathan Demme passed away

Oscar winning, American Director, Jonathan Demme, passed away at the age of 73 years. The filmmaker helmed classics like *The Silence of the Lambs* and *Philadelphia*.

The Silence of the Lambs, released in 1991, was awarded five Oscars, including a best director statuette for Demme and one for best picture. Tom Hanks picked up a best actor statuette for his role in *Philadelphia*. Demme also directed a number of beloved smaller films, including *Rachel Getting Married* (2008), starring Anne Hathaway.



Defence

1. IIT-Madras inked Memorandum of Understanding with Indian Army

The Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IITM) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army to identify the critical technological areas that can be enhanced in the armed forces.

As per the MoU, the Army will sponsor four officers for doctoral programmes besides a five-day Technology Development Programme for 15 officers on a biannual basis. This is the fourth MOU after IIT Gandhinagar Mumbai and Kharagpur with which the Indian Army has signed in the recent past.



2. Defence Acquisition Council cleared proposals to buy Barak missiles

Defence Acquisition Council approved to procure Barak missiles from Rafael Advance Defense Systems of Israel at an approximate cost of around Rs500 crore, under 'buy global' category. The said decision has been taken to increase India's maritime capability in view of the changing security dynamics in the Indian Ocean region (IOR).

The DAC also approved procurement of 'Expendable Bathythermograph Systems' from the US, a small torpedo-shaped device that detects water temperature changes, for the Indian Navy.



3. India signed defence deals with Israel worth over \$2 billion

India has inked defense deals worth over \$2 billion for the Barak-8 medium-range SAM systems to include one regiment of 16 launchers and 560 missiles for the Indian Army. The SAM systems, advanced surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems, are designed to destroy hostile aircraft, missiles and drones at a range of 70-km. It is a joint project between the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).



IAI will also supply additional long-range surface to- air missile (LRSAM) air and missile defense systems for Indian aircraft carriers.

4. India-United Kingdom entered into a defence partnership

India and the United Kingdom have entered into a defence partnership to encompass cooperation in defence industry as well as stronger military-to-military engagement, including training and advanced joint exercises.

The two countries also agreed to develop cooperation between the UK Hydrographic Office and the Indian Navy Hydrographic Office. The UK Secretary of State for Defence Sir Michael Fallon was on a four-day visit to India.



5. The 12th Indo Mongolian joint exercise held

Twelfth iteration of Indo - Mongolian Joint Military Exercise Nomadic Elephant is held at Vairengte from 05 April 2017 until 18 April 2017.

Nomadic Elephant is aimed at training the troops in Counter Insurgency & Counter Terrorism Operations under the United Nations mandate. The joint training laid emphasis on conducting operations by a joint subunit, comprising of troops from both the armies, in adverse operational conditions aimed at enhancing the interoperability between the two armies.



6. Indian Warships Visit Toulon, France

In continuation of the Indian Navy's overseas deployment to the Mediterranean Sea and West Coast of Africa, three Indian warships INS Mumbai, Trishul, and Aditya, arrived at Toulon, France.

On completion of the visit at Toulon, bilateral exercise Varuna between the Indian Navy and the French Navy is scheduled from 24 to 30 April 2017.

Bilateral exercises such as Garuda, Shakti and Varuna have been a regular feature between the two nations.



7. India is the world's fifth largest military spender

According to a report published by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), India was at fifth place on the list of the world's highest spenders on defence in 2016 as its military expenditure grew by 8.5% last year to \$55.9 billion.



The global military expenditure rose for a second consecutive year to \$1,686 billion. USA, China, Russia and Saudi Arabia top the list respectively. The other prominent spenders in the top 15 include Japan, South Korea, and Australia. The US is the top spender whose military expenditure grew 1.7% between 2015 and 2016 to \$611 billion.

8. India test-fired Agni-III ballistic missile

India carried out a fresh user trial of 3,000-kilometer range Agni-III ballistic missile from Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha coast. The Strategic Forces Command with logistics support from Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out the test from launch pad No. 4 of the Integrated Test Range.



The Agni-III is capable of carrying both conventional and nuclear warheads. It is equipped with hybrid navigation, guidance and control systems along with advanced on-board computer. The missile has a two-stage solid propellant system. It can re-enter the atmosphere at a very high velocity.

1. Finance Ministry released India's External Debt Statistics end-December 2016

Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance released India's External Debt position at end-December 2016, which is as follows.

India's external debt stock fell by US\$ 29.0 billion (6.0 percent) to US\$ 456.1 billion, at end-December 2016 over the level at end-March 2016. The long-term external debt accounted for 81.6 percent of India's total external debt, while the remaining 18.4 percent was short-term debt.



While the long-term debt at US\$ 372.2 billion, declined by US\$ 29.4 billion (7.3 percent) at end-December 2016 over the level at end-March 2016, short-term debt increased marginally by 0.5 percent to US\$ 83.8 billion.

2. Revenue Department exceeds Revised Tax Collections target for 2016-17

The total tax revenue targets of the revised estimates for 2016-17 for both Direct and Indirect Taxes was Rs. 16.97 lakh crore of which 8.47 lakh crore was for Direct Tax and Rs. 8.5 lakh crore from Indirect Tax.

It may be recalled that the Revised Estimate figures of 2016-17 was Rs. 16.97 lakh crore compared to the Budget Estimates figures of Rs. 16.25 lakh crore in 2016-17.



As against the Revised Estimate, the provisional figure of tax collection is Rs 17.10 lakh crore, which is a growth of around 18% compared to last year.

3. Indian economy expected to grow at 7.2% in 2017-18

According to IMF estimates, Indian economy is expected to grow at 7.2% in 2017-18 and 7.7% in 2018-19. It was announced that second New Development Bank Annual Board of Governors' meeting held in New Delhi. According to Indian government, India requires 646 billion dollars over next few years to finance infrastructure development.



India had possessed loans of USD 2 Billion from the National Development Bank for various purposes. New Development Bank Annual Board of Governors' meeting declared that New Development Bank would emerge as a Development Bank and help in the funding of emerging economies.

4. Ola united with UPI to ease payment options

Ola cab services united with Unified Payment Interface (UPI) to ease digital payment options for its customers. UPI will make payments faster and convenient. Ola money will offer 'Pay by UPI' along with cash, debit/credit card and Ola Money wallet option, thus Ola customers to use their unique UPI IDs to pay for all their rides on the Ola platform.



ANI Technologies Pvt. Ltd., operating under the trade name Ola, is an Indian online transportation network company.

5. ADB approved \$175 million loan to Power Grid Corporation

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) extended a \$175 million loan to the Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. for a 20-year term at an annual interest rate determined in accordance with ADB's London interbank offered rate (LIBOR)-based lending facility, to promote construction of high voltage transmission systems and improve national grid system.



Apart from ADB's loan, Power Grid Corporation has also obtained \$50 million co-finance from the Clean Technology Fund. The \$50 million CTF loan financing will come with a 40-year term.

6. India's Foreign Exchange surged to 369.95 billion US dollars

India's foreign exchange surged by 2.02 billion US dollars to 369.95 billion US dollars in the week that ended on 31st of March 2017. RBI informed that foreign currency assets, a major part of the overall reserves rose by 2.08 billion US dollars to 346.32 billion US dollars.

Gold reserves, on the other hand moved down by 45 million US dollars to 19.87 billion US dollars. India's special drawing rights with the International Monetary Fund also fell 5.1 million US dollars to 1.45 billion US dollars.



7. Flipkart Buys eBay India

India's largest e-commerce player, Flipkart, has acquired eBay's India business. eBay has agreed to make a \$500 million cash investment in and sell its eBay.in business to Flipkart in exchange for an equity stake in Flipkart.

eBay.in will continue to operate as a separate entity from Flipkart and the two companies plan to tap in each other's inventory to expand sales. Flipkart raised USD 1.4 Billion from Tencent, eBay and Microsoft at post transaction valuation of USD 11.6 billion.



8. World Bank predicted India's GDP at 7.2% in 2017-18

World Bank report predicted India's GDP at 7.2% growth for year 2017-18 and 7.5% for year 2018-19. According to World bank, India's GDP slowed down to 6.8% in 2016-17 due to demonetization but further implementation of proper reforms and GST, India's GDP will further accelerate to 7.5% in 2018-19.

According to World Bank Report, the economic growth is projected to increase gradually to 7.7% by 2019-20 due to private investments. The World Bank analysis, however, has warned against "significant risks to India's favorable growth outlook".



9. Reliance Industries Topped TCS to become the most-valued Indian Company

Reliance Industries Ltd. regained its status as India's most valued firm by market capitalisation. RIL topped TCS to regain the status. Shares of RIL were trading 3.43 percent higher at Rs. 1,416.40 on BSE at 12:36 hrs, giving the company a market capitalisation (m-cap) of Rs. 4,60,291.20 crore – the highest for any listed firm in the country.

TCS had replaced RIL as the most valued firm more than four years ago.



10. India's Forex reserves increase by \$1.25 billion

According to the Reserve Bank of India's weekly statistical supplement, India's foreign exchange (Forex) reserves have increased by \$1.25 billion to reach \$371.13 billion from \$369.88 billion as on April 21, 2017. The current reserves are just short of a lifetime high of USD 371.99 Billion reached in the week to September 30, 2016.

The components of India's Foreign Exchange Reserves include foreign currency assets (FCAs), Gold, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), RBI's Reserve position with International Monetary Fund (IMF). FCAs constitute the largest component of the Forex Reserves.



Environment

1. Scientists identified fungus that will help clean environment

A soil fungus named as 'Aspergillus Tubingensis' was identified by scientists of Chinese Academy of Sciences that will quickly break down plastic materials with the help of its enzymes and clean environment. This garbage ending fungus was found in Islamabad, Pakistan.



The researchers took samples of soil and various pieces of rubbish and found that fungus secretes enzymes on the surface of the plastic and uses the physical strength of its mycelia to break surface of the plastic and chemical bonds between the plastic molecules.

2. New species of tree-dwelling crab found in Kerala

University of Kerala's Scientists discovered a new species of long-legged, tree-dwelling crabs named Kani maranjandu in Western Ghats of Kerala. The name came from Kani tribe of Kerala. Species is first of its kind to offer a record of an arboreal crab. Kani maranjandu is long legged.



It has elongated walking legs, which is not found in any other genus. Researchers have been in search of female species but could not find one. Recently, they captured a female specimen and later a large adult male.

3. First tropical cyclone of 2017 in the Bay of Bengal

Tropical Storm Maarutha became the first tropical cyclone of 2017 in the Bay of Bengal when it formed on April 15, 2017. This cyclone is expected to hit Myanmar on 17 April 2017 and bring heavy rains in parts of that country.



Tropical Cyclone Maarutha is the first named storm of 2017 Northern Hemisphere tropical cyclone season. A Cyclone represents a rotating, organized system of clouds and thunderstorms that originates over tropical or subtropical waters and has closed low-level circulation.

Finance

1. Interest rates on Small Savings Schemes lowered by 0.1%

The Government lowered the interest rates on all nine small savings scheme by 0.1% with effect from 1 April 2017.

- PPF scheme will fetch lower annual rate of 7.9%.
- 5-year National Savings Certificate will fetch 7.9%
- Kisan Vikas Patra investments will yield 7.6% and mature in 112 months.
- Sukanya Samridhi Account Scheme will offer 8.4% annually (Previously 8.5%).
- 5-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme will fetch 8.4%



2. Karnataka Bank and SBI Card launched co-branded credit card

Karnataka Bank and SBI Card announced their collaboration to launch two variants of co-branded credit cards for the customers of Karnataka Bank - Karnataka Bank Platinum SBI Card and Karnataka Bank SimplySAVE SBI Card.

While the Karnataka Bank Platinum SBI Card has been designed keeping in mind the premium customers, the Karnataka Bank SimplySAVE SBI Card is aimed at value conscious consumers and offers rewards and features that enable customers to maximize their savings on their regular spends.



3. Reserve Bank of India to set up a separate Enforcement Department

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is setting up a separate Enforcement Department. The Enforcement Department (EFD) is opened on April 3, 2017, to separate those who oversee the possible rule breaches and those who decide on punitive actions so that enforcement process operates fairly and is evidence based.



The EFD shall, inter alia, develop a broad policy for enforcement and initiate enforcement action against the Regulated Entities (REs) for violation consistent with such policy. EFD would serve as a centralized department to deal with banks only for enforcement action.

4. RBI decides to permit banks to issue PDI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to permit banks to issue Perpetual Debt Instruments (PDI) qualifying for inclusion as Additional Tier 1 capital and debt capital instruments qualifying for inclusion as Tier 2 capital, by way of rupee denominated bonds overseas.

Some of the measures taken by RBI to deepen the corporate bond market:

- Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have been permitted to invest in unlisted corporate bonds.
- Partial Credit Enhancement ceiling by banks has been raised from 20% to 50% of the issue size.
- FPIs have been provided direct access to secondary market trading in corporate bond market without involving brokers.
- Brokers authorized as market makers are allowed to participate in corporate bond repo market.



5. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)

NPCI has been set up as an umbrella organization owned and operated by the banks. NPCI has been authorised by Reserve Bank of India under the PSS Act, 2007 to operate the following Payment Systems:

- National Financial Switch (NFS)
- Immediate Payment System (IMPS)
- Affiliation of RuPay Cards (debit cards/ prepaid cards) issued by banks and co-branded credit cards issued by non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) or any other entity approved by the RBI
- National Automatic Clearing House (ACH)
- Aadhaar Enabled Payments System (AEPS)
- Operation of Cheque Truncation System



6. SBI enters the 'Top 50 Global Banks' league

The State Bank of India has entered into the league of 'Top 50 Global Banks'. The merger of five associate banks and Bharatiya Mahila Bank with the SBI has helped increase its balance sheet size to Rs. 41 lakh crore.

Post-merger, the bank now has 2.77 lakh employees, 50-crore customers and more than 25,000 branches and 58,000 ATMs.

It will have a deposit base of more than Rs. 26 lakh crore and advances level of 18.50 lakh crore.



7. Axis Bank made an agreement with Wells Fargo for US remittances

The Axis Bank Ltd. has signed an agreement with Wells Fargo to offer real-time remittances from NRIs to India. There will be no transaction fee applicable to the money transfers from USA. Wells Fargo is one of the leading banks in the United States and has global presence.

This tie-up is the first of its kind with a US banking entity for Axis Bank. There will also be no restrictions on the amount of transfer. Wells



Fargo has similar tie-ups with ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank.

8. Kotak Mahindra Bank launched 8-11 app to double their customer base

Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched an 8-11, a digital and paperless account opening system, that can be used anytime, anywhere. It allows customers to open a zero-balance, zero-charge account.

The account can be opened within five minutes using the Kotak Mahindra's mobile banking system. Kotak Mahindra was the first bank to use Aadhar-based OTP, which RBI allowed in December 2016, for account opening.



9. RBI Board approved a proposal to introduce Rs. 200 notes

The board of the Reserve Bank of India has passed the proposal for processing the printing the new Rs. 200 notes after June 2017. The RBI board has 14 members, which includes four Deputy Governors, Economic Affairs Secretary 'Shaktikanta Das', Financial Services Secretary 'Anjuly Chib Duggal' and RBI Governor Urjit Patel.

It is part of Government's decision to rework the currency mix. The Indian Government wants to enhance the digital payments and does not intend to increase currency in circulation to the pre-demonetization level.



10. The Rs. 2 lakhs cash transaction limit not applicable for bank, post office withdrawals

The Income Tax department has clarified that the ban on cash transaction in excess of two lakh rupees will not be applicable to withdrawals from banks and post office savings accounts.

Through the Finance Act 2017, the government has banned cash transactions of over two lakhs and said a penalty of an equal amount would be levied on the receiver. The Central Board of Direct Taxes said a necessary notification in this regard would be issued.



11. First Monetary Policy Review of 2017-18

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has kept the key policy rate, the repo rate unchanged in its first bimonthly monetary policy review of the financial year 2017-18. However, RBI raised reverse repo rate by 25 bps to 6%. Following the review, the key rates now stand at:

- Bank Rate – 6.50%
- Marginal Standing Facility Rate – 6.50%
- Repo Rate – 6.25%
- Reverse Repo Rate – 6.00%
- CRR – 4%
- SLR – 20.50%



12. RBI gives license nod to Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ltd

Reserve Bank of India gave final license to Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ltd, headed by Kumar Mangalam Birla to set up a payments bank. Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ltd is 51:49 joint venture with Idea cellular. RBI has given license with an aim to bring financial inclusion by welcoming small finance banks and payments banks in banking industry.



Payments banks are allowed to accept deposits from individuals and small businesses up to a maximum of Rs. 1 lakh per account. India post payments bank and Airtel payments bank have already started operations.

13. South Indian Bank united with Flyworld Money for remittances

The South India bank entered into agreement with Flyworld Money Exchange, to provide facility of remittances made by Indian expatriates in Australia. Flyworld Money Exchange will provide facility of cost-effective remittances to NRIs in Australia for remittances made in India. This pact will be considered as South Indian Bank's first remittance arrangement with an exchange house in Australia.



Flyworld Money Exchange provides this facility to customers as well as non-customers by enabling the bank to reach the Indian Diaspora in Australia more efficiently.

14. RBI allowed banks to invest in REITs & InvITs capital

RBI has allowed banks to invest up to 10 per cent of the unit capital of single Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs). The move is aimed to boost spending on infrastructure.

Banks can invest within the overall ceiling of 20 per cent of their net worth permitted for direct investments in shares, convertible bonds/debentures, units of equity-oriented mutual funds and exposures to venture capital funds (VCFs).



15. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana crossed Rs. 1.8 lakh crore target for 2016-17

Loans extended under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) during 2016-17 have crossed the target of Rs. 1,80,000 crore for 2016-17. Sanctions currently stand at Rs. 1,80,087 crore with final data still awaited from some of the smaller non-banking lenders. The Union Budget has announced a target of Rs. 2.44 lakh crore for Mudra Loans during 2017-18.



Mudra Loans are available for non-agricultural activities up to Rs. 10 lakh and activities allied to agriculture such as Dairy, Poultry, Bee Keeping etc., are covered. Mudra's unique features include a Mudra Card, which permits access to Working Capital through ATMs and Card Machines.

16. RBI issues new framework for bad loans

With an aim to resolve the problem of banks' mounting non-performing assets (NPAs), or bad loans, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued "Revised Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework for banks" with effect from 1st April 2017.

Under the revised framework, if a bank crosses the third level of risk threshold (where a bank's common equity tier I capital falls below the threshold of 3.625 percent by 3.125 percent or more) it will either be amalgamated or merged, or taken over by another entity altogether.



17. Income Tax department launched 'Operation Clean Money-II'

The Income Tax department has identified over 60,000 "high risk" persons for probe under the second phase of the 'Operation Clean Money'.

The IT Department has identified high-value property deals, outward remittances and large cash sales made by these 60,000 assesseees during the demonetisation period. Post demonetisation, the IT Dept. has detected Rs. 9,334 crores of undisclosed income and referred about 400 cases to the Enforcement Directorate and the Central Bureau of Investigation.



18. Bank Boards Bureau draws up 'GRAF' for PSBs

The Bank Boards Bureau (BBB) has drawn up an elaborate Governance, Reward and Accountability Framework (GRAF) that integrates elements of organisational structure and processes to ensure high standards of corporate governance. It aims to make PSBs more competitive against private sector rivals as well as prepare them for possible mergers with each other.



The Bureau has also evolved a code of conduct and ethics that can be enforced across all PSBs to ensure the right behaviour.

19. Postal department, SBI to promote cashless transactions

The Department of Posts has joined hands with State Bank of India to promote 'SBI buddy e-wallet' and POS machines for cashless transactions at Post Office counters while booking speed post and registered post items.

P K Swain, Chief postmaster general, Punjab circle and Anil Kishora, Chief General Manager, SBI, Chandigarh dedicated SBI buddy e-wallet and SBI POS machines in Chandigarh.



20. I-T CPC in Bengaluru allotted a unique pin code for taxpayers benefit

The Department of Post has allotted a unique pin code to the Central Processing Centre (CPC), Income tax Department in Bengaluru to ensure better delivery of letters and mails sent by taxpayers and assesseees. The new pin code is 560500 while the CPC earlier used to sport the old pin code of 560100.

The CPC is the central database centre of the department, which receives all Income Tax Returns (ITRs), both e-filed and sent through post.



21. IRDAI launched a web portal for insurance self-networking platform

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has launched a web portal for Insurance Self Networking platform for online registration. Insurance companies, brokers and corporate agents can sell and service insurance policies through this platform. The insurers and insurance intermediaries may access it using the following URL: isnp.irda.gov.in



The ISNP portal will offer services like change of policy details like name and address, collection of renewal premiums, surrender or withdrawals, duplicate policy, death/maturity claim and other policy specific services.

22. Grasim received RBI approval to hike FII limit

The Reserve Bank has allowed Aditya Birla Group firm Grasim Industries to raise the foreign shareholding to 49 per cent from the existing limit of 30 per cent under the portfolio investment scheme (PIS).

FII, NRIs and PIOs (persons of Indian origin) can invest in primary and secondary capital markets in India through portfolio investment scheme (PIS). The RBI monitors ceilings on FII/NRI/PIO investments in Indian companies on a daily basis.



23. Bank accounts to be blocked if not self-certified by April 30, 2017

As part of FATCA compliance, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has asked the banks/financial institutions to obtain self-certification from customers by April 30, 2017, to avoid closure of accounts. It has directed the banks to obtain a self-certification for the accounts opened from July 1, 2014 to August 31, 2015.

The Indian Government entered an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with USA for implementation of FATCA coming into force from 31 August 2015. FATCA stands for Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act.



24. Amazon received RBI approval for e-wallet

Amazon India has received the RBI's approval for an e-wallet. The licence has been issued to Amazon Online Distribution Services on March 22, and is valid for five years. According to RBI's draft guidelines, all entities seeking fresh approvals to launch PPIs will need to have an audited net worth of Rs. 25 crore, which must be maintained at all times.

Amazon had launched its Pay Balance service in order to boost cashless transactions in December 2016. According to RBI data, volume of payments through PPIs rose from Rs. 1320 crores in November to Rs. 2150 crores in March.



25. Central Government amended the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Deposit Scheme

In exercise of the powers conferred by clause (c) of Section 199B of the Finance Act, 2016 (28 of 2016), the Central Government amended through a Notification the conditions specified in clause 5 of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Deposit Scheme.

Now the effective date of opening of the Bonds Ledger Account shall be the date of receipt of deposits by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) from the authorized banks. Provided further that the date of deposit shall in no case, be extended beyond 30 April 2017.



26. RBI inaugurated Banking Ombudsman at Chhattisgarh and in J&K

The Reserve bank of India inaugurated two new Banking Ombudsman offices in Jammu of Jammu and Kashmir and Raipur city of Chhattisgarh. Previously, banking services related complaints from entire Jammu & Kashmir used to fall under the jurisdiction of New Delhi-I banking ombudsman office, so in order to ease services for customers, a new office has been opened in Jammu. Earlier, Bhopal ombudsman office provided banking ombudsman services to Chhattisgarh



This takes total number of offices to 20 across the country.

27. RBI signed a MoU with the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan

The Reserve Bank of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on "Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information" with the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan.



The Reserve Bank has entered into Memorandum of Understanding, Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and Statement of Co-operation with supervisors of a few countries to promote greater co-operation and share supervisory information. With this RBI signed 39 such MoUs, one Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and one Statement of Co-operation as well.

28. SEBI launched a new website

SEBI has launched a new version of its website www.sebi.gov.in with enhanced user friendly features such as a better user experience across various devices, enhanced 'Search' function, enhanced content with need based search, enhanced speed of loading pages and better responsive web pages.



The new website is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA for making web content more accessible to differently abled people and conforms to the guidelines for Indian government websites.

29. ICICI Bank data centre rated India's first IGBC Platinum rated project

ICICI Bank Data Centre in Hyderabad was honored with IGBC plaque by IGBC Green Data Centre Rating System. With this, ICICI bank Data Centre of Hyderabad becomes India's first Platinum rated project under IGBC Green Data Centre Rating System. Chanda Kochhar, MD & CEO, ICICI Bank was presented IGBC plaque by IGBC, at a ceremony held in Hyderabad.



ICICI Bank's Data Centre has contributed to power savings of 15 MW off-site renewable energy by LED based energy efficient lighting fixtures and procurement of green certified products and materials.

30. Finance Ministry agreed 8.65% interest rate on EPF

Ministry of Finance approved 8.65% rate on Employees Provident Fund (EPF) for 2016-17, which will be credited into the accounts of four crore subscribers. It was approved by Employees' Provident Fund Organisation trustees in December 2015. Previously, government had planned to lower the EPF rate for aligning it with the rates of small savings schemes like PPF.



The government generally ratifies the rate of return approved by the CBT because the EPFO is an autonomous body and provides interest on EPF deposits from its own income.

31. Indian Government to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds 2017-18 – Series I

Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, has decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds 2017-18 – Series I. The Bonds will be sold through banks, Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices and recognized stock exchanges viz., National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange.



Minimum permissible investment will be 1 gram of gold. The investors will be compensated at a fixed rate of 2.50%. The Bonds will be restricted for sale to resident Indian entities including individuals, HUFs, Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.

32. RBI capped bank exposure to REITs, InvITs at 10%

The RBI allowed banks to invest up to 10% of the unit capital of a Real Estate Investment Trust (REITs) or Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs). In its first bimonthly monetary policy of 2017-18, the RBI had permitted banks to invest in REITs and InvITs.



The banks' exposure to REITs/InvITs will be within the overall ceiling of 20% of the net worth permitted for direct investments in shares, convertible bonds/ debentures, units of equity-oriented mutual funds and Venture Capital Funds (VCFs).

33. RBI inked a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bank of Guyana

The Reserve Bank of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on "Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information" with Bank of Guyana. The MoU was signed by Dr Gobind N. Ganga, Governor on behalf of Bank of Guyana and Dr. Urjit R. Patel, Governor on behalf of RBI.



The RBI has entered into Memorandum of Understanding, Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and Statement of Co-operation with supervisors of a few countries to promote greater co-operation and share supervisory information. With this RBI has signed 40 such MoUs, one Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and one Statement of Co-operation as well.

34. Manappuram Finance launched co-branded prepaid card with YES Bank

Kerala-based NBFC Manappuram Finance launched its own co-branded prepaid card in tie-up with YES Bank with an aim to promote digital financial transactions.



The 'Manappuram YES Bank Prepaid Money Card' can be pre-loaded up to a maximum amount of Rs. 50,000 and then be used to withdraw money from all ATMs. The card works on MasterCard and RuPay networks. It can be used for online transactions and at merchant establishments with PoS terminals.

35. YES BANK awarded the Golden Peacock Award 2017

YES BANK has won the prestigious 'Golden Peacock Innovative Product / Service Award 2017' for its innovative mobile technology product, SIMsePAY at the Dubai Global Convention 2017 for the 27th World Congress on Leadership for Business Excellence & Innovation and Presentation of Golden Peacock Awards.

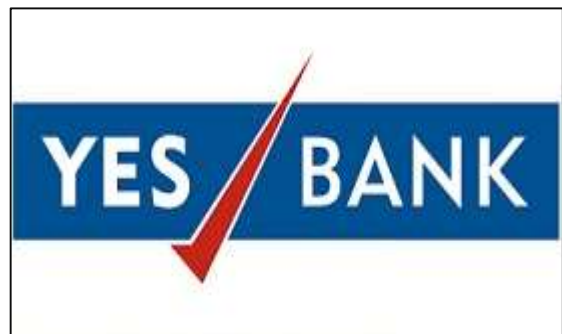
SIMsePAY is a unique innovation that allows any account holder to do money transfers, pay utility bills and other mobile payment services, without the need for smart phones or internet.



36. Paisabazaar.com tied up with Yes Bank

Paisabazaar.com announced a first of its kind strategic partnership with YES BANK. This is for the first time in the industry that a large financial marketplace has entered into a unique customer level alliance with a bank to offer conditionally approved loans* to their existing customers.

As part of the alliance, YES BANK will help Paisabazaar.com through the Bank's advanced analytics and data mining capabilities to offer Paisabazaar.com customers with customized and conditionally approved offers across YES BANK's retail lending products.



37. Indian Bank to offload 7% of shares to public through follow-on offer

Indian Bank has decided to offload 7% of its shares to the public through a follow-on offer. The bank's Chairman cum Managing Director Kishor Kharat said the move is to reduce promoters' holding to 75% of the shares. The Union Government is the promoter of the bank holding 82% of shares at present.

The bank has earned a net profit of 319.70 crore rupees last quarter. Indian Bank is the first Indian public sector bank whose Price-to-Book value has reached the level of 'One,' reflecting its strong performances.



Important Days

1. The 82nd Establishment Day of RBI celebrated

The Reserve Bank of India celebrated their 82nd Establishment Day on 1 April 2017. RBI commenced their operations on 1 April 1935 and was setup based on the recommendations of the Hilton Young Commission.

RBI is considered as one of the most effective central banks in the world. The main functions of the RBI include issuance of currency notes, monetary and credit policy, banker to the government and management of Foreign Exchanges. The current governor of RBI is Dr. Urjit Patel.



2. World Autism Awareness Day

The World Autism Awareness Day is celebrated annually on April 2. The day aims to increase people's awareness about people, especially children, with autism. 2017 Theme: "Toward Autonomy and Self-Determination"

Different public organizations including the Ministry of Social Welfare, Social Welfare Department, National Disability Development Foundation, National Disability Forum, socio-cultural bodies and non-government organizations are holding elaborate programs to observe the day.



3. International Day of Sport for Development and Peace observed on 6th April

In order to support United Nations' objectives for development and peace and achieve objective of 2030 sustainable development sports goal, 6 April was announced in 2013 to observe as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) by the UN General Assembly.

The United Nations Office on Sports launched digital campaign #WePlayTogether on 2017 International Day of Sport for Development and Peace to recognize positive influence of sports on the advancement of human rights, and social and economic development.



4. National Maritime Day observed in India

April 5 marks the National Maritime Day of India. On this day in year 1919, navigation history was created when SS Loyalty, the first ship of the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, journeyed to the United Kingdom. The National Maritime Day was first celebrated on 5 April 1964.



The maritime day flag was hoisted and the Port Trust chairperson took salute of the Sail Past and celebrations were organized at the port. Various demonstrations and shows were displayed such as 'Man over Board Drill', 'Search pattern of Man over board' and Firefighting.

5. 'International Day for Human Space Flight' observed on 12 April

The General Assembly, in its resolution A/RES/65/271 of 7 April 2011, declared 12 April as the International Day of Human Space Flight "to celebrate each year at the international level the start of the space era for mankind, recalling the important contribution of space science and technology in achieving sustainable development goals.



On 12 April 1961 was the date of the first human space flight, carried out by Yuri Gagarin, a Soviet citizen. This historic event opened the way for space exploration for the benefit of all humanity.

6. International Day for Monuments and Sites Observed on 18 April

Every year on 18 April, ICOMOS observes the International Day for Monuments and Sites, whose establishment was approved by the 22nd UNESCO General Conference in 1983. The theme of 2017 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.



ICOMOS promotes local communities and individuals to consider the importance of cultural heritage to their lives.

7. Civil Services Day celebrated on 21 April

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, presented awards for Excellence in Implementation of Priority Programs and addressed Civil Servants on the 11th Civil Services Day observed on 21 April. The Prime Minister presented 12 awards, which include 10 under the five Priority Programs and 2 under the Innovation category.



During the function, "Making New India-2017", a film by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances was screened. Two books were also released by Prime Minister namely "Fostering Excellence" and "New Beginning".

8. Earth Day observed on 22 April

Earth Day is observed annually all over the world on 22 April with the message to protect environment. The theme of World Earth Day 2017 is "Environmental and Climate Literacy". The theme helps create awareness on protecting nature & natural resources.



The day was proposed at the UNESCO conference in 1969 and the first Earth Day celebrations took place in 1970. The day increase the awareness among people about the environment safety as well as to demonstrate the environmental protection measures.

9. National Panchayati Raj Diwas observed

The third National Panchayati Raj Diwas was observed on 24 April. The Kuthar Gram Panchayat of Himachal Pradesh got the award for being the first Panchayat to become open defecation free (ODF). This year Ministry of Panchayati Raj is commemorating National Panchayati Raj Day on 24 April 2017 at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

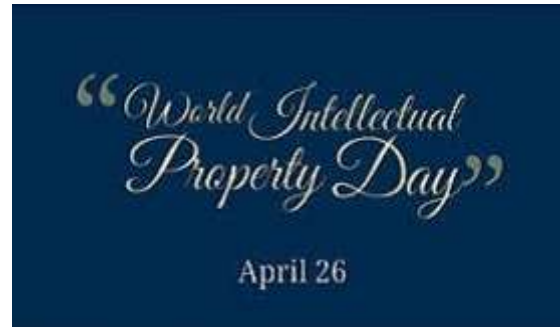


The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 that came into force with effect from 24 April 1993 has institutionalized Panchayati Raj through the village, Intermediate and District level Panchayats.

10. World Intellectual Property Day

The World Intellectual Property Day is celebrated annually on April 26. The day endorses the role that intellectual property rights (patents, trademarks, industrial designs, copyright) play in encouraging innovation and creativity. The theme for 2017 is "Innovation – Improving Lives".

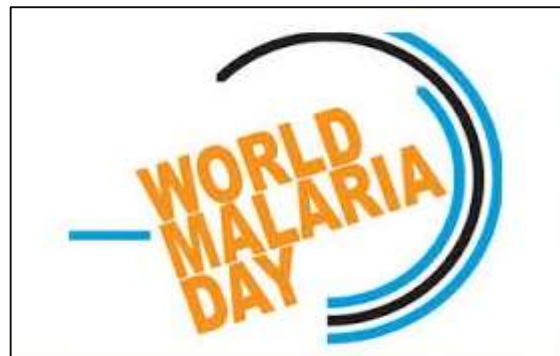
The event was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000. World Intellectual Property Day is sometimes referred as World IP Day. It aims to increase people's awareness and understanding of intellectual property (IP).



11. World Malaria Day observed on 25 April

The World Malaria Day (WMD) is an international observance observed every year on 25 April. The day gives people the chance to promote or learn about the efforts made to prevent and reduce Malaria around the world. The theme for 2017 is "Malaria prevention works: Let's close the gap".

WMD is one of eight official global public health campaigns currently marked by the World Health Organization (WHO). World Malaria Day was established in May 2007 by the 60th session of the World Health Assembly, WHO's decision-making body.



International

1. El Salvador becomes the first country in the world to ban metals mining

El Salvador has become the first country in the world to ban metals mining nationwide. The bill was passed by 69 votes as against the only 43 required.

The law provides for an immediate, definitive, and permanent ban on all metals mining, including exploration activities. The ruling comes after a long-dragged dispute over a proposed gold mine by Pac Rim Cayman, a unit of Canadian-Australian Company OceanaGold Corp.



2. NDB invested \$1.5 billion in seven projects during its 2 years of operation

The BRICS-backed New Development Bank (NDB) has invested a total of \$1.5 billion in seven projects during its two years of its operation. The bank had begun its operations in July 2015. Six of the projects financed by the bank are in the renewable energy sector and one in transport financing.



NDB had signed its first loan agreement for a project in China in December 2016. The New Development Bank (NDB) is a multilateral development bank established by the BRICS states (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

3. India, UK to set up National infrastructure & investment fund for green energy

India and the United Kingdom have decided to set up a 240 million pound fund to finance clean energy projects in India, which will involve contribution of 120 million pounds in the Green Growth Equity Fund, which will focus initial investments in India's rapidly growing energy and renewables market.



The Fund will be a sub-fund of National Infrastructure and Investment Fund, which was set up by India in 2015 to finance greenfield as well as brownfield projects.

4. US withdraws funding for United Nations Population Fund

The United States is withdrawing funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) that promotes family planning in more than 150 countries. According to US, agency participates in a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization in China whereas agency states that its work does not break any US laws.



In total, 32.5 million dollars' worth of funds will be withdrawn for the 2017 financial year. This is the first of the promised cuts to US financial contributions to the UN by the Trump administration.

5. SASEC countries pledged to improve intra-regional connectivity

South Asian countries of South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation pledged to upgrade intra-regional connectivity and promote trade and tourism, held at a meeting in New Delhi of Finance ministers of South-Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Myanmar. Pledge is a part of SASEC Vision for 2025 and adopted operational plan of 2016-25.



SASEC aims to achieve USD 70 Billion incremental GDP and 20 million jobs by 2025. The seven nations (SASEC) sought trade of oil and gas along with improving road connectivity.

6. Meeting of EPG on India-Nepal ties held in Kathmandu

The third meeting of Eminent Persons Group on India-Nepal Relations held at Kathmandu. During the two day meeting, members discussed various bilateral issues including revision of 1950 Peace and Friendship Treaty. First meeting of the group was held at Kathmandu in July and second at New Delhi in October 2016.



The Eminent Persons Group is a joint mechanism consisting experts and intellectuals from India and Nepal. It was set up to provide suggestions for updating all existing bilateral treaties and agreements between both the countries.

7. Norway unveiled plans to build world's first sea tunnel

Norway unveiled plans to build the world's first sea tunnel to pass through a mountain, avoiding dangerous waters that intimidated even the Vikings. Built to bypass the Stad peninsula, a storm-swept area in western Norway, the Stad ship tunnel will be 1.7 kilometers long and 36 meters wide, making journeys safer.



Tunnels for boats exist in other parts of the world such as the Canal du Midi in France, but the Stad tunnel will be the first to accommodate ships up to 16,000 tonnes for freight transport and passengers.

8. Lenin Moreno selected as the Ecuador President

Around 64 years old Socialist candidate Lenin Moreno was elected as Ecuador's president, defeating former banker Guillermo Lasso. Presidential elections gave boost of power to leftist movement in South America after right-leaning governments recently came to power in Argentina, Brazil, and Peru.



Moreno, a former special envoy on disability and accessibility, has promised to reach out to opponents and business sectors, create job opportunities, oppose corruption and restrain country from April's earthquake.

9. WTO formed committee to resolve India-Japan steel dispute

World Trade Organization has set up committee to solve import duty issue of iron and steel products between Japan and India. Japan has raised objection over violation of WTO trade norms on steel imports by India. The bilateral trade earnings between the two countries stood at \$14.51 billion in 2015-16. Trade is highly in support of Japan.



India was not in favor of panel formation, instead India thought of resolving issue in consultations but repeated requests of Japan in forming panel has given a step ahead to WTO in solving the said issue.

10. Japan accepts 'Bitcoin' as its currency from April 2017

With the new law's implementation, Japan has officially recognized bitcoin as its mainstream currency. This new law classifies Bitcoin as a legal payment option within the country. This law will come into effect from April 1 2017.

Following the new norms, Bitcoin exchanges will also come under additional regulatory scrutiny. Other requirements of new norms include stated capital and cyber security requirements. The recognition means complying AML and KYC norms, regulations governing banks and financial institutions, digital currencies exchange platforms etc.



11. India-UAE cultural celebrations festival launched at Abu Dhabi

The India - UAE cultural celebrations festival was launched at Abu Dhabi with a tribute video featuring both Mahatma Gandhi and late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan - two iconic figures. The video took the audience through a journey of shared values, pluralism and multiculturalism between the two nations.

The initiative proposed to bring some of the diversity of India to the UAE by bringing artists from both the countries on the same platform to work and collaborate. It was a cultural partnership for a positive future between India and the United Arab Emirates.



12. South Korea successfully test-fired home developed ballistic missile

South Korea test-fired a home-developed ballistic missile with a range long enough to hit any part of North Korea. The missile with a range of 800 kilometers could serve as a strong deterrent to Pyongyang.

This test comes a day after the North Korea fired its own ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan.

The new missile could cover all of North Korea even when fired from a southern region of the country.



13. G 20 Digital Ministers' Meet on Digital Economy held in Germany

The G20 Digital Ministerial Meeting was held in Dusseldorf, Germany. The G20 Ministers expressed their warm appreciation for the accomplishments of the Digital India program. They noted how Digital India is provisioning a unique digital identity – cheaply, securely, and with privacy – to 1.1 billion citizens via Aadhaar.

India's interests were conveyed to the G20 forum, and suitably reflected in the Ministerial Declaration and Roadmap. This included unleashing the potential of Digital Economy to drive digital inclusion and reducing digital divide.



14. Nepal Government withdraws the second Constitution Amendment Bill

Nepal government has withdrawn the second Constitution Amendment Bill. Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Ajaya Shankar Nayak submitted the proposal in the parliament today to withdraw the bill and house endorsed it. The members of Madhesi parties protested the new amendment proposal and walked out of the parliament.

The Madhesi leaders said that they will not accept any proposal which will dilute provincial boundaries issue. The second amendment bill was submitted in November last year to address various demands of agitating Madhesi parties including revision of provincial boundaries.



15. First rail freight service from UK to China departed

The first rail freight service from the UK to China has departed on its 17-day, 7,500-mile journey. The DP World locomotive left its terminal in Stanford-le-Hope, Essex, for Zhejiang province, eastern China.

The train will pass through seven other countries - France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan during the journey. The first rail freight service in the opposite direction, from China to the UK, arrived three months ago.



16. Centenary of Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram celebrated in London

The centenary of Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram was celebrated in London with the screening of a documentary to re-tell Gandhi's story. The documentary 'Sabarmati Ashram – The Home of Gandhi's Experiments with Truth' was screened at the Nehru Centre.



The film showed how Gandhi set up the ashram in 1917 on a wasteland on the banks of Sabarmati River and some pro-British newspapers ridiculed his idea of Salt March. Screening of the documentary reflected the values such as non-violence, peace, love and harmony that Gandhi ji preached.

17. India, China signed a MoU for extending Hindi language course

India and China signed an agreement to extend the term of Hindi language course functioning at a leading Chinese University. The MoU was signed by Consul General of Shanghai Consulate Prakash Gupta, on behalf of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) President Cao Deming in Shanghai.



Under the terms of the agreement, the MoU envisaged appointing a Hindi language professor by ICCR in consultation with SISU to teach the language to Chinese and international students at the University.

18. Nepal and China hold first-ever joint Military exercises

Nepal and China held their first-ever joint military exercise with a special focus on combating terror.

This 10-day-long military drill "Sagarmatha Friendship 2017" was organised by the two countries as part of their preparedness against terrorism that has posed as a serious security threat globally.



The joint training with China marks Nepal Army's extension of military diplomacy. The Nepal Army has long been conducting joint military drills with Indian and American Army.

19. Turban Day celebrated at Times Square in US

Non-profit group 'The Sikhs of New York' organised the 'Turban Day' at Times square in the United States.

The iconic Times Square was seeped in the colours and tradition of the Sikh culture as members of the community tied turbans to thousands of New Yorkers and tourists.

The Turban Day was started in 2013 at Baruch College to promote and educate people about the Sikh religion and identity.



20. PM Modi to be the Chief Guest for UN Vesak Day celebrations in Sri Lanka

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the chief guest for the UN Vesak Day celebrations to be held in Sri Lanka from 12th to 14th May. Mr. Modi is scheduled to participate in couple of other public functions during his two-day visit apart from bilateral meetings with Sri Lankan leadership. The UN Vesak Day celebrations are being hosted for the first time in Sri Lanka.

The theme for this year's celebrations will be 'Buddhist teachings for social justice and sustainable peace'. The day is celebrated since 2001 after UN passed a resolution to this effect.



21. Australia abolished the 457 Visa Programme

Australia has scrapped a popular work visa used by over 95,000 foreign workers to tackle the growing unemployment in the country. Majority of these foreign workers include Indians. This program will be replaced by another visa program, which will have new restrictions.

The program known as 457 Visa allows businesses to employ foreign workers for a period of up to four years in skilled jobs where there is a shortage of Australian workers. The new visa will include mandatory criminal checks and tighter English language requirements.



22. The G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting held in Washington D.C

Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley participated in G-20 Finance Ministers' and Central Bank Governors' meeting was held in Washington D.C. The discussion sessions focused on the Compact with Africa, Financial Sector Development and Regulations, International Financial Architecture and Global Financial Governance.



The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley discussed in the meeting that many more multi-faceted reforms are expected to ensure that India can withstand the volatility of the global economy as well as ensure an upward growth trajectory. Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley attended the 'Development Committee Restricted Lunch Session' on the theme of "Inequality".

23. The 1st 'India Indonesia Energy Forum' held in Jakarta

The 1st 'India Indonesia Energy Forum', was held in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Energy Forum was preceded by the 2nd Joint Working Group on Oil and Gas, 4th Joint Working Group on Coal and the 1st Joint Working Group on New and Renewable Energy.



A MoU between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of the Republic of Indonesia. The MOU seeks to establish a cooperative institutional framework to facilitate and to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of oil and gas sectors based on equality and mutual benefit.

24. Mongolia launched its first satellite

Mongolia launched its first satellite, a 1,227-megahertz satellite, called Mongol Sat-1 that will help the nation expand its television, telecoms and broadband services.



The satellite was launched in partnership with Asia Broadcast Satellite (ABS), a telecoms and broadcast provider in the region. Mongolia got into an economic and financial crisis last year after a collapse in commodity prices eroded growth. The International Monetary Fund has asked Mongolia to diversify its economy as part of a \$5.5 billion bailout.

25. IMF predicts World economy to grow at 3.5% in 2017

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has predicted the world economy to grow by 3.5% this year, up from 3.1% in 2016. The IMF's latest outlook for 2017 is a slight upgrade from the 3.4% global growth it had forecast in January. The IMF also predicted a growth of 3.8% in 2018.

The IMF's new improved projections are based primarily on a resilient China, rising commodity prices and sturdy financial markets including a changing policy mix under a new administration in the United States.



26. China to host BRICS Film Festival in June 2017

The second BRICS Film Festival will be held in Chengdu, southwest China's Sichuan Province from June 23 to 27, 2017. Chinese director Xie Fei will be the president of the festival jury. The first BRICS Film Festival was held in New Delhi in September 2016.

There are going to be 30 film screenings from the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) during this festival. An anthology by five directors from the BRICS nations, "Where has the time gone", will also be screened.



27. Cuba and Morocco re-establish diplomatic ties after 37 years

Cuba and Morocco has signed an agreement to re-establish diplomatic ties after a gap of 37 years. Morocco cut ties with Havana in 1980 after Cuba recognised Western Sahara as the independent Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Morocco claims the territory as its own. Cuba's support for the Polisario Front also added to the relations become worse.

King Mohamed VI of Morocco has ordered the opening of an embassy in Havana.



28. India notified compliance of UN sanctions against North Korea

India notified the compliance of the UN resolution imposing sanctions on North Korea, which include prevention of direct or indirect supply, sale, transfer or export of all weaponry through its territories or by its nationals to that country.

The sale of luxury goods including jewelry, gems and automobiles, except food or medicine, that could directly contribute to the development of North Korea's operational capabilities of its armed forces is also prohibited.

It also mentions immediate freezing of the funds that are on its territories, which are owned entities engaged in the North Korea's nuclear-related weapons.



29. Belgium became the first country to open 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). Hari Sankaran was nominated as Honorary Consul of the Kingdom of Belgium to the state of Gujarat.

The opening of the consulate general is significant for many traders from Gujarat who are engaged in diamond trade in Antwerp in Belgium. GIFT is a central business district (CBD) located between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in the state of Gujarat. The likely cost of the GIFT City project is Rs. 70,000 crores.



30. Indian short film to be screened by UNESCO as part of World Press Freedom Day celebrations

An Indian short film "Azaad" will be screened by UNESCO as part of a World Press Freedom Day event on May 3 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The film is directed by Rahul V. Chittella and stars Atul Kulkarni and Sakshi Tanwar. The film tells the story of the dysfunctional relationship between a father and his son.

World Press Freedom Day is celebrated by UNESCO to celebrate the principle of freedom of the press. The event is taking place in Jakarta from May 1-4.



Miscellaneous

- Myanmar became the new member of South Asia Sub-regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) program.
- P V Sindhu won the Women's Singles title at the 2017 India Open Super Series.
- The winners of the Leon Challenger Tour tennis tournament's Men's Doubles trophy are Leander Paes and Adil Shamasdin
- The winner of the 2017 Miami Open Men's Singles title is Roger Federer.
- The winner of the 2017 Miami Open Women's Singles title is Johanna Konta.
- The Union Government has sanctioned Rs 98.35 Cr for the development of a Heritage Circuit in Assam.
- Malala Yousafzai became the youngest person to address Canadian Parliament.
- Geetha Johri has been appointed as the first woman Director General of Police (DGP) of Gujarat.
- The Chairperson of the newly constituted National Board for Electric Mobility is Girish Shankar.
- Gilbert Baker, who passed away recently, was the creator of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rainbow Flag.
- Brayan Jimenez, former President of Guatemalan Football Association, was banned for lifetime by FIFA.
- The theme of the 2017 International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action was Needs driven, People Centred.
- The child rights campaign launched by Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi in Dhaka recently is "100 Million for 100 Million".
- Mahesh Kumar Jain was appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of IDBI Bank.
- International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) was observed across the world on 6 April 2017.
- Misbah-ul-Haq recently announced his retirement from the international cricket.
- Kasaav won the 64th National Film Awards for the Best Feature Film.
- Neerja won the 64th National Film Awards for the Best Hindi Feature Film.
- The Uttar Pradesh government has set up a high-level judicial committee to probe the alleged misuse of money and work being carried out on Gomati River Front Development project.
- The Madhya Pradesh government is all set to launch Deendayal Antyodaya Rasoi Yojana in its districts in order to provide subsidised food to the poor.
- The Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI) in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh is going to set up a DNA bank for wildlife.

- Iceland will become the world's first country to neutralise gender pay gap.
- Mining major Vedanta Resources was recently merged with Cairn India.
- Mukulita Vijayawargiya was appointed as the Whole Time Member of IBBI.
- Committee headed by Girdhar Malviya submitted its report on draft Ganga Act.
- The United States recently dropped largest non-nuclear bomb ever an Islamic State tunnel complex in eastern Afghanistan. The bomb is called as Mother of All Bombs.
- The Union Government constituted Dinesh Sharma Committee to examine the existing framework with regard to Virtual Currencies.
- India won the 5th edition of Asian School Hockey Championship-2017.
- Mukta Dutta Tomar has been appointed as the Ambassador of India to Germany.
- Nokia signed MoU to bring 5G network in India with Airtel and BSNL.
- Russia has vetoed a UN draft resolution demanding the Syrian government cooperate with an investigation of a suspected chemical attack.
- Youngest Nobel Peace laureate Malala Yousafzai became the sixth person to receive honorary citizenship of Canada.
- Telangana state government has decided to increase the reservations of backward Muslim population and STs in the state.
- Narendra Modi became the most followed head of the state on Instagram with 7 million followers.
- International Day of Human Space Flight is observed annually on 12 April 2017 to celebrate the anniversary of - the first human space flight undertaken by Yuri Gagarin.
- The President of India Pranab Mukherjee presented the Standing Conference of Public Enterprises (SCOPE) Awards at the 8th Public Sector Day function held in New Delhi.
- The Lok Sabha recently passed the Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill, 2017. The Bill seeks to constitutional status to National Commission for Backward Classes.
- India's first ever micro-drama festival, named Thespis, was held in New Delhi.
- Manipur has decided to hold People's Day on the 15th of every month.
- The month-long exhibition 'Swachhagraha – Babu Ko Karyanjali – Ek Abhiyan, Ek Pradarshani' commemorating 100 years of Champaran Satyagraha will be held in New Delhi.
- The first India-Indonesia Energy Forum was held in Jakarta.
- Malaysia Airlines became the world's first airline to adopt new satellite-based airplane tracking system.
- The Punjab state government is planning to set up "Book Banks" in schools to provide old books to needy students.

- The theme of the 2017 International Mother Earth Day is "Environmental & Climate Literacy".
- India recently contributed USD 250000 to the United Nations Election Assistance Programme.
- Lucknow will host the main event of the International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations in June 2017.
- Tata Consultancy Services became India's most-valued company in terms of market valuation.
- The theme of the 2017 World Heritage Day is Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Tourism.
- IIT Kharagpur is all set to introduce a Vastu Shastra classes for its architecture students.
- The winner of the Arunachal Festival of Speed is Amanpreet Ahluwalia.
- India and Australia signed six pacts after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian PM Malcolm Turnbull.
- The Haryana state government has launched 'Operation Durga', to ensure women's safety from the street Romeos.
- The Indian cultural centre in Egypt recently organised a seminar to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two nations.
- B S Sandhu was appointed as the new Director General of Police of Haryana.
- Belgium became the first country to open an honorary consulate office in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).
- Rahul Bajaj was conferred by the CII President's Award for Lifetime Achievement by the President Pranab Mukherjee.
- Nita Ambani was made a member of two important commissions of the International Olympic Committee's governing body: - Olympic channel and Olympic education Commission.
- Hana Khatib was appointed as first female judge in Muslim Sharia Court of Israel.
- World Lab Animal Day (WLAD) is observed annually on 24 April.
- NASA recently successfully launched its heavy-lift super pressure balloon (SPB) from Wanaka, New Zealand.
- Uttar Pradesh government cancelled 15 public holidays in educational institutions.
- The newly discovered planet by NASA scientists is being referred to as Iceball.
- NASA astronaut, Peggy Whitson, set a new US record for most cumulative days spent in space.

National

1. President inaugurated 'Namami Brahmaputra' festival in Assam

President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the five-day-long Namami Brahmaputra river festival at the Kachamari Ghat near Fancy Bazar in Guwahati, Assam. It is India's biggest river festival so far and is a tribute to Brahmaputra river.



The river festival was organized across 21 districts of Assam through which the mighty river passes. Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay also participated in the inauguration ceremony. Brahmaputra is considered as the only male river in the country.

2. Cabinet approved the revised Air Services Agreement with Malaysia

The Union Cabinet approved the revised Air Services Agreement (ASA) with Malaysia. Some of the most significant features of the Air Services Agreement are - Existing ASA was signed in 1974, hence there is a need to revise, update and modernize the exiting ASA. Text of the existing ASA has been replaced with the new text as per the latest ICAO template.



The Cooperative Marketing Arrangement for third country airlines has been added. Clause on domestic codeshare has been added. The articles on 'safety and security' have been added in the revised ASA. The article related to 'intermodal services' have been added in the revised ASA.

3. Cabinet approved MoU between Forum of Regulators and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Forum of Regulators (FOR) and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) in the area of large-scale Grid Integration of Renewable Energy.

The MoU provides the following broad areas for cooperation in the area of large-scale integration of renewable energy:

- Design of frameworks for Renewable Energy procurement international experience.
- Regulatory interventions for renewables development
- Load forecasting techniques and processes.
- Contracting/Power Purchase Agreements.
- Ancillary services including physical mechanisms, regulations and markets.
- Data analysis and cost-benefit analysis for regulatory decision-making.



4. Cabinet approved the signing of new Air Services Agreement between India and Serbia

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for updation of the existing Air Services Agreement (ASA) between India and Serbia, which was signed on 31st January, 2003.

The updation is as per latest International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) template keeping in view the latest developments in civil aviation sector and with an objective to improve the air connectivity between the two countries.

As of now, there is no connectivity between the two nations and the revised agreement may lead to establishing connectivity between the two countries.



5. Cabinet approved ratification of the two fundamental conventions of the ILO

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for ratification of the two fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization namely, Minimum Age Convention (No 138) concerning minimum age for admission to employment and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No 182) concerning the prohibition and immediate action for elimination of the worst forms of Child Labour.



India is a founder member of the International Labour Organization (ILO). India has so far ratified 45 Conventions, out of which 42 are in force. Out of these, four are Fundamental or Core Conventions.

6. Cabinet approved the fixation of NBS rates for P&K fertilizers for the year 2017-18

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the Fixation of Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) rates for Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers for the year 2017-18.



Government has been implementing Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Policy for decontrolled P&K fertilizers. Under this policy, the subsidy on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers is announced by the Government on annual basis for each nutrient. These include – Nitrogen (N), Phosphorous (P), Potash (K) and Sulphur (S) on per kg basis, which is converted into subsidy per tonne depending up on the nutrient content in each grade of the fertilizers.

7. Cabinet approved unrestricted export of all certified organic agricultural products

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval for removal of all quantitative ceilings on individual organic products and allowed unrestricted exports of all organic agricultural and organic processed products.



However, in respect of organic pulses and lentils, in view of their acute shortage in the country, the quantitative ceiling on exports will continue but enhanced from the existing 10,000 MT per annum to 50,000 MT per annum.

8. Cabinet approved Grants-in-aid of Rs. 25 crore to AERUs beyond 2016-17

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved to extend the grants-in-aid support to the existing network of 12 Agro-Economic Research Centres (AERCs) and three Agro-Economic Research Units (AERUs) for one more year that is up to 2017-18.



An amount of Rs. 25 crores will be required to continue the grants-in-aid to the existing 15 AERCs/AERUs. This would provide policy oriented Agro Economic Research inputs through field studies and reviewing / monitoring of Flagship programmes of the agriculture and allied sector.

9. All India Institute of Ayurveda established at New Delhi

To promote natural meditation and research in the field of Ayurveda All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) has been established as an Autonomous Body under the aegis of Ministry of AYUSH at a cost of 157.00 crores.



AIIA is a 200 bedded referral hospital and shall impart PG & Ph.D. degree courses in Ayurveda. 1st Batch of P.G. course has been started in 2016. Institute has started OPD & IPD facility with major specialties in Ayurveda. Presently AIIA is functional.

10. JAPAN'S Official Development Assistance (ODA) Loan of RS. 21,590 Crore to India

The Government of Japan plans to realize 3.5 trillion Yen of public and private investment and financing from Japan, including Official Development Assistance (ODA), to India in five years, to finance appropriate public and private projects of mutual interest. Around 50% of 3.5 trillion Yen i.e. 1.75 trillion Yen is expected to be in the form of ODA loan for five years from 2015-16 onwards.



The Government of Japan has committed JICA Official Development Assistance loan for an amount of Yen 371.345 Billion (= Rs. 21,590 crores approx.) under FY 2016-2017 loan package.

11. Government approved Rs. 2,256 crore outlay for Project Saksham

The Government has approved Rs. 2,256 crore outlay for Project Saksham to bolster the information technology network for the new GST regime.

Project Saksham is the name given to CBEC's IT Infrastructure Project. This IT Infrastructure project will enable the implementation of Goods and Services tax (GST) as well as support all existing services in Customs, Central Excise and Service Tax.



In addition, it will also enable extension of the Indian Customs Single Window Interface for Facilitating Trade (SWIFT) and other taxpayer-friendly initiatives under Digital India and Ease of Doing Business of CBEC.

12. Union Government launched the eChallan and mParivahan mobile apps

The Union Government has launched two mobile apps, eChallan and mParivahan – related to road safety and customer facilitation. The apps will enable citizens to report any traffic violation or road accident. It will also provide access to various services and information.

The eChallan application is an integrated enforcement solution to manage traffic violations for use by the Transport Enforcement Wing and Traffic Police. The mParivahan is an empowering app for the citizens.



13. PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Asia's longest tunnel

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest road tunnel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. The tunnel will reduce the travel distance between Jammu and Srinagar by 30.11 km, which will help save fuel worth Rs 27 lakh daily.

The cost of the project was Rs. 3,720 crores and it is built at an altitude of 1,200 metres. The tunnel is among the longest highway tunnels in Asia. The length of the tunnel is 9.28 km. The world's longest highway tunnel is 24.51 km and is in Norway.



14. Union Textiles Minister launched PowerTex India Scheme

The Government has launched PowerTex India, a comprehensive scheme for powerloom sector development, simultaneously at over 45 locations in the country.

The comprehensive scheme has the following components:

- In-situ Upgradation of Plain Powerlooms
- Group Workshed Scheme (GWS)
- Yarn Bank Scheme
- Common Facility Centre (CFC)
- Pradhan Mantri Credit Scheme for Powerloom Weavers
- Solar Energy Scheme for Powerlooms
- Facilitation, IT, Awareness, Market Development and Publicity for Powerloom Schemes
- Tex Venture Capital Fund
- Grant-in-Aid and Modernisation & Upgradation of Powerloom Service Centres (PSCs)



15. Tax evasion of over Rs. 5 crore a non-bailable offense under GST

The government has decided to make tax evasion of over Rs 5 crore under the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime as a non-bailable offence. The police will have an authority to make an arrest without a warrant.

The Central GST (CGST) Bill provides that if the offences relating to taxable goods and/or services where the amount of tax evaded, the amount of input tax credit wrongly availed, or the amount of refund wrongly taken exceeds Rs. 5 crores, it shall be treated as cognizable and non-bailable.



16. The 9th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue held in Delhi

The Ninth round of Economic and Financial Dialogue held in New Delhi was witnessed by Finance Ministers of the UK and India. The UK and India shared a common commitment in addressing cross-border tax evasion and avoidance and agreed to collaborate in determining the status of wealth deposited in foreign financial accounts by nationals of both countries.



The UK and India welcomed the selection of the first Chevening Standard Chartered Financial Services Fellows. The UK and India agreed to encourage sustainable bilateral investment that benefits both countries.

17. PM Ujjwala Yojana beneficiaries crosses 2 crore in number

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojna, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May 2016, marked 2 crore beneficiaries registration for providing free of cost LPG (cooking gas) connections to BPL households. The scheme is aimed at replacing wooden traditional or fossil fuel based cooking with LPG-based kitchens, thus empowering women. Scheme would also protect health of women.



Under this scheme, government intends to give such subsidized connections to five crore households and an adult woman member of a BPL will be given deposit-free LPG connection with financial assistance of Rs 1,600 per connection by the Centre.

18. Government withdraws subsidy to mild hybrid vehicles

The Union Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises announced to withdraw subsidy given to mild hybrid vehicles under FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric vehicles in India) scheme. Scheme was announced in 2015 to popularize the use of electric vehicles in the country and with an aim to promote eco-friendly vehicles.



According to Ministry of Heavy Industries, mild hybrid technology will stand excluded from the benefits of the FAME India scheme with effect from April 1, 2017. FAME India is part of the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan.

19. Cabinet approved a MoU between India and Australia regarding Health and Medicine

The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the MoU between India and Australia on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine. The main areas of cooperation include communicable diseases such as malaria and TB, mental health and non-communicable diseases, anti-microbial resistance and responding to public health emergencies, regulation of pharmaceuticals, vaccines and medical devices, tobacco control and digital health.



The MoU will involve cooperation through joint initiatives in the Health Sector and strengthen bilateral ties between India and Australia.

20. Cabinet approved agreement on Audio Visual Co-Production between India and Bangladesh

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the agreement on Audio Visual Co-Production India and Bangladesh. The Agreement would cover co-production of films, documentaries, and animations films.



An audio-visual co-production made in accordance with the proposed Agreement shall be entitled to all the benefits, which may be accorded to any national audio-visual work by both countries in accordance with their respective laws and regulations. India has so far entered into audio-visual co-production agreements with countries like Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, Brazil, France etc.

21. Cabinet approved MoU in the field of Mass Media between India and Bangladesh

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the MoU on Cooperation in the field of Mass Media between India and Bangladesh.

The main areas of cooperation are encouraging the exchange of experts in the field of mass media, encourage cooperation between educational, training and research institutions, and facilitating accredited mass media



representatives to set up offices for performance of professional duties based on reciprocity.

22. Cabinet approved MoU on passenger cruise services between India and Bangladesh

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved MoU on passenger cruise services on the coastal and protocol routes between India and Bangladesh for starting regular movement of passengers and tourists in watercrafts between the two countries.



The operationalization of this MoU will promote people-to-people contact and cooperation between the two countries in respect of economic, social and cultural advancement. It will also generate employment opportunities for the people of India and Bangladesh.

23. Cabinet approved inked MoU between India and Bangladesh for judicial sector

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved signing of MoU between India and Bangladesh in the field of judicial sector cooperation. It is aimed at developing, promoting and strengthening cooperation between the judiciaries of the two countries.



The MoU provides for promoting mutual interaction among judges and officials at various levels of the judiciary through exchange visits, training and academic programs. It will also encourage mutual exchange of information on latest developments in the field of law and justice.

24. Cabinet approved a MoU between India and France in Civil Aviation

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and its French counterpart, Civil Aviation Authority (DGAC), France to implement Technical Cooperation Program in civil aviation sector.



The Technical Cooperation Program will be beneficial for enhancement of skills and expertise of AAI's officers. This MoU is also beneficial for imparting training of engineers, technicians, managers etc.

25. Cabinet approved a MoU between India and Bangladesh for fairway development

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved MoU between India and Bangladesh for fairway development of Ashuganj-Zakiganj stretch of Kushiyara River and Sirajganj-Daikhawa stretch of Jamuna River in the Indo-Bangladesh protocol route by undertaking necessary dredging jointly by the two countries.



This MoU will considerably reduce the logistics cost of cargo movement to North Eastern India. It will also reduce the congestion through the Siliguri Chicken's Neck corridor.

26. Cabinet approved closure of Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved closure of the Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY), which was set up in 2012 to address the social security-related issues of the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category workers going abroad for employment to ECR countries.



The subscription under the MGPSY was very low and no new subscription was received for more than a year. Closure of the scheme will, therefore, obviate the avoidable recurring administrative and record-keeping expenditure.

27. Cabinet apprised MoU with Ferrovie Dello Stato Italiane S.P.A. of Italy

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has been apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with Ferrovie Dello Stato Italiane S.P.A. of the Republic of Italy on 31st January, 2017 on technical cooperation in railway sector.



The MoU will provide a platform to Indian Railways to interact and share the latest developments and knowledge in the railway sector to promote safety, efficiency and sustainability. The objective of this MoU is to develop technical cooperation activities in the railway sector.

28. Cabinet approved Collaboration Agreement to support the Belmont Forum Secretariat

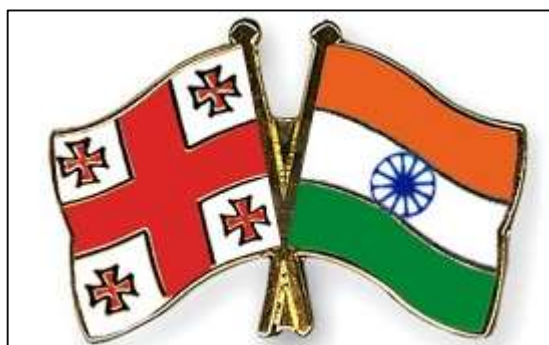
The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved signing of the Collaborative Agreement with French National Research Agency (ANR), France for supporting the Belmont Forum Secretariat from January 2015 to December 2017 at a total estimated expenditure of 40,000 Euros.



The Agreement will help to maintain a certain degree of continuity in the operations of the Forum and help in smooth coordination of the activities of Belmont Forum.

29. Cabinet approved Air Services Agreement between India and Georgia

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the signing of the Air Services Agreement between India and Georgia. The Agreement between the two countries is based on latest International Civil Aviation Organization template keeping in view of developments in Civil Aviation sector and with an objective to improve the air connectivity between the two countries.



It will provide enabling environment for enhanced and seamless connectivity while providing commercial opportunities to the carriers of both the sides ensuring greater safety and security.

30. India and the UK announced joint UK-India Green Growth Equity Fund

India and the UK announced the launch of an Early Market Engagement for the joint UK-India Fund, namely a Green Growth Equity Fund, which aims to leverage private sector investment from the City of London to invest in green infrastructure projects in India.



Both governments reaffirmed their commitment to anchor invest up to £120 million each (i.e. totally £ 240 million) in the joint fund which will be established under the NIIF framework. To begin with, the fund aims to raise around £500 million, with the potential to unlock much more in future.

31. Cabinet approved extension of implementation of Crime and Criminal Tracking Network

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the proposal of the Ministry of Home Affairs for extension of the implementation phase of the Crime and Criminals Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS) Project for another year beyond 31 March 2017.



The extension would help in achieving the remaining objectives of the project comprehensively. The Inter-operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) aims to integrate the CCTNS project with the e-courts and e-prisons databases.

32. Indian Railways Organization for Alternate Fuel signs Agreement with BHEL

Ministry of Railways under the guidance of Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu initiated signing of agreement between Indian Railways Organization for Alternate Fuel (IROAF) of Indian Railways and Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) for constructing a 2MW roof top power plant at a record low cost of Rs 3.58 Crores per MWp (Megawatt peak) under Government of India's Incentive Scheme.



The plant will be set up at Diesel-Loco Modernization Works, Patiala formerly Diesel Component Works, Patiala.

33. Cabinet approved setting up of independent RDA in New Delhi

Union Cabinet approved setting up of an independent Rail Development Authority (RDA) Regulatory Mechanism in New Delhi. The RDA will have broad function of tariff determination, ensuring fair play and level playing field for all stakeholders' investments.



It will also work for the setting efficiency and performance standards and dissemination of information. The initial corpus of the Authority will be fifty crore rupees. The RDA will have a chairperson and three members besides experts from relevant areas.

34. Seven lakh houses constructed under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal mission

A total number of over seven lakh houses have been constructed under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal mission, a Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna mission including subsumed projects of Rajiv Awas Yojna for urban poor and slum dwellers in all Metropolitan cities and Delhi.



In pursuance of the government's vision of facilitating housing to all by 2022, Centre is implementing PMAY mission to provide assistance to all states and UT in addressing the housing requirement of the slum dwellers and urban poor.

35. Petroleum Minister launched BS-IV grade fuels nationwide

Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan formally launched BS-IV grade transportation fuels across the country from Bhubaneswar.



To mark this important event of the launch of BS-IV fuels across the country, the Hon'ble Minister symbolically commenced sale of the eco-friendly and low-emission fuels from 12 different locations across the country through live video links - Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Bhopal etc.

36. PM launched development projects in Jharkhand

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched development projects at Sahebganj in Jharkhand. He laid the Foundation Stone of a 4-lane bridge over the River Ganga, and a multi-modal terminal. The multi-modal terminal is an important component of the development of the National-Waterway 1 from Varanasi to Haldia.



The Prime Minister inaugurated the 311-kilometer Govindpur-Jamtara-Dumka-Sahebganj highway and inaugurated a solar power facility at Sahebganj District Court Premises and Sahebganj District Hospital. These development projects will benefit the Santhal Pargana area, and lead to greater empowerment of the tribal communities.

37. Geo-tagging of agriculture assets created under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna

A MoU was signed between Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) for geotagging of agriculture land in presence of Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and the Minister of State, Department of Atomic Energy.



More than 1.5 lakh assets have been created under this scheme in agriculture, horticulture, livestock, fisheries and dairy sectors. It will be helpful in monitoring and utilizing, but extremely useful in formulating the development schemes in the agriculture sector. It will also help in avoiding duplication.

38. The WHO lauded India for passing the Mental Healthcare Bill

The WHO (World Health Organization) lauded India for passing the Mental Healthcare Bill and asked nations to scale up mental health services quality. It said depression affects 86 million people in South-East Asia region.



On the eve of World Health Day, it was announced that the most severe form of depression can lead to suicide and asked communities to talk about the syndrome to prevent hardships and precious lives being cut short by it. The World Health Day 2017 focused on depression, a condition involving persistent sadness or loss of interest or pleasure in things normally enjoyed.

39. President of India inaugurated the first NIMCARE World Health Day Summit 2017

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the first NIMCARE World Health Day Summit 2017 in New Delhi. The slogan of the first NIMCARE World Health Day Summit was, 'Unite for a Healthy Mind'. The World Health Day Summit began by launching the eCAP & SOL's Tele-psychiatry application for the rural and urban population in need of mental health consultation.



President of India urged all to strive to make even greater progress in the efforts to create awareness about depression and focus on further strengthening our health care delivery systems.

40. 26 AYUSH information cells established abroad

Around 26 AYUSH Information Cells have been set up in 24 countries viz. Malaysia, Trinidad & Tobago, Mexico, Cuba, Hungary, Russia (2 Cells), Indonesia (2 Cells), Mauritius, Slovenia, Sweden, China, Dubai, Croatia, Kyrgyzstan, Finland, Argentina, Serbia, Israel, Tajikistan, Peru, Tanzania, Switzerland, Venezuela and London.



AYUSH Information Cells help in global promotion and propagation of AYUSH systems of medicine, which would lead to signing of MoUs with foreign Governments/ Institutes, for cooperation in the field of traditional systems of medicine, setting up of AYUSH Academic Chairs and undertaking collaborative research.

41. India and ADB inked \$175 million loan agreement for solar transmission system

The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank signed a \$175 million loan agreement to support construction of high voltage transmission systems to evacuate power generated from new mega solar parks to the interstate grid, and improve reliability of the national grid system.



The project will improve the capacity and efficiency of interstate transmission networks, particularly in transmitting the electricity generated from the new solar parks to the national grid. POWERGRID will make an equity contribution of \$135 million equivalent to support the total project cost of \$450 million.

42. Uma Bharti launched MIS for monitoring PMKSY Projects

Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Sushri Uma Bharti launched MIS for monitoring PMKSY project in New Delhi. This project is likely to create an irrigation potential of 2.50 lakh ha. Similarly, Polavaram Project has been put on a fast track when completed this project is likely to irrigate 2.9 lakh ha.



The MIS has been put in the public domain. Project wise – Priority wise –State wise physical – financial details in tabular – graphical format are available in the MIS.

43. President of India inaugurated All India Seminar on “Economic Reforms with reference to Electoral Issues

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated an All India Seminar on “Economic Reforms With Reference to Electoral Issues” organized by the Confederation of the Indian Bar in New Delhi, to strengthen the democratic structure of India.



The President congratulated the Confederation of the Indian Bar for organizing this Seminar and expressed hope that the Seminar will deliberate at length electoral reforms and substantive and concrete suggestions will come out of the deliberations.

44. Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the web portal “Bharat ke Veer”

The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh inaugurated the web portal and mobile application named “Bharat ke Veer”. The portal is an IT based platform, with an objective to enable willing donors to contribute towards the family of a Braveheart who sacrificed his/her life in line of duty.

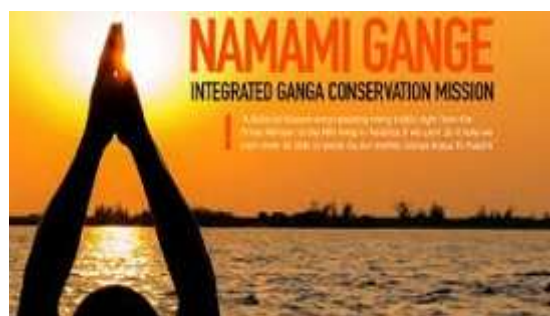


“Bharat Ke Veer” corpus would be managed by a committee made up of eminent persons of repute and senior Government officials, who would decide to disburse the fund equitably to the Braveheart’s family on need basis.

45. NMCG approved sewage treatment projects worth Rs. 2100 Crores

In a major push to Namami Gange program, National Mission for Clean Ganga approved 26 projects at an estimated cost of Rs 2154.28 Crore.

This amount will be spent in the states of UP, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Delhi for creation of new sewage treatment capacity of 188 Million Liters per Day (MLD), rehabilitation of 596 MLD of existing STP capacity, up-gradation of 30 MLD of existing STP capacity.



The completion of these projects will help in reducing the pollution load on the river Ganga.

46. Niti Aayog's Lucky Draw scheme awarded Rs. 245 crores prize money

National Payments Corporation of India awarded over Rs. 245 crores as prize money to 18 lakh winners under the NITI Aayog's Lucky Draw schemes for consumers and merchants. Three mega prizes for merchants worth Rs. 50 lakh, Rs. 25 lakh and Rs. 12 lakh were also declared at the event through the 100th mega draw. The winners were felicitated by the Prime Minister on April 14th, 2017 at Nagpur, on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti.



Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi and Karnataka were among the top five states with maximum awardees.

47. India and Bangladesh inked several agreements

In order to boost ties with the neighboring country Bangladesh, India inked various agreements with Bangladesh. India signed 22 agreements with Bangladesh in fields such as defence, nuclear cooperation, judicial sector, earth sciences, navigation, peaceful uses of outer space, Teesta water issue etc.



India extended its hand of support by providing a new line of concessional credit of USD 4.5 Billion for the implementation of projects in Bangladesh.

A peaceful agreement was also signed on nuclear co-operation and 6-point agenda to scale up trade and investment between both the neighboring countries.

48. India and Russia inked deal for Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant

Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. and the ASE Group of Companies, a subsidiary of ROSATOM State Atomic Energy Corporation of Russia, inked agreement regarding fulfilment of all warranty terms and obligations of the contractor (ASE Group of Companies) for the construction of Unit 1.



As the warranty period ended in December 2015, final take over agreement executed to ensure the reliability of the plant and equipment as this is the first of a series of six reactors.

49. Prime Minister inaugurated ‘Swachhagraha “Bapu Ko Karyanjali”-a Mission

The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated “Swachhagraha “Bapu Ko Karyanjali” – A Mission, An Exhibition’ to mark 100th Anniversary of Champaran Satyagrah at the National Archives of India (NAI) in New Delhi. He also launched an Online Interactive Quiz “Karyanjali”, which will continue for 30 months until October 2019.



A musical and dance program based on the banned literature on Mahatma Gandhi and Swachhagraha entitled “Satya, Swachh, Sur” was presented. The digital and experiential exhibition strived to connect the essential principles of Satyagrah ‘Jeevan-Chakra’ evolved by Gandhi Ji.

50. Rs 23,443 crores released for MGNREGS for Mission Water Conservation

The Ministry of Rural Development released Rs. 23,443.09 crore to the States as first tranche for Financial Year 2017-18 under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The Government is laying considerable emphasis on Water Conservation and Water Management works under MGNREGS.



In a recent communication to the States, the Ministry has advised the States to ensure not less than 65% expenditure on Natural Resource Management (NRM) Activities. There are 155 kind of works permissible under MGNREGS. Of these, 100 works are NRM related.

51. “nakshe” Portal launched on the 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 250th anniversary of Survey of India (SoI). Topographic maps or Open Series Maps (OSM) containing natural and fabricated geographical features including terrain or topography are prepared by the SoI since its inception in 1767.



These OSM maps have been made available as free download from “nakshe” web portal through Aadhaar enabled user authentication process, in line with Digital India program of the Government of India.

52. Parliament passes HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control), Bill 2017

Parliament passed the Human Immunodeficiency Virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Prevention and Control), Bill 2017 with the Lok Sabha. The Bill has already been passed by the Raja Sabha.



The Bill seeks to provide for the prevention and control of the spread of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, AIDS.

It also provides for the protection of human rights of persons affected by the virus and syndrome. A per the bill, an ombudsman will be appointed by each state government to inquire into complaints related to the violation of the Act.

53. Parliamentary Panel recommended HM to take up border forces medical facilities

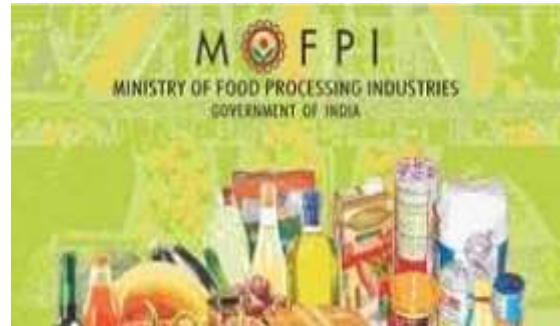
A Parliamentary Panel recommended to the Home Ministry to take up the matter of medical facilities provided to personnel of Border Guarding Forces with the Health Ministry to cover all border districts under Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS).



The Department Related Standing Committee on Home Affairs, headed by P Chidambaram, felt that the Jawans are not satisfied with the medical facilities offered to them. The Committee also recommended the Home Ministry must construct composite hospitals in all frontier headquarters and unit hospitals in all sectors.

54. Govt to launch scheme SAMPADA for food processing

The government will soon launch a scheme SAMPADA for food processing sector to integrate current and new schemes aimed at reducing food wastage and doubling farmers' income. It will include ongoing schemes like mega food parks and cold chain projects.



The Centre has so far sanctioned 42 mega food parks and 234 cold chain projects with 139 lakh tonnes of preserving and processing capacity of agro-produce worth 35 thousand crore rupees. National Food Processing Policy is under consideration.

55. LS passed Collection of Statistics (Amendment) Bill, 2017

The Lok Sabha passed the Collection of Statistics (Amendment) Bill, 2017. The Bill seeks to extend its jurisdiction to Jammu and Kashmir for the collection of statistics pertaining to subjects under the Union or the Concurrent list of the Constitution as applicable to the State.



This Bill also provides for the appointment of a nodal officer to coordinate and supervise statistical activities under the government. Stringent provisions have been made in the bill for protection of the collected data.

Centre will launch a labour survey to ascertain the status of unemployment in the country.

56. Shradha Mengshete won Rs 1 cr under Lucky Grahak Yojana

Shradha Mengshete has won the Rs. 1 crore-mega draw for Lucky Grahak Yojana, from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Shradha won it for making a transaction of Rs. 1590 through her RuPay card only to pay an EMI for her new mobile phone.



Under the schemes, which have now ended, 1.60 million persons won varying prizes of a total of Rs 258 crore across India. The 2nd prize of Rs. 50 lakh was won by Hardik Kumar from Khambhat in Gujarat. The 29-year-old is a primary school teacher, who used his RuPay card for making a transaction of Rs 1,100.

57. Cabinet approved signing of Framework of Understanding between India and Bangladesh

The Union Cabinet approved signing of Framework of Understanding (FoU) on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector with Bangladesh.

The objective of the proposed FoU is to establish a cooperative institutional framework mechanism to facilitate and enhance India-Bangladesh bilateral cooperation in the hydrocarbon sector based on equality and mutual benefit.



The FoU promotes bilateral cooperation at the sub-regional and regional levels. It will provide impetus to development of the two countries and realize their developmental aspirations.

58. Cabinet approved a MoU between India and Tunisia

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of justice between India and Tunisia.

During the recent years, social, cultural and commercial relations between India and Tunisia have developed in a positive direction. Signing of an agreement on cooperation in the field of justice will further enhance good relations between the two countries and add new dimensions in the field of judicial reforms.



new dimensions in the field of judicial reforms.

59. Cabinet approved implementation of the Target plus Scheme (TPS)

The Union Cabinet approved the implementation of Supreme Court's Judgment dated 27th October 2015 regarding Target Plus Scheme (TPS) 2004-09 in Civil Application No. 554 of 2006. The revenue implication under the TPS arising from the Hon'ble Supreme Court's Judgment is about Rs. 2700 crore.

The corrective measure will end multiple litigations with the Government and the claims under the TPS will be issued as per original provisions under Foreign Trade Policy in compliance with the decision of the Hon'ble Supreme Court.



60. Cabinet approved the “Signing and Ratification of MoU for BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection” setup

The Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Ministry of Power for Signing of "Memorandum of Understanding for Establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection". It will be signed among member states of BIMSTEC at the upcoming 3rd BIMSTEC Energy Ministers' Meeting to be held in Nepal.



In the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat 2016, held in Goa on the 16th October 2016, the Leaders decided to expedite the signing of the MoU on BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection. Eventually, during the 4th meeting of BIMSTEC Senior Officials on Energy held on 11th-12th January 2017, the MoU was discussed and finalized.

61. Cabinet apprised MoU between India and Russia

The Union Cabinet apprised of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Russia for cooperation in the field of Science & Technology (S&T) signed in October 2016.



The objective of the MoU is to facilitate and support joint scientific and research activities between scientific organizations, subordinated to the Agency and scientific organizations and scientists of the Republic of Russian Federation, with India through DST. Under this MoU, the Parties will conduct of joint scientific events and support establishment of direct connections.

62. Cabinet approved setting up of Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy

The Union Cabinet approved setting up of Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE) at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. It is – "an Institute of National Importance" through an Act of Parliament.



This Institute will have the governance structure as well as legal mandate to grant degrees in a manner similar to that enjoyed by IITs.

A separate Act will also impart the required status to the Institute to become a "Centre of Excellence" in petroleum and energy

studies. The objective is to meet the quantitative and qualitative gap in the supply of skilled work force for the petroleum sector.

63. Cabinet approved measures to increase oil palm area and production in India

The Union Cabinet approved measures to increase oil palm area and production in India. These include relaxation of land ceiling limit for oil palm cultivation under NMOOP (National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm) and norms of assistance mainly for planting materials.

It is done with an aim to encourage oil palm plantation on large scale by corporate bodies, utilize wastelands, and encourage farmers for oil palm cultivation in a bigger way.



64. Cabinet approved setting up of a Special Purpose Vehicle

The Union Cabinet approved setting up of a Special Purpose Vehicle to be called Government e-Marketplace (GeM SPV) as the National Public Procurement Portal as Section 8 Company registered under the Companies Act, 2013, for providing procurement of goods & services required by Central & State Government organizations.

This GeM SPV shall provide an end-to-end online Marketplace for Central and State Government Ministries, Departments, Central & State Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs & SPSUs), autonomous institutions and local bodies, for procurement of common use goods & services in a transparent and efficient manner.



65. HUPA Minister inaugurated two-day national review of PMAY

The Union Minister for Housing & Urban Poverty Alleviation inaugurated the two-day National review of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) Mission. Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu urged the State Governments and UT administrations to organize loan mela's to facilitate interest subsidy to the beneficiaries.

The two-day National Review included various sessions to discuss upon Demand Survey, Status of Housing For All Plan of Action (PoA)



and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP), Grounding and progress of projects, MIS and Geo-tagging, Technology Sub-Mission and CLSS for Economically Weaker section and Low Income Group.

66. Petrol, Diesel prices to change every day in five cities from May 1

Petrol and Diesel prices to change every day due to international rates in five select cities from 1st of May. A pilot for daily revision of petrol and diesel price will be first implemented in Puducherry, Vizag in Andhra Pradesh, Udaipur in Rajasthan, Jamshedpur in Jharkhand and Chandigarh.



The State fuel retailers currently revise rates on 1st and 16th of every month based on average international price of the fuel in the preceding fortnight and currency exchange rate.

67. CBDT to issue PAN and TAN within 1 day

In order to improve the Ease of Doing Business for newly incorporated corporates, CBDT has tied up with Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to issue Permanent Account Number (PAN) and Tax Deduction Account Number (TAN) in 1 day.



Applicant companies will submit a common application form SPICe (INC 32) on MCA portal and once the data of incorporation is sent to CBDT by MCA, the PAN and TAN are issued immediately without any further intervention of the applicant. CBDT has also introduced the Electronic PAN Card (E-PAN) which is sent by email.

Electronic PAN Card (E-PAN) which is sent by email.

68. DAC&FW in consultation with NITI Aayog identified nine marketing reforms

DAC&FW in consultation with NITI Aayog has identified a set of nine marketing reforms to be made in Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Acts of the States/UTs.



These include three mandatory reforms enabling integration to e-NAM viz provision for e-trading, unified trading license and a single point levy of market fee, as well as setting up markets in the private sector, direct marketing, etc., all aimed at reducing the intermediaries between producer and buyer to ensure remunerative prices to the farmer.

69. Aadhaar Seeding Application launched by Shri Bandaru Dattatreya

The Central Board (EPF) under the leadership of Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment (Independent Charge) Shri Bandaru Dattatreya held its 217th special meeting in New Delhi, where he launched the Aadhaar Seeding Application.

The EPFO has developed this Aadhaar seeding application with support of the Common Service Centres. With the implementation of Aadhaar Seeding Application, now Provident Fund members or pensioners can walk in any of the field offices of EPFO or CSC outlets and seed the Aadhaar with the UAN.

70. BHIM-Aadhar launched by the Prime Minister on Ambedkar Jayanti

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a series of initiatives on the 126th birth anniversary of Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar in Nagpur. He launched the BHIM Aadhaar platform for merchants, Cash back and Referral bonus schemes for BHIM and declared about 75 townships going less-cash.

The Prime Minister felicitated the winners of the Mega draw of the two major incentive schemes to promote digital payments- Lucky Grahak Yojana and Digidhan Vyapaar Yojana.



Under this scheme, Rs. 258 crores worth prize money was won by 16 lakh winners, including customers and merchants belonging to different corners of the country and from varied lifestyles.

71. About 3.54 Crore SCS & OBCS Students Covered Under the Digital Payment Scholarship Scheme

Around 14 scholarship schemes for Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Classes (OBCs)/Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic Tribes (DNTs) students covering 3.54 crore students are under the digital payment scholarship scheme.

The entire scholarship amount was released to the students' bank account and there is 60% Aadhaar seeding in SC student's bank account.

Each branch of public sector banks has been assigned responsibility by the Finance Ministry to handhold at least one SC/ST youth, as an entrepreneur, to generate more employment among them.



72. Government to set up 32 new seismological observatories

Government will set up 32 new seismological observatories by the year-end to boost information-gathering capability on earthquakes. At present, 84 such observatories are functional in the country. The observatories generate ground motion data recorded by the digital seismography used for estimation of data and other earthquake parameters.

Five observatories will be installed in Uttar Pradesh, four each in Bihar and Haryana, three each in Himachal Pradesh and Delhi, two each in Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and one each in Uttarakhand, Jharkhand, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal and Lakshadweep.



73. France and India signed agreement to upgrade Railways

The French Minister of State for Transport, Marine Affairs and Fisheries Alain Vidalies signed an agreement with Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu.

The agreement was inked for collaboration in areas such as high-speed and semi-high speed rail, modernisation of current operations and infrastructure, station renovation and operations, suburban trains and safety systems, operations and security.



The French Minister also met Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and proposed for usage of electric buses and LNG-fuelled barges to reduce carbon footprint of public transport.

74. Cabinet approved listing of 11 CPSEs on stock exchanges

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval for listing of the following 11 CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) on stock exchanges. As approved, the listing of CPSEs will be through the public offer of shares up to 25 percent of Government of India's shareholding.



The other CPSEs that will be listed are the Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd, IRCON International Ltd, Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) Ltd, RITES (earlier known as Rail India Technical and Economic Service), Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL), Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDSL), North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO), Mishra Dhatu Nigam Ltd. (MIDHANI) and MSTC Ltd.

75. World Bank approved \$375-mn loan for India's first modern waterway

The World Bank's Board approved a \$375 million loan to help the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) put in place the state-of-the-art infrastructure and navigation services needed to develop India's first modern inland water transport fairway on a 1,360 km-stretch of the Ganga river between Varanasi and the seaport of Haldia.



The waterway is known as National Waterway 1 (Jal Marg Vikas) Project. It will help save more than 150,000 tonnes of CO2 equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions annually.

76. President of India inaugurated the Global Exhibition on Services

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the third edition of the Global Exhibition on Services (GES-2017) at New Delhi. Global Exhibition on Services embraces as many as twenty vital services sectors for special focus.



While some of the services are traditional ones such as tourism and hospitality and retail, many of the focus sectors are new to India and the world, including space services, sports services and wellness services. India's services exports are helping global businesses build their productivity and competitiveness, and are supporting jobs across the world.

77. PM launched projects related to SAUNI Yojana at Botad

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation, Phase-1 (Link 2) of the SAUNI (Saurashtra Narmada Avtaran Irrigation) Yojana, at Botad. He also laid the Foundation Stone of Phase 2 (Link 2) of the SAUNI Yojana.



Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan was appreciated for the work done by him on river water conservation, and the Narmada. Prime Minister called for the extensive use of drip irrigation, and said the Union Government is working on ways to help double incomes in the agriculture sector.

78. PM launched Government projects in Dadra and Nagar Haveli

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated several Government projects at Silvassa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli. These include Government buildings, solar PV systems, Jan Aushadhi Kendras and a Passport Seva Kendra.



He also distributed Aids and Assistive Devices to Divyangjans, and other benefits under existing Government schemes. At present, government’s development schemes have been successful such as the number of beneficiaries under the Ujjwala scheme for LPG has crossed two crores in less than a year.

79. Portal and Mobile App of RUSA launched

Union Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar launched the unique portal and mobile app of Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA), a body under the aegis of the Ministry of Human Resource Development in New Delhi.



Under the concept of RUSA the quality of education can go up by improving the research labs infrastructure and creating smart class rooms and various other programs. 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.

80. Prakash Javadekar launched the Fund and Reform Tracker of RUSA

Union Minister of Human Resource Development Shri Prakash Javadekar launched the Fund and Reform Tracker developed by Rashtriya Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in New Delhi. Fund and Reform Tracker will monitor RUSA projects from the minute they are sanctioned. They will also track their progress until their completion.



Tracking projects are the soul of this Application, and every initiative is tagged with a unique ID number, thus providing the entire story of how an idea germinated and matured. A powerful Dashboard gives an overall picture of the scheme and the state wise performance.

81. Nation-wide training program launched for Elected Women representatives

A comprehensive module for capacity building of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayats and a training program for Trainers of women panchayat leaders across the country was launched by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.



The training program seeks to empower EWRs of panchayats by enhancing their capacity, capability and skill in governance and administration of villages. The module has been prepared by the National Commission for Women of the WCD Ministry in collaboration with TISS.

82. Cabinet approves the 123rd Constitution Amendment Bill 2017

The Union Cabinet approved introduction of Constitution (123rd Amendment) Bill 2017 and National Commission for Backward Classes (Repeal) Bill, 2017 in the Parliament. It also gave approval for retention of posts, incumbents and office premises held by the existing National Commission for Backward Classes by the proposed new National Commission for Backward Classes.



Bills were introduced and passed in the Lok Sabha in the just concluded budget session of Parliament. However, the Rajya Sabha referred the bills to the Select Committee of the House for further scrutiny.

83. Railway Ministry inaugurated 'Vistadome' Coaches

Shri Prabhu dedicated Vistadome Coach and Laid Foundation stone for Mechanized Laundry under BOOT Model at Visakhapatnam. Vistadome coach having features like glass roof, LED lights, rotatable seats, GPS based info system, etc., will offer to tourists to enjoy scenic beauty not only at destination but also along the journey.



Mechanised Laundry under BOOT Model at Visakhapatnam will significantly improve the quality of linen leading to enhanced passenger satisfaction. A function was also arranged at Visakhapatnam, in which a large number of Public Representatives.

84. Bhopal station becomes first privately run railway station

Indian Railways has handed over Habibganj station of Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) to private firm for handling operations. This will include station building, fancy makeover, ease congestion, offer cafeteria and food plaza facilities etc. M/s Bansal Pathways Ltd is all set to take over the management of station as per the Station Facility Management Agreement.



However, core operations such as signaling, track maintenance and running of trains will be undertaken by the railways. With this agreement, Madhya Pradesh becomes first state to have railway station privately handled by a firm. The total makeover will take around two years.

85. Cabinet approved policy guidelines to avail external assistance by State Government entities

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the policy guidelines to allow financially sound State Government entities to borrow directly from bilateral ODA (Official development Assistance) partners for implementation of vital infrastructure projects.



The guidelines will facilitate the State Government entities to borrow from the external bilateral funding agencies subject to fulfilment of certain conditions and all repayments of loans. The concerned State Government will furnish guarantee for the Loan. The Government of India will provide counter guarantee for the loan.

86. Krishi Karman Awards 2015-16 honored to three states

Krishi Karman awards 2015-16 were presented by the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers to the following three states – Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh and Tripura. These states were awarded for their record performance in the production of food grains during 2015-16. Tripura received national award for the second time.



States had adopted an “innovative, eco-friendly integrated pest management” to achieve this production target. In a communication to the State government, the Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers’ Welfare in the Union Ministry of Agriculture stated that a sum of ₹5 crore had been released for the award.

87. Union Cabinet banned use of red beacon vehicles by VIPs

The Union Cabinet, in its meeting chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi decided to do away with beacons of all kinds atop all categories of vehicles in the country with effect from May 1st. Beacons, however, will be allowed on vehicles concerned with emergency and relief services, ambulance, fire service etc.



This Ban is applicable to the Prime Minister, Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, State Cabinet Ministers, Bureaucrats and Judges of the High Court and Supreme Court. Only President, Vice-President and Chief Justice of India will be allowed to use red beacon vehicles.

88. Cabinet approves procurement of Election Commission to buy VVPAT machines

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for procurement of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Units. These will be used in the General Elections, 2019.



The approval has been given for purchase of 16,15,000 Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) Units at a tentative unit cost of Rs 19,650 and at a total estimated cost of Rs 3173.47 crores.

The decision of the Government would enable the Election Commission of India to deploy VVPAT Units in the General Elections, 2019, which will act as an additional layer of transparency for the satisfaction of voters.

89. NDMA conducted its first mock exercise on forest fire in Uttarakhand

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) conducted a first-of-its-kind State-level mock exercise on forest fire in Uttarakhand. The mock exercise, aimed at assessing the efficacy of integrating the preparedness and response mechanisms of the forest department with those of the district administration, has been conducted in collaboration with the State Government.



The exercises were conducted in coordination with various agencies, such as fire, forest, Army, health, police, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and civil defense.

90. India and Republic of Korea signed Inter-Governmental MOU

India and the Republic of Korea (RoK) signed an Inter-governmental Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Defence Industry Co-operation in Shipbuilding.

The co-operation with the recommended Korean Shipyard would enable HSL to upgrade and modernize its facilities and execute naval shipbuilding projects in a timely and cost effective manner.

HSL would be able to imbibe best practices in shipbuilding leading to effective project management.

MoU will develop and strengthen defence industry co-operation between Republic of India and the Republic of Korea.



91. Service charge not mandatory as government approved guidelines

Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said that the government has approved guidelines on service charge. Service charge on hotel and restaurant bills is “totally voluntary” and not mandatory.

Hotels and restaurants will not decide on service charge to be levied but it will be at a customer’s discretion. As per the guidelines, the column of service charge in a bill will be left blank to customers to fill up before making the final payment. The guidelines are being sent to states for necessary action at their end.



92. Government extended date for filing tax declarations under PMGKY until May 10

The government has extended the date of declarations about tax payment and deposits under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) until 10th of May 2017.

This has come within days of extending the date for making deposits as part of the tax amnesty scheme until 30th of April. The declarations can be filed in cases where tax, surcharge and penalty under PMGKY has been paid on or before the 31st March and deposit under the Deposit Scheme has been made on or before 30th of April.



93. Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh inaugurated India Steel 2017 in Mumbai

The 3rd edition of International Conference and Exhibition on Steel Industry, "India Steel 2017", was held at Mumbai Exhibition Centre in Mumbai from 19th to 21st April, 2017. It was inaugurated by Union Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh.

The conference was organised by FICCI along with Union Ministry of Steel. More than 200 exhibitors from the steel sector participated in the event. India is the third largest producer of crude steel.



94. Cabinet approved amendments in Mega Power Policy 2009

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the time period for the provisional Mega projects (25 projects), for furnishing the final Mega certificates to the Tax authorities be extended to 120 months instead of 60 months from the date of import. Developers would be required to keep their Fixed Deposit Receipt (FDR) or Bank Guarantee (in lieu of duty exemption claimed) alive.

The CCEA also approved 25 Provisional Mega certified project for Mega Policy benefits in proportion to the long term PPA (Power Purchase Agreement) tied up.



95. Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot inaugurated photo Exhibition “The Paths We Walk”

Shri Thaawarchand Gehlot, Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment inaugurated a Documentary Photo exhibition “The Paths We Walk”. The exhibition was organized by The National Trust under Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in collaboration with Society for Child Development, New Delhi. The Divyangjan artists presented their creative art works to the guests on the occasion.

The Documentary photo exhibition is intended to tackle negative myths of disability and employment of persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Intellectual Disability and Multiple Disabilities.



96. New Delhi hosted two-day National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign-2017

The National Conference on Agriculture for Kharif Campaign – 2017 is being organized on 25th and 26th April, 2017 at New Delhi. Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare applauded efforts of the Central and State Governments in attaining an estimated record production of about 272 million metric tons in food grains and 33.6 million tons oilseeds.



Union Agriculture Minister complimented states that have achieved the target of delivery of soil health cards to all farmers and exhorted the others to complete the first phase by in the next 2-3 months.

97. Over Rs. 1 lakh crore investment approved for housing of urban poor

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation has sanctioned 100,537 more houses for urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) with an investment of Rs. 4,200 crores taking the total investment so far approved to Rs. 100,466 crores.

In the latest sanctions, Madhya Pradesh got 57,131 houses, Tamil Nadu – 24,576, Manipur – 6,231, Chattisgarh – 4,898, Gujarat – 4,261, Assam – 2,389, Kerala – 643, Jharkhand – 331 and Daman & Diu – 77.



With the latest sanctions, the Ministry has approved construction of 18,75,389 houses for Economically Weaker Sections under PMAY(Urban). The total investment approved includes central assistance of Rs. 29,409 crore, assistance from State Governments and beneficiary contribution.

98. PM launched UDAN Scheme for Civil Aviation from Shimla

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi launched UDAN – the Regional Connectivity Scheme for civil aviation, from Shimla Airport. Under this scheme, flights have started from Shimla, Nanded and Kadapa Airports. The Prime Minister addressed the gathering at Shimla Airport and at Nanded and Kadapa via video link.



The Prime Minister also unveiled an e-plaque to mark the laying of Foundation Stone of a Hydro Engineering College at Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh. UDAN – Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik welcomes the new civil aviation policy that marks an opportunity to cater to the aspirations of the people of India.

99. Shri Venkaiah Naidu launched MyMSME Mobile App and MSEFC Portal

Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, Union Minister for Urban Development and Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting launched Micro and Small Enterprises Facilitation Council (MSEFC) portal and MyMSME Mobile App on the 15th Meeting of the National Board for MSME.



MSEFC portal would facilitate implementation of the delayed payment provisions of the MSMED Act 2006 and assist in monitoring of delayed payment cases. In addition, the MyMSME mobile app provides information on all schemes implemented by the Ministry of MSME and MSMEs can lodge grievances pertaining to Ministry of MSME through this app.

100. NHRC organized two-day workshop on 'Good Governance

National Human Rights Commission, NHRC organized a two-day regional workshop for northern India on 'Good Governance, Development and Human Rights' at Chandigarh. The objective of the workshop was to raise awareness amongst all stakeholders about the importance of good governance in relation to human rights and development. Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh participated in the workshop.



With this regional workshop, the Commission aimed to solidify the ground for the furtherance of human rights awareness and attainment of good governance.

101. Center reviewed progress of PM's Development Package for J&K

A high-level Inter-Ministerial meeting was held in New Delhi to review the progress in implementation of development package for Jammu and Kashmir. In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced a package of 80 thousand crore rupees for the J&K.



The meeting was chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh. During the meeting, Mr. Singh took stock of the progress of various development initiatives announced for the state. The meeting was attended by representatives from various central ministries and departments, and the state government.

102. India is set to host the 18th World Road Meeting

The 4-day 18th World Road Meeting titled CROSSROADS-WRM 2017 will be organized in New Delhi from Nov. 14 to 17, 2017. The global mega event will be organized by the International Road Federation, Geneva. The theme of this year's edition is 'Safe Roads and Smart Mobility: The Engines of Economic Growth'.



About 4000 global Road safety experts, professionals, companies and Government organizations, active in road transport and mobility sectors from various parts of the world will take part in the event.

103. India and Armenia inked three agreements

India and Armenia signed three agreements to boost bilateral cooperation. The two countries signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on peaceful uses of outer space, another MoU on cooperation in youth matters and a program of cultural cooperation for the years 2017-2020.



India will help Armenia to build satellite and remote sensing data matters and train Armenian scientists. The two countries agreed to liberalize the visa regime issue to improve people-to-people contact. Both the sides also agreed to enhance cooperation in the agricultural sector.

104. Government released 25% of PM's development package of Rs 80,000 crores to J&K

The Union Government has released around Rs 20,000 crore so far under the Prime Minister's Development Package (PMDP) for Jammu and Kashmir. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced a package of Rs. 80,000 crore for the state in 2015. Out of the announced package, over Rs. 61,000 crores have already been sanctioned by the various Central Ministries.



The PMDP will provide a major development push for Jammu and Kashmir with projects such as AIIMS for State, Support for District as well as Sub-District Hospitals and Primary Health Centers, IIM at Jammu and additional Girls' Hostels in Higher Educational Institutions.

105. India & Sri Lanka signed MoU on cooperation in Economic Projects

India and Sri Lanka have signed Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Economic Projects. The main areas and the scope of cooperation are 500 Megawatt LNG Power Plant, an LNG Terminal/Floating Storage Regasification Unit in Colombo and a 50 Megawatt Solar Power Plant in Sampur.



Upper tank farm in Trincomalee will be jointly developed by India and Sri Lanka with fresh investment. The other areas of co-operation are Industrial Zones and SEZs in identified locations, Railway sector development, and container terminal in Colombo port as a Joint Venture and development of agriculture and livestock in Sri Lanka.

106. India & Cyprus inked Work Plan for cooperation in agriculture sector

India and Cyprus signed Work Plan for 2017–18 to implement an already signed MOU for cooperation in the agriculture sector. It will accelerate agricultural production to meet the rising demand for food as well as increase the income of those dependent on agriculture.



It covers areas such as joint research projects, training/exchange program for scientists/experts working in the specific fields in various institutes of the two countries, exchange of germplasms and technology, promotion of private sector participation, joint workshops and conferences, etc.

107. India and Cyprus inked four Agreements

India and Cyprus signed four agreements following delegation-level talks headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades in New Delhi. The agreements include – An executive program on culture, education and scientific cooperation for the years 2017 to 2020. A work plan under a programme of cooperation in agriculture for the period 2017-2018. Cooperation in the area of merchant shipping and to Boost air services between the two countries.



“Advancing a multifaceted partnership. The two leaders witness exchange of four agreements after delegation talks and working luncheon,” External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Gopal Baglay tweeted.

108. IOC to build new terminal at Motihari to supply fuel to Nepal

The Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) will build a new oil terminal at Motihari in Bihar to supply fuel to Nepal via the planned pipeline up to Amlekganj in Nepal. The 69-km Motihari-Amlekganj pipeline will be built by IOC at an approved cost of Rs. 325 crores.

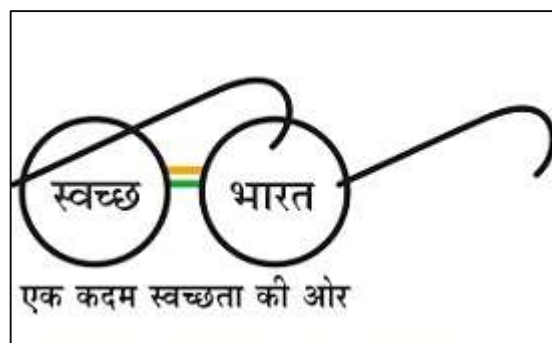


The current terminal at Raxaul will be closed since it does not comply with the Oil Industry Safety Directorate (OISD) guidelines. India recently extended the fuel supply agreement with Nepal to five years. Nepal receives around two lakh kiloliters of fuel from Indian Oil every month.

109. Union Government takes 10 new Swachh Iconic Places under Swachh Bharat Mission

The central government announced ten new Iconic places to be taken under the Phase II of Swachh Iconic Places initiative. These ten new iconic places, which are to be brought to a higher standard of the swachhta and visitors' amenities, are as follows:

- Gangotri
- Yamunotri
- Mahakaleshwar Temple, Ujjain
- Charminar, Hyderabad
- Church and Convent of St. Francis of Assisi, Goa
- Adi Shankaracharya's abode Kaladi in Ernakulam
- Gomateshwar in Shravanbelgola
- Baijnath Dham, Devghar
- Gaya Tirth in Bihar
- Somnath temple in Gujarat



The Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) is an initiative of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation under Swachh Bharat Mission.

110. Health Ministry launched 'Test and Treat Policy for HIV'

The Union Ministry for Health launched the 'Test and Treat Policy for HIV' under which anyone who is tested and found HIV positive will get the necessary treatment.

As soon as a person is tested and found to be positive, he will be provided with ART irrespective of his CD count or clinical stage. The government will also soon develop a National Strategic Plan for HIV for next seven years for ending AIDS. The 90:90:90 strategy adopted by the Health Ministry will help to identify 90% of those infected, place 90% of these on treatment and ensure 90% have their virus under control.



111. AIIMS became India's first public hospital for eye tumors

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) became India's first public hospital to start plaque brachytherapy facility for the treatment of eye tumors.

The facility is a form of local radiation delivered to the eye through a radioactive device, which is attached to the eye for a temporary period.

The facility will treat children suffering from a type of cancer called Retinoblastoma and adults who suffer from melanoma.



112. Tripartite MOU signed for broadband services to Post Offices

A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding has been signed among BBNL, Department of Posts and BSNL for providing broadband connectivity of BharatNet to Post Offices in rural areas.

This MoU is the first tri-partite agreement to provide broadband connectivity to about 1.3 lakh, post offices in rural areas and 25,000 sub-post offices for high-speed internet connectivity to the rural masses.

BharatNet is one of the nine pillars of realizing the Prime Minister's vision of Digital India.



113. Over 21 lakh LED Street Lights installed across India

Under the Government of India's Street Lighting National Program (SLNP), over 21 lakh conventional streetlights have been replaced with LED street lights across the country. Energy Efficiency Services Limited, a Public Energy Services Company under the administration of Ministry of Power, Government of India (GoI) is the implementing agency for SLNP.



The installation of LED street lights has resulted in Annual energy savings of 295 million-unit kWh, avoided capacity of over 73 MW and reduction of 2.3 lakh tonnes of CO2 annually. The project has been implemented across 23 states and union territories.

114. The Eastern Peripheral Expressway for decongesting Delhi likely to be complete by August 2017

The Eastern Peripheral Expressway for decongesting Delhi is likely to be completed by August 2017. EPE would be the country's first green expressway with excellent smart features.



The Peripheral Expressway Project comprises two expressways - Western Peripheral Expressway (WPE) and Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) connecting NH-1 and NH-2 from Western and Eastern side of Delhi. The EPE and WPE constitute one combined project forming a Ring Road around Delhi with a total length of 270 km. About 183 km length passes through the State of Haryana whereas the remaining about 87 km length passes through the State of Uttar Pradesh.

Persons in News

1. Indian batsman MS Dhoni named one day CEO of Gulf Oil

India's famous batsman and skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni became the acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gulf Oil India just for a day. He took charge of Gulf Oil India at the Mumbai head office. Previously in 2011, Mahendra Singh Dhoni was named as the brand ambassador for Gulf Oil in the year 2011.

He attended some special meetings and is said to have taken some key decisions. Mahendra Singh Dhoni showed interest in knowing corporate CEO's work. He has been associated with the company since quite a long time.



2. Malala Yousafzai became the youngest to address Canada's parliament

Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai became youngest to address Canadian Parliament and officially received the honorary Canadian citizenship.

The Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau honored Malala Yousafzai with honorary Canadian citizenship at a ceremony held in Canadian Parliament, discussed various issues with Malala such as girls' upliftment through education, sustainable development of their communities and appreciated her support towards girls' rights and education.



Canadian citizenship has been honored to 5 such other brave personalities such as Raoul Wallenberg, Nelson Mandela, the 14th Dalai Lama, Aung San Suu Kyi, and Aga Khan.

3. British-Indian educationist named 'Asian Businesswoman of the Year'

Indian origin Asha Khemka was named "Asian Businesswoman of the Year" at an event in Birmingham. She received the award at the 5th annual Asian Business Awards Midlands. The award honors the success and achievements of local Asian businesses.



Ms. Khemka has been honored with one of the UK's top civilian awards - Dame, the female equivalent of knighthood – in 2014 for her work related to the education sector in Nottingham. She was also awarded the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 2008.

4. Sagar Baheti became the first visually impaired Indian to complete the Boston Marathon

Sagar Baheti became the first visually impaired Indian to complete the Boston Marathon. Bengaluru-based Baheti completed the race in 4 hours, 14 minutes and 7 seconds to finish at the 18th spot in the visually impaired category. He completed 42.195 Km distance.



He became the first visually impaired Indian to qualify for the marathon and was one of the 30,000 runners who took part in the race. The historic Boston Marathon is traditionally held on Patriots' Day, the third Monday of April. It is considered as one of the most difficult marathon courses around the world.

5. Srishti Kaur crowned Miss Teen Universe 2017

Srishti Kaur was crowned Miss Teen Universe 2017 held at Managua, the capital of Central American country Nicaragua. She succeeded Niveles Gonzalez from Puerto Rico as the Miss Teen Universe.



The runners-up of the event were Samantha Pierre from Canada and Ary Trava from Mexico. Kaur also won the best national costume at the event for a stunning peacock gown designed by Devashish Majumdar and Melvyn Noronha. The pageant is organized by the Miss Universe organization for teens aged 15 to 19.

6. Sudarsan Pattnaik won the gold medal in a Moscow competition

Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik won jury prize gold medal at 10th Moscow Sand art Championship at Kolomenskoye, Moscow in Russia. The theme of the competition was the "World around us". There were around 25 sculptors from different countries, who participated in the competition.

Pattnaik created a 10-ft high sand sculpture of Lord Ganesh with the message of "Go Green". Last year Pattnaik won gold medal at Moscow for his sand sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi on "World peace".



Places in News

1. The Second Annual Meeting of the NDB held in New Delhi

The Second Annual Meeting of the New Development Bank (NDB) was held in New Delhi from 31st March to 2nd April, 2017. The Annual meeting focussed on Building a Sustainable Future. Five MOUs were signed during the three day Meeting.

India has sought USD 2 Billion loans for various projects from the NDB. India has also signed a 350 million dollar loan agreement with NDB for financing Development and Upgradation of Major District Roads in Madhya Pradesh.



2. The 19th Commonwealth Forestry conference held in Dehradun

The 5-day 19th Commonwealth Forestry conference was held in Dehradun beginning 3rd of April at Forest Research Institute (FRI). The conference was organized on the theme 'Forests for Prosperity and Posterity'.

Around 500 delegates that included scientists and experts from 49 member countries of the Commonwealth gathered to participate in the conference. The conference focussed on biodiversity conservation and management, livelihood and economic security from forests.

This was the second time India hosted the event. Previously it was held in Delhi in 1968.



3. New Delhi hosted the National conference on 'Communicating India'

Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Rajyavardhan Rathore inaugurated national conference on Communicating India in New Delhi. The conference was organized based on three main themes i.e. telling the India's story to the world, communicating via Journalism and Dialogue with Diaspora.

The National Conference on Communications provides stage for researchers, students and practicing engineers to present and exchange ideas in latest technological advancements and innovations.



4. Two-day Convention on World Homoeopathy Day concluded

Two-day Convention on World Homoeopathy Day concluded successfully in New Delhi. The convention was organised by Central Council for Research in Homeopathy. On this occasion the AYUSH Minister, recalled the great contribution of Hahnemann, and how his scientific aptitude helped him to discover a healing system based on the infallible laws of nature.

On this occasion, CCRH, for the first time ever, presented awards to incentivise the contributors in the field of Homoeopathy research. During the convention, Minister of AYUSH also announced the awardees of Scholarship for Quality M.D. Dissertations in Homoeopathy.



5. Delhi hosted India's first micro-drama festival

Delhi hosted India's first ever micro-drama festival called as Thespis with the help of theatre group 'Vriksh'. Thespis is showcase of 28 independent plays. This was first such show held in India, thus welcoming the trend of micro-drama concept in India. People witnessed longest play of the festival ran for not more than 10 minutes and the shortest one lasted for only 42 seconds.

Out of the 42 entries, 25 plays in 10 diversified languages including Kashmiri, Rajasthani, Urdu and Punjabi among others were selected for the showcase in festival. Festival began with play 'Chamaeleonidae'.



6. Indian President inaugurated Kempegowda festival in New Delhi

Kempegowda Festival was inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi. It has been said that Kempe Gowda was a "just and humane" ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire. His brilliance could implement planned urban development that stands out, as early as in the 16th century A.D. The festival was organized by the Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Foundation.

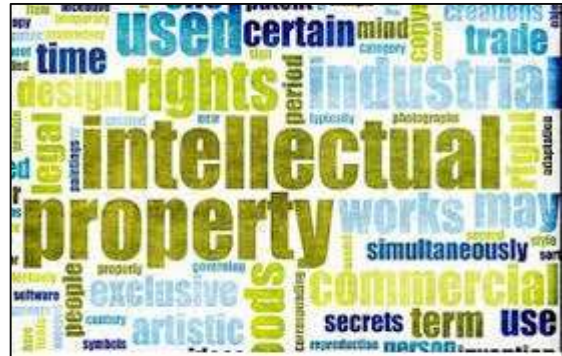
Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Foundation was founded on April 17, 2016. Indian President praised Jagadguru Sri Sri Sri Nimalanandanatha Swamiji for his work towards popularizing Nada Prabhu Kempe Gowda.



7. Launch of IPR Awareness Campaign for Schools

The Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) in collaboration with the International Trademark Association (INTA) kicked off the IPR Awareness campaign for schools across the country in New Delhi.

The program was an hour-long interactive session with a presentation delivered by the INTA Working Group included various games and activities to keep the kids engaged. Along with the presentation, colorful and vibrant posters on different IPs were put up and mementos including a brochure on IP designed for kids was given to all students in attendance of the session.



8. Bhubaneswar became the first Indian city to win the Pierre L'enfant Awards 2017

Bhubaneswar became the first Indian city to win Pierre L'enfant Planning Excellence and Achievement Awards-2017 for "Bhubaneswar Smart City Plan", which is based on citizen engagement approach. It also envisages the use of technology for improving the overall quality of life.

The APA Awards jury has selected Five Excellence Award recipients in total. The award is instituted by the American Planning Association. The award has been named in the honor of French-born American architect and civil engineer, Pierre L'enfant, who is credited for designing the layout of the streets of Washington, D.C.



Regional

1. Madhya Pradesh government launched 'MP e-nagarpalika' app

The Madhya Pradesh government has launched a mobile app 'MP e-nagarpalika' to provide various municipal services online. Around 378 services like online payment of property tax, seeking building permission, birth/marriage/death certificates, etc., would be available round the clock on this app.



This app will also register complaints related to garbage, water, streetlights etc. It also has the facility of Online Payment gateway. The mobile app is a part of Rs. 225-crore 'e-nagarpalika' project.

2. Mizoram became the 27th state to join UDAY

The Government of India and the State of Mizoram signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under the scheme Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) for operational improvement of the State's Power Distribution Department. It became the 27th state to join UDAY.



Mizoram would derive an overall net benefit of approximately Rs.198 crores by opting to participate in UDAY. The scheme would also allow speedy availability of cheaper power to 22,007 households in the State that are still without electricity.

3. Uttar Pradesh to waive off farmer's agriculture loan of up to Rs 1 lakh

Uttar Pradesh government decided to waive off farmer's agricultural loan of up to 1-lakh rupees and to provide free electricity to BPL families in urban areas. About 86 lakh small and marginalized farmers of the state will be benefited and about 36 thousand crore rupees of financial burden will be on the public exchequer to meet out the decision of waiving off the Agri-loans.



The Uttar Pradesh government announced setting up of three separate committees of Ministers on formulation of new Industrial policy, check illegal mining and protect the interests of potato growing farmers.

4. The 5-day Namami Brahmaputra festival held in Assam

Assam celebrated their five-day long Namami Brahmaputra festival. A MoU to dredge the Brahmaputra was signed among the Assam government, NHAI and Inland Waterways Authority of India.



The dredging of the Brahmaputra will change the entire economic corridor of Assam as Brahmaputra National waterway-II and will have direct access to Chittagong port of Bangladesh and Haldia port of West Bengal. It was announced that Sagarmala project will be carried out at the cost of 15 lakh crore rupees.

5. CM Mamata Banerjee declared Jhargram as the 22nd district of WB

The West Bengal Chief Minister declared Jhargram as the 22nd district of West Bengal, fulfilling a longstanding demand of its residents. Several developmental projects for the district were announced including a stadium and several schools, colleges, and hospitals and an archery academy in Jhargram will be established to train talented youths.



Chief Minister recalled that earlier, nearly 35,000 persons were recruited in the police from Junglemahal (forested stretches comprising large areas of Bankura, West Midnapore, etc.) and announced that henceforth, the day will be celebrated as 'Jhargram Divas'.

6. 'Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana' to be launched in Nellore

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana", a 'Scheme for providing Physical Aids and Assisted-living Devices for Senior citizens belonging to BPL category' was launched in District Nellore, Andhra Pradesh on 1st April, 2017.



The devices will help the Senior Citizens to overcome their age related physical impairment and to lead a dignified and productive life with minimal dependence on caregivers or other members of the family. The ambitious Scheme is expected to benefit 5,20,000 Senior Citizens during 3 years. The expected financial outlay is Rs. 483.6 Crores.

7. J&K government imposed ban on polythene manufactured below 50 microns

The Jammu and Kashmir government banned polythene bags manufactured below fifty microns to make the state's environment and ecology pollution free. Ministry to introduce guidelines and regulations and improve proper recycling of plastic waste, reducing its impact on the environment.

Some other measures were also adopted such as awareness camps will be organized to educate masses about ill effects of non-biodegradable products and manufacturer's name and address will be printed on the bag.



8. First biogas bus launched in Kolkata

Kolkata introduced first biogas-fueled bus for public transport with the help of company Phoenix India Research and Development Group. Public will be charged flat Rs. 1 fare. It is first of such launch in the entire south East Asia.

Phoenix India Research is in process of seeking government approval for providing cheap fuel to old buses, which have run for 15 or 20 years. Kolkata will introduce four more buses. The first bus will cover distance of 17 km between Ultadanga and Garia in the southern fringes of the city.



9. Berhampur Thakurani Yatra festival observed in Odisha

Southern Odisha's biggest festival Berhampur Thakurani Yatra was celebrated in Odisha. It is a festival, which is celebrated for one long month. This year, it is expected to conclude by May 1. Festival marks celebration of weaving community, known as Devangiris, and is organized by P Durga Prasad Desibehera, every year since generations.

Every year, Desibehera, head of the Devangiris, and his wife along with several others visit Thakurani temple in a manner to invite the goddess 'home' at midnight on the first day.



10. Uttar Pradesh to set up six AIIMS like institutes in the next five years

The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announced to set up six AIIMS like institutes and 25 new medical colleges in the state in the next five years.

Expressing concern over the poor medical facilities in rural areas, Mr. Adityanath appealed to medicos to come forward to work in those areas in the early days of their careers. Underlining the contribution of KGMU in the field of medicine, the Chief Minister announced that government would provide all possible help to the university and upgrade it to an AIIMS like institution.



11. Uttar Pradesh to allow liquor shops only under the excise act

The Uttar Pradesh government asked the officials that liquor shops will be allowed only under excise act and guidelines issued by the Supreme Court. Government has issued directions to administrative and police officers after people began picketing against liquor shops demanding their closure.

The Government has clarified that alcohol establishments will not be allowed near to educational institutions, hospitals, religious places, and residential areas as per guidelines of the apex court. It has also been said that officers will be held responsible if illegal alcohol shops were found and manufacturing and selling of illicit alcohol come to notice.



12. Haryana to provide Rs 21,000 to families under 'Aapki Beti, Hamari Beti' scheme

In order to implement scheme 'Aapki Beti, Hamari Beti', Haryana government will provide one-time grant of Rs. 21,000 to all those eligible families whose third girl child was born on or after August 24, 2015. Scheme was launched with an aim to increase girl child sex ratio.

There has been improvements observed in sex ration of Haryana, on implementation of scheme. Haryana government observed sex ration at birth 938 girls per 1,000 boys in February 2017.



13. Assam Government to make Girls Education free up to the University Level

The Assam government proposed to make girls education free up to the university level. The policy proposed to implement two child norms for getting government jobs. The minimum age for marriage must be followed for getting benefits of the Government Employment Generation Schemes.



The two child norms will also be followed for aspiring candidates of gram panchayat and municipality board. Policy proposed strict measures to prevent child marriage. State Population Resource Centre will be set up in the state as per the proposal.

14. Madhya Pradesh launched Deendayal Antyodaya Rasoi Yojana

Madhya Pradesh became the third state to launch popular subsidized meal scheme under name 'Deendayal Antyodaya Rasoi Yojana'. The scheme has been already launched in two other states Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan. In Tamil Nadu, it has been launched under name 'Amma Canteens'.



The first phase of the scheme was launched by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in 49 districts headquarters across Madhya Pradesh state. In order to implement Deendayal Antyodaya Rasoi Yojana', food centers (canteens) will be opened at each district.

15. Chattisgarh CM Raman Singh announced liquor ban in state

Chattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh announced that liquor prohibition would be enforced in Chattisgarh. Chief Minister announced that there would be no sale of liquor in those villages, where population is less than three thousand and rules will be formulated accordingly.



He made this historic announcement in Munger, Bihar, following a meeting with Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, who has emerged as an icon for the pro-prohibition movement after implementing liquor ban in his state in April 2016.

16. Madhya Pradesh decided to ban plastic carry bags from May 1

In Madhya Pradesh, the state government has decided to ban plastic carry bags from 1st of May in the state. The decision was taken in a cabinet meeting held in Bhopal under the leadership of chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan. The state cabinet also gave approval to Chief Minister Young Professionals for Development Program on the lines of Maharashtra and Haryana.



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17. Uttar Pradesh to draft proposal for 24 hours power supply by 2018

In Uttar Pradesh, the government has given nod to draft proposal for giving 24-hour electric power in state by 2018 under 'Power to all scheme'. In this regard, a MOU will be signed with union government on coming 14th April.



Faulty electricity transformers will be changed within 48 hours instead of 72 hours. Cabinet decided to waive off electricity surcharges and facilitate people by making payment in four installments whose bill amount is over rupees 10 thousand. CAG has been given nod to audit 29 development authorities in state.

18. Himachal achieved 108% target under MGNREGS

In Himachal Pradesh, 240 lakh person-days were generated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act against the target of 218 lakh person-days during 2016-17. A sum of 625 Crore Rupees was spent against the target of 396 Crore Rupees.



Under the Deendayal Rural Skill Scheme five hundred Crore Rupees project had been adopted by the Union Government and first installment of 133 Crore Rupees has also been received. This scheme will provide job-oriented training for 15,000 unemployed youth between 18-35 years age of BPL families during next three years.

19. Maharashtra Government to supply free seeds, pesticides to marginal farmers

The Maharashtra Government is planning to supply seeds, fertilisers and pesticides free of cost to small and marginal farmers to keep the production costs minimal and to reduce their losses.

The State Government would also include farm labourers into the fold of National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme in the next couple of months. The Government is also coming with a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for food grains.



20. Jharkhand Police initiated Tare Zameen Par program in Naxal-affected areas

Jharkhand Police has initiated 'Tare Zameen Par program' to enlighten children in the Naxal-affected areas in the Palamau district of Jharkhand. This program is aimed to restore confidence in the state police force and to encourage children to lead happy lives.

As a part of this program, the state police appealed the locals to donate bags, shoes, books and clothes to improve the basic amenities of the children in the Naxal-affected areas.



21. Gorakhpur and Agra Airports renamed by the Uttar Pradesh Government

The Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister 'Yogi Aditya Nath' changed the name of Gorakhpur and Agra Airports and the name of the department of welfare of the differently abled, in the third meeting of the Uttar Pradesh cabinet.

The Gorakhpur Air Force Station was named after the founder of the Nath monastic movement, as Mahayogi Goraknath Airport. Likewise, the Agra Airport was renamed after RSS ideal Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay airport. The Department of Disabled Welfare will now be called as 'Divyang Jan Vikas Empowerment'.



22. DARPAN web app launched by Manipur

The two web applications were Anti-Corruption Cell and Digital Application for Review by Public and Nation (DARPAN), was launched by Manipur Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh to curb corruption, monitor all government-funded projects, check accountability and bring more transparency in system.



DARPAN app would check development of project at every stage such as upload details of projects right from the initial stage until sanction of fund, progress of work and photos the work sites etc.

23. Maharashtra to stage special drive for transgenders to register as voters

In order to ensure that transgenders voting rights in Maharashtra, the state is in process to launch a special awareness drive with the help of Election Commission of India. The day will be observed as Third Gender Day. With this, Maharashtra becomes first state to launch a special awareness drive for transgenders voting rights.



Under the special awareness drive, ECI will screen a two-and-a-half-minute film, slated to run in 400 theatres four times a day and put up posters on two 12-rake locals asking transgenders to register as voters.

24. Haryana Government to provide Accidental Insurance Cover

Haryana Government has decided to provide accidental insurance cover to all residents of the State in the age group of 18 to 70 years under the 'Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana' (PMSBY). The premium would be reimbursed by the state government.



The sum insured would be two lakh rupees each in case of accidental death, and, in case of total and irrecoverable loss. All resident of Haryana having Aadhaar seeded saving bank accounts would be entitled to join the scheme.

25. West Bengal launched Social Security Yojana

West Bengal Government has introduced the Social Security Yojana by converging five separate beneficiary schemes for workers in the unorganised sectors and for self-employed people. Around five crore people will benefit from the Yojana.

State Assistance Scheme for Provident Fund for Unorganised Sector, West Bengal Unorganised Sector Workers' Health Security Scheme, and Social Security scheme for Construction Workers, West Bengal Transport Workers Social Security Scheme and West Bengal Bidi Workers Welfare Scheme are being converged.



26. UP Government to set up 40 Yoga wellness centres in 40 districts

Uttar Pradesh government has decided to set up 40 Yoga wellness centres in 40 districts during current financial year. Of them 23 will be set up at Ayurvedic hospitals, 12 at homeopathic and 7 at Unani hospitals and colleges. State will seek assistance from union government to set up such centres in remaining 35 districts.

The UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed to develop first herbal garden of the state near to Government National Homeopathic College and Hospital, Lucknow and encourage the farmers for cultivation of herbal plants across the state.



27. Maharashtra CM launched Mumbai BDD chawl revamp

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated an ambitious scheme to revamp one of the oldest chawls in central Mumbai under which the state expects to build at least 16,000 affordable houses in the space-starved city.

The 207 BDD chawls were built in the 1920s by the then British government. Each tenant would get a 500 square feet house in the new buildings after the project. The Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority (Mhada) has been entrusted with undertaking the revamp of these chawls.



28. Haryana launched a Mobile Application called 'Kilkari'

The National Health Mission (NHM) in Haryana launched a mobile-based application, Kilkari, to create awareness among pregnant women, parents and health workers on the importance of ante and post-natal care, institutional delivery and immunization.

From the second trimester of pregnancy until the child is one-year-old, the application will deliver 72 time appropriate audio messages to registered mobile numbers on pregnancy, child and childbirth care every week.



29. Maharashtra to plant trees on the land near railway tracks

The Maharashtra government has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Railways to plant trees on the land adjacent to the railway tracks in the state with an aim to expand the green cover.

The Maharashtra state Forest department had planted 2 crore 83 lakh trees across the state on July 1, 2016 and has plans to plant 4 crore trees on July 1 this year.



30. Madhya Pradesh pips Tamil Nadu to lead in houses sanctioned under PMAY (Urban)

With total houses sanctioned of 2,66,842, Madhya Pradesh has emerged the leader for the first time in approvals under PMAY(Urban) with a total investment of Rs. 18,283 crores. Tamil Nadu is second with 2,52,532 houses with a total project cost of Rs. 9,112 crores.

In the latest sanctions, Madhya Pradesh got 57,131 houses, Tamil Nadu - 24,576, Manipur - 6,231, Chattisgarh - 4,898, Gujarat - 4,261, Assam - 2,389, Kerala - 643, Jharkhand - 331 and Daman & Diu - 77.



31. Northeast India's largest IT hub opens in Tripura

The largest Information Technology (IT) hub in Northeast India was inaugurated in Agartala to boost employment and e-governance besides to export software technology. It was set up at a cost of Rs 50 crores. It is the 6th IT hub in the Northeast region.

The IT hub would help to create employment opportunities for the IT educated youths. Tripura last year got the award from the central government for its performance in IT and e-governance.



32. Maharashtra's Bhilar village to become 1st book village of India

Bhilar, a village in Maharashtra, will become India's first 'book village' from May 4 where tourists and locals can come and read books, magazines, newspapers stacked at 25 premises. The village is already popular for its strawberries. The village is located near picturesque hill station Panchagani.

The idea of 'pustakanche gaon' – book village in Marathi – came from Hey-on-Wye, a small place known as 'town of books' in Wales, United Kingdom.



33. Kerala organized first ever transgender athletic meet

Kerala successfully organized a first of its sort sports meet for transgenders to promote equality for the transgender community in the state.

At least 130 athletes belonging to the transgender community participated in the event. The athletes participated in six sporting events including sprint in 100m, 200m, 400m, 4x100m relay, shot put and long jump. Kerala was the first state to formulate a transgender policy. The state set up a transgender justice board to deal with their complaints. The state also introduced a separate column, called intersex, in the birth and death registration form.



34. Ballabgarh in Haryana renamed as Balramgarh

The Ballabgarh city in Haryana state has been renamed as Balramgarh derived after its founder king Balram Singh. The princely State was founded by Balram Singh in 1739. Ballabgarh means 'The Fort of Balram'. The Government has also announced to grant Rs. 10 crores for the restoration of tube wells in the area and reconstruction of dilapidated bypass of Faridabad.



Haryana has recently renamed few cities, viz, Gurgaon as Gurugram, Mewat as Nuh, Mustafabad village in Yamunanagar has been named as Saraswati Nagar.

Reports

1. HRD Ministry ranked IISc as the best educational institution

According to an annual national rankings released by the HRD ministry under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore has been ranked at the top. IISc is the first Indian institution to make it to the top 10 in a global ranking.

Seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) are the other institutes in the top ten.



2. WADA placed India at the 3rd position under the Doping Charts List

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) placed India at third position for the third consecutive time in a doping violation report 2015, because 117 athletes from the country were punished. Russian Federation topped the charts with 176 athletes from the country being punished and Italy was placed at 2nd position with 129 athletes from the country being punished.

It is the first set of Anti-Doping Rule Violation statistics under the revised WADA Code and third such report in its history since 2013.



3. WTTC placed India on the 7th position in the Tourism based GDP Economy Report

World Travel and Tourism Council released tourism based GDP economy report 2016 where India was ranked 7th in terms of its total contribution to the country's GDP. Report analysis was topped by USA followed by China at 2nd, Germany at 3rd place.

India created 40.3 million jobs in 2016, accounted for 88% growth in travel economy and received 9 million international arrivals in 2016. World Travel and Tourism Council report is based on International Monetary Fund (IMF) outlook October 2016 for year 2016 and 2020.



4. WEF placed India on the 40th position in Travel and Tourism Competitive Index

World Economic Forum released the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index, where India was moved 12 places up in this ranking from 52nd to the 40th position. In all, in the last three years India has cumulatively improved its ranking by 25 places, which is a significant achievement. Index was topped by Spain followed by France at 2nd, Germany at 3rd, Japan at the 4th place and UK at the 5th place.



The report ranks 136 countries across 14 dimensions based on economic development, sustainable development, and societal benefits through tourism and travel sectors.

5. India ranks 9th in terms of corruption in business

EMEIA Fraud Survey 2017 placed India at 9th place among 41 surveyed countries for the survey done on bribery and corrupt practices in businesses. The remaining eight countries are Ukraine, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Kenya, South Africa and Hungary, in the perception survey.



In 2015, India was placed at sixth position, however new schemes, AADHAR enrolment etc. has improved transparency and governance of the system. The survey reported that nearly 78% respondents in the India have mentioned that bribery and corrupt practices happen widely in businesses.

6. President of India released India rankings 2017 report

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee released the India Rankings 2017 report. He also presented awards to top-ranked institutions i.e. top 10 in overall category and toppers in the stream wise categories – Engineering, Management, Universities, Colleges and Pharmacy.



The Indian Institute of Science was ranked first, followed by Indian Institute of Technology Madras at second spot and Indian Institute of Technology Bombay at third place. The President congratulated all the awardees and institutions of repute and hoped that this feather in their cap would inspire others to follow their example.

7. Samsung R&D Institute India topped chart of IT patent applicants

As per the annual report of Office of the Controller General of patents, designs, trademarks and geographical indications, Samsung R&D Institute India topped the chart for the maximum number of patent applications in the IT sector in 2015-16. TCS and Wipro followed the list in the top three.



The other top applicants include premier Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs) and HCL Technologies. Samsung R&D Institute India, TCS, Wipro, IITs and HCL have filed

229, 213, 149, 60 and 49 applications, respectively.

8. President Pranab Mukherjee presented National Geoscience Awards for 2016

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee conferred the National Geoscience Awards 2016 on twenty-six geoscientists in New Delhi.



The 26 geoscientists were presented the National Geoscience Awards for the year 2016. Dr. Abhishek Saha from National Institute of Oceanography Goa got the Young Scientist Award. The awardees this year were from GSI, CSIR, IITs, and various other private and public sector enterprises. The National Geoscience Awards includes the Award for Excellence, Young Scientist Award and nineteen individual and / or team awards in 16 fields of geosciences.

9. Haldia Port Topped the List in the First Ever Ranking of Ports on Sanitation Parameters

Haldia Port bagged the first rank on sanitation parameters. The assessment was done by Quality Council of India (QCI) based on the efforts undertaken by the ports to counter waste generating sources with respect to port operation, office area, township area and the response to incoming ships.



The Vizag port bagged the second spot. The survey was done on the twelve major ports under the Ministry of Shipping. Almost all ports have achieved the benchmark for cleanliness or are well above it.

10. India placed on the 8th spot in the Global FDI Confidence Index

A.T. Kearney Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Confidence Index 2017 placed India at 8th spot based on factors such as investors' decision considering investment destination, domestic market size and cost of labour. India has moved up by one spot compared to last year, due to 'transparent' and an 'easy' business environment in India's reforms.



Index was topped by USA (1st), followed by Germany (2nd), China (3rd), United Kingdom (4th) and Canada (5th). The Index is an annual analysis of how political, economic, and regulatory changes will likely affect FDI inflows into countries in the coming years.

11. Forbes' under 30 super achievers list names 50 Indians

The second Forbes '30 Under 30' Asia list 2017 lists 300 young entrepreneurs around the world in 10 categories, including entertainment, finance and venture capital, retail, social entrepreneurs and enterprise technology.



Around 53 Indians have been included in the list. List was topped by China, with 76 entrepreneurs. Some of such listed Indians entrepreneurs were gymnast Dipa Karmakar, Olympic medalist Sakshi Malik, actor Alia Bhatt, Paralympic swimmer Sharath Gayakwad, founder of SheSays Trisha Shetty, founder of Feeding India Ankit Kawatra etc.

12. Narendra Modi and Paytm's Vijay Shekhar Sharma in Time's 'most influential people' list

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Paytm founder Vijay Shekhar Sharma made it to an annual list of '100 most influential people in the world' this year released by the Time magazine.



US President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and their Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping have also been named by the Time magazine. They were all named among the 100 most influential people in the world in its annual list of global achievers.

13. India became World's Second Largest LPG importer

India has become world's second largest LPG importer after China. Japan stood third. According to Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell, LPG imports in the country has increased 23% during the financial year 2016-2017 to about 11 million tonnes.

The Government of India started a free LPG scheme for poor women who fall under the category of BPL. The government provided a whopping 32.5 million LPG connections under the clean fuel drive in 2016 only. India has set an ambitious target of increasing LPG usage to cover 80% of the households by March 2019.



Resignations & Retirements

1. Shashank Manohar stepped down as the ICC Chairman

Shashank Manohar resigned from his post as ICC Chairman citing personal reasons. Manohar was elected unopposed as the ICC's first independent chairman in May 2016 for a two-year term but had several conflicts with BCCI on revenue sharing pattern.

His decision to bring in constitutional reforms has been severely opposed by BCCI. Manohar had last year resigned from the BCCI citing his inability to carry out Lodha Committee reforms.



2. Twitter's VP of Asia Pacific business, Aliza Knox resigned

Twitter's Vice President of Asia-Pacific business, Aliza Knox, has quit the company after a near-five year stint. Knox had helped built Twitter's presence in Asia with an office in Singapore that currently spans nine locations. Twitter has appointed Maya Hari as its new Managing Director for South East Asia and India.

Aliza has joined mobile ad platform Unlockd as Chief Operating Officer. Unlockd is an Australian startup, which gives consumers rewards and discounts in exchange for viewing ads or content when unlocking their smartphones.



Science & Technology

1. Veteran NASA spacewoman to spend three more months in orbit

World's oldest and most experienced spacewoman 'Peggy Whitson' will be given three extra months in orbit. Peggy Whitson will remain on the International Space Station until September 2017. The 57-year-old astronaut reached space in November 2016 and was supposed to return to Earth in June 2017.



However, as per agreement between NASA and the Russian Space Agency, she will stay another three months and take advantage of an empty seat on a Soyuz capsule in the fall. Scientists are eager to monitor any changes to her body.

2. Earth like exoplanets detected around atmosphere

Earth like the one exoplanets were detected around atmosphere termed as Gliese 1132b or GJ 1132b. Exoplanets Gliese 1132b or GJ 1132b is highly unlikely to be habitable with over 250C temperature.



The system was studied using ESO/MPG telescope, by a team led by John Southworth (Keele University, UK) and Luigi Mancini (currently at the University of Rome Tor Vergata), and including researchers from the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy (MPIA, Germany) and the University of Cambridge. The Study revealed that planet has a thick atmosphere rich in steam and/or methane.

3. DNA Bank established in North India for wildlife

Scientists from the Indian Veterinary Research Institute is all prepared to collect DNA samples of all wild animals to set up DNA bank. At present, Hyderabad is the only city in India with DNA bank in its Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES).



DNA bank will help in research, help in bringing down poaching and prepare a baseline data of different animals. IVRI collects the DNA samples of animals such as tigers, leopards, lions etc.

4. China launched high-throughput communications satellite

China launched a new communication satellite, which will enable passengers of high-speed trains to watch high-definition videos smoothly and help those at the scene of natural disasters. Shijian-13, China's first high-throughput communications satellite was launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in China's southwestern Sichuan Province.



The satellite, which has a higher message capacity than the combined capacity of all of China's previous communications satellites, is capable of providing better Internet access on planes and high-speed trains, as well as in less-developed regions.

5. Cisco launched 5th global cyber range lab in Gurugram

US-based tech giant Cisco launched its fifth global cyber range lab in Gurugram with an aim to train Indian firms and government agencies on real—world cyber-attacks. Cisco has four other such labs in Australia.



The facility was inaugurated by National Cyber Security Coordinator Gulshan Rai. Cisco will also launch a Security Operations Centre (SOC) in Pune which will be its fourth such centre after the US, Poland and Japan.

6. TAL Manufacturing Solutions launched Made-in-India robot

TAL Manufacturing Solutions has launched a Made-in-India robot catering primarily to micro, small and medium industries. TAL is a wholly owned subsidiary of Tata Motors.



The indigenously built robot — TAL Brabo — is available in two variants of payloads of 2 kg and 10 kg, priced at ₹5 lakh and ₹7 lakh, respectively. TAL Manufacturing has also received 'CE' certification for the Made-in-India robot 'BRABO' for its commercial sale in Europe. BRABO can be used for varied applications like pick and placement of materials, assembly of parts etc.

7. Scientists find Second Great Spot on Jupiter

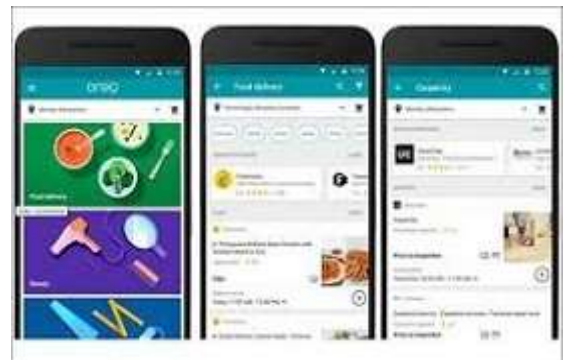
Scientists have found a second "Great Spot" in Jupiter, which is far colder and higher than the original, Great Red Spot. The new spot has been named "Great Cold Spot" and spans 24,000 kilometres across and 12,000 kilometres wide.



The newly discovered weather system is continually changing in shape and size: it is formed by the energy from Jupiter's polar auroras. A team led by University of Leicester's Tom Stallard used a telescope in Chile to chart the temperature and density of Jupiter's atmosphere.

8. Aro app launched by Google

Google's new Aro app offers Indian consumers a new food delivery and home services app. App is initially launched for cities Mumbai and Bengaluru. With this launch, Google extends its business in restaurant delivery and home services businesses.



A single app offers users to order meals from nearby restaurants or schedule appointments with local service professionals, including electricians, painters, cleaners, plumbers, and more. App works as a service provider and it is not running its own food delivery or home services business.

9. China's first cargo Spacecraft Docked Successfully with Tiangong-2 Space Lab

China's first cargo spacecraft docked successfully with the Tiangong-2 space lab. It was a major step towards Beijing's goal of establishing a permanently manned space station by 2022. The cargo spacecraft can carry 6 tonnes of goods, 2 tonnes of fuel and can fly unmanned for three months.



The Tianzhou-1 cargo resupply spacecraft made the automated docking process with the orbiting space lab after it had taken off from the Wenchang Satellite Launch Centre. The Tiangong-2 space laboratory was home to two astronauts in China's longest ever-manned space mission.

10. NASA's Cassini spacecraft successfully executed its dive in between Saturn and its rings

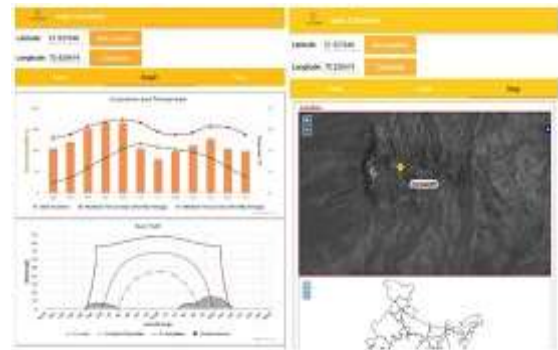
NASA's Cassini spacecraft has successfully executed its historic first-ever dive through the narrow gap between the planet Saturn and its rings, marking the beginning of the 'Grand Finale' of the 20-year-long journey.



The spacecraft is in the process of beaming back science data collected during its passage, through NASA's Deep Space Network Goldstone Complex in California's Mojave Desert. Cassini was programmed to collect science data while close to the planet and turn toward Earth to make contact about 20 hours after the crossing.

11. ISRO Developed "Solar Calculator" Android App

The Space Applications Centre (SAC), ISRO, Ahmedabad at the behest of Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Govt. of India has developed an android App for the computation of solar energy potential. It is a very useful tool for installation of PV solar panels for tapping solar energy.



Following are the major features of the App:

- The App provides solar energy potential (in kWh/m²) at any given location
- The required location can be keyed in or can be obtained through GPS
- Location is displayed on image with satellite data in the background
- It also suggests optimum tilt angle for solar PV installation

1. SV Sunil Named Asian Hockey Federation Player of the Year 2016

India forward SV Sunil was named the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) Player of the Year for 2016 while drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh was named as the Asian Promising Player of the Year 2016 in the junior men's category.

Sunil is considered as one of the fastest men on the pitch in the world. He has also served as the team's Vice Captain. Sunil played a vital role in India's memorable run in last year's Champions Trophy in London, where they claimed silver for the first time.



2. Sachin Tendulkar launched his own mobile app

Former cricketer Sachin Tendulkar launched his Android and iOS app called 100MB. The app has been developed by Pune-based technology firm JetSynthesys.

The app incorporates a 'Live chat with Sachin' section for fan engagement, apart from displaying the latest scores, schedules and player statistics. The other highlights of the app include live feeds, chats, and discussions about cricket. The app also allows users access to their personal social media account within the app.



3. Jepkosgei broke three world records at Prague Half Marathon

Joyciline Jepkosgei of Kenya smashed three world records in winning the Prague Half Marathon. The Kenyan set a new half marathon world record — as well as registering the quickest times for the 10-kilometre and 15-kilometre marks — in just her fifth half marathon.

She clocked 64 minutes 52 seconds to complete the half marathon, 14 seconds better than the previous record. Her 10-km split time was 30:05 while she clocked 45:37 at the 15-km split.



4. P V Sindhu won India Open badminton title 2017

P.V. Sindhu won the India Open badminton championship in New Delhi. She defeated reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin in straight sets 21-19, 21-16. She entered the final after beating Saina Nehwal and Sung ji-Hyun.



Viktor Axelsen of Denmark clinched the men's singles title beating Chinese Taipei's Tien Chen Chou. The India Open (officially titled as the Yonex-Sunrise India Open) is an annual badminton event, which has been held in India since 2008.

5. Roger Federer defeated Rafal Nadal to win Miami Open 2017

Roger Federer defeated his old nemesis Rafael Nadal to win the Miami Open title. Federer beat Nadal for the third time this year. He defeated Nadal in the Australian Open final and in the Indian Wells.

The victory was Federer's 26th ATP Masters 1000 title. Only Novak Djokovic with 30 and Nadal with 28 have won more.



The other winners in Miami Open 2017 are:

- Women's Singles- Johanna Konta (United Kingdom)
- Men's Doubles- Łukasz Kubot (Poland)/ Marcelo Melo (Brazil)
- Women's Doubles- Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada) / Xu Yifan (China)

6. NHL will not participate in 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics

National Hockey League announced that they would not take part in the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics. NHL had been seeking major concessions from the IOC for taking part in the South Korea games. The NHL had participated in every Winter Olympics since the 1998 Nagano Winter Games.



The decision will affect almost every major hockey-playing nation with the Sweden, Finland, Russia, United States and Canadian teams almost entirely made up of NHL players.

7. Vijay Goel approved appointment of Foreign Coaches in Athletics

Sports Minister Vijay Goel approved appointment of two foreign coaches and two support staff for athletics. Appointments of Dave Smith, Galina P. Bukharina, Dmitry Kislev and Elmira Kisleva have been made up to 2020 Olympics and they will be subject to performance review annually.

The Government is committed to provide best possible help and support, sports infrastructure and equipments to athletes. These appointments were recommended by the Foreign Coach Selection committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Sports.



8. Indian Batsman Virat Kohli crowned Wisden's 'King of the Willow'

Indian batsman Virat Kohli was named Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World for 2016. Recently, Virat Kohli scored 641 T20 International runs at 106.83 and 739 runs at 92.37 in 10 One-day international matches. Virat Kohli was also awarded Wisden India Almanack's Cricketer of the Year for the second time in its 2017 edition.

Batsman Virat Kohli scored 1,215 Test runs at average of 75.93. Virat Kohli was honored with 'Polly Umrigar award' at the BCCI Annual Awards.



9. Indian Olympic Association granted affiliation to Boxing Federation of India

The Indian Olympic Association granted affiliation to the Boxing Federation of India (BFI). IOA now recognizes BFI as a fully recognized body by granting affiliation as per the directives of the International Olympic Committee.

The two bodies had been at an impasse since the BFI took charge of the Boxing after elections, which were conducted in the presence of individuals from International Boxing Association and the sports ministry. Indian Amateur Boxing Federation will be considered as the official national body for the sport.



10. US, Canada & Mexico to launch joint World Cup 2026 bid

Football federations of US, Canada and Mexico appear set to launch a joint bid for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. President of the Canadian Federation, Victor Montagliani announced that a joint bid for the 2026 World Cup between the three countries was being discussed.

FIFA will designate a host for the 2026 edition in 2020. US had last organized the World Cup in 1994. Mexico has hosted the event twice, in 1970 and 1986. There has been only one World Cup hosted by multiple nations. The 2026 World Cup will expand to 48 teams from 32.



11. India's first basketball school launched in Mumbai

National Basketball Association of India announced establishment of India's first basketball school in Mumbai. It is a training-based tutorial basketball development programs around the world for international male and female players ages 6-18.

This launch is a part of multiyear agreement between National Basketball Association and India on Track (IOT). National Basketball Association has also announced launch of additional schools in India. School's development program is designed by Elite Basketball Development team.



12. Lewis Hamilton won his fifth Chinese Grand Prix

Lewis Hamilton won the Chinese Formula One Grand Prix. Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel stood second while Max Verstappen of the Red Bull finished third. Daniel Ricciardo of the Red Bull and Kimi Räikkönen of the FERRARI finished fourth and fifth respectively.

It was Hamilton's 54th career win and a record fifth in Shanghai. It was the first win of the season for Hamilton. The Chinese Grand Prix is currently held at the Shanghai International Circuit, Jiading and Shanghai.



13. India School team bagged Asian School Hockey Championship

The Indian School team beat Malaysia 5-1 to lift the title at the Fifth Asian School Hockey Championship in Bhopal.

For India, Alishan Mohammad scored two goals and Pratap Lakra successfully converted a penalty corner and a penalty stroke in the goal. Maninder Singh scored the fifth goal. Malaysia managed to score its single goal through Akhimullah Anuar Esook. India defeated China 11-0 in the semifinal, while defending champion Malaysia defeated Singapore by 12-1. In the match for third and fourth place, Singapore beat China 3-1.



14. Cricketer Harbhajan Singh selected as the brand ambassador for ICC Champions Trophy

Eight cricketers have been selected as brand ambassador for ICC Champions Trophy, to be held in the UK from June 1-18. Shahid Afridi from Pakistan, Bangladesh's Habibul Bashar, Ian Bell from England, Shane Bond from New Zealand, Mike Hussey from Australia, India's Harbhajan Singh, Kumar Sangakkara from Sri Lanka and Graeme Smith of South Africa are eight brand ambassadors selected for Champions Trophy.



The brand ambassadors of ICC Champions Trophy Tour will take part in Cricket for Good coaching clinics, a program aimed at providing schoolchildren with an opportunity to meet and play with legends.

15. Chris Gayle became the first batsman to score 10K runs in Twenty-20

Chris Gayle of Royal Challengers Bangalore became the first batsman to make 10,000 runs in Twenty-20 cricket.

The second highest run-scorer after Gayle is Brendon McCullum (7596). Brad Hodge has 7338 runs to his name while David Warner has 7156 runs.

Gayle also made the record of becoming the first batsman to score more than 10,000 runs in three formats -- First Class cricket, list- A and Twenty 20s.



16. Golf Industry Awards to SSP Chawrasia and Aditi Ashok

The Golf Industry Association (GIA) announced the winners of the second edition of the Golf Industry Association (GIA) Awards 2017.

Aditi Ashok was given the Award for Outstanding Achievement as a Player. She finished second in the Ladies European Tour (LET) order of merit last year. S.S.P Chawrasia bagged the Award for the Men's Player of the Year (2016). Ali Sher, the Delhi Golf Club caddy-turned-pro-golfer, was feted for an Outstanding Playing Career.



17. Nadal won Men's Singles at Monte Carlo Masters

Rafael Nadal won his 10th Monte-Carlo Rolex Masters crown after beating fellow Spaniard Albert Ramos-Vinolas in the final. It was Nadal's 29th ATP World Tour Masters 1000 title.

India's Rohan Bopanna and his Uruguayan partner Pablo Cuevas lifted the men's doubles crown at the Monte Carlo Masters after win over Spain's Feliciano Lopez and Marc Lopez in Monaco. The Monte-Carlo Masters is an annual tennis tournament for male professional players held in Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, France, a commune that borders on Monaco.



18. Jehan Daruvala becomes the 1st Indian on pole in the Formula 3 European Championship

Jehan Daruvala became the first Indian racer to take pole position in the F3 European Championships in the qualifying session for Round 2 in Monza, Italy. However, he finished the race in second place, behind Lando Norris of the UK.

Daruvala's feat came over 16 years after Narain Karthikeyan's pole during the 2000 Macau GP in the British F3 Championship. Formula 3 is considered one of the most crucial steps en route to Formula 1.

