

CURRENT AFFAIRS



December 2017

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Current Affairs – December 2017

This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and a huge collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **December 2017**.

This guide will help you in preparing 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

S K Chourasia appointed as DGOF and Chairman of Ordnance Factory Board

Shri Sunil Kumar Chourasia, IOFS, has been appointed as the new Director General of Ordnance Factories (DGOF) and Chairman of the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB). Manufacturing of new products through collaboration with public and private players is the core mantra of OFB. Previously, Sunil Kumar was Member, OFB and was in charge of Material & Components division. He has served as director in Ministry of Defense from 1992 to 1997 and chief vigilance officer in PSUs from 2002 to 2005.



Dia Mirza appointed as UN Environment Goodwill Ambassador for India

Former Miss Asia Pacific, actor, producer, entrepreneur and environmentalist, Dia Mirza, was selected as UN Environment's Goodwill Ambassador for India. Dia will have responsibility to raise awareness and seek solutions to environmental issues. As a Goodwill Ambassador, Dia will work with the United Nations to further spread the message for clean air, clean seas, wildlife protection and climate change.



Ellie Goulding signed as UN Environment Global Goodwill Ambassador

British singer-songwriter Ellie Goulding signed on as a Global Goodwill Ambassador for UN Environment, joining the fight to save the lives and habitats of people and animals by cleaning up our air and seas, fighting climate change and protecting species. UN Environment's global campaign, Breathe Life, is tackling air quality and over 100 cities have joined with the goal of creating clean air in cities by 2030. Ellie is also backing UN Environment's #CleanSeas campaign. Already 37 governments have joined the Clean Seas campaign.



IPS officer Abhay appointed NCB Director General

According to an order issued by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of senior IPS officer Abhay as the Director General of Narcotics Control Bureau, NCB. The ACC has approved his appointment to the post till 18th of November 2019. Mr. Abhay is at present working in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The post was lying vacant after R R Bhatnagar took over as DG of CRPF in April 2017.



Dinesh K Sarraf appointed as Chairman of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board

Former retired Chairman of ONGC, Dinesh K Sarraf was given duties of working as head of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board by the Appointments Cabinet Committee, for a 5-year term or till the age of 65, whichever will be earlier. Due to retirement of many members of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board and absence of new appointments, PNGRB has been practically not functioning for last one year. PNGRB is responsible for refining, transport, trade, supply and marketing of petroleum products. PNGRB board includes a full-time chairman, three members and one Member (legal).



Rahul Gandhi elected as new President of Congress

Rahul Gandhi was unanimously elected for the post of the Congress president. He became the 49th Congress president after he took over the baton from his mother Sonia Gandhi. He is the sixth member of the Nehru-Gandhi family to become Congress president. Rahul Gandhi was elevated as the party's vice president in January 2013. He entered electoral politics in 2004. He was appointed as the party general secretary in 2007.



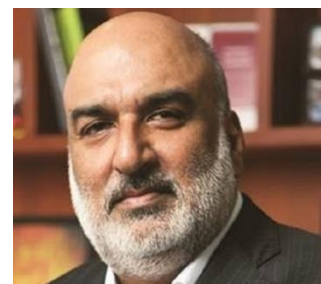
Senior IAS officer Pradeep Singh Kharola appointed as Air India CMD

Karnataka's 1985-batch IAS officer Pradeep Singh Kharola was selected to the post of Chairman and Managing Director of Air India, replacing Rajiv Bansal. He has experience of working as Managing Director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd, as the Chairman of Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation Ltd and as principal secretary to the Karnataka Chief Minister. Air India is the flag carrier airline of India that has debt burden of more than Rs 50,000 crore, at present.



Nakul Chopra appointed as chairman of BARC India

President of Advertising Agencies Association of India and Senior Advisor of Public Communications, Nakul Chopra was selected as the 3rd Chairman of Television ratings agency Broadcast Audience Research Council (Barc) India. He replaced Viacom18 Group CEO Sudhanshu Vats, who completed his one-year tenure. BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) India is an industry body set up to analyze Television Rating Points of TV Serials, shows and movies of Television(TV) Analytics of India and publishes weekly TV viewership data for India.



Buddhist monk Dhammapiya selected as new secretary general of IBC

Tripura's buddhist monk Dhammapiya was selected as the new secretary general of the International Buddhist Confederation. Other members to this board, comprise of representatives from Mongolia, Australia, Mexico, Bhutan, Uganda and other countries. Dr Dhammapiya belongs to Tripura's Manubankul area. International Buddhist Confederation is a confederation based in Delhi, meant for preservation of heritage sites and development of regional cooperation in India and other parts of the world. IBC was founded by Lama Lobzang in 2013. It is first such institution which unites Buddhists from the whole world.



R Hemalatha took charge as Director of National Institute of Nutrition

R Hemalatha has taken charge as the new Director of National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad. Hemalatha is a highly accomplished scientist and has vast experience in the field of maternal and child health, clinical and population-based studies. She has served as secretary of the Nutrition Society of India, is a fellow of the National Academy of Medical Sciences and a fellow of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences.



UNGA voted against US decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital

UN member-states voted on a motion rejecting US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, with President Donald Trump threatening to cut funding to countries that back the measure. UN General Assembly decided on a draft resolution reaffirming that Jerusalem is an issue that must be resolved through negotiations and that any decision on its status has no legal effect and must be rescinded. The measure was sent to the General Assembly after it was vetoed by the United States at the Security Council, although all other 14 council members voted in favor.



Justice UD Salvi selected as officiating chief of National Green Tribunal

Justice U D Salvi was selected as officiating chief of National Green Tribunal by Ministry of Environment and Forests, replacing Justice Swatanter Kumar. Justice Swatanter Kumar will retire on February 13, 2018. Since retirement of Justice Swatanter Kumar is due till February, Justice U D Salvi will remain part of five-member panel, to be headed by Chief Justice of India. The National Green Tribunal is meant for speedy disposal of cases relating to environmental protection and conservation of forests and other natural resources including enforcement of any legal right relating to environment.



BCCI appointed Saba Karim as General Manager of Cricket Operations

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has appointed Mr Saba Karim as General Manager, Cricket Operations. The General Manager's post has been lying vacant since the resignation of MV Sridhar. Mr Karim will assume office from January 1, 2018. He will report to Mr Rahul Johri - CEO, BCCI, and assist him in meeting Board's vision and strategy. Saba Karim represented India in one Test and 34 ODIs. He was a national selector from the East Zone in 2012 and later took over as a television commentator.



Awards

President presented 'National Awards for Divyangjan Empowerment -2017'

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, presented the National Awards for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities (December 3, 2017). The National Awards were presented in 14 main categories. 52 awards to individuals and institutions were conferred. The awards consist of a certificate to each, and medal or shield in some categories as also with cash component amounting to Rs. 43.50 Lakhs.



1. **Best Employer** - IBM India Pvt. LTD
2. **Best Placement Agency** - Youth4jobs foundation and Devnar Foundation

Government enhanced monetary allowances for Gallantry Award winners

The Union Government has hiked the monetary allowances for the Gallantry Award winners from ten thousand to 20 thousand rupees, for Ashok Chakra from six thousand to 12 thousand rupees while Mahavir Chakra recipients will get 10 thousand instead of five thousand rupees. Distinguished Service Order, Indian Order of Merit and Indian Distinguished Service Medal will now get eight thousand while Jangi Inam's monetary allowance has been revised to one thousand rupees.



16-year old Syrian teenager won International Children's Peace Prize

Mohamad Al Jounde, a teenage Syrian refugee, has been awarded with the International Children's Peace Prize 2017 for building a school for children who fled to Lebanon during the conflict in Syria, when he was just 12. The award was launched in 2005 by Dutch Kids Rights Foundation and the previous winners include Malala Yousafzai. The award is given annually to a child who fights for the rights of other children.



Joda East Iron Mine bestowed with the Golden Peacock Innovation Management Award 2017

Joda East Iron Mine (JEIM) of Tata Steel has been conferred with the Golden Peacock Innovation Management Award for the year 2017 for driving innovation in mines. JEIM defeated 1,000 entries from over 25 countries worldwide, to win this award. JEIM is a fully mechanized captive iron mines of Tata Steel, is rated five-star category mines by the Government of India for doing sustainable mining.



President of India gave away National Energy Conservation Awards

The National Energy Conservation Awards Programme recognizes the energy efficiency achievements in 56 sub sectors across industry, establishments and institutions. Shri Ram Nath Kovind gave away the National Energy Conservation Awards to industries that have demonstrated measurable reductions in their energy use as part of the National Energy Conservation Awards Programme. He also presented the National Painting Competition on Energy Conservation Prizes and visited the gallery.



Vice President conferred 'Yeraringan' Award to M.S. Swaminathan

The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu conferred 'Yeraringan' Award to Prof. M.S. Swaminathan, a transformative leader who has inspired many scientists to focus on the problem of Indian agriculture. During the tenure of Prof. Swaminathan as an adviser to the Minister of Agriculture, he invited Dr. Norman Borlaug to India and worked with him in developing high yielding varieties of wheat, which resulted in adoption of the new agricultural strategy of using high yielding variety seeds and chemical fertilizers.



Actress Priyanka Chopra honored with Mother Teresa Memorial award for social justice

Indian actress Priyanka Chopra received Mother Teresa Memorial award for social justice for providing her support and contribution towards social causes. Veteran actress and former Miss World Priyanka Chopra had been responsibly handling role of UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador by fighting for the rights of refugees and displaced people. The Mother Teresa Awards are conferred to honour individuals and organizations that bring peace, equality and social justice among all. Mother Teresa award for social justice is given in memory of Christian missionary Mother Teresa, by the Harmony Foundation based in Mumbai.



Diwali foundation's 'Power of One' award given to 6 diplomats

Diwali Foundation, USA that grew out of the campaign for a United States postage stamp to commemorate the 'festival of lights', gave away first "Power of One" award. It was given to Lakshmi Puri (Deputy Executive Director of UN Women), Egypt's former Under Secretary-General Maged Abdelaziz, Moldova's former director of General Assembly Affairs Ion Botnaru, former Ukraine permanent representative Yuriy Seregeyev. Lebanon's permanent representative Nawaf Salam and Britain's Permanent Representative Matthew Rycroft.



G. Satheesh Reddy conferred with National Design Award

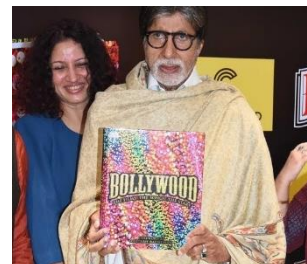
Scientific Adviser to Union Defense Minister and Director General, Missiles and Strategic Systems, G. Satheesh Reddy, has been conferred with the prestigious National Design Award. Mr Reddy has been honoured for his major role in indigenous design and development of state-of-the-art weapon systems, formulation of national policies, harnessing the research and innovation in industry, academia and R&D institutes. He is the only Indian to hold the distinction of being inducted as Fellow of Royal Institute of Navigation, London and Royal Aeronautical Society, UK.



Books & Authors

Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan launched book on Indian Cinema

Veteran Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan launched a book titled as 'Bollywood: The Films! The Songs! The Stars!'. The book is based on facts, insight stories, making of movies and behind the scenes of bollywood film industry. It is co-authored by S.M.M. Ausaja, Karan Bali, Rajesh Devraj and Tanul Thakur. British multinational publishing company Dorling Kindersley (DK) has taken the initiative of publishing the book. The book details popular Bollywood films and actors in a chronological order.



Bengali Poet Joy Goswami to Get 31st Moortidevi Award

Eminent Bengali poet Joy Goswami will be honoured with the 31st Moortidevi Award for the year 2017 for his poetry collection titled 'Du Dondo Phowara Matro'. The selection committee was headed by poet and scholar Satya Vrat Shastri. The award consists of a Saraswati Statue, a Citation Plaque and cash award of Rupees 4 lac. Joy Goswami has received many awards including Kendriya and Bangla Sahitya Akademi Awards, Ananda Purashkar, and the first Tata Literature Live Poet Laureate Award.



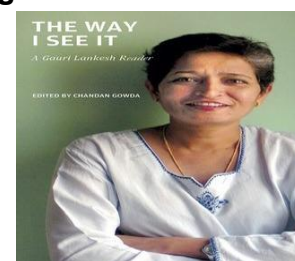
Mamang Dai and Ramesh Kuntal won Sahitya Akademi award

Sahitya Akademi announced its annual awards for 2017 in 24 languages. Seven novels, five collections each of poetry and short stories, five works of literary criticism, a play and a book of essays have won the awards. Mamang Dai received award in English language for his novel 'The Black Hill'. Ramesh Kuntal Megh won the award in Hindi for his literary criticism work Vishw Mithak Sarit Sagar. The award in the form of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and a cheque of 1 lakh rupees was presented.



'The Way I See It' book launched on Gauri Lankesh's writings

The Way I See It - a Gauri Lankesh Reader, book on selected writings by journalist late Gauri Lankesh was launched at Mumbai. It has been edited by writer and sociologist Chandan Gowda. The book details about the perspective by which she saw the world. Gauri Lankesh often raised her voice against religious violence, caste system and rise of Hindu groups. She was shot dead in Bengaluru by unidentified killers in her home.



Mamta Kalia to be honoured with 27th Vyas Samman

Popular Hindi scholar and writer Mamta Kalia has been chosen for this year's Vyas Samman for her novel "Dukkhham Suddham". "Dukkhham Suddham" is a saga of a lower middle-class family's three generations. The literary work focuses on the transition in relations and situations of our society. The award instituted by the K K Birla Foundation carries a cash prize of Rs 3.50 lakh. It is given annually to outstanding literary work in Hindi authored by an Indian citizen.



Committees

Minorities Commission sets up committee on giving minority status to Hindus

National Commission for Minorities has set up a three-member committee to study the matter to give minority status to people of Hindu faith in eight states: Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur where their population is less than 50%. The Commission is Chaired by Syed Ghayorul Hasan Rizvi and will give its report within three months. Other two NCM members are Sulekha Kambre and Manjeet Singh Rai. Ajay Kumar, Additional Secretary of NCM, is committee secretary



Government sets up committee for drug pricing

An expert level multi-disciplinary committee was set up by the department of pharmaceuticals for assistance on matters pertaining to implementation of drug price control order such as pricing and launch of new drugs and medicines. Committee will be binding regulators as its recommendations and making it in favor of poor patients. Other issues covered by committee are ceiling price on drugs, classification of drugs, control on retail prices, claims of pharmaceutical companies about additional therapeutic features in any drug formulation and bulk drug.



Government formed committee to work on NPAs of power sector

A high-level committee headed by NITI Aayog chief executive Amitabh Kant was set up to find a solution on problems of stressed assets in India's power sector. According to Economic Survey 2016-17, non-performing assets in power sector account for 5.9% of total outstanding banking advances of Rs 4.73 trillion. The committee held its first meeting with ministries of power, coal and department of financial services and reviewed 34 coal-fueled power projects with a debt of Rs1.77 trillion.



Railway Board forms panel to review Flexi-fare system

The Railway Board has formed a six-member committee to review the process of flexi-fare system in premium trains. The Board will compare the prices with that of other modes of transport in the same sectors. Under the flexi-fare system, base fares increase from 10% to 50% with every 10% of berths booked. The committee should assess the impact of implementation of flexi-fare in its current form with respect to revenue generated for the railways.



Delhi Government forms panels to look into fee hike in private schools

The Delhi government has formed 'Fee Anomaly Committees' to look into the matter of fee hikes by private schools in Delhi. The three-member committee will comprise of district deputy directors of education, an education officer of the zone and a chartered accountant. Every district will have such a committee. The committee is expected to look into every complaint within 90 days. Parents can register their complaints with the committee in the prescribed format by paying a processing fee of Rs 100.



Deaths

French rock star Johnny Hallyday died

France's veteran rock star Johnny Hallyday passed away at age of 74 due to lung cancer. He was known for his American rock 'n' roll singing on songs such as "Tutti Frutti," "Blue Suede Shoes" and "C'est le Mashed Potatoes." Hallyday had acted in more than 30 films and appeared on cover of magazine Paris Match many times. Around 100 million records of songs of Hallyday were sold. One of his super hit album was "Ça Ne Finira Jamais" ("It Will Never End") of 2018. He was given tribute with rock-star funeral by hundreds of fans on the streets of Paris.



Famous journalist Sukharanjan Sengupta died

Famous journalist Sukharanjan Sengupta died due to health issues at the age of 85. Sukharanjan Sengupta was known for his Bengali writing in Bengali dailies 'Jugantar' and 'Ananda Bazar Patrika'. He worked as professional journalist for more than 60 years. He served as journalist in Lok Sevak, Jana Sevak, Jugantar and Anandabazar Patrika. Sengupta's cover story on Bangladesh liberation war was extensively appreciated. Sengupta was author of many books. He was honored with 'Lifetime Achievement Award' by 7th edition of journalism awards.



Lalji Singh, the father of DNA fingerprinting in India died

Veteran Indian scientist Lalji Singh passed away at the age of 70 due to heart attack. He was known as the father of DNA fingerprinting in India. Lalit Singh established centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics for all species and several diseases. He worked as director at the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology and Vice Chancellor of the Banaras Hindu University. Lalit Singh dedicated various research labs to India. Labs made for studying genetics and transgenic research.



Actor-Director Neeraj Vora died

Actor-Director Neeraj Vora has passed away at the age of 54 years. He was reportedly in a coma from past 13 months after suffering from a massive heart-attack and brain stroke. Neeraj made his acting debut with Ketan Mehta's Holi (1984). he acted in several films like Rangeela, Raju Ban Gaya Gentleman, Akele Hum Akele Tum, Virasat, Mann, Satya, Mast, Pukar and Company. He directed Khiladi 420 and Phir Hera Pheri, the sequel to Hera Pheri.



Bengali Singer Jatileswar Mukhopadhyay died

Noted Bengali singer Jatileswar Mukhopadhyay passed away at the age of 82 years. Mr Mukhopadhyay was conferred with the `Sangeet Samman` award in 2012. His popular songs are "E kon sakal", "Tomar Sange Dekha Na Hole", "Aamar Swapan Kinte Paare" and "Bondhuya Amar Chokhe Jal Enechhe" among many. He had learnt music under the guidance of doyens of Bengali light classical music Chinmoy Lahiri and Sudhin Dasgupta.



Veteran actor Partha Mukhopadhyay passed away

Veteran actor Partha Mukhopadhyay, who had acted in many Bengali classics, passed away at the age of 70 years. Mukhopadhyay had acted in classics like Atithi, Balika Badhu, Amar Prithivi, Baghbandir Khela, Agniswar and had made his mark as a character actor in 1970s and 1980s. He had the distinction of having acted in films helmed by renowned directors such as Tapan Sinha, Tarun Majumdar and Goutam Ghosh. The Bengal state government had conferred Partha Mukhopadhyay with a special award for his contribution to Bengali films.



Legendary musician Robbie Malinga passed away

South African music legend, Robbie Malinga, passed away at the age of 49 years. The musician is known for his hit songs such as, 'Sobabili', 'Mthanda' and 'Baby Please'. He is responsible for shaping the careers of artists like Brown Dash, Kabelo, Arthur Mafokate, Izinyoka, Mzekezeke and Sbu of AmaLawyer fame. He had been awarded with African Music Award for Best Remix of the Year and South African Music Award for Best Produced Album.



The animator of Bugs Bunny, Bob Givens, died

Bob Givens, best known for redesigning Bugs Bunny, passed away at the age of 99 years. In a career spanning over 60 years, he worked as an animator for companies such as Disney, Warner Bros, and Hanna-Barbera. Other characters he illustrated over his six-decade career included Tom & Jerry, Daffy Duck, Alvin and the Chipmunks and Popeye. He's also known for his work as a storyboard artist on the TV series Linus! The Lion Hearted.



Defense

Godrej Aero received new BrahMos contract for missile airframes.

Godrej Aerospace received tender of additional 100 units of airframes for the air launched version of BrahMos missile. Godrej Aerospace handed over 100th set of airframe assemblies to BrahMos Aerospace Pvt. Ltd. (BAPL) for use in its missile systems. Godrej Aerospace (GA) is a business unit of Godrej & Boyce which had recently created critical systems and components for the launch vehicle to the ISRO's successful launch of 104 satellites.



India joined Wassenaar Arrangement after completing internal procedures

India joined the Wassenaar Arrangement. The membership will facilitate high-technology tie-ups for country's defense and space programmes. India's entry into the export control regime would enhance its credentials in the field of non-proliferation despite not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is the 2nd diplomatic success for India in membership of export control regimes after it joined Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)



INSV Tarini left for its onward journey to Port Stanley in Falklands

The Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini left Lyttelton for its onward journey to Port Stanley in Falklands. The Sailing Vessel had arrived at Lyttelton after completion of second leg of its maiden voyage to circumnavigate the globe. Nearly 200 visitors visited the vessel and interacted with the crew at Lyttelton Port of Christchurch. This historic attempt by an all-women crew is being led by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi and the crew comprises Lieutenant Commanders Pratibha Jamwal, P Swathi, and Lieutenants S Vijaya Devi, B Aishwarya and Payal Gupta.



PM dedicated naval submarine INS Kalvari to the nation

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, dedicated to the nation, the naval submarine INS Kalvari, at Mumbai. INS Kalvari is the first of the six Scorpene-class submarines, being built in India as part of technology transfer from France. It is the first indigenously built submarine in 22 years. It has a range of 12,000 km. It is named after the dreaded Tiger Shark, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean. The other two Scorpene-class submarines are INS Khanderi and INS Karanj.



Indo-UK joint military exercise, “Ajeya Warrior”, concludes

The 14 days long Indo-UK joint military exercise 'Ajeya Warrior' concluded in Rajasthan. The third in the series of joint exercises between the Indian and the British Armies, it commenced on 1st of December at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges near Bikaner. The exercise was aimed at sharing best practices and experiences of the two armies. It was pitched at Company level and around 120 soldiers and officers participated from both the sides.



Southern Command Conducted Major Exercise in Rajasthan

The Southern Command conducted a major exercise called 'HAMESHA VIJAYEE' in the deserts of Rajasthan from 16 to 22 December 2017 to evaluate the capability of the armed forces to strike deep into enemy territory in an integrated air-land battle. The Southern Command undertakes such exercises at regular intervals using modern weapons and equipment so as to ensure high degree of battle readiness. The exercise showcased a high degree of synergy between the Army and Air Force.



Indian Navy Conducted Exercise with Oman Navy

Indian Naval Ships Trikand and Teg are deployed to Oman for bilateral exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr' or 'Sea Breeze'. The Indian Navy ships along with four Royal Navy of Oman ships Al Rasikh, Khassab, Al Mubashir and Al Bushra sailed for the sea phase of the exercise where, for the first time, an Indian Navy submarine as well as the versatile P8I, long range maritime aircraft participated. 2017 exercise is the 11th edition and has been a biennial feature since 1993. This year marks 24 years of Indian Navy -Royal Navy of Oman bilateral exercises.



Liberalized family pension to be extended to army personnel working along Line of Actual Control (LAC)

Liberalized Family Pension is provided to army personnel working on Line of Control (LoC)/International Border (IB) along Pakistan border, and those working along Line of Actual Control (LAC) along India-China borders on the same manner as for the army personnel working in LOC and International Border. This Liberalized Family Pension covers accidental death/injury sustained due to natural calamities while performing operational duties in action against enemy forces. The Liberalized Family Pension provides for 100% of last reckonable emoluments.



Navy Cooperation entered into Bilateral Agreement with Singapore

A bilateral agreement for Navy Cooperation with Singapore was signed during the visit of Defense Minister of Singapore to India. The agreement envisaged enhanced defense cooperation with Singapore through information sharing, conduct of joint activities such as naval exercises, as well as expert level exchanges on specialized issues such as submarine operational safety between the navies by the two countries. The Agreement thus provided a framework to develop deeper cooperation with Singapore on maritime security, maritime domain awareness, as well as provision of mutual logistics support.



Government approved more than 74% FDI for joint venture defense sector

As per current Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy in defense sector notified by Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, FDI up to 49% is allowed under automatic route and beyond 49% through Government route. In so far as joint venture in the defense sector with more than 74 per cent FDI is concerned, no such proposal has been approved by the Government. Further, FDI in defense is subject to industrial license under Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951 and manufacturing of Small Arms and Ammunition under the Arms Act, 1959.



ICGS Sujay offshore patrol vessel commissioned

Indian Coast Guard Ship "Sujay", the sixth in the series of six 105m Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) was commissioned by Director General Indian Coast Guard Shri Rajendra Singh at Goa. 'Sujay' meaning 'Great Victory' is projection of Indian Coast Guard's will and commitment "To serve and Protect" the maritime interest of the nation. The ship is based at Paradip, Odisha under the operational and administrative control of Commander Coast Guard Region (North-East).



Lt Gen B S Sahrawat takes over as DG, NCC

Lieutenant General B S Sahrawat took over as the Director General of National Cadet Corps. He is a third generation army officer. Mr Sahrawat is alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla and Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. He has done the prestigious NDC Course. He has recently completed his PhD in 'Human Capital Management in Army'. He has been awarded the Sena Medal during the floods of Kosi River in Bihar in 2008.



DRDO successfully conducts Interceptor Missile Test

India successfully tested homegrown supersonic interceptor missile after it successfully destroyed an incoming ballistic missile over the Bay of Bengal. The low altitude Advanced Area Defence (AAD) interceptor missile was fired from Dr Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. The incoming ballistic missile was launched from LC-III complex of ITR, which followed the exact path of intended ballistic missile. The AAD interceptor is a single-stage missile powered by solid propellants. It is 7.5 metres tall and weighs around 1.2 tonnes. It had a diameter of less than 0.5 metre.



Retail inflation for industrial workers increased to 3.24%

Retail inflation for industrial workers rose to 3.24%. The year-on-year inflation measured by monthly Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers-CPI-IW stood at 3.24. Food inflation stood at 2.26 per cent against 1.30 per cent in September 2016 and 2.99 per cent during the corresponding month of the 2016. Food group contributed 1.94 percentage points to the total change. The All-India CPI-IW for October, 2017 increased by 2 points and pegged at 287.



CBDT signed two Indian advance pricing agreements

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) entered into 2 Bilateral Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs). These Agreements are the first ever Bilateral APAs with The Netherlands. The APA Scheme endeavors to provide certainty to taxpayers in the domain of transfer pricing by specifying the methods of pricing and setting the prices of Distribution, Provision of Marketing Support Services, Provision of Business Support Services, etc.



Government released mid-term review of Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20

The government has released the midterm review of the Foreign Trade Policy. The review highlighted the Goods and Services Tax (GST) as a game changer. The five-year FTP was announced on April 1, 2015. The government has set an ambitious target of India's goods and services exports touching \$900 billion by 2020. The government announced incentives worth Rs 8,450 crores and an additional 2% incentive for labor-intensive sectors.



Direct tax collections rose to 14.4%

Direct tax collections registered a growth of 14.4% during April to November of 2017-18. Tax collections stood at 4.8 lakh crore rupees, which is 14.4 per cent higher than the net collections as compared to last fiscal. The net direct tax collection represents 49% of the total budget estimates of 9.8 lakh crore rupees for direct taxes for 2017-18. The gross collections before adjusting for refunds have increased by 10.7% to 5.82 lakh crore rupees during April to November of 2017-18. Refunds amounting to over one lakh crore rupees have also been issued during the period.



Construction equipment industry expected to grow at 14 %

The construction equipment industry is expected to grow at 14% after Union Government's decision to spend over 10 billion dollars over next few years in the infrastructure sector. According to the Chairman of International Construction Equipment and Construction Technology Trade Fair Vipin Sondhi, the sector is optimistic of a stable growth over the next five years. EXCON 2017 trade fair was organized in Bengaluru from December 12 to 16.



Maruti Suzuki listed sixth most valuable Indian firm

According to the list unveiled of the most valued companies on the BSE, Maruti Suzuki became India's sixth most valued firm surpassing State bank of India. Maruti Suzuki India Ltd share price jumped to an all-time high of Rs 9,072 a piece, with its Rs2.74 trillion market capitalization ahead of SBI's Rs2.71 trillion. The list was topped by Reliance Industries Ltd, followed by Tata Consultancy Ltd (TCS), HDFC Bank Ltd, ITC Ltd and Hindustan Unilever Ltd. Maruti Suzuki created its place in top 6 due to its increasing demand in passenger vehicles market.



Retail inflation rose to 4.88%

Retail inflation rose to 4.88% in November 2017 on account of costlier fuel, vegetables and eggs. The inflation, based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), was at 3.58% in October 2017. Inflation in eggs shot to 7.95% in November on annual basis, as against 0.69% in October 2017. In the fuel and light segment, it was 7.92%, as against 6.36 in October. For vegetables it was 22.48 % in November. On overall basis, the inflation in the food segment increased to 4.425 in November as compared to 1.9% in October 2017.



UN reported GDP forecast of Indian economy at 7.2% in 2018

UN reported GDP forecast of Indian economy at 7.2% in 2018 and 7.4% in 2019, on the back of strong private consumption, public investment and the ongoing structural reforms. It is unveiled that the credit growth is subdued despite monetary easing, but bank recapitalization and the Indian Bankruptcy Code (IBC) have the potential to revive credit growth. The 'World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018' report unveiled by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) admits economic outlook as "largely favorable".



ADB lowers India's GDP forecast for FY18 to 6.7%

According to Asian Development Outlook Update 2017 report, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) lowered India's GDP forecast for Financial Year 2017-18 by 0.3% to 6.7%. It also revised the growth forecast to 7.3% in 2018-19 from earlier 7.4% mainly due to rising global crude oil prices and soft growth in private sector investment and weather-related risks to agriculture. As per the report, growth in the People's Republic of China (PRC) is now expected to expand by 6.8% in 2017 and 6.4% in 2018. Growth projections for the United States remain unchanged at 2.2% in 2017 and 2.4% in 2018.



Wholesale inflation jumped 3.93% in November

Inflation based on the wholesale price index rose to 3.93% in November 2017 due to an increase in the prices of onions and seasonal vegetables. Wholesale inflation was 3.59% in October 2017 and 1.82% in November 2016. The wholesale inflation in food articles increased to 6.06% in November from 4.3% in October. Wholesale inflation in onions surged to 178.19% in November and in seasonal vegetables, it jumped to 59.8%. But inflation in eggs, meat and fish as a category dropped to 4.73% during the month.



Initiatives taken by Govt to boost GDP growth

The Government of India has taken various initiatives to boost the GDP growth. As per the quarterly estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) released by Central Statistics Office (CSO), the growth rate of GDP at constant (2011-12) market prices has increased from 5.7% in the first quarter of 2017-18 to 6.3% in second quarter of 2017-18.



The various initiatives are:

- fillip to manufacturing
- concrete measures for transport and power sectors
- comprehensive reforms in the foreign direct investment policy
- special package for textile industry
- push to infrastructure development by giving infrastructure status to affordable housing, higher allocation to highway construction, focus on coastal connectivity.
- lower income tax for companies with annual turnover up to Rs 50 crore
- further measures to improve the ease of doing business
- introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Government approved Dish TV merger with Videocond2h

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has approved the merger of Videocon d2h with DishTV. Dish TV India Limited (Dishtv) is Asia Pacific's largest direct-to-home (DTH) company and part of the Essel Group. The new entity will be called Dish TV Videocon Limited. The combined entity will serve more than 29 million subscribers. For the year ended March 2017, the total revenue of Dish TV and Videocon d2h (at a proforma level) stood at Rs 6,086 crore.



Ola acquired Foodpanda India

Ola has acquired online food delivery start-up Foodpanda India from its German Parent Delivery Hero AG in an all-stock deal. ANI Technologies Pvt. Ltd which operates Ola will infuse \$200 million in Foodpanda India's operations. Foodpanda's India business will be transferred to Ola in return for shares in the Indian ride-hailing firm. Ola's biggest rival, Uber Technologies Inc., has already entered into the online food ordering and delivery segment through its unit UberEATS.



Iraq becomes leading oil supplier to India

Iraq has overtaken Saudi Arabia to become top crude oil supplier to India in the current fiscal due to its discounted price. Saudi Arabia supplied 21.9 million tons (MT) of crude to India between April and October 2017, while Iraq supplied 25.8 MT. India has so far imported 125.8 MT of crude oil, worth \$45.1 billion, in the April-October period. In 2016-17, crude oil imports stood at 213.9 MT, costing USD 70.2 billion.



Exports jumped by 30.55% to USD 26.19 billion

India's exports rose by 30.55% to 26.19 billion US\$ on account of improved global demand, government incentives and simplification of GST refund process. Robust growth in outward shipments of gems and jewelry, engineering goods, chemical and pharmaceutical products was found. The government had announced 8,450 crore rupees' incentives for exporters in sectors like leather and agriculture. Input Tax Credit and Integrated-GST refunds for exporters are being expedited for quick unlocking of their capital.



TCS bagged fresh \$2.25 billion outsourcing contract from Nielsen

Tata Consultancy Services signed \$2.25 billion outsourcing contract from television ratings company Nielsen. As per new deal, contract has been extended till December 2025. Nielsen will purchase services from TCS of worth USD 186 million in services per year from 2021 through 2024 and USD 139.5 million in services in 2025. TCS will provide Nielsen with professional services relating to IT including application development and maintenance, BPO, client service knowledge process outsourcing, management sciences, analytics, and financial planning.



Maharashtra topped GST collections in first five months

Since the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime in July 1, 2017, two states Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra are leading in GST collections in the first five months, among states and Union Territories. The total cess collections by 2 states stood at Rs 30,224 crore. Maharashtra topped by collecting Rs 3,702 crore, followed by Uttar Pradesh at Rs 3,549 crore in CGST. The government has overall collected Rs 92,283 crores, out of which 59048 crore forms CGST and 87,888 crore form SGST.



GST collections decline to Rs 80,808 cr in November

The total revenue collected under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) kept falling for the second straight month to Rs 80,808 crore in November from Rs 83,346 crore in October. The GST collection for the month of July was over Rs 95,000 crore, while for August, it was more than Rs 91,000 crore. September's indirect tax collection stood at over Rs 92,000 crore. Of the Rs 80,808 crore, 13,089 crore rupees have been collected as Central GST, Rs 18,650 crore as State GST, Rs 41,270 crores as Integrated GST and Rs 7,798 crore as compensation cess.



Amazon acquired Security Camera and Video Doorbell Maker Blink

Amazon has acquired wireless security camera startup Blink for an undisclosed amount of deal. The cameras from Blink are supposed to last for two years with just a pair of AA batteries. It does not need a wiring. They're also relatively inexpensive. Blink recently launched the connected doorbell with a built in camera which also operates off of batteries. The acquisition will help Amazon compete in the fast-growing home security camera market.



India to overtake UK, France to become 5th-largest economy in 2018

According to the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) consultancy's 2018 World Economic League Table, India is set to leapfrog Britain and France in 2018 to become the world's fifth-largest economy in dollar terms. Currently India is ranked 7th in the list. The world's largest economies now are the US (\$19.362 trillion), China (\$11.937 trillion), Japan (\$4.884 trillion), Germany (\$3.652 trillion), France (\$2.575 trillion) and Britain (\$2.565 trillion). China is likely to overtake the United States as the world's No.1 economy in 2032.



Government likely to impose anti-dumping duty on a Chinese antibiotic

The commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Anti-Dumping and Allied Duties, DGAD has recommended levy of up to 9.48 dollar per kg in its final findings. The DGAD has concluded in its probe that Ofloxacin has been exported to India from China below its normal value, which has resulted in dumping. Ofloxacin is used to treat certain infections including bronchitis, pneumonia, and infections of the skin, bladder, urinary tract, reproductive organs, and prostate gland.



Macro-Economic Fundamentals for the Year 2017-18

Macroeconomic Indicator	For Year 2017-18
GDP Growth Rate (%)	6.0 (Up to Q2)
CPI	3.6% (Q2)
WPI	3.6% (Q2)
Current Account Deficit	US\$ 14.3 billion (Q1)
Trade Deficit	US\$ 41.2 billion (Q1)
External Debt to GDP Ratio (%)	20.2
FDI Inflows	US\$ 1,350.93 million (As on October, 2017)
Foreign Exchange Reserves	US\$ 401,942.0 million (As on December 1, 2017)

Environment

300 fossilised pterosaur eggs discovered

A team of Brazilian and Chinese palaeontologist declared the discovery of hundreds of fossilised eggs laid by Pterosaurs, a group of extinct winged dinosaurs in northwestern China. Pterosaurs that lived in China, more than 100 million years ago, are called to be from a group of extinct winged dinosaurs that were the first known vertebrates to be able to fly. The newfound eggs are of Hamipterus tianshanensis, a species of pterosaur.



Scientists discovered new frog species in Arunachal Pradesh

A new species of frog was found in fast flowing streams of Talle Valley Wildlife Sanctuary of Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Subansiri district. It has been named as Odorrana arunachalensis. It was discovered by a team of scientists of Zoological Survey of India, led by Bhaskar Saikia, Bikramjit Sinha and Ilona Jacinta Kharkongor. Odorrana appears to be medium-sized green coloured frog adapted for a life in torrential waters. It has a distinguished character of black band-like mark between the eyes.



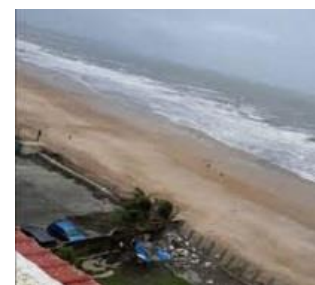
New scorpion species discovered in Tripura

According to a study published in Zootaxa, scientist Zeeshan Mirza from National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore, has discovered the eleventh wood scorpion species from India in Tripura's Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary. The new species is named Liocheles schalleri. They are also called as dwarf scorpions. Wood scorpions are only about three cm long and live in small burrows on the ground. There are altogether 125 species of scorpions.



Environment Ministry launched project 'Blue Flag'

The 'Blue Flag' is a certification project launched by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) that a beach, Marina or sustainable boating tourism operator, meets its stringent environmental standards. Under the project, Integrated Coastal Management Programme will finance the cleanliness activity done by each coastal state or union territory for its identified beaches for cleanliness drive. The beaches will not only be cleaned but also will be provided with basic amenities.



Corporation Bank launched RuPay Credit Cards

RuPay Select and RuPay Platinum credit cards variants were launched by Corporation Bank in Mangaluru to boost digital payments and lessen cash use by customers. Credit card variants will be accepted at all RuPay-enabled 1.5 million plus POS terminals and 80,000 plus e-commerce merchants. RuPay Select credit card offers lounge access, cover of 10 lakhs and cash backs whereas RuPay Platinum Credit Card offers cash back and insurance of 2 lakhs. Union Bank of India was first Bank to launch these variants in union with NPCI.



Reserve Bank of India kept repo rate unchanged at 6%

The 6-member Monetary Policy Committee headed by Reserve Bank of India Governor Urjit Patel kept the repo rate unchanged at 6% after its monetary policy review. The reverse repo rate was kept at 5.75%. The Reserve Bank said the reason for the decision was achieving the medium-term target for consumer price index inflation of 4%, while supporting growth. The RBI raised its inflation estimate to 4.3 to 4.7% for the second half of the current fiscal.



EPFO opened new facility for over 4.5 crore members

The Employees' Provident Fund Organization, EPFO, has opened a new facility for its over 4.5 crore members that will allow consolidation or merger of their multiple PF accounts with the current Universal Account Number, UAN. Under this facility, subscribers of the EPFO can merge as many as 10 previous accounts with their UAN at one go with an objective of having one employee, one EPF account. The subscribers will have to provide their current activated UAN, member ID (identification) and mobile number registered at the UAN portal.



Government roped in ICICI Bank to enable cashless payments on e-NAM

The government has roped in ICICI Bank to enable online payments at 470 mandis integrated with the national portal of electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM). Presently, e-NAM participants are doing payments through traditional ways via bank branches, debit cards and net banking. ICICI Bank will enable BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on the e-NAM portal for making cashless payments. NAM is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.



Paytm launched 'Paytm Ka ATM' partner outlet for banking operations

Paytm Payments Bank launched 'Paytm Ka ATM' outlets. These specially branded outlets will allow customers to open savings account and deposit/withdraw money. In the first phase, 3,000 'Paytm Ka ATM' points in select cities including Delhi NCR, Lucknow, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi and Aligarh will be opened. Another 100,000 Paytm Ka ATM banking outlets across India will be opened at the cost of ₹3000 Cr over the next three years to expand offline distribution network. It is done with an aim to promote financial inclusion.



BSE's India INX received SEBI nod for listing of debt securities

BSE's India International Exchange received SEBI's nod on the framework for listing of debt securities. With this approval, India International Exchange became first Indian exchange to offer clearing and settlement of debt securities through International Central Securities Depositories. Indian and foreign issuers at GIFT city will be allowed to issue masala bonds, Eurobonds and foreign currency bonds from India INX. India INX is India's first International Exchange set up at GIFT City (Gujarat International Finance Tec-City), that offers international investors and Non-Residents Indians to trade from anywhere across the globe.



RBI raised FPI Limit in G-Secs and State Development Loans

The Reserve Bank of India has raised the limits for investment by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) for the January-March 2018 quarter by Rs 6400 crore in Central Government Securities (G-Secs) and ₹5,800 crores in State development loans (SDLs). Beginning January 1, 2018, the revised investment limit for FPIs in G-Secs will be ₹2,56,400 crores against the existing limit of ₹2,50,000 crores. The revised investment limit for FPIs in SDLs will be ₹45,100 crores against the existing limit of ₹39,300 crores.



US Federal Reserve raised interest rates by 0.25% again

The US Federal Reserve raised its interest rates by 0.25%, the third rate rise this year. The US Policymakers also boosted their economic forecasts, projecting 2.5% growth in GDP in 2017 and 2018. The Fed is also expected to make three further increases in rates next year, unchanged from its previous forecast. The Fed is targeting a range of 1.25% to 1.5% for its benchmark rate. It is believed that interest rates are on track to exceed 2% in 2018.



Government to bear MDR charges on transactions up to Rs 2000 made through debit cards

The government has decided to bear the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges on transactions up to 2,000 rupees made through debit cards, BHIM UPI or Adhaar-enabled payment systems to promote digital transactions. The MDR will be borne by the government for two years with effect from 1st of January, 2018 by reimbursing the same to the banks. It is estimated that the MDR to be reimbursed would be 1,050 crore rupees in 2018-19 and 1,462 crore rupees in 2019-20.



RBI imposed Rs 3 crore penalty on IndusInd Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 30 million on IndusInd Bank Limited (the bank) for non-compliance with the directions issued by RBI on Income Recognition and Asset Classification (IRAC) norms and contravention of regulatory restrictions pertaining to non-fund based (NFB) facilities. The statutory inspection of the bank with reference to its financial position as on March 31, 2016 revealed, inter alia, violations of various regulations issued by RBI in the assessment of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and extension of NFB facilities.



RBI imposed PCA on Corporation Bank

RBI has triggered Prompt Corrective Action against Corporation Bank and imposed certain restrictions on it due to high non-performing loans above 10%. RBI has earlier placed restrictions on 7 banks which include Oriental Bank of Commerce, Dena Bank, Central Bank of India, IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of Maharashtra and UCO Bank. Once RBI initiates PCA against a bank, it can't open branches, recruit staff, or give employee increments, and can disburse loans only to companies with borrowing above investment grades.



Nearly Rs. 52,000 Crore Capital infused in PSBs under Indradhanush Plan

The Government has infused Rs. 51,858 crores in PSBs and allocated a sum of Rs. 22,915 in 13 PSBs during the FY 2016-17 under first tranche of capital infusion out of which a sum of Rs. 16,414 (75%) was infused upfront and the remaining amount was to be infused based on the performance of the respective banks. GoI proposed to make available Rs. 70,000 crores out of budgetary allocations for infusing capital in Public Sector Banks (PSBs). Amounts of Rs. 25,000 crores each in the financial years 2015-16 and 2016-17, and Rs. 10,000 crores in financial years 2017-18 and 2018-19, were envisaged.



EPFO launched online facility to obtain COC

Employees’ Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) has launched an online facility to obtain Certificate of Coverage (COC). This facility is available to Indian workers who are deputed by their employer to the countries with whom India has entered into a Social Security Agreement (SSA) and they take Certificate of Coverage (COC) from EPFO. India has entered into Social Security Agreements (SSAs) with 18 countries:

- (i) Australia, (ii) Austria, (iii) Belgium, (iv) Canada, (v) Czech Republic (vi) Denmark, (vii) Finland, (viii) France, (ix) Germany (x) Hungary, (xi) Japan (xii) Republic of Korea (South Korea) (xiii) Luxembourg, (xiv) Netherlands, (xv) Norway, (xvi) Portugal (xvii) Sweden and (xviii) Switzerland.



UAN is mandatory for Certificate of Coverage.



Select appropriate Member ID against entered UAN.

J&K Bank launched ‘Sahafat Finance Scheme’

Jammu and Kashmir Bank became the first bank to launch a special financial scheme, ‘Sahafat Financial Scheme’, for journalists of the state. As a part of the scheme, the bank will extend maximum credit of Rs 3 lakh repayable in 60 EMI’s to media persons for personal and professional needs on urgent basis. The loan shall be in form of term loan for purchase of cameras, tablets, laptops and revolving cash-credit facility to meet routine money needs. The scheme offers an insurance cover of Rs 4 lakh against an annual premium of Rs 342.



UIDAI temporarily suspends Airtel’s Aadhaar-linked e-KYC services

UIDAI has temporarily suspended Bharti Airtel and Airtel Payments Bank from conducting Aadhaar linked e-KYC verification of SIM cards and bank clients following allegations of Bharti Airtel using the Aadhaar-eKYC based SIM verification process to open payments bank accounts of its subscribers without their 'informed consent'. More than 23 lakh customers have reportedly received as many as Rs 47 crore in their Airtel bank accounts, which they did not know had been opened.



ED freezes assets worth Rs 245cr in STC scam case

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has frozen assets worth Rs 245 crore in connection with its money laundering probe in the alleged fraud of Rs 2,200 crore with the State Trading Corporation (STC). State Trading Corporation had granted financing facility to Global Steel Holding Limited for purchase of raw material for their Philippine-based steel plants on cash and carry basis. The Global Steel Holding Limited and its promoter Pramod Kumar Mittal defaulted on repayment to the tune of Rs. 2,200 crore.



RBI imposed Rs 5 crore penalty on Syndicate Bank

The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 5 crore on Syndicate Bank for non-compliance with its directions on "Cheque Purchase or Discounting, Bill Discounting, and Know Your Customer (KYC)" norms. Recently, RBI had fined IndusInd Bank Rs 2 crore for non-compliance of asset recognition norms. The regulator had penalised Union Bank of India, Yes Bank and IDFC Bank with Rs 2 crore, Rs 6 crore and Rs 2 crore respectively.



ICRA launched Fixed Income Indices for Debt Markets

ICRA Management Consulting Services (IMaCS) has launched a set of four fixed income indices - ICRA Gilt Indices, ICRA Liquid Indices, ICRA Corporate Bond Indices and ICRA Composite Debt Indices. The ICRA Gilt Indices include short term, medium term, long term and composite gilt as well as 10-year gilt indices. ICRA Liquid Indices aim to represent the performance of the short-term securities with maturity up to 91 days. IMaCS is an arm of ICRA. ICRA Limited (ICRA) is an Indian independent and professional investment information and credit rating agency.



RBI placed Bank of India under PCA

The Reserve Bank of India has placed Bank of India (BoI) under the 'prompt corrective action' (PCA) framework in view of high net NPA, insufficient CET1 Capital and negative Return on Assets for two consequent years. As on end of March-17, BoI had net non-performing assets (NNPA) of 6.90 per cent; common equity tier (CET) - tier I capital of 7.17 per cent; and return on average assets (RoAA) of -0.24 per cent (in FY17) and -0.94 per cent (in FY16). The MD & CEO of Bank of India is Dinabandhu Mohapatra.



Competition Commission of India approved merger of IndusInd Bank and Bharat Financial Inclusion

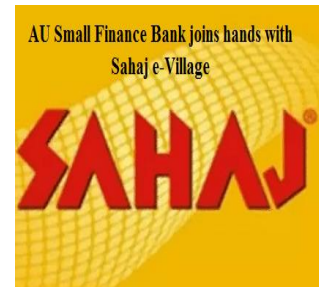
The Competition Commission of India has approved merger of IndusInd Bank and Bharat Financial Inclusion. However, the amalgamation is subject to the receipt of approval from the RBI and regulatory approval, including approval of the stock exchanges, SEBI, the National Company Law Tribunal and respective shareholders. BFIL had a customer base of 68 lakh and loan portfolio of Rs. 7,709 crore as of June 30. For 2016-17, the company had recorded a profit of Rs. 290 crore.

IndusInd



AU Small Finance Bank collaborated with Sahaj e-Village

AU Small Finance Bank has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Sahaj e-Village for extending its banking service in remote areas through Business Correspondent Agent (BC) model. As a part of the MoU, Sahaj Agents will gather information, counsel and provide customized products and services to customers in the interior locations where the Bank does not have a presence. Sahaj e-Village Limited is a venture initiative of SREI Infrastructure Finance Limited (SIFL) under the flagship of NeGP of the Government of India.



YES Bank and EIB to Co-finance \$400 mn for Clean Power Projects

Yes Bank and the European Investment Bank will co-finance \$400 million (Rs2,561 crore) funding for renewable power generation in the country. Of the \$400-million, the EIB will fund \$200 million. The EIB loan of \$200 million has a tenor of 15 years. Several solar projects in Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Karnataka have been identified under the renewable power generation initiative. The MD and CEO of Yes Bank is Rana Kapoor while the President of European Investment Bank is Werner Hoyer.



IMF and WB released the Financial System Stability Assessment and Financial Sector Assessment

IMF and WB released the Financial System Stability Assessment (FSSA) and Financial Sector Assessment (FSA) respectively on their websites. India welcomed assessment of the Indian financial system undertaken by the joint IMF-World Bank team conforming to the highest international standards. The Second comprehensive FSAP has now been successfully conducted for India in 2017. FSAP, a joint program of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB involved in developing countries and region only), undertakes a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of a country's financial sector.



RBI placed United bank of India under PCA

Reserve Bank of India kept United Bank of India under the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework on basis of weak balance sheets. Prompt corrective action has been applied by RBI for the improvement of bank in areas such as risk management, asset quality, profitability, efficiency etc. Other banks who have also been applied prompt corrective action are Bank of India, Central Bank of India, IDBI Bank, UCO Bank, Dena Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Indian Overseas Bank, Bank of Maharashtra and Corporation Bank.



Government Mint launched first home-grown high purity gold reference standard

The India Government Mint, Mumbai, has launched first home-grown high purity gold reference standard of the nation called as the Bharatiya Nirदेशक Dravya (BND-4201). It is the reference material for gold of '9999' fineness (gold that is 99.99% pure). IGM has developed BND-4201 in collaboration with Bhabha Atomic Research Centre -- National Centre for Compositional Characterisation of Materials (Hyderabad), and Council of Scientific & Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (New Delhi).



Quikr acquired HDFC's digital, realty units

Quikr has acquired HDFC Realty and HDFC Red in an all-stock deal. HDFC picked up around 3.5% stake in Quikr for the two businesses, collectively valued at about Rs 357 crore. In the recent past, Quikr has acquired Salosa, Stayglad and ZapLuk in the home services segment, Commonfloor and Grabhouse in the real estate segment, Hiree in the recruitment segment and Stepni in the automobile services segment.



State-Run Banks' bad loans crossed Rs 7.34 Lakh Crore

At the end of 2nd quarter of 2017-18, non-performing assets were reported to be Rs 7.34 lakh crore by major state run banks. State Bank of India reported highest amount of bad loans with Rs 1.86 lakh crore, followed by Punjab National Bank at Rs 57,630 crore, Bank of India at Rs 49,307 crore, Bank of Baroda at Rs 46,307 crore and Canara Bank at Rs 39,164 crore. Corporate defaulters form a major part of bad loans. Government is constantly in process of making out ways for reducing bad loans and increasing number of debt recovery tribunals.



SLCM ties up with HDFC Bank, IndusInd Bank for collateral management

Sohan Lal Commodity Management (SLCM) has tied up with HDFC Bank and IndusInd Bank to provide collateral management services. With this, farmers will have more access to post-harvest credits at affordable interest rates. It will help for easy access to scientific storage facilities leading to a fair price discovery of their produce in the market. SLCM has a presence across 17 states in India with a network of 2,100 warehouses. They have a reliable scientific management system for over 725 commodities.



Samsung in partnership with Axis Bank offers 'Bill Payments' on Samsung Pay

Samsung India has launched 'Bill Payments' on its flagship payments service Samsung Pay in partnership with Axis Bank. The new feature will enable Samsung Pay users to pay their utility bills seamlessly using Samsung Pay's secure and convenient platform. Bill payment through Samsung Pay comes with a host of unique features and offers users a secure, hassle free and instant payment option on-the-go. It is facilitated by NPCI's Bharat Bill Payments System (BBPS).



Government cuts small savings interest rate by 0.2% points

The government cut the interest rate on small savings schemes, including public provident fund (PPF), national savings certificate (NSC) and Kisan Vikas Patra, by 0.2% for the January to March quarter. However, the five-year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme will continue to earn 8.3% per annum. PPF and NSC will all earn 7.6% while KVP will yield 7.3% and will mature in 11 months. Sukanya Samriddhi Account will offer 8.1% as against 8.3%. Term deposits of 1-5 years will fetch a lower interest rate of 6.6-7.4%, to be paid quarterly, while the five-year recurring deposit is pegged at 6.9%.



SIDBI launched Udyami Mitra Portal

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has launched the 'Udyami Mitra' Portal (www.udyamimitra.in) to improve accessibility of credit and handholding services to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) have been advised to ensure a target of 7.5% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) for Micro Enterprises, that collateral security is not required for loans upto Rs. 10 lakh to MSE sector, a simplified working capital requirement for MSEs.



Insurance Regulator permits foreign insurers to open offshore business at GIFT IFSC

The Insurance Regulatory Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has permitted foreign insurers for undertaking offshore insurance business from International Financial Services Centre (IFSC), at Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT). Foreign insurers can now open IFSC Insurance Offices (IIO) at GIFT IFSC. Foreign direct insurers and re-insurers are permitted to open office to undertake dollar-denominated business from within the IFSC in GIFT SEZ, all other Special Economic Zones in India, and foreign countries (including foreign to foreign, India to foreign and foreign to India).



SBI Board approves raising Rs. 8,000 crores

State Bank of India has approved raising Rs. 8,000 crores through various sources, including masala bonds, to meet Basel III capital norms. The bank has time till March 2018 to raise the funds. Masala bonds are rupee denominated specialized debt instruments that can be floated in overseas markets only to raise capital. Banks in India have to comply with the global capital norms under Basel III by March 2019, three months later than the internationally agreed time frame by January 2019.



Government raised Rs. 14,500 crores through BHARAT 22 ETF

The government has raised Rs 14,500 crore through the Bharat-22 Exchange Traded Fund (ETF). The ETF saw bids of nearly Rs 32,000 crore, with FIIs bidding for one-third of the money. The portion reserved for retail investors was subscribed 1.45 times; retirement funds by 1.50 times and NIIs and QIBs by 7 times. The Index is a unique blend of shares of key CPSEs, Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and also the Government owned shares in blue chip private companies like Larsen & Tubro (L&T), Axis Bank and ITC.



Important Days

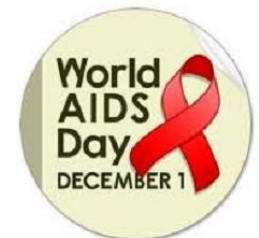
International Day of Disabled Persons observed on 03rd December

The United Nations' (UN) International Day of Persons with Disabilities is observed annually on December 3rd to focus on issues that affect people with disabilities worldwide. It aims to promote the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities in all spheres of society. The theme for 2017 was "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all". This theme marked the importance of building resilient societies and creating opportunities that truly leave no one behind as 2030 agenda pledges to "leave no one behind".



World AIDS day observed on 1 December

The United Nations' (UN) World AIDS Day is observed annually on December 1st to honor AIDS victims. It also focuses on issues surrounding HIV and AIDS. The theme for the year 2017 was 'My health, my right' that focused on the right to health. The day is dedicated to raise awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection. The day is observed often with education on AIDS prevention and control.



BSF Raising Day observed on 1 December

52nd Border Security Force Raising day was observed on 1st December 2017, by conducting cultural programmes and 'barakhana' (big feast) for BSF personnel. Border Security Force is India's first line of defense that came into existence on December 1, 1965. The BSF is a paramilitary force responsible for guarding India's border. Border Security Force guards India at all international borders. BSF is deployed on Indo-Pakistan International Border, Indo-Bangladesh International Border, Line of Control along with Indian Army and in Anti-Naxal Operations.



Indian Navy Day observed on 4th december

Indian navy day is annually observed on 04th December to memorize the achievements and role of the naval force in India. The Indian Navy is the marine branch of the Indian Armed Forces and is led by the President of India as Commander-in-Chief. Indian Navy protects marine borders of India and boost international relations by conducting joint exercises. On the occasion of Indian Navy day, various award-winning innovations by the force were displayed at "Innovation Pavilion" at the Navy House in New Delhi.



Armed Forces Flag Day observed throughout India

The Armed Forces Flag Day was observed throughout India. The day observed since 1949, has become a tradition to remember the sacrifices and commemorate the honor to the soldiers, airmen and sailors. It is dedicated towards collection of funds from people for the welfare of the Armed Forces personnel. Flag Day is an opportunity for every Indian citizen to contribute most generously to the Armed Forces Flag Day Fund. The week leading to the Flag Day, is celebrated as Armed Forces Week.



International Civil Aviation Day

The purpose of International Civil Aviation Day is to help generate and reinforce worldwide awareness of the importance of international civil aviation to the social and economic development of States, and of the unique role of ICAO in helping States to cooperate. ICAO Council established a special anniversary theme for International Civil Aviation Day after every 5 years. For 2015-2018 inclusive the Council has selected the following theme: **Working Together to Ensure No Country is Left Behind.**



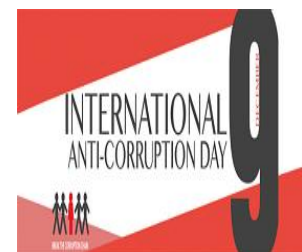
International Mountain Day observed on 11th December

The "International Mountain Day" is observed annually on 11th December to create awareness about the importance of mountains to life, to highlight the opportunities and constraints in mountain development and to build alliances that will bring positive change to mountain peoples and environments around the world. The day aims to draw attention to the important roles that mountainous regions play in water and food supply. The year 2017 Theme is – "Mountain under Pressure: climate, hunger, migration".



International Anti-Corruption Day 2017 observed across the world

The United Nations' (UN) International Anti-Corruption Day is observed on December 9th each year. The day aims to raise public awareness of corruption and what people can do to fight it. Theme for 2017 is "United against corruption for development, peace and security". As per the UN, every year \$1 trillion is paid in bribes while an estimated \$2.6 trillion are stolen annually through corruption – a sum equivalent to more than 5% of the global GDP.



World Human Rights Day observed on 10th December

The Human Rights Day is observed every year on the 10th of December for people to know and push for their rights, no matter where they are in the world. It commemorates the day on which, in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. 2017 World human rights day marks the beginning of 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The theme of 2017 was '#StandUp4HumanRights'.



National Energy Conservation Day

The 27th National Energy Conservation Day celebration was held in New Delhi. The day is observed every year in India on 14th December by Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), under Ministry of Power, to drive mass awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and conservation. As part of its awareness outreach, BEE recognizes and encourages endeavors of industries in reducing energy consumption by felicitating them with National Energy Conservation Awards. BEE also awards prizes to the national winners of the annual National Painting Competition on Energy Conservation.



Nation Celebrates Vijay Diwas - 16 December

On 16 December 1971, General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, Chief of Pakistan forces along with 93000 troops had surrendered unconditionally to the allied forces after the defeat of Pakistan in the war. The end of the India- Pakistan war 1971 also resulted in subsequent secession of East Pakistan into Bangladesh. Since then, 16 December is celebrated as Victory Day in Bangladesh and Vijay Diwas in India as a tribute to the martyrs of Indian Army and Mukti Bahini who, led by General Jagjit Singh Aurora in Dhaka, laid down their lives.



International Migrants Day

The United Nations (UN) International Migrants Day is observed annually on December 18 to recognize the efforts, contributions, and rights of migrants worldwide. The theme for 2017 is "Safe Migration in a World on the Move". The International Migrants Day is seen firstly as an opportunity to recognize the contributions made by millions of migrants to the economies of their host and home countries, and secondly to promote respect for their basic human rights.



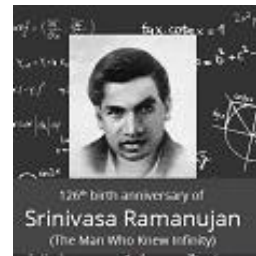
International Human Solidarity Day 2017

The United Nations' (UN) International Human Solidarity Day is observed annually on 20th December to celebrate our unity in diversity, remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements, raise public awareness of the importance of solidarity and encourage new initiatives for poverty eradication. The General Assembly, on 20 December 2002, established the World Solidarity Fund, which was set up in February 2003 as a trust fund of the United Nations Development Programme. Its objective is to eradicate poverty.



National Mathematics Day

The National Mathematics Day is observed annually on the 22nd December on the birth anniversary of the great Indian Autodidact Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan. He was considered as the master of the number theory, infinite series, mathematical analysis and equations without any formal training in pure mathematics. He had formulated more than 3900 mathematical results and equations. Ramanujan had discovered the smallest number represented as sum of two cubes 1729 which is known as Hardy-Ramanujan number.



Kisan Diwas observed on 23rd December

Kisan Diwas or the National Farmers' Day is observed every year on 23rd of December in the honor of the former Prime Minister of India Chaudhary Charan Singh. It was in 2001 when the government decided to celebrate 23rd December as Kisan Diwas. The fifth Prime Minister of India, Chaudhary Charan Singh, introduced many policies to improve the life of Indian farmers. The day pays honor to the great work done by the farmers of the nation.



Good Governance Day observed on 25th December

Good Governance Day is annually celebrated on birth anniversary of former Indian Prime Minister, Bharat Ratna recipient, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who was born on 25th December. Uttar Pradesh state provided freedom to 93 prisoners whereas Madhya Pradesh provided pulses at concessional rate in tribal areas. In 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced to observe 25th December as Good governance day nationwide. Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the 10th Prime Minister of India, first for 13 days in 1996 and then from 1998 to 2004.



International

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani launched 1st phase of Chabahar port in Iran

The first phase of the Chabahar port, Iran, launched by Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, has opened a new strategic transit route between Iran, India and Afghanistan. Mr Radhakrishnan represented India in the 2nd meeting of the India-Iran-Afghanistan Ministerial-level Trilateral Meeting on Chabahar Port Development, presided by respective Ministers of Iran and Afghanistan. The Ministers agreed to intensify efforts on issues concerning regional connectivity and focusing on Chabahar Port development under the Trilateral Transit and Trade Agreement at the Trilateral Meeting.



India re-elected as Member of International Maritime Council

India was re-elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organization [IMO] under Category "B" at the 30th session of the Assembly of the IMO held in London. The IMO Council consists of 40 member countries. In Categories "A" and "B" there are 10 members each and in Category "C" 20 members, who are elected by the IMO Assembly. IMO Council plays a crucial role to play in deciding various important matters within the mandate of the IMO, in relation to the global shipping industry, including its work programme strategy and budget.



IMF gave nod to new USD 88 billion credit line for Mexico

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund approved a successor two-year arrangement for Mexico under the Flexible Credit Line (FCL) of amount US\$88 billion and cancelled the previous arrangement in the same amount. The FCL is designed for crisis prevention purposes as it provides the flexibility to countries with very strong track records to draw on the credit line at any time to help keep their economic policies will remain strong.



China hosted 3rd DRC-NITI Aayog Dialogue

The 3rd edition of the Dialogue between the NITI Aayog and the Development Research Council of China was held in Beijing, China. The dialogue took place under the MOU. The DRC-NITI Dialogue provided an important platform for both sides to discuss key macro-economic issues impacting both countries and areas of mutual interest. The 3rd Dialogue enabled an in-depth interaction between the two delegations on the world economic prospects, India-China economic cooperation and need to strengthen bilateral cooperation in trade and investment.



ADB to support power plant projects in Bangladesh

The Asian Development Bank's Board of Directors has approved debt financing and partial risk guarantees totalling \$583 million to develop the Reliance Bangladesh Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and Power Project. The project, which includes a power generation facility to be located in Meghnaghat, near the capital city of Dhaka, and an LNG Terminal, near Kutubdia Island will significantly increase power generation and improve energy infrastructure in Bangladesh. ADB's support will help Reliance Power Limited to develop an initial approximately 750 megawatts (MW) of gross power generation capacity and terminal facilities for LNG import.



Venezuela launched new virtual currency

Venezuela government announced creation of cryptocurrency, named as 'Petro'. It was launched by Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro. It is launched so as to ease financial transactions and overcome the US -led financial blockade. US -led financial blockades are US sanctions on Venezuela about remitting money through international banks, which is in turn impacting some bond payments and certain oil exports. Petro digital currency will be backed by Venezuelan reserves of gold, oil, gas, and diamonds. A cryptocurrency is a digital currency that work as a medium of exchange. Some of examples of cryptocurrency are Zcash, Bitcoin etc.



Supreme Court Allows Trump's Travel Ban to go into Full Effect

The US Supreme Court has allowed President Donald Trump's travel ban targeting people from six Muslim-majority countries to go into full effect. The ban will now go fully into effect for people from Chad, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen seeking to enter the US. Seven of the nine judges lifted restrictions on the travel ban imposed by other courts earlier. However, as an exception to the ban, certain people from the six nations can still apply for a visa for tourism, business or education purposes.



Venezuela's Avior Airlines banned from European Union skies

Venezuela's Avior Airlines has been banned from European Union skies after a commission determined it no longer meets international safety standards. Avior had been added to a list of international airlines prohibited from flying within the union because the European Aviation Safety Agency detected unaddressed safety deficiencies. Major carriers like United and Delta have already halted operations in Venezuela. Avior operates flights within Venezuela, throughout Latin America and to Miami, Florida.



Australia passed 'Marriage Equality Law'

In the past, Australia's parliament had passed bill unanimously to allow same sex marriage. The same was now passed by House of Representatives. With this new marriage equality law, Australia became 25th country to recognize marriage irrespective of gender. According to law, couples have to give one-month notice period before getting married and those who are married, will be recognized automatically once governor general gives his assent. Other countries who have passed marriage equality law are Austria, Canada, France, Finland, Denmark, Spain, UK, US, Mexico etc.



President Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as capital of Israel

U.S. President Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and announced that the American embassy would be shifted from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The decision was welcomed by Benjamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister of Israel but criticized by many other international bodies. The decision came after the promise made by Trump during the 2016 U.S. Presidential elections campaign that U.S. embassy in Israel will be shifted from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which he termed as the "eternal capital of the Jewish people."



Saudi Arabia lifts ban on movie theatres after 35 years

The government of Saudi Arabia announced the lifting of ban on movie theatres. The nation will have its first public cinemas in more than 35 years. According to the government statement, the licensing process for cinema operators will start within 90 days and the films "will be subject to censorship according to media policy standards of the kingdom". Saudi Arabia has been witnessing a series of reform in the past few months under the powerful Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, which includes giving women the right to drive and to attend soccer games.



China successfully launched Algeria's 1st communication satellite

China has successfully launched Algeria's first communication satellite, the first project in aerospace industry between the North African nation and Beijing. The satellite was launched by the Chinese Long March-3B carrier rocket. The Alcomsat-1 was launched into a present orbit from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in the southwestern province of Sichuan. The Satellite will be used by Algeria for broadcast and television, emergency communication, distance education, e-governance, and satellite-based navigation.



France has banned baby milk formula, food products by dairy giant Lactalis

France has banned the sale and ordered a recall of several baby formula milk and baby food products made by French dairy giant Lactalis after the discovery of salmonella bacteria. According to consumer protection agency DGCCRF, Lactalis had not managed contamination risk. Twenty cases of salmonella infection of infants were reported in France during early December. Lactalis is one of the world's biggest dairy producers and has 229 production sites in 43 countries.



Qatar inked \$8-bn deal to buy 24 Typhoon fighters from Britain

Qatar has signed a \$8-billion deal to buy 24 Typhoon fighters from Britain. It follows a billion-dollar deal signed by Qatar to buy 12 French Dassault Aviation warplanes. These jets will boost the Qatari military's mission to tackle the challenges they both share in West Asia, supporting stability in the region and delivering security at home. A memorandum of understanding was signed by the two countries for this Typhoon contract in September.



China began set up of world's biggest floating solar project

A floating solar power plant, called to be the world's biggest solar project, will be built by China's Three Gorges Corp unit. It will be built at the cost of 1 billion yuan (\$151 million) in China's eastern province of Anhui. World's biggest 150-megawatt power plant project has now been connected to a grid. Power plant will have panels fixed to float on the surface of a lake. 150 megawatt power plant project will save operational and construction cost of solar plant project. It will be operational by May 2018.



Cartographers surveyed that Mt Hope is new tallest mountain in British Antarctic Territory

British Antarctic Survey (BAS) discovered that Mt Paget on South Georgia island is found to be the new tallest mountain on British Overseas Territory at 3239 metres above sea level outside the Antarctic. It was discovered by cartographers surveying Antarctica for updating maps. Prior to cartographers' survey, Mt Jackson was called as the tallest mountain in the territory at 3,184 metres. Mt Paget is 377 metres (1237 ft) taller than Mt Jackson. The survey of Mount Hope as the UK's tallest peak is an outstanding example of British mapping techniques.



US President signed USD 692 billion defence budget

US President Donald Trump has signed a 692 billion dollar defence budget, which among other things gives funding to provide legislative authority to implement his South Asia strategy and authorises critical missile capabilities to counter threats posed by North Korea. The National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) authorises 626 billion dollars of the base budget resources for the Department of Defence and the national security programs of the Department of Energy, providing an additional 66 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations.



AIIB approved US\$250-million loan to Reduce Coal Use and Improve Air Quality in Beijing

The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's (AIIB) Board of Directors has approved a US\$250-million loan for a project that will reduce China's coal use by about 650,000 tons annually. The project is scheduled for completion in 2021. With this, the Beijing Air Quality Improvement and Coal Replacement Project is expected to reduce annual carbon dioxide emissions by 595,700 tons; particulate matter by 3,700 tons; sulfur dioxide by 1,488 tons and nitrogen oxide by 4,442 tons.



India and Australia held their first '2+2 dialogue' in New Delhi

India and Australia discussed their first '2+2 dialogue' in New Delhi and highlighted the importance of maintaining Asia-Pacific region as a "free" and "open" zone under the "2+2" dialogue model which comprise of the foreign and defence secretaries of both sides. This 2+2 discussion was first such meeting as both the sides participated in the quadrilateral discussion for a new strategic partnership. In 2+2 dialogue, maritime influences of China, infrastructure claiming by China and freedom of navigation on South China Sea was discussed.



Norway becomes first country to end FM Radio

Norway has become the first country to shut down national broadcasts of its FM radio network as the country completed its transition to digital radio. The main reason behind this technological shift is because the transition allows for better sound quality, a greater number of channels and more functions, all at a cost eight times lower than FM radio. The transition only involves national radio channels. Most local stations continue to broadcast on FM.



Argentina hosted 11th WTO Ministerial Conference

The World Trade Organization's 11th Ministerial Conference was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 11th to 14th December, 2017. It was chaired by Minister Susana Malcorra of Argentina. Members committed to ensure a deal on fisheries subsidies, work programme on e-commerce was adopted and cease on payments of customs duties on electronic transmissions for another two years. The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. The WTO has over 160 members representing 98% of world trade.



Google launched 1st Machine Learning Research Lab in Asia with 'Google AI China Center'

Google has launched its research lab focused on artificial intelligence (AI) in China. The centre is first of its kind in Asia to be launched by Google. It will consist of a team of AI researchers in Beijing, supported by Google China's strong engineering teams. Google AI China Centre will publish its own research and support the AI research community by funding and sponsoring AI conferences and workshops. Google's other machine learning research groups, besides the Googleplex, are in New York, London, Zürich and Toronto.



Maldives signed FTA with China

The Maldives has signed a Free Trade Agreement with China. President Abdulla Yameen of Maldives signed the agreement. The FTA is focussed on 'strengthening cooperation on jointly building the 21st century Maritime Silk Road'. The FTA gives Maldives full market access in China for fish and fishery products, coconut, cotton seeds etc. at zero duty. In return, Maldives will open up to China its construction, tourism and travel, education, transport including maritime transport services.



'Youthquake' Named 2017 Word of the Year by Oxford Dictionaries

Oxford Dictionaries has chosen "Youthquake" as the 2017 word of the year. The word means "a significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people". The word was coined in the 1960s by then-Vogue editor, Diana Vreeland, to describe upheavals in fashion and music caused by Britain's youth culture. Presently, the word reflects a "political awakening" among young voters. Usage of the term in the UK increased fivefold in 2017 over 2016.



Gabon certified as polio-free by WHO

The World Health Organisation has declared Gabon a "polio-free country". There are no new reported or suspected cases in the country. Polio is a highly-infectious viral disease which mainly affects young children and can result in permanent paralysis. There is no cure and it can only be prevented through immunisation. Now the disease is endemic only in Afghanistan and Pakistan, where the WHO recorded four cases this year – two in each country. Last year, there were 37 cases globally.



Sebastián Piñera won Chile's Presidential Election

Conservative leader Sebastián Piñera has won Chile's presidential election. The former President secured 54.6% of the votes while the closest centre-left opponent, Alejandro Guillier, received 45.4%. The incoming President has proposed to slash taxes on business to revive growth. Piñera led the country from 2010 to 2014. Piñera will replace incumbent socialist Michelle Bachelet, Chile's first female president. More than half of Chile's eligible voters, some 6.5 million people, did not participate in the election's first round.



India and Myanmar sign MoU for development of Rakhine State

India and Myanmar signed MoU for development of Rakhine State through the Rakhine State Development Programme. The MoU is a Government to Government agreement on long-term socio-economic development of the state. The MoU will help the Government of Myanmar achieve its objective of restoration of normalcy in Rakhine State. As a part of the MoU, GoI proposes to take up a project to build prefabricated housing in Rakhine State so as to meet the immediate needs of returning people. The MoU is the first G to G agreement.



France Passed Law to Ban all Oil and Gas Production by 2040

The French parliament has passed a law that bans all exploration and production of oil and natural gas by 2040. Under the law, existing drilling permits will not be renewed and no new exploration licenses will be granted in France or its overseas territories. France became the first country to pass such law. However, the interesting fact is, France imports 99% of its domestic consumption of oil and gas. The ban is a step to fulfill France's commitments under the Paris climate agreement to curb global warming.



US President signed \$1.5 trillion tax overhaul into law

The US President Donald Trump has signed \$1.5 trillion tax overhaul into law. It is the first major overhaul of the US tax laws since 1986. According to the new Bill, the corporate tax has been slashed from previous 35% to 21%. The bill is projected to decrease federal revenue by almost \$1.5 trillion over the next decade. The Bill also temporarily reduces the tax burden for most individuals.



World's longest glass bridge opened for public in China

China opened world's longest glass bottomed bridge for public. 1,601 feet long bridge has capacity to hold more than 2000 people but only 500 people will be allowed to walk on bridge at a time. The bridge is 6.5 foot wide and hanged over 755 feet above the ground in the beautiful Shijiazhuang of Hongyagu Scenic Area in Hebei province. The bridge is made with 1,077 glass panels and has ability to weigh 70 tonnes. The new bridge opened by China is 191 feet longer than the previous record holder, which is also in China. Hebei Bailu Group is creator of the bridge.



China successfully launched remote sensing satellites to conduct electromagnetic environmental probes

China has successfully launched remote sensing satellites to conduct electromagnetic environmental probes. The satellites were launched on a Long March-2C carrier rocket from Xichang Satellite launch center in the southwest Sichuan province. The satellites have entered its preset orbit and the launch was proclaimed a success. China did not disclose the number of satellites launched. The launch was the 260th mission of the Long March rocket family.



George Weah elected as the new President of Liberia

Former international football star, George Weah, has been elected as the new President of Liberia, Africa's oldest republic. This was Liberia's first independently run election since the end of its civil wars. Weah beat Vice President Joseph Boakai after he got 61.5% of the votes as against 38.5% of Mr Boakai. Mr Weah will take over from Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who is in power since 2006. Weah won the FIFA World Player of the Year award in 1995 while playing for AC Milan. He later played for Chelsea and Manchester City.



Russia's Central EC rejects Alexei Navalny's bid to run against President Putin next year

Russia's Central Election Commission has unanimously rejected top opposition figure Alexei Navalny's bid to run against President Vladimir Putin next year. The commission voted 12 to zero in barring Navalny from the presidential election, citing a controversial embezzlement conviction for which he received a five year suspended sentence. The decision prompted the 41-year-old protest leader, who maintains that the court case against him was fabricated for political reasons, to call for a boycott of the election.



PM Narendra Modi to be first Indian PM to attend WEF in 20 years

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will become the first Indian PM in 20 years to attend the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum to be held in Davos, Switzerland from January 23-26. The world's top CEOs and a large number of heads of government will gather at the annual meet. PV Narasimha Rao and HD Deve Gowda are only two Indian Prime Ministers to have attended the meeting in the past, 1997 being one last such occasion. The Founder and Executive Chairman of WEF is Klaus Schwab. It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.



UN approved 286 million dollar cut in annual budget

The United Nations General Assembly has approved a budget of 5.3 billion dollars after 286 million US dollar cut in its annual budget for 2018-19. The additional reductions come mainly from across-the-board cuts in non-post resources for most Departments and Offices. The budget covers UN activities across a range of areas, including political affairs, international justice and law, regional cooperation for development, human rights and humanitarian affairs, and public information.



Guatemala to move embassy to Jerusalem

Guatemala has confirmed to move its embassy in Israel to Jerusalem following Donald Trump's move to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital. Guatemala is one of only eight countries to vote with the US in opposing a UN resolution condemning Trump's move. Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales spoke to Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Morales was a television personality with no real political experience before becoming president of Guatemala in 2016.



UAE and Saudi Arabia formed a separate group from GCC

UAE formed a new economic and partnership group with Saudi Arabia, separate from the Gulf Cooperation Council so as to cooperate relations between the UAE and Saudi Arabia in all military, political, economic, trade and cultural fields. UAE President, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nayhan approved the new "joint cooperation committee". Gulf Cooperation Council is an intergovernmental union of all Arab states of the Persian Gulf, except for Iraq. Its member states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.



Miscellaneous

- Sachin Tendulkar has requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to include all international medalists in Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS).
- Pistol aces Jitu Rai and Heena Sidhu bagged a bronze each at the 10th Asian Championship 10m Rifle/Pistol in Wako City, Japan.
- India has reclaimed the bronze medal at the Hockey World League (HWL) Final tournament after they defeated Germany 2-1.
- Foreign Ministers of Russia, India, and China (RIC) held a trilateral meeting in New Delhi.
- OBOPAY has secured a license for Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) from the Reserve Bank of India to operate a semi-closed loop wallet.
- The Vice-President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu inaugurated the World Conference on Vedas, "Vishwa Ved Sammelan".
- The State Bank of India has introduced a loyalty program called as State Bank Rewardz, for its valued customers.
- As per information extracted from MCA21 Registry, as on 31.03.2017, 25.01% of the directors on the boards of companies are women directors.
- Companies spent Rs 176.59 Crores in the Northeast states towards corporate social responsibility (CSR) works in 2015-16.
- The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved a scheme to provide a pension of Rs 1500 to transgenders above 18 years of age in the state.
- India will host a meeting of WTO member countries in February 2018 to muster support for food security and other issues.
- Goa has celebrated its 56th Liberation Day. The state was liberated on 19th December in 1961 from Portuguese control after almost 450 years of colonial rule.
- The BJP has retained power in Gujarat for the 6th time in a row and swept the polls in Himachal Pradesh finishing just short of the two-third majority.
- India's top-ranked junior shuttler Aakarshi Kashyap won U-17 and U-19 singles titles at Badminton Junior Nationals in Guwahati, Assam.
- SEBI hiked FPI investment limit from 1.89 lakh crore rupees to 1.91 lakh crore.
- The Vice President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, inaugurated the centenary celebrations of Yoga Institute, in Mumbai.
- India's first and only design university, 'World University of Design' opened its campus at Sonapat, Haryana.
- The Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Dmitry Rogozin, visited India on December 23, 2017 to participate in the Co-Chairs meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC).

- Shri M. Subbarayudu, (IFS: 1994), presently Joint Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Peru.
- SBI Card and Bharat Petroleum announced the launch of the BPCL SBI Card – the most rewarding fuel cobranded credit card in the country
- India's first ever AC local train to be commenced at Mumbai.
- Government is considering the recommendations of Inter-Ministerial Committee on Lokpal and Lokayuktas and other related law (Amendment) Bill, 2014 for the establishment of Lokpal in the country.
- Actress Anushka Sharma has been named PETA's Person of the Year by animal rights organisation People for Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).
- Saudi Arabia is hosting a world chess tournament for the first time, nearly two years after the country's top cleric issued a religious edict against playing the board game.
- Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Shri Raj Kumar Singh, informed that 1085 small hydro power projects with aggregate capacity of 4399.355 MW capacity have been set up upto November 2017.
- Markets regulator SEBI stated that cross-holding in credit rating agencies (CRAs) will be capped at 10% and also decided to raise the minimum net worth requirement to Rs 25 crore from the current Rs 5 crore.
- Cryptocurrency dealer 'Pluto Exchange' announced the launch of India's first mobile application for transacting in virtual currencies.
- India will host the 46th Congress of the International Hockey Federation.
- China has temporarily halted funding of road projects in Pakistan.
- Uttarakhand state government has signed a MoU with IT giant Hewlett Packard to provide tele-medicine facilities in the remote areas of the state.
- The 6th 'International Tourism Mart' (ITM) was inaugurated in Assam.
- The International conference on climate change was held in Nepal.
- Chhattisgarh received the Award for Best State in Promoting Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities for the year 2017.
- United States of America has withdrawn itself from United Nations' refugee and migrant pact.
- The United States recently launched the largest-ever air exercise along with South Korea.
- The 7th edition of the three-day 'Kathakar: International Storytellers Festival' was inaugurated in New Delhi.
- Uhuru Kenyatta was sworn-in as the President of Kenya.
- Salil S Parekh has been appointed as the CEO and MD of Infosys.

- Rafaele Bergamasco has been appointed as the new Performance Director for women's boxing.
- The Union government has sanctioned Rs 75 crore for setting up a LPG bottling plant in Meghalaya.
- Assam has generated 40 thousand direct employments.
- Alappuzha has been included in top 5 global cities list by UNEP to successfully manage solid waste.
- The Indian men's hockey team has been ranked 6th in the latest listings released by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).
- The Indian women's hockey team has been ranked 10th in the latest listings released by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).
- Feminism was named as the word of the year 2017 by Merriam-Webster.
- Nakul Chopra has been elected as BARC India Chairman.
- The Union government has imposed a 30% import duty Chana and Masoor.
- The lawmakers of Uganda voted to remove presidential age limits, paving way for their current President to serve a sixth term in office.
- Indian navy completed the 2nd phase of joint oceanographic survey along with the naval force of Sri Lanka.
- The Losar Festival celebrations were organised at Ladakh.
- Juan Orlando Hernandez won the presidential election in Honduras.
- Sumita Misra has been appointed as Joint Secretary in Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council.
- The parliament of Israel passed a law limiting the powers of its police.
- The Indian Science Congress 2018 will be hosted by Imphal.

National

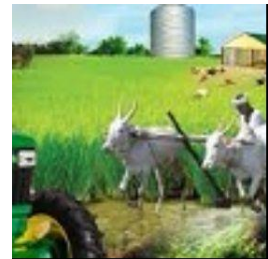
Ministry of NE development announced Rs 90 cr for Northeast hill area development

Minister of State for Development of North Eastern Region announced 90 crore rupees for Northeast Hill Area Development, starting from Tamenglong district, in the first phase, for a period of two years. It is done to introduce an exclusive hill area development programme and ensure equitable development of all the districts of the State. Over the last three years, the handloom and textile products from Northeast have been given due boost.



Centre increased the agricultural education budget by 47.4%

The government of India increased the budget of Agricultural Education by 47.4% in 2017 as compared to the financial year 2013-14. It is first-of-its-kind that all Graduate Level Courses of Agriculture and its related subject have been declared as Professional Courses, in which agricultural graduates will be able to get a better opportunity from professional work in the future. The main objective of this programme is to provide confidence and complete skills to agricultural Graduates while studying at undergraduate level.



Cabinet approved setting up of National Nutrition Mission

The Union Cabinet approved setting up of National Nutrition Mission with a three-year budget of Rs.9046.17 crore commencing from 2017-18. The NNM is an apex body that monitors, supervises, fix targets and guide the nutrition related interventions across the Ministries. National Nutrition Mission is aimed at mapping of various schemes contributing towards addressing malnutrition and setting-up Nutrition Resource Centres, involving masses through Jan Andolan for their participation on nutrition through various activities, among others.



India and Singapore inked agreement on navy cooperation

India-Singapore bilateral agreement for navy cooperation was inked at the 2nd defense ministers' dialogue between the two countries. It was done to increase cooperation in maritime security, joint exercises, temporary deployments from each other's naval facilities and mutual logistics support. Prior to this agreement, Singapore and India have also made progress in defence industry cooperation, with the signing of the terms of reference for the Defence Industry Working Group in August 2016.



India, Cuba sign MoU for enhanced cooperation in health sector

India and Cuba signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for enhanced cooperation in the health sector. The objective of the MoU is to establish comprehensive inter-ministerial and inter-institutional cooperation between the two countries in the field of health by pooling technical, scientific and financial and human resources. The MoU between the two sides is important for exchanges in the health sector and to develop institutional framework. The government will also form a Joint Working Group for implementation of the MoU.



India and Italy sign MoU for cooperation in Agriculture and Phytosanitary issues

India and Italy signed a new MoU for cooperation in Agriculture and Phytosanitary issues that will replace the one signed in 2008. The MoU identifies areas of mutual cooperation in agriculture machinery, training, investment, institutional linkages, precision farming, cattle breeding and fisheries. The Indian government also raised the issue of Indian exports of grapes and rice suffering on account of arbitrary Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) set by European Commission.



Health Ministry and Rotary India sign MoU for achieving immunization target

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Rotary India to provide support and accelerate the efforts under Polio Eradication Programme. The key areas for collaboration will be:

- Social mobilization of beneficiaries, especially in urban slums and undeserved areas having no mobilizers.
- Support to the members of NCC, NYK, NSS etc. in their efforts of community mobilization.
- Generating awareness through innovative approaches for Polio Eradication Programme, Routine Immunization including Mission Indradhanush, Intensified Mission Indradhanush and Measles-Rubella.



UNESCO recognised Kumbh Mela as cultural heritage of humanity

India's Kumbh Mela has been recognised by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity at its 12th session in South Korea. The inscription of elements on the list helps countries which are a part of UNESCO's convention for safeguarding cultural heritage to mobilise international cooperation and assistance. Kumbh Mela is considered to be the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, attended by millions irrespective of caste, creed or gender.



Indian Prime Minister Inaugurated B R Ambedkar International Centre

Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the “Dr. Ambedkar International Centre” at New Delhi. The statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was unveiled at the centre. DAIC will be a centre for research on social and economic issues and act as a think-tank for inclusive growth, and related socio-economic matters. DAIC has been constructed at the cost of Rs. 195 crores. The center has been envisioned on the study of the subjects which Dr. Ambedkar dealt with in his life time and to afford and promote human rights, equality and upliftment of society.



Minister of State for MSMEs launched public procurement portal for MSEs

A Public Procurement Portal ‘MSME Sambandh’ was launched by Shri Giriraj Singh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for MSME. The objective of the portal is to monitor the implementation of the Public Procurement from MSEs by Central Public Sector Enterprises. The portal would gel with the ease of doing business and ‘Make in India’ initiatives of the Government of India. Micro and Small Enterprises would be able to access the information about the products being procured by CPSEs. Thus, it would help the MSEs in participating in the procurement process.



Union Minister Ravi Shankar launched first NIC-CERT to prevent, predict cyber-attacks on government utilities

Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad launched first NIC-CERT, a setup of National Informatics Centre to prevent and predict cyber-attacks on government utilities. NIC-CERT has been setup with the objective of creating a comprehensive framework that integrates world class security components and inbuilt threat intelligence for detection, prevention and incident response. Using the tools, the team will correlate events that would help in generating a canvas of the attack surface and identify the vulnerabilities and possible exploits.



Home Ministry released Rs 174 crore to six states for border development

Home Ministry released Rs 174 crore to six states having an international border for development of infrastructure in forward areas under the Border Area Development Programme (BADP). The states that will be benefited include Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh. The centrally-funded BADP programme covers all villages within 10 kilometers of the international border in 17 states. Schemes under BADP include activities relating to Swachhta Abhiyan, skill development programmes, promotion of sports activities, promotion of rural tourism, border tourism, protection of heritage sites.



India to host 3rd Annual Meeting of Board of Governors of AIIB

The 3rd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of AIIB will be hosted by India at Mumbai in June 2018. The theme of the meeting will be Mobilizing Finance for Infrastructure: Innovation and Collaboration. The MoU was signed by Joint Secretary (Multilateral Institutions Division) in Department of Economic Affairs, Sameer Kumar Khare, and AIIB's Vice-President and Corporate Secretary Danny Alexander.



India Signed Loan Agreement with World Bank for US\$ 250 Million for SANKALP Project

India has signed a Financing Agreement for IBRD loan of USD 250 million for the "Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) Project" with the World Bank. The Objective of the project is to enhance institutional mechanisms for skills development and increase access to quality and market-relevant training for the work force. The Key result areas for the project include Institutional Strengthening at the National and State Levels for Planning, Delivering, and Monitoring High-Quality Market Training, Improved Quality, Market Relevance of Skills Development.



India and Morocco sign MoU for enhanced cooperation in healthcare

India and Morocco signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for enhanced cooperation in the health sector. The MoU was signed by Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Dr. Abdelkader Amara, Ministry of Health, Kingdom of Morocco. The main areas of cooperation include the following:



- Non-communicable diseases, including child cardiovascular diseases and cancer;
- Drug Regulation and Pharmaceutical quality control;
- Communicable Diseases;
- Maternal, child and neonatal health;
- Hospital twinning for exchange of good practices and
- Training in administration and management of health services and Hospitals

JIPMER signed MoU with Marrakech Mohamed VI University Hospital, Morocco

The Jawaharlal Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER), Puducherry signed a MoU with Marrakech Mohamed VI University Hospital, Morocco. The focus areas under this MoU will be Tele-Health Care, Health Education, technical support in controlling epidemics and support in rendering second opinion on various complicated cases. JIPMER is an Indian central government funded institute with autonomy to run its internal administration.



Government approved draft legislation banning instant Triple Talaq

The Union Cabinet has approved proposal to introduce the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017, to make instant triple talaq or talaq-e-biddat, void and illegal. The bill is designed to provide a shield for Muslim women. According to the Bill, practice of instant triple talaq, would attract a jail term of three years for the husband. The Bill would give power to the victim to approach a magistrate seeking a “subsistence allowance” for herself and minor children.



Cabinet approved National Medical Commission Bill

The Union Cabinet has approved National Medical Commission Bill, 2017. It will replace the Medical Council of India (MCI) with a national medical commission. The 25-member commission will include Chairman and Member Secretary. It will have 12 ex-officio members and 11-part-time members. The Commission will lay down policies for maintaining a high quality and high standards in medical education and make necessary regulations in this behalf and ensure coordination among the Autonomous Boards.



Union Cabinet approved continuation of NLCPR scheme for North East till March 2020

The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of the existing Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) scheme with funding pattern of 90:10 till March, 2020 with an outlay of Rs.5300.00 crore. It would enable completion of on-going projects. The Union Cabinet also approved the introduction of new Central Sector Scheme of “North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme” (NESIDS) from 2017-18 with 100% funding from the Central Government to fill up the gaps in creation of infrastructure in specified sectors till March, 2020.



Cabinet approved special package for leather and footwear sector

The Union Cabinet has approved the special package for employment generation in leather and footwear sector. The package involves implementation of Central Sector Scheme "Indian Footwear, Leather & Accessories Development Programme". The scheme would also help to address environment concerns specific to the leather sector, facilitate additional investments, employment generation and increase in production. It will generate 3.24 lakhs new jobs in 3 years and assist in formalization of 2 lakh jobs as cumulative impact in Footwear, Leather & Accessories Sector.



Cabinet approved agreement with UNESCO

The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography, as a Category-2 Centre (C2C) of UNESCO, in Hyderabad. The center will provide an opportunity for India to emerge as a leading country in the Indian Ocean. The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a training centre towards development of capacity for the countries on the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR), African countries bordering the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, small island countries under the framework of UNESCO.



Cabinet approved continuation of National Ayush Mission

The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Ayush Mission (NAM) from 01.04.2017 to 31.03.2020 with an outlay of Rs. 2400 crore over the 3-year period. The Mission was launched in September, 2014. The NAM is being implemented by Ministry of AYUSH with the objectives of providing cost effective AYUSH Services through supporting the efforts of State/UT Governments for providing AYUSH health services education in the country.



Cabinet approved MoU between India and Colombia in the field of agriculture and fisheries

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Colombia in the field of agriculture and fisheries. The MoU provides for cooperation in the following fields of agriculture and Fisheries:



1. Innovative agricultural practices/approaches,
2. New agricultural mechanizations
3. Successful models of agricultural marketing
4. Marine Industrial Fishing, Aqua-culture and Research & Training in the field of Fisheries
5. Small and large ruminants (cattle, sheep, goat) and pigs productivity, diseases and diagnostics

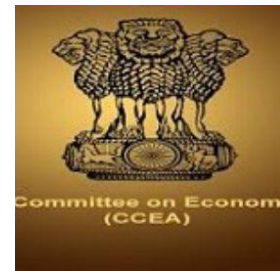
Cabinet approved second financial restructuring of Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the Second Financial Restructuring proposal of Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) It is a CPSE under the administrative control of the Ministry of Railways (MoR). The conversion of Non-Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares (RPS), amounting to Rs. 4,079.51 crore, held by President of India through Ministry of Railways, into Compulsorily Convertible Non-Cumulative Preference Shares (CCPS), has been approved.



Cabinet approved capital investment subsidy to industrial units located in NER

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved Capital Investment Subsidy amounting to Rs.264.67 crore to four industrial units located in North Eastern Region (NER) including Sikkim under Central Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme (CCISS), 2007 of North East Industrial Investment and Promotion Policy (NEIIPP), 2007. The CCEA has also revised financial powers for approval of capital investment subsidy claims up to Rs.500 crore which will be now approved by the Minister of Commerce & Industry. The Government of India has been implementing this Scheme to promote industrialization in North Eastern Region.



Government signed agreement with Japan for Bullet Train Project

A Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed between Governments of India and Japan to implement Mumbai-Ahmedabad high speed rail corridor with technical and financial assistance of Government of Japan. Government of Japan has agreed to provide 81% of the project cost at a very concessional interest rate of 0.1% with repayment period of 50 years. The project is sanctioned on the premise of transfer of technology and Make in India.



14th Inclusive Finance India Summit held in New Delhi

The 14th Inclusive Finance India Summit was held in New Delhi. The summit acts as a global platform to deliberate on issues related to Financial Inclusion, Financial Education and Financial Stability, and build a Financial Inclusion Vision 2020. The major awardees are:

- Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited- Awarded under Microfinance Organization of the Year, Large category
- Dr. Y. V. Reddy – Awarded for Contribution to Advancing Financial Inclusion in India Lifetime Achievement Award
- Dr. Veerendra Heggade – Jury Special Award for Contribution to Advancing Financial Inclusion in India



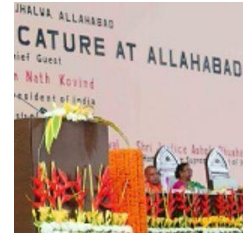
4th India-Australia-Japan Trilateral Dialogue

The 4th India-Australia-Japan Trilateral Dialogue was held in New Delhi. The three sides highlighted the growing convergence of their respective countries' interests in the Indo-Pacific region and underscored their shared commitment to peace, democracy, economic growth and a rules-based order in the region. They underscored their support for ASEAN centrality in the political and security architecture of the Indo-Pacific region.



President of India laid Foundation Stone of 'NYAYA GRAM' Project of High Court of Allahabad

The President of India laid the foundation stone of the Nyaya Gram project of the High Court of Allahabad. Nyaya Gram Initiative has been started to make judiciary system more accessible for the common people. Nyaya Gram will have an academy that will provide required training to the judicial officials and other employees. It will contribute to capacity of the lower judiciary in Uttar Pradesh.



Ministry of Skill Development and Maruti Suzuki enter into an agreement to support Skill India in automobile industry

The Directorate General of Training (DGT), Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Government of India and Maruti Suzuki India Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding to provide high employment potential trades related to automobile and manufacturing industry to youth. As a part of the agreement, Maruti Suzuki in consultation with DGT will develop specific training modules as per need of the automobile industry. The successful trainees will be eligible for employment in Maruti Suzuki or its business partners.



Lok Sabha passes the Central Road Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2017

The Lok Sabha passed the Central Road Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2017. The Bill seeks to amend the Central Road Fund Act, 2000, through which the cess levied and collected on high speed petrol and diesel is distributed for development of rural roads, national highways, railways, state roads and border area roads. The present bill seeks to allocate 2.5% of the CRF generated to accelerate the development and maintenance of national waterways by reduction of an equal percentage from the share of national highways.



Government disposed 2,750 cases under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code

According to a data from Ministry of Corporate Affairs, 2,750 cases have been disposed by the government through proceedings and over 1,988 cases are pending under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). After notification of relevant provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 on 01.12.2016, 2,434 fresh cases have been filed before NCLT and 2,304 cases of winding up of companies have been transferred from various High Courts.



Expenditure on Health Sector by GoI

As per Economic Survey 2016-17 Volume 2 brought out by Ministry of Finance, expenditure by Government (Central and State Governments combined) on health as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the last three years is as under:

- (i) 2014-15 - 1.2%
- (ii) 2015-16 - 1.4% (RE)
- (iii) 2016-17 - 1.5 % (BE)

The National Health Policy 2017 envisages increasing expenditure by Government on health to 2.5% of GDP in a time bound manner by 2025. No target has been set for the current year.



Cabinet approved establishing India's First National Rail and Transportation University at Vadodara

The Union Cabinet has approved the Ministry of Railways' transformative initiative to set up the first ever National Rail and Transport University (NRTU) in Vadodara to skill its human resources and build capability. The University will be set up as a Deemed to Be University under de novo category as per the UGC [Institutions Deemed to be Universities] Regulations, 2016. Government is working towards completing all approvals by April 2018 and to launch the first academic program in July 2018.



Eastern Railway launched R-Mitra Mobile App

A Mobile Application "R-MITRA" (Railway Mobile Instant Tracking Response & Assistance) has been launched by Eastern Railway for security of passengers, especially women passengers, in Kolkata and suburban areas of the Zone. Security Application R-MITRA has been launched to facilitate security of passengers and to render timely security related assistance to passengers within the jurisdiction of Eastern Railway. Prevention and detection of crime against passengers over Railways is the responsibility of concerned States which is being discharged by them through Government Railway Police (GRP).



Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project

The salient details of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Project are:

1. Mostly elevated corridor between Sabarmati and Mumbai (508 kilometre) with 12 stations;
2. Maximum Design Speed of 350 kilometre per hour and operating speed of 320 kilometre per hour;
3. The journey time between Mumbai and Sabarmati will be 2.07 Hrs for a Fast Train and 2.58 Hrs for train stopping at all the stations enroute.



4. Estimated cost of the project: Rs 1,08,000 crore; 81% of the project cost funded by loan from Government of Japan at a rate of interest of 0.1% with a repayment period of 50 years with 15 years grace period.
5. The project is targeted for commissioning by the year 2022-23.
6. Feasibility studies have been sanctioned over several corridors including Delhi-Chennai.

Cabinet approved "Scheme for Capacity Building in Textiles Sector (SCBTS)" for the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for a new skill development scheme covering the entire value chain of the textile sector excluding Spinning & Weaving in organized Sector, titled "Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector (SCBTS)" from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with an outlay of Rs. 1300 crore. The scheme will have National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF) compliant training courses with funding norms as per the Common Norms notified by Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).



Cabinet approved extension of term of the Commission to examine the issue of sub-categorization of OBCs

upto 2nd April, 2018. The Commission is headed by Justice (Retd.) Smt G Rohini and commenced its functioning on 11th October, 2017. It has since interacted with all the States/UTs having reservation for OBCs, and the State Backward Classes Commissions. It was stipulated that it would submit its report within twelve weeks. Keeping in view the voluminous data involved and the time required for its analysis to prepare a comprehensive report, the Commission had sought extension of its term by twelve weeks.



Cabinet approved MoU between India and Cuba on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post-facto approval for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Cuba on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine. The MoU covers the following key areas of cooperation:

1. Exchange & training of medical doctors, officials, other health professionals and experts;
2. Regulation of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and exchange of information;
3. Promotion of business development opportunities in pharmaceuticals and others identified by parties;
4. Procurement of generic and essential drugs and assistance in sourcing of drug supplies;
5. Procurement of health equipment and pharmaceutical products;



Cabinet approved MoU between India and Italy on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine

The Union Cabinet has given its ex-post-facto approval for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Italy on cooperation in the field of Health and Medical Sciences. The MoU covers the following areas of cooperation:



1. Exchange & training of medical doctors, officials, other health professionals and experts;
2. Regulation of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and cosmetics and exchange of information thereon;
3. Procurement of generic and essential drugs and assistance in sourcing of drug supplies;
4. Collaboration in the prevention of NCDs of mutual interest, such as neuro-cardiovascular diseases, cancer, COPDs, mental health and dementia, with an emphasis on SDG3 and related factors

5350 Startups have been recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion

According to a data released by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, as on 1st December, 2017, a total of 5350 Startups have been recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) for availing benefits under Startup India initiative.



- Under the Fund of Funds for Startups, 75 startups have received funding to the tune of INR 337.02 crore.
- A total of 74 Startups have been recognized to avail tax exemption under Section 80 IAC of Income Tax Act,
- 975 applicants have received benefits under the Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) scheme

India's merchandise exports registered positive growth

India's merchandise exports registered a positive growth of 5.17% during 2016-17 over 2015-16 and 12.01% during 2017-18 (Apr-Nov) over 2016-17 (Apr-Nov). India's merchandise trade deficit has been declining for last two years. The names of the top countries with which India has registered favourable trade balance during the last three years are as follows:



SI.	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
1	U S A	U S A	U S A
2	Hong Kong	U Arab Emts	U Arab Emts
3	U Arab Emts	Hong Kong	Bangladesh PR
4	Sri Lanka DSR	Bangladesh PR	Hong Kong
5	Bangladesh PR	Sri Lanka DSR	Nepal

MOU signed under Make in India Programme

In the last three financial years, the Government has accorded Acceptance of Necessity for 105 proposals worth Rs. 2,33,000/- Crore to Indian Vendors only. The following agreements have been signed by Government of India under 'Make in India' initiative:



Sr. No.	Country	Details of Agreement
1.	Russia	Agreement between the Government of Russian Federation and the Government of Republic of India for construction of follow-on-ships of Project 1135.6 in Russia and in India.
2.	Russia	Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Russian Federation on cooperation in the field of Helicopter Engineering.

Loan agreement signed for pure hydroelectric plant of North Eastern Region

A Loan agreement and a Guarantee agreement for providing additional funding of Euro 20 million was signed between Germany and North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited for the project 'Pare Hydroelectric Plant' under Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation. It may be recalled that in 2008, Germany had signed a loan agreement with NEEPCO for providing Euro 80 million under Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation. The broad objective of the project is efficient and ecological friendly generation of electric power for socio-economic development of the North Eastern Region.



Japanese grant aid signed for advanced traffic information and management

The exchange of notes on Japanese Grant Aid for the project for implementation of Advanced Traffic Information and Management System in Bengaluru was signed between Ministry of Finance, Government of India and Mr. Kenji Hiramatsu, Ambassador of Japan to India. Japan committed to grant aid of an amount of JPY 1.276 billion for the project that will install an Advanced Traffic Information and Management System, including signalling system and traffic congestion length measurement sensor. This project will contribute in strengthening connectivity and industrial competitiveness of local economy by improving traffic congestion and urban environment.



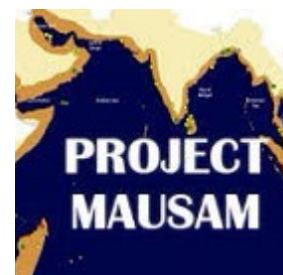
India signed Financing Agreement with the World Bank for US\$ 125 Million

Government of India has signed a Financing Agreement for IDA Credit of USD 125 million (equivalent) for the "Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement Operation (STRIVE) Project" with the World Bank. The Objective of the operation is to improve access to quality and market-driven vocational training provided in it and apprenticeships. The result areas for the project include Improved Performance of Industrial Training Institutes; Increased Capacities of State Governments to Support Industrial Training Institutes and Apprenticeship Training; Improved Teaching and Learning; and Improved and Broadened Apprenticeship Training.



39 countries identified under Project 'Mausam'

Project 'Mausam' is the initiative of Ministry of Culture to be implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the nodal agency with research support of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and National Museum as associate bodies. This project aims to explore the multi-faceted Indian Ocean 'world' – collating archaeological and historical research. The list of 39 countries identified under Project Mausam is:



1. Bahrain	21. Myanmar
2. Bangladesh	22. Oman
3. Cambodia	23. Pakistan
4. China	24. Philippines
5. Comoros	25. Qatar
6. Egypt	26. Singapore
7. Eritrea	27. Sri Lanka
8. Réunion, French Department	28. Saudi Arabia
9. Indonesia	29. Seychelles
10. Iraq	30. Somalia
11. Iran (Islamic Republic)	31. South Africa
12. Jordan	32. Sudan
13. Kuwait	33. Syrian Arab Republic
14. Kenya	34. United Republic of Tanzania
15. Lebanon	35. Thailand
16. Madagascar	36. Turkey
17. Malaysia	37. United Arab Emirates
18. Maldives	38. Viet Nam
19. Mauritius	39. Yemen
20. Mozambique	

GST Council cleared e-way bill mechanism

The GST Council has decided to implement the e-way bill mechanism throughout the nation by June 1 after reviewing the readiness of the IT network. Under the e-way bill system, goods worth more than ₹ 50,000 have to be pre-registered online before they can be moved from one state to another. The e-way bill system will help in the seamless movement of goods across state borders. It will be available on a trial basis for voluntary adoption by businesses from January 16



Samsung India Partnered with UNESCO to Launch VR Content and 360-Degree Videos on Indian Heritage Sites

Samsung India has entered into a partnership with UNESCO MGIEP (Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development) to launch 360 video and Virtual Reality (VR) content of two magnificent Indian heritage sites, the Sun Temple in Konark, Odisha and Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh. The project will provide experiential educational content to students across the country. The immersive content will also be available to students at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (JNV).



India ranked 60th most innovative country on the Global Innovation Index-2017

India currently ranks 60th out of 127 countries on the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2017 as compared to 66th rank on GI 2016. In order to make India an innovation- driven economy, NITI Aayog, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) together launched a mega initiative "India Innovation Index" that will rank states on Innovations through country's first online innovation index portal that will capture data on innovation from all Indian states on innovation and regularly update it in real time.



Lok Sabha passed Requisitioning and Acquisition of immovable Property (Amendment) Bill, 2017

The Lok Sabha has passed the Immovable Property (Amendment) Bill by a voice vote. The Bill seeks to amend the regulations governing compensation payable for acquisition of immovable property by the Centre for defence and security purposes. The bill seeks to amend a provision to allow the Centre to re-issue the notice of acquisition in order to ensure that the property's owner gets an opportunity to be heard.



Parliament passed Companies Amendment Bill

The Rajya Sabha has passed the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2017 by a voice vote. The Bill seeks to bring about major changes in the Companies Act, 2013. It provides for more than 40 amendments to the Companies Act, 2013. The Bill was already passed in the Lok Sabha in July 2017. It intends to strengthen corporate governance standards, initiate strict action against defaulting companies and help improve ease of doing business.



Lok Sabha passed 'Supplementary Demands for Grants and Appropriation Bill 2017'

Lok Sabha voted the Supplementary Demands for Grants and passed the Appropriation bill to authorise the government to spend the money from consolidated fund of India. Under Supplementary Demands for Grants, the government proposed for additional expenditure of 66,113 crore rupees under different heads, including a net cash outgo of Rs. 33,379.99 crore during 2017-18. Of the total expenditure, over 20,532 crore rupees will be provided for urea freight subsidy, while another 15,908 crore rupees towards National Highways.



Union Cabinet approved new Consumer Protection Bill

Union Cabinet approved a new Consumer Protection Bill that seeks to establish an authority to safeguard consumers' rights, has the provisions for penalty and jail terms in case of adulteration and misleading advertisements by companies. It focusses on consumer empowerment. Celebrities endorsing misleading advertisements will also be liable for fine and ban up to three years as per the new bill. The Cabinet approved the introduction of the Consumer Protection Bill, 2017, which will replace a bill of 2015.



NHAI creates National Highways Investment Promotion Cell (NHIPC)

The National Highways Authority of India has created a National Highways Investment Promotion Cell (NHIPC) for attracting domestic and foreign investment for highways projects. The cell will focus on engaging with global institution investors, construction companies, developers and fund managers for building investor participation in road infrastructure projects. The Government has set target of construction of 35,000 km. of National Highways in the next five years at the cost of Rs. 5,35,000/- crores under 'Bharatmala Pariyojana'.



Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana scheme launched

Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana is a Central Sector Scheme launched, under which aids and assistive living devices will be provided to senior citizens belonging to BPL category who suffer from age related disabilities such as low vision, hearing impairment, loss of teeth and loco-moto disabilities. The aids and assistive devices viz. walking-sticks, elbow-crutches, walkers, tripods/quad-pods, hearing aids, wheelchairs, artificial dentures and spectacles are provided to eligible beneficiaries. The Scheme is being implemented by the "Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation.



Lok Sabha passed Indian Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2017

Lok Sabha passed Indian Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2017. Mr. Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change introduced the bill in Lok Sabha replacing the Indian Forest (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017. It was presented with amendments such as transit of forest-produce and the duty to be levied on them. According to new law, 'bamboo' will not be considered as tree. It has been removed from definition of tree which includes palms, bamboos, stumps, brush-wood, and canes. It was amended to ease inter-state movement of bamboo as initially transportation of trees growing in non-forest areas required permits for inter-state movement.



Government released Rs 10,000 cr under ICDS Scheme

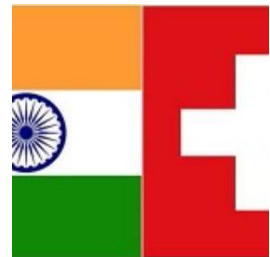
The government has released more than Rs 10,000 cr to States/UTs in the current financial year till date under ICDS scheme. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme was launched in 1975 with the primary objective to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years. The package of following six services are provided under the ICDS scheme:



1. Supplementary nutrition,
2. Pre-school non-formal education,
3. Nutrition & health education,
4. Immunization,
5. Health check-up and
6. Referral services

India-Swiss data sharing from January 1

India has signed an agreement with Switzerland that would allow automatic sharing of tax-related information from January 1 2018. The agreement was signed by CBDT chairman Sushil Chandra and Swiss Ambassador to India Andreas Baum. A joint declaration for the implementation of Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) was signed between the two nations. Both the countries would start collecting data in accordance with the global standards in 2018 and exchange it from 2019 onwards.



Government launched Ganga Gram Project

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS) launched 'Ganga Gram' – a project for sanitation based integrated development of all 4470 villages along the River Ganga. MDWS is the nodal agency for implementation of the project. It is an integrated approach for holistic development of villages situated on the banks of River Ganga with active participation of the villagers. The objectives of Ganga Gram Project include solid and liquid waste management, renovation of ponds and water resources, water conservation projects, organic farming, horticulture, and promotion of medicinal plants.



MEA launched SAMEEP

The External Affairs Ministry has come up with an initiative - SAMEEP - 'Students and MEA Engagement Programme' with an aim to take Indian foreign policy and its global engagements to students across the country. Under this programme, all the ministry officers - under-secretary and above - will be asked to interact with the students about the way the MEA works, basic elements of its policies, how diplomacy is conducted, and generally give students an idea of what a career in the MEA would look like.



Darpan Launched For Financial Inclusion Of Rural Population

The Union Government has launched DARPAN – “Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for A New India” Project to improve the quality of service, add value to services and achieve “financial inclusion” of un-banked rural population. The project has an outlay of Rs. 1400 Crore. The project is targeted to be completed by March, 2018. 43,171 Branch Post Offices have already migrated under the “DARPAN” project. Department of Posts has established 991 ATMs across the country, which are interoperable with other banks.



Cabinet approved auctioning of 683 FM channels

The Union Cabinet has approved auctioning of 683 FM channels in 236 cities under Phase III of FM radio privatization. The new cities include cities in border areas of Jammu and Kashmir and north-east states where the population is less than 100,000. These auctions are expected to generate an estimated revenue of more than Rs1,100 crore. With the complete rollout of FM Phase-III auctions, all the 29 states and six out of the seven union territories – except Dadra & Nagar Haveli – will be covered by private FM radio broadcasting.



Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched e-HRMS

Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions Dr Jitendra Singh launched the electronic-Human Resource Management System (e-HRMS) on the occasion of Good Governance Day. The e-service book will be integrated into the e-HRMS. With launch of e-HRMS, employees will be able to not only see all their details like service book, leave, GPF and Salary but also apply for different kind of claims or reimbursements, loans or advances, leave, leave encashment, LTC advances and Tour on a single platform.



Government released Rs 167 cr to 9 states with international border for development of infrastructure

Union Home Ministry has released 167 crore rupees to nine states with international border for the development of infrastructure in forward areas. The states which will benefit include Rajasthan and Punjab, both having international border with Pakistan, and West Bengal and Assam, which share boundary with Bangladesh. The amount was also released to Meghalaya, Bihar, Sikkim, Tripura, Himachal Pradesh and West Bengal under the Border Area Development Programme. The fully centrally funded BADP programme covers all villages which are located within 0-10 km of the International Border in 17 states.



Atal Innovation Mission selects additional 1500 Schools for establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), Government of India's flagship program to promote innovation and entrepreneurship nationwide in schools, universities and industry, has selected additional 1500 Schools for establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs). The total of such schools now is 2441. The addition of these schools will give a major boost to realize the vision of the mission to 'Cultivate One Million children in India as the Innovators of tomorrow'. ATLs are innovation play workspaces for students between Grade VI to Grade XII, stimulating innovations combining science & technology.



Ministry of Corporate Affairs rolled out Condonation of delay scheme

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs has introduced the Condonation of Delay Scheme-2018 to provide a three-month window to be operational from January 1 to March 31, 2018 for defaulting companies and their director to submit their annual filings. Condonation of Delay Scheme 2018 is a Scheme introduced by Central Government as a golden opportunity for the non-compliant defaulting companies to rectify the default. After submitting the filings under the scheme, a company concerned would have to file a separate form seeking condonation of the delay along with a fee of ₹30,000.



Lok Sabha passed GST (Compensation to States) Amendment Bill- 2017

The Lok Sabha has passed the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Amendment Bill- 2017. The Bill will amend the Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Act, 2017. The Act allows the central government to notify the rate of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Compensation Cess on items such as pan masala, coal, aerated drinks, and tobacco, subject to certain caps. The amount received by levying the GST Compensation Cess is used to compensate states for any loss in revenue following the implementation of GST.



Parliament passed Indian Forest (Amendment) Bill, Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy Bill

Parliament has passed the Indian Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2017 after Rajya Sabha approved it. The bill seeks to exempt bamboo grown in non-forest areas from definition of tree, thereby dispensing with the requirement of felling and transit permit for its economic use. Parliament has also passed the Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy Bill. It establishes the Institute at Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh and declares it as an institution of national importance. The Institute aims at providing high quality education and research focusing on the themes of petroleum, hydrocarbons and energy.



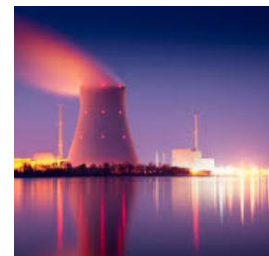
President of India dedicated four projects to the people of the Andhra Pradesh

The President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, dedicated four projects of the Andhra Pradesh State Government to the people of the state. These were Andhra Pradesh Fibregrid, Andhra Pradesh Surveillance Project, Drone Project; and Free Space Optical Communication or FSOC system. The vision of Fibre Grid project is to provide broadband connectivity of 15 Mbps for all households and 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps for institutions & Offices by 2018. The AP government wants to use drones for governance, administration, and for the maintenance of law and order in the state.



Target for Atomic Energy revised

The target of nuclear energy generation in the XI Five Year Plan (2007-2012) was 163,395 Million Units (MUs), which was revised to 124,608 MUs at MTA stage. The actual generation in the XI Five Year Plan was 109,642 MUs. The shortfall in generation was on account of lower generation due to non-availability of indigenous uranium in the required quantity, delay in fruition of international cooperation resulting in delay in availability of imported uranium and shifting of completion of the Kudankulam (KKNPP-1&2, 2 X 1000 MW) and Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) projects to XII Plan.



Union Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched Livestock Disease Forewarning – Mobile Application (LDF-Mobile App)

Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister, Shri Radha Mohan Singh, launched Livestock Disease Forewarning – Mobile Application (LDF-Mobile App), developed by ICAR-National Institute of Veterinary Epidemiology and Disease Informatics (ICAR-NIVEDI), Bengaluru. The forewarning is covered for 13 priority diseases across various livestock species (Cattle, Buffalo, Sheep, Goat and Pig). In addition to forewarning, the LDF-Mobile App also provides the details of clinical samples to be collected in event of specific disease outbreaks for laboratory confirmation.



Status of financial assistance under 'Startup India' Scheme

As on 1st December, 2017, a total of 5350 Startups have been recognized by Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) for availing benefits under Startup India initiative. The status of the financial assistance provided through Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) under the Startup India initiative is as follows:



- INR 500 crore has been released to SIDBI in Financial Year 2015-16 and INR 100 crore in Financial Year 2016-17
- Total commitments under FFS by SIDBI are at INR 605.7 crore to 17 Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs)
- AIFs have drawn INR 90.62 crore from the FFS and have invested a total of INR 337.02 crore in 75 Startups

10 Cities selected for pilot project of Multi-Modal Electric Public Transport under FAME India

The Government is providing Rs 437 crore subsidy to 11 cities under FAME India, for launching electric buses, taxis and three-wheelers. The cities include Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Jaipur, Mumbai, Lucknow, Hyderabad, Indore and Kolkata, plus two cities – Jammu and Guwahati under special category. Department of Heavy Industry is expected to spend about Rs. 437 Crore under "Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric and Hybrid Vehicles in India" (FAME India scheme, Phase I), which includes about Rs. 40 crores as incentives for installation of charging infrastructure.



Government implementing Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana (AABY)

Government is implementing the Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana (AABY) (earlier known as Khadi Karigar `Janashree Bima Yojana') through KVIC in association with the LIC. The premium amount of the scheme is Rs.100/- per annum which is shared as 12.50% each by Artisan and KVIC, 25% by Khadi Institution and 50% by Central Government (National Social Security Fund). Under AABY, the Khadi Artisans belonging to the age group of 18 to 59 years are provided insurance cover for the following:



- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| • Death (natural) | : Rs. 30,000.00 |
| • Death (accidental) | : Rs. 75,000.00 |
| • Disability (permanent) | : Rs.75,000.00 |
| • Disability (partial) | : Rs. 37,500.00 |
| • Educational Benefits (Shiksha Sahayog Yojana) | :Two children |
| studying in standard IX to XII including Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) | |
| are eligible for scholarship of Rs.300/- per quarter | |

Dornier 228, first Made in India aircraft to get DGCA nod for civilian flight

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has given nod to Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) manufactured Dornier 228 to be used for civilian flights. Dornier 228 became the first plane to be made in the country for commercial flights. It has till now been used by the defence forces. It has maximum cruise speed of 428 kmph and a range of 700 km. It is capable of night flying. The plane has a wingspan of 16.97 metres.



Milk production increased to 163.7 million tonnes in 2016-17

India continues to be the largest producer of milk in the world since last 15 years. Milk production, which was around 17-22 million tonnes in the 1960s, has increased to 163.7 million tonnes in 2016-17. During the last 3 years, with the annual growth rate of 5.53%, milk production in India has outpaced global milk production where it has grown by 2.09%. There are three important projects for dairy development are going on - National Dairy Plan Phase I (NDP I), National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) and Dairy Entrepreneurship Development Scheme.



Budgetary allocation to the DoNER Ministry

The fund/budgetary allocation to Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region during the period 2014-2015 to 2017-2018 is given below:-

(Rs in crore)



	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Budget Estimates	2332.78	2362.74	2430.01	2682.45
Revised Estimates	1825.45	2000.14	2524.42	-

5,45,090 Affordable Houses Sanctioned for Urban Poor under PMAY (Urban)

MHUA has approved the construction of 5,45,090 more affordable houses for the benefit of urban poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) with an investment of Rs. 31,003 cr with central assistance of Rs. 8,107 cr.



S.No	State	No of Houses	No of Cities	Investment	Central Assistance
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1	Andhra Pradesh	1,42,447	31	Rs.9,919 cr	Rs.2,137 cr
2	Uttar Pradesh	1,20,645	282	Rs.5,076 cr	Rs.1810 cr
3	Karnataka	1,18,646	65	Rs.6,870 cr	Rs.1,780 cr
4	Madhya Pradesh	1,00,341	165	Rs. 4,232 cr	Rs.1,505 cr
5	Jharkhand	30,486	31	Rs.3,837 cr	Rs.388 cr
6	Chattisgarh	29,703	124	Rs 911 cr	Rs 446 cr
7	Arunachal Pradesh	2,822	6	Rs 157 cr	Rs 42 cr

65.75 MW Power Generated in the country from the Municipal Solid Waste

The present installed capacity of power generation from Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) is 65.75 MW which is about 0.02% of total power generation capacity in the country. The state-wise details of six Municipal Solid Waste to Energy plants set up, as on 15.12.2017:



S. No.	State / UTs	Plant Commissioned/Under trial	Capacity (MW)
1	Delhi	M/s Ramky Group at Narela-Bawana, New Delhi	24
2	Delhi	M/s Jindal Urban Infrastructure Pvt Ltd. at Okhla, New Delhi	16
3	Delhi	M/s IL&FS Environment Infrastructure and Services Ltd. at Ghazipur, New Delhi	12
4	Madhya Pradesh	M/s Essel Infra at Jabalpur	9
5	Maharashtra	M/s Solapur Bio-energy Systems Pvt. Ltd at Solapur	3
6	Himachal Pradesh	M/s Elephant Energy Private Limited at Shimla	1.75

Wind Power capacity to be expanded to 9500 MW during the current financial year

According to Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Shri Raj Kumar Singh, as on 30.11.2017, a cumulative capacity of 467 MW of grid interactive wind power has been installed during the current financial year. The government has plans to bid out a cumulative 9500 MW capacity of wind power projects by the end of current financial year in the following way:



- Solar Energy Corporation of India finalised the bids for 1000 MW of Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) connected wind power projects in February and October 2017
- Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Maharashtra, have also issued bids of 500 MW each
- Ministry has proposed to bid out another 4000 MW capacity of ISTS connected wind power projects in the current financial year

UDAY States have reduced losses by Rs. 16,762.6 crore in FY17

The participating states of Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) scheme have reduced the financial losses from Rs. 51,589.51 crores in FY 2016 to Rs.34,826.87 crores in FY 2017. The participating States have achieved an improvement of 1.00% in Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses and Rs.0.17 a Unit in the gap between Average Cost of Supply (ACS) and Average Revenue Realized (ARR) in FY 2017. Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs.233.03 crores for online monitoring of Rural Feeders in the country.



Lok Sabha passed the Triple Talaq Bill

The Lok Sabha has passed the Triple Talaq Bill. The bill would now be moved in the Rajya Sabha. It would make instant talaq punishable and would be a cognisable, non-bailable offence. The Bill was passed with voice vote and it makes instant triple talaq or talaq-e-biddat a criminal offence, with a jail term of up to three years. The proposed law would be applicable to the entire nation, except in state of Jammu and Kashmir.



Persons in NEWS

Getachew Besha won full Pune International Marathon

Getachew Besha won the Full Marathon with the timing of 2 hours, 15 minutes and 15 seconds. Zelalem Lemmalemu claimed the second spot, with Deveje Kasaw finishing third. Amongst the Indian runners, Karan Singh stood first, followed by Kishor Gavane and Babasaheb Khillare. In Womens Half Marathon, Tisausa Basazin also from Ethiopia stood first with the timing of 1 hour, 23 minutes and 40 seconds. Sampada Buchade was the fastest Indian in the category. In the Men's Half marathon, Ethiopians Mitku Dekeba and Abebe Tafesef bagged the first two positions.



PM Modi emerged as most tweeted about world leader after US President

According to microblogging site Twitter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as the most tweeted about world leader after US President Donald Trump this year. Twitter said, Mr Modi with 37.5 million followers is the second most tweeted about world leader, after Mr Trump with 44.1 million followers. Other world leaders to figure in the top-10 list include Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, French President Emmanuel Macron and British Prime Minister Theresa May.



Saudi Crown Prince won Time Person of the Year readers' poll

Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been voted Time magazine readers' Person of the Year embarking on his bold social and economic reforms in Saudi Arabia. He won 24% of the votes. The prince has launched National Transformation Program 2020 and Vision 2030 which have been praised by experts all over the world. The prince also supported the movement to allow women to legally drive.



Yuvraj Singh launched UNICEF-ICC's Adolescent Campaign

Yuvraj Singh will promote 'Power of Sports to Shape the Future of Adolescents' a joint initiative by UNICEF and the International Cricket Council for youngsters in South Asia. Yuvraj Singh was joined by Under-19 cricket stars from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The panel discussed sports' power to transform lives and communities.



Diddy topped the List of 2017's Highest-Paid Musicians released by Forbes

According to the Forbes recently released annual Highest-Paid Musicians of 2017 list, Diddy [Sean Combs] was named the highest earner, raking in \$130m. Second in the list was Beyonce who took home \$105m in earnings.



The top ten list:

- 1) Diddy (\$130m)
- 2) Beyonce (\$105m)
- 3) Drake (\$94m)
- 4) The Weeknd (\$92m)
- 5) Coldplay (\$88m)
- 6) Guns N' Roses (\$84m)
- 7) Justin Bieber (\$83.5m)
- 8) Bruce Springsteen (\$75m)
- 9) Adele (\$69m)
- 10) Metallica (\$66.5m)

Michael Jordan named world's highest-paid athlete ever

According to the latest list released by Forbes, Michael Jordan has been named as the highest-paid athletes of all time. The retired basketball legend has £1.4billion in the bank. Tiger Woods comes in at No 2, with £1.27bn to his name. He is the only active athlete to be in the top ten. Arnold Palmer (Golf) is at third position with £1bn. The others in the list are:



- £898million - Jack Nicklaus (Golf)
- £748m - Michael Schumacher (Motorsport)
- £610m - Phil Mickelson (Golf)
- £599m - David Beckham/Kobe Bryant (Football/Basketball)
- £587m - Floyd Mayweather (Boxing)
- £550m - Shaquille O'Neal (Basketball)

Jitesh Singh Deo won Mr India World 2017 title

Jitesh Singh Deo of Lucknow has won the Mr India World 2017 title. He will now represent India at the Mr World competition. Prathamesh Maulingkar won the title of Peter England Mr India Supranational 2017. Abhi Khajuria and Pavan Rao won the titles of Peter England Mr India 1st Runner-Up and Peter England Mr India 2nd Runner-Up, respectively. The finale of the gala was judged by Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut, designer Manish Malhotra and tennis player Mahesh Bhupathi, among others.



François Gabart Sails Around the World in 42 Days and Breaks World Record

French sailor François Gabart, set a new world record for sailing solo around the world: 42 days, 16 hours, 40 minutes and 35 seconds. It is more than 6 days faster than the previous record, set a year earlier. The record was earlier held by French Thomas Coville. The record is subject to checks of the boat's black box and its GPS data before final confirmation by the World Sailing Speed Council.



Shree Saini crowned Miss India USA 2017

Shree Saini has been crowned Miss India USA 2017. She is an anti-bullying activist and is a resident of Washington. Prachi Singh from Connecticut was declared the first runner-up and North Carolina's Fareena became the second runner-up. The event was held at the Royal Alberts Palace in Edison, New Jersey. Cancer surgeon Kavita Malhotra Pattani from Florida was crowned Mrs. India USA 2017. 17 years old Swapna Mannam from New Jersey was crowned Miss Teen India USA 2017.



Salman Khan topped Forbes India Celebrity List 2017

Salman Khan has topped the Forbes India Celebrity 100 list for the second consecutive year. Shah Rukh Khan and Virat Kohli were second and third respectively in the list. Akshay Kumar was at 4th position. Salman earned ₹232.83 crore. Shah Rukh Khan had an earning of ₹170.5 crore while Virat Kohli had ₹100.72 crore. The others in the top ten are:



- 5) Sachin Tendulkar
- 6) Aamir Khan
- 7) Priyanka Chopra
- 8) M S Dhoni
- 9) Hrithik Roshan
- 10) Ranveer Singh

Vin Diesel Tops Forbes List of 2017's Top-Grossing Actors

According to Forbes annual list, Vin Diesel is the top grossing actor in the world with \$1.6 billion in global ticketing receipts in 2017. Dwayne Johnson, who was last year's highest paid actor, was ranked second on the list with \$1.5 billion. Wonder Woman star Gal Gadot was third in the list with a total of \$1.4 billion. Harry Potter star Emma Watson placed fourth with \$1.3 billion, while Johnny Depp and Daisy Ridley placed fifth and sixth with \$1.1 billion and \$1.08 billion respectively.



Places in News

8th GALF 2017 inaugurated in Panaji

The 8th Goa Arts and Literature Festival (GALF) 2017 was inaugurated in Panaji. GALF 2017 was conceptualised, organised and hosted by The International Centre Goa in association and Goa Writers, an association of Goa-based authors. The festival involved book releases, reading sessions, debates, talks, panel discussions, interactive sessions and cultural performances in Marathi, English, Hindi and Konkani. Prominent attendees were Sahitya Akademi Award winners Ganesh Devy, Ramachandra Guha, Jerry Pinto and Ranjit Hoskote.



Delhi hosted ASEAN India connectivity Summit

ASEAN-India Connectivity Summit was hosted by New Delhi. The theme of the summit was 'Powering Digital and Physical Linkages for Asia in the 21st Century'. Various senior government officials, investors, industry leaders, representatives of trade associations and entrepreneurs witnessed summit. They discussed on offering strategies to enhance economic, industrial and trade relations between ASEAN and India and enhancing policy recommendations on existing connectivity prospects. Some other issues such as infrastructure, roadways, shipping, digital, finance, energy and aviation were also discussed.



Kumbh Mela inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO

UNESCO has recognised India's Kumbh Mela as an "intangible cultural heritage of humanity" and held up as the world's largest peaceful gathering of pilgrims. The recognition was accorded by the Inter-governmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Kumbh Mela is held in Haridwar, Allahabad, Ujjain and Nashik. The Representative List includes forms of expression that testify to the diversity of the intangible heritage and raise awareness of its importance.



2nd UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture Held in Muscat

The Second UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture was held in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman from 11 – 12 December 2017. The United Nations has declared 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (IY2017), a unique opportunity to explore and highlight tourism's potential to help transform our world into a place of prosperity and wellbeing for all. The First UNWTO/UNESCO World Conference on Tourism and Culture was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia in February 2015.



Delhi hosted 7th International Ground Water Conference

New Delhi hosted 7th International Ground Water Conference (IGWC-2017). The theme of IGWC-2017 was "Ground water Vision 2030- Water Security, Challenges and Climate Change Adaptation". The aim of IGWC 2017 was to provide a common platform to discuss and present their vision for groundwater management in the face of growing challenges of the needs of rising earth population and anticipated impacts of climate change. India is at present the largest and fastest consumer of groundwater in the world.



3rd World Telugu Conference held in Hyderabad

The third World Telugu Conference was held in Hyderabad. The aim of the Conference was to promote Telugu and its literature besides helping the present generation learn more about Telugu language and its rich culture and heritage. The 5-day event was inaugurated by Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu while 50 thousand participants witnessed the literary-cultural event. The venues and dais were named after eminent Telugu legends and linguistic personalities.



7th international coffee fest to be held in Bengaluru

The seventh edition of the India International Coffee Festival (IICF) will be organized in Bengaluru. The four day event from January 16-19, will help promote the Indian coffees globally. The theme of the event is "Express yourself with Coffee". The festival is being organised by the India Coffee Trust and State-run Coffee Board. Over 100 companies, 600 delegates and some 10,000 visitors are expected to participate. Bengaluru will also host the World Coffee Conference in 2020.



Bengaluru became first Indian city to have its Own Logo

Bengaluru became first Indian city to launch its own logo. The logo was launched at the global tourism fest 'Namma Bengaluru Habba'. It is designed by Nammur, a design start-up. Nammur was selected through a contest for designing logo. Nammur received cash prize of Rs. 5 lakhs. The logo is created in such a way that it depicts the name 'Bengaluru' in both the languages English and Kannada. The logo is launched with an aim to represent new identity of Bengaluru city through the logo.



Regional

Nagaland celebrated 54th Statehood Day

Nagaland celebrated 54th statehood day and 18th Hornbill festival by organizing various social activities at orphanages, schools and government offices. In 1963, Dr S Radhakrishnan, second president of India formally announced December 1 as 16th state of the India. The Hornbill Festival is 10 days collaborative celebration of all Naga tribes at one venue and has been coined as "Festival of Festivals. The Festival showcases a mélange of cultural displays under one roof at a model village built at Kisama, 12 kilometres away from the State Capital Kohima.



India's largest floating solar power plant to be set up in Kerala

India's largest ever floating solar power plant with 500 kWp (kilowatt peak) capacity will be established on the Banasura Sagar reservoir in Wayanad, Kerala. This ultimate 500 kWp solar plant will float on 1.25 acres of water surface of the Banasura Sagar reservoir and has capacity of generating seven lakh units of power annually. It will be established at the cost of Rs. 9.25 crore. Thiruvananthapuram-based Ad tech Systems have constructed solar plant with 17 inverters, 500 KVA transformer a supervisory control and data acquisition system.



10th Jaipur International Film Festival

The 10th Jaipur International Film Festival scheduled from January 6, 2018 for 5 days has released the second and the last list of films selected for the Festival. The list includes a total of 48 films from 13 countries. The first list of selected films was released on November five containing 72 films. A total of 120 films will be screened. JIFF is the first film festival in the country that selects documentary films too.



MP Assembly passed death penalty Bill for rape of girls aged 12 and below

The Madhya Pradesh state assembly has passed a bill aimed at amending the Indian Penal Code (IPC) to impose the death penalty on those found guilty of raping girls aged 12 and below. The bill will be sent to the state governor, who will then forward it to the President for his assent. Madhya Pradesh becomes the first state in the country where those convicted of such rapes will face the death punishment.



U.P. became first State to endorse Centre's triple talaq draft bill

Uttar Pradesh has become the first State to endorse the Central government's draft bill that makes instant triple talaq a cognisable and non-bailable offence. The Supreme Court on 22nd August had struck down Uttar Pradesh has become the first State to endorse the Central government's draft bill that makes instant triple talaq a cognisable and non-bailable offence. The centre has sent the drafted 'Muslim Women Protection of Rights on Marriage Bill' to the states to send their respective views on it.



MoHUA inked agreement with German firm GIZ for technical cooperation

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with German firm GIZ for technical cooperation in the implementation of transport projects in Coimbatore, Bhubaneswar and Kochi. Total amount of around 29 crore rupees through GIZ is envisaged for this purpose over a period of three years. The main objective of the agreement is to improve planning and implementation of sustainable urban transport. The project will give the desired impetus in three major interventions proposed under Smart City Mission of this Ministry viz. ITS based transport solutions, Non-motorised vehicles and Last mile connectivity.



Ministry of Housing
and Urban Affairs
Government of India

ADB Provides \$346 Million to Upgrade State Highways in Karnataka

The Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Board of Directors has approved a \$346 million loan to upgrade highways in the Indian state of Karnataka. This is the second loan from ADB for improving the state's road network. The total cost of this project is \$655 million, of which the state government will provide \$202 million and the private sector will invest an estimated \$107 million through hybrid annuity contracts. The project is due for completion at the end of 2023.



Official Logo for Allahabad Kumbh Mela 2019 released in Lucknow

The official Logo and tagline for Allahabad Kumbh Mela scheduled to be held in January 2019 were released in Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. The new Kumbh logo comprises temples, saints, rivers, kalash (pitcher) and the swastik among other things. Uttar Pradesh governor Ram Naik launched the event's tagline 'chalo Kumbh chalo-chalo Kumbh chalo'. A website to facilitate tourists was also launched. The government had, earlier, announced to rename the Ardh Kumbh held every six years as Kumbh and Kumbh held every 12 years as Maha Kumbh.



Rajasthan became first state to offer e-mail IDs in hindi language

Rajasthan state took initiative to launch free email addresses in Hindi (in Devanagari script) for its residents. It is first such state that has introduced such facility for its residents. The email addresses will be written as 'name@rajasthan.bharat' in Devanagari script. First such email id was created in name of Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje. It is done with an aim to promote hindi language as well as providing ease to those residents who are uncomfortable with English e-mail ids. It will ensure maximum participation of people towards e-governance.



Safe City Surveillance scheme launched by Bihar state government

In order to ensure women's safety, Bihar state introduced 'Bihar Safe City Surveillance Scheme'. Under this scheme, all major public places will be covered with close-circuit television (CCTV) cameras to keep a close watch on crime happening in the state. This will not only help in controlling crimes against women but also against all types of crimes. The scheme is launched at the cost of Rs 110.68 crore. There will be set up of 9 Yatayat thanas (emergency traffic police stations).



UP Cabinet approved UPCOCA Bill

The Uttar Pradesh Cabinet has passed a new Bill named UPCOCA to combat land mafia, mining mafia and organised crimes in the state. The Uttar Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Bill, 2017 or UPCOCA, was also passed in the State Assembly. The bill will allow the government to attach "illegal" property of those booked under it. Similar laws are already in existence in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Gujarat.



Maharashtra Government to adopt Clinical establishment (Registration and Regulation) Act

Maharashtra Government has started efforts to adopt Clinical establishment (Registration and Regulation) Act by registering and regulating all clinical establishments in the state with an aim to ensure the minimum standards of facilities and services provided by them. This bill will pave way to control unethical practices adopted by some of the private hospitals. The draft Clinical Establishment Bill has been pending in the state since 2010 due to opposition from medical fraternity.



Government laid foundation stone for 32 projects in Uttarakhand

The Union Government has laid the foundation stone for 32 projects with an approximate cost of about Rs 905 crore in Uttarakhand under Namami Gange programme. Out of 32 projects for which foundation stone was laid, 20 projects worth Rs 871.74 crore pertain to sewage treatment and infrastructure in different parts of Uttarakhand. Six are in Haridwar that includes construction of STPs in Jagjeetpur and Sarai under PPP based Hybrid Annuity model. The total cost of projects in Haridwar is Rs 414.20 crore.



PM dedicated 60 MW Tuirial Hydroelectric Power Project in Mizoram

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the 60 MW Tuirial Hydro Electric Power Project (HEPP) to the Nation and launched 'MyDoNER App'. He distributed cheques to the Start-up Entrepreneurs Aizawl. The Tuirial HEPP has been constructed as a Central Sector Project and implemented by North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO), under the administrative control of the Ministry of Power. The Project built at a cost of Rs.1302 crore, is the biggest power project located in the State of Mizoram and will feed the entire energy to be generated to the home State.



Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated Eastern India's first CNG stations

Union Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated two Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations for scooters and three-wheelers at Chandrasekharpur and Patia area in Bhubaneswar. The two CNG stations are Eastern India's first CNG stations. A total of 50 CNG-run auto-rickshaws will ply in the city. The rate of 1 kg of CNG is Rs 59. The CNG stations were part of GAIL's Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga and City Gas Distribution (CGD) projects in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.



Union Government gave final green nod for Kaleswaram project

The Union Forest and Environment Ministry has given green nod to the Kaleswaram Lift Irrigation Project in Telangana. However, the ministry has put some conditions before granting the clearance. The Telangana government needs to report the micro-climatic change conditions in the project area during construction/post-construction period at regular intervals. Solid waste generated should not be disposed off as landfill material. The state government has acquired 3,100 hectares of forest land and showed alternative land elsewhere for reforestation.



Andhra Pradesh government inked agreements with Alphabet X

The Andhra Pradesh Government and Alphabet X have signed an agreement to bring the breakthrough Free Space Optical Communication (FSOC) technology in order to provide internet through the government Fibergrid project. The association is a first of its kind in the world to provide wireless internet connection at a higher speed of up to 20Gbps and to a distance of up to 20kms. The state government has aimed to provide broadband connectivity to 12 million households and thousands of businesses by 2019.



Two-day regional conference on 'Good Governance and Replication of Best Practices' held in Guwahati

A Regional Conference on 'Good Governance and Replication of Best Practices' held in Guwahati to create a common platform to share experiences in the formulation and implementation of citizen centric governance, improved public service delivery, Good Governance Index etc. The themes of the various sessions were 'Responsive Public Delivery', 'State Collaboration Initiatives in Administrative Reforms', 'PM awarded Initiatives 2017', 'Presentations from North Eastern States on Governance Initiatives by Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland and Meghalaya'.



Jairam Thakur sworn in as new CM of Himachal Pradesh

Jairam Thakur has been sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. He became the 14th chief minister of the state. The oath of office and secrecy was administered by Governor Acharya Devvrat. Rajiv Bindal was nominated as speaker of the legislative assembly of the state. Thakur had earlier served as minister from 2009 to 2012. He was state BJP chief from 2006 to 2009. He is a five-time BJP MLA from Seraj constituency.



Vijay Rupani sworn in as CM of Gujarat Chief Minister

Vijay Rupani was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for a second consecutive term. He became the 16th Chief Minister of Gujarat and was administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Om Prakash Kohli. Nitin Patel was elected as Deputy Chief Minister. BJP won the elections for the sixth consecutive time with 99 seats securing clear majority in the 182-member assembly. The Cabinet has one female face, Vibhavriben Dave as MoS.



Bihar decided to develop Guru Circuit destinations of Sikhs in state

Bihar government decided to develop Guru Circuit connecting important religious destinations of Sikhs in the state. It was announced at the three-day Shukrana Samaroh (thanks giving) of 351st Prakash Parv (birth anniversary) of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru in Patna. The development of Guru circuit will improve connectivity and other tourist facilities and opportunities which will help in attracting tourists. Takht Harmandir Saheb of Patna Sahib, Guru Ka Bagh and Bal Leela Saheb, all in old Patna, Handi Saheb of Danapur among other spiritual places will be part of Guru circuit.



Lakshadweep to have India's first runway on 'Sea Bridge'

Airports Authority of India has planned to extend Lakshadweep's Agatti Airport by building an RCC platform on the beach and shallow sea. The RCC platform will be built by erecting pillars on shallow sea area. The project has costing of about Rs 1,500 crore. The new project will provide facility of operation of ATR-72 aircraft instead of only smaller turboprops. Also, new airport will come up with affordable air fares.



Uttar Pradesh inked MoU with South Korea

In order to develop skills in tourism and farming, Uttar Pradesh inked MoU with South Korea. MoU was inked to provide more employment opportunities and development, improve cooperation in the field of technology, aptitude advancement etc. A delegation from Gimhae city of South Korea discussed with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath about tourism co-operation. In 2000, a MoU was signed to develop Ayodhya and Gimhae as sister cities and build a memorial in Ayodhya, which is visited by South Korean tourists.



Union Government, TN Govt and World Bank sign 318-million-dollar loan agreement

The Centre, Tamil Nadu Government and the World Bank signed a 318-million-dollar loan agreement for the Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization Project to promote climate resilient agriculture technologies, improve water management practices, and increase market opportunities for small and marginal farmers. The project will benefit about 5 lakh farmers. It will rehabilitate and modernize about 4,800 irrigation tanks and 477 check dams, spread across 66 sub-basins, in delivering bulk water to irrigation systems.



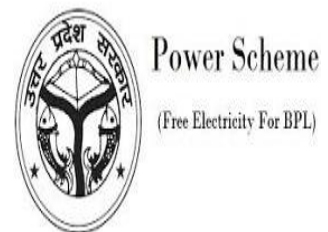
Rajasthan government sets up Automatic service ATMs at nearly 9900 Atal Seva Kendras

The Rajasthan state government is setting up Automatic service ATMs, 'E-Mitra Plus', at nearly 9900 Atal Seva Kendras and 2500 urban locations with an aim to deliver services through e-governance. People will be able to access 380 services of over 80 government departments and over 100 services of private sector. This service will be available 24 X 7 for 365 days. E-plus is a completely human-less interface, which has linked with AADHAR and has provision for payment by cash and card. The e-Mitra network enables over 60 lakh transactions every month with turnover of about 700 crore rupees.



Uttar Pradesh government introduced new power scheme

The Uttar Pradesh state government has launched a free household power connection scheme for the poor people of the state. The scheme was launched to mark former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's birth anniversary. The UP government has a target of covering 16 million by 2018-end, driven by its slogan 'Prakash hai to vikas hai'. The government has also introduced Kisan Uday Yojana where the existing 5 HP/7.5 HP submersible and coupling sets of farmers will be replaced free of cost.



India signed loan agreement with the World Bank for USD 40 Million for “U.P. Pro-Poor Tourism Development Project”

The Government of India, the Government of Uttar Pradesh and the World Bank signed a \$40 million loan agreement for the Uttar Pradesh Pro-Poor Tourism Development Project to increase tourism-related benefits for local communities. The programme size is approximately USD 57.14 million, of which USD 40 million will be financed by the Bank, and the remaining amount will be funded out of State Budget. The programme duration is 5 years.



Reports

Indian-American Kamala Harris topped Global Thinkers List 2017

Foreign Policy magazine revealed list of 2017 top 50 leading global thinkers, which was topped by Indian-American Senator Kamala Harris. South Korean President Moon Jae-in was ranked at 2nd place and comedian Minhaj was ranked at 3rd place. Kamala Harris is first ever Indian-American to be elected to the US Senate. 2017 list included the range of personalities who had created immense influence over various issues.



'The silence breakers' named Time's Person of the Year for 2017

The Time magazine has named 'the silence breakers' its Person of the Year for 2017 referring to those individuals, mostly women, who came forward this year to publicly expose patterns of sexual harassment and assault by powerful public figures in America. Those recognized by Time range from famous actresses who took on disgraced Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein to ordinary women who shared their stories of abuse using the hashtag #MeToo and its foreign language equivalents.



National Trachoma Survey Report 2014-17

Shri J P Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, released the National Trachoma Survey Report (2014-17). India is now free from 'infective trachoma'. The survey findings indicate that the active trachoma infection has been eliminated among children in all the survey districts with overall prevalence of only 0.7%. Trachoma (Rohe/Kukre) is a chronic infective disease of the eye and is the leading cause of infective blindness globally. It affects the conjunctiva under the eyelids.



Forbes' List of best countries for business 2018 topped by UK

UK has been ranked as the best country for business 2018. U.K was followed by New Zealand and the Netherlands, while India was ranked 62nd. It was calculated on basis of various parameters such as technological readiness, size and education of its workforce, political risk etc. U.K. was ranked 4th in terms of technological readiness, 3rd in workforce education and 28th in terms of political risks. Forbes categorized 153 nations on 15



different factors including property rights, innovation, taxes, and corruption and investor protection.

Uttarakhand government mandates use of LED bulbs in all government offices

In an initiative to conserve energy and save power, Uttarakhand government made use of LED bulbs mandatory in all government offices. The state government will make available 67 LED distribution counters for bulbs distribution in all Municipal corporations and Councils and all districts of Uttarakhand Renewable Energy Development Agency. These counters will be increased to 100. Government will make available 10 million LED bulbs in the state. Central government has also provided energy efficiency LED lamps under Unnat Jeevan by Affordable LEDs and Appliances (UJALA) project.



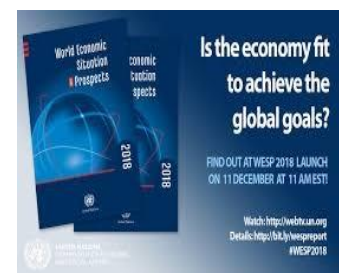
India ranked 109th in mobile internet speed by Ookla

Famous internet speed testing firm Ookla unveiled its Speedtest Global Index. Speedtest Global Index measures average internet speeds in different countries, on mobile and home broadband and ranks countries accordingly. Ookla ranked India at 109th spot in mobile internet speed and 76th spot in fixed broadband speed. Ookla's Speedtest Global Index was topped by Norway with an average download speed of 62.66 Mbps in mobile internet and 153.85 Mbps average download speed in fixed broadband. Ookla is the worldwide leader in broadband testing, network diagnostic applications and data.



UN released World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018 report

UN released World Economic Situation and Prospects 2018 report that unveiled world economic growth at 3%, the highest growth since 2011. The improvement shows only two-thirds of countries worldwide is experiencing stronger growth in 2017. Global growth is expected to remain steady at 3.0 per cent in 2018 and 2019. The report calls for stronger efforts to delink economic growth and environmental degradation. The improved global economic situation provides an opportunity for countries to focus on low carbon economic growth.



India ranked at 100th place in Global Prosperity Index

According to the Legatum Prosperity Index rankings 2017, India has climbed by 4 positions from 104 to 100. Norway came 1st, followed by New Zealand, Finland, Switzerland and Sweden. In Prosperity Pillar rankings, India performs best on Governance and Economic Quality and scores lowest on the Natural Environment pillar. The biggest positive change came in Business Environment rank: by 21 places. The index is based on pillars such as governance, economic quality, natural environment, personal freedom, social capital, safety and security.



World Migration Report 2018 reported Indian Diaspora as largest in the world

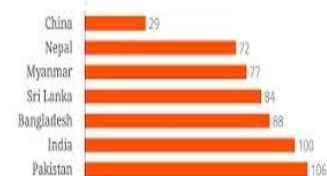
International Organization for Migration unveiled in its World Migration Report 2018 that Indian diaspora is the largest diaspora in the world. The report unveiled that more than 15 million Indians migrated out of India and live abroad, followed by Mexico and Russia. Indian diaspora comprises 6% of total number of international migrants. Around 15.6 million Indians migrate from India to international destinations. According to report, top 5 countries found in as 'destination spot' for global diaspora are U.S, Germany, Russia, Saudi Arabia and U.K.



Global Hunger Index

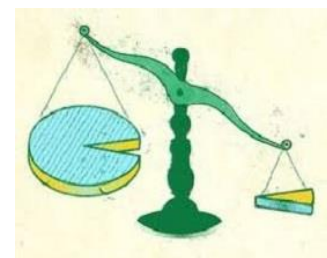
As per 2017 Global Hunger Index (GHI) Report, published by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), India ranks 100 out of 119 countries. India ranks below many of its neighbouring countries such as China (29th rank), Nepal (72), Myanmar (77), Sri Lanka (84) and Bangladesh (88). The Global Hunger Index scores are based on four indicators – Undernourishment, Child wasting, Child stunting and Child mortality. Government of India has accorded high priority to address the issue of hunger and malnutrition by implementing several schemes/ programmes such as Provision of food grains at highly subsidized prices, National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 and National Nutrition Mission.

Global Hunger Index 2017 Rank



Income Inequality Highest in India Since 1980s

According to the World Inequality Report 2018, published by the World Inequality Lab, income inequality has risen in India from the 1980s onwards. The top ten percent of the population account for 56% of the national income in 2014 while the top one percent of the population accounted for as much as 22% of the country's total income in 2014. This rising inequality trend is in contrast to the 30 years that followed the country's independence in 1947.



India Ranked 60th Most Innovative Country in the Global Innovation Index

According to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2017 report, published by Cornell University, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), India ranks at 60th spot among 127 countries. India was ranked at 66th position in the last rankings in 2016. Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, the US and the UK lead the 2017 GII rankings. China is ranked 22nd in the list. India also maintained the top spot in the Central and South Asia regions.



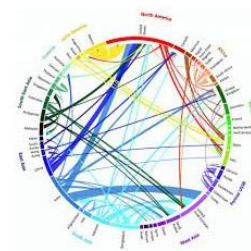
Delhi ranked 7th in the list of most expensive office locations

According to a report published by JLL India, a real estate services firm, Delhi has been ranked at 7th place in the list of most expensive premium office locations in the world. Mumbai has been ranked 16th. The list is topped by Hong Kong followed by London (West). New York, Beijing, Tokyo are on the third, fourth and fifth position respectively. Shanghai is at 6th position and San Francisco at 8th. Mumbai rentals are higher than cities like Los Angeles, Singapore, Paris, Seoul, Sydney, Frankfurt, Chicago and Toronto.



International Migration Report 2017

According to the International Migration Report 2017, published by the UNITED NATION'S, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, there are now an estimated 258 million people living in a country other than their country of birth — an increase of 49% since 2000. India has topped the list of people living abroad at 17 million. Mexico was second in the list with 13 million. Russia at 11 million, China at 10 million and Bangladesh at 7 million are the other nations in the top -five.



Resignations & Retirements

Sushil Kumar and Mary C. Kom resign as National Sports Observer

Wrestler Shri Sushil Kumar and Boxer Ms Mary C. Kom have submitted their resignation as National Sports Observers. As both the top athletes are still active in their respective fields, wrestling (Men) and Boxing (Women), they felt that this could be seen as conflict of interest. Keeping in mind the best of the sporting traditions the athletes submitted their resignation. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has accepted their resignations as National Sports observers.



Brazil's 2002 FIFA World Cup-winning superstar Kaka announced retirement

Former Brazil attacking midfielder Kaka has announced his retirement from football. Kaka was a member of the Brazil side that won their fifth FIFA World Cup™ title at Korea/Japan 2002. He also won two FIFA Confederations Cup crowns in 2005 and 2009. He was named FIFA World Player of the Year in 2007. The Brazilian joined Milan in 2003 and stayed for six years before joining Real Madrid for a then-world record €65m (£56m) fee.



Justice Swatanter Kumar, Chairperson of NGT, retired

National Green Tribunal (NGT) Chairperson Justice Swatanter Kumar has retired from the post after completing his five-year tenure. Justice Umesh Dattatraya Salvi has now been appointed as the new NGT Chairman. During his five-year tenure, Justice Kumar delivered several landmark decisions like the ban on 10- year-old diesel and 15-year-old petrol vehicles, the slew of directions for rejuvenation of the Ganga and Yamuna, the demolition of illegal hotels in Himachal Pradesh and the ban on plastic items in Delhi, Haridwar and Punjab.



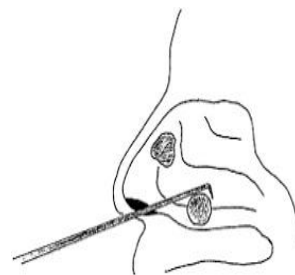
Airtel Payments Bank CEO Shashi Arora resigned

Shashi Arora, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Airtel Payments Bank, has resigned after a firm's e-KYC (know your customer) licence suspension by Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Arora joined Airtel in February 2006 and was appointed as the CEO of Bharti Telemedia. The UIDAI had barred Bharti Airtel and Airtel Payments Bank from conducting Aadhaar-based verification of customers using the e-KYC process.



Nasal foreign body removal device launched by government

Bangalore's start up InnAccel Technologies Private Limited has developed a nasal foreign body removal device. It is named as Noxeno, which was launched by Government. Noxeno permits doctors to quickly and safely remove objects inserted in nose that mostly children aged 2 to 10 years, put into their noses. It is first such creation by any fellow trained under Biodesign programme of Department of Biotechnology. Government launched Noxeno at a summit organised by Department of Biotechnology.



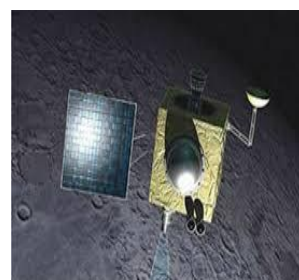
NASA study unveiled existence of liquid water oceans on Pluto

In a new study of NASA, it has been unveiled that some icy worlds in our outer solar system, including Pluto, may harbour liquid water oceans beneath the surface. Heat generated by the gravitational pull of moons formed from massive collisions could extend the lifetimes of liquid water oceans beneath the surface of large icy worlds. The team is under process to develop and use even more accurate models to discover at what point a liquid water ocean forms; whether it forms almost immediately or if it requires a significant buildup of heat first.



ISRO to launch 2nd Lunar mission Chandrayaan 2 by March 2018

Indian Space Research Organisation is planning to launch Chandrayaan-II by March 2018. The space agency's second indigenous mission to the earth's satellite will be equipped with upgraded domestic space technology. Chandrayaan-I had an impact probe, which crash landed on moon's surface, but Chandrayaan-II will have a controlled descent of a rover which will perform in-situ lunar surface observations for 14 Earth days and the data will be relayed back for further analysis.



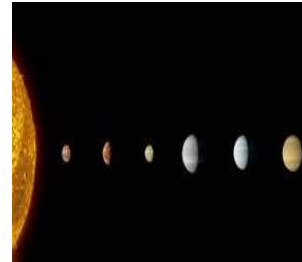
NASA's SuperTIGER Balloon Flies Again to Study Heavy Cosmic Particles

A science team in Antarctica is preparing to loft a balloon-borne instrument to collect information on cosmic rays, high-energy particles from beyond the solar system that enter Earth's atmosphere every moment of every day. The instrument, called the Super Trans-Iron Galactic Element Recorder (SuperTIGER), is designed to study rare heavy nuclei, which hold clues about where and how cosmic rays attain speeds up to nearly the speed of light. The launch is expected by Dec. 10, weather permitting.



NASA finds another solar system with 8 planets

NASA with the help of its Kepler space telescope and artificial intelligence has discovered an eighth planet circling Kepler-90, a Sun-like star 2,545 light-years from Earth. The discovery marks the first solar system to tie with our solar system in the number of planets orbiting one star. The newly-discovered Kepler-90i – a sizzling hot, rocky planet that orbits its star once every 14.4 days – was found using machine learning from Google. Machine learning is an approach to artificial intelligence in which computers “learn.”



India has deployed its own regional navigational system

India has deployed its own regional navigational system, namely NavIC comprising of a constellation of seven navigational satellites and associated ground segment for providing position, navigation and timing services to Indian region. The IRNSS (NavIC) enables providing position, navigation and timing information that could be utilised for a large range of civil and strategic applications and services. The satellite is planned for launch during first quarter of 2018.



ISRO is planning to launch the first solar mission, Aditya-L1

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is planning to launch the first solar mission, Aditya-L1. Aditya-L1 is a fully indigenous effort with the participation of national institutions. Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru is the lead institute for the development of Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC). Aditya-L1 mission is aimed at studying the Sun from an orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrangian point 1 (L1) which is about 1.5 million kilometers from the Earth.



Yaogan Weixing remote sensing satellite launched by China

Yaogan Weixing remote sensing satellite, the Land Surveying Satellite -2 (LKW-2) was launched by Chinese scientists. It was launched into a pre-set orbit from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in the Gobi Desert of northwest China's Gansu Province. The satellite will help in scientific experiments, land survey, crop yield assessment, military purpose and disaster monitoring. LKW-2 is an electro-optical observer land-surveying satellite, used for remote sensing exploration of land resources. The LKW-1 satellite was launched in 2006.



Prithvi Shaw to lead India in 2018 ICC U-19 Cricket World Cup

Batsman Prithvi Shaw will lead a 16-member Indian team in 2018 ICC Under-19 Cricket World Cup. The All-India Junior Selection Committee has finalized the India U19 team for the ICC U19 Cricket World Cup 2018. The 16-team event will be held in New Zealand from 13th January to 3rd February 2018. India have won the Under-19 World Cup title thrice in 2000, 2008 and 2012. India is the joint-most successful team in the history of the tournament along with Australia who were winners in 1988, 2002 & 2010.



Virat Kohli became first captain to register a hat-trick of centuries

Indian captain Virat Kohli created history by becoming the first captain to score a hat-trick of centuries in a three-match series. He not only made hat trick of centuries but also scored his sixth double century, the highest as a captain. With six double centuries, Virat Kohli broke the record of Brian Lara for most double centuries scored by a Test captain. The history was created on the second day of the third and final Test against Sri Lanka. With 6 double centuries, Virat Kohli matched Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag for most double hundreds for India in Tests.



IOC banned Russia from next year's Winter Games

Russia were banned from the 2018 Olympics over state-sponsored doping but the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has said that Russian competitors would be able to compete under strict conditions. Russian athletes would be able to take part in the Games, as independent competitors under the Olympic flag. The IOC announced the decision after examining evidence of state-sponsored doping over several years that reached a high-point at the Winter Olympics hosted in Sochi, Russia, in 2014.

The decision was taken in the IOC's executive board meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland.



India won first-ever South Asian Regional Badminton Team Championship

India has won the first-ever South Asian Regional Badminton Team Championship. India defeated Nepal, 3-0, in the final held at Guwahati. Aryaman Tandon won the boys' singles competition after he defeated Dipesh Dhami 21-9, 21-15. Ashmita Chaliha won by 21-9, 21-6 over Rashila Maharjan in the Girls' singles event. In Boys' Doubles, the pair of Arintap Dasgupta and Krishna Prasad beat the duo of Dipesh Dhami and Nabin Shrestha 19-21, 21-14, 21-11 to seal the deal for India.



Sports Minister launched SAICON 2017 in New Delhi

The first international conference on sports medicine and sports sciences SAICON 2017 was launched by the Minister of State (I/C) Youth Affairs and Sports in Delhi. Sports medicine doctors and scientists contribute significantly to athletes' performance as they provide an edge to their talent and skills and help in facilitating rehabilitation and recovery. SAICON 2017 promoted scientific temperament in the country and inspired students, researchers and educationists alike to take up sports science and research to the next level.



India won five medals at 10th Asian Airgun Shooting Championship

India won five medals at the 10th Asian Airgun Shooting Championships in Japan.

Ravi Kumar won an individual bronze in the men's 10 metre air rifle, while Arjun Babuta won individual silver in the corresponding junior men's event. India also bagged three team silver medals in each of the three air rifle events. Overall, India had seven individual finalists across the three events. This will be the same range where the shooting competitions for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics will be hosted.



Government to launch 'Khelo India' programme to bring sports into mainstream

The government will launch a 'Khelo India' programme at a cost of 1,756 crore rupees for the period 2017-18 to 2019-20. Some salient features of the programme:

1. A new Pan Indian Sports Scholarship scheme, which will cover 1,000 most talented young athletes each year across select sports disciplines, will be introduced. Each athlete selected under the scheme will receive an annual scholarship worth 5 lakh rupees for 8 years
2. Year 2018 will be celebrated as Year of Sports.
3. Promote 150 select schools and 20 universities across the country, as hubs of sporting excellence



Australia beat Argentina to win gold in Hockey World League final

Australia's Kookaburras have defended the Hockey World League title that they won in Raipur two years ago by claiming a 2-1 triumph over reigning Olympic champions Argentina. Blake Govers and Jeremy Hayward scored for Australia. The two teams occupy the top two spots in the FIH World Rankings.



Awards:

- ONGC Best Junior Player: Victor Wegnez (BEL)
- Odisha Tourism Best Goalkeeper: Juan Vivaldi (ARG)

- Hero Top Scorer: Loick Luypaert (BEL)
- Odisha New Opportunities Best Player: Mats Grambusch (GER)

Cristiano Ronaldo won 5th BALLON D'OR

Cristiano Ronaldo has won the Ballon d'Or for a fifth time to equal Lionel Messi for the most Ballons d'Or of all time. Ronaldo scored 42 goals across all competitions during the 2016-17 season, leading Real Madrid to a La Liga and Champions League double. He helped Madrid to a La Liga, Champions League and Spanish Super Cup treble this year. Ronaldo won his first prize in 2008 before successes in 2013, 2014 and 2016. Lionel Messi finished second in the voting while Brazil's Neymar finished third.



India to host 2021 Champions Trophy and 2023 World Cup

India has been selected as venue for conducting One Day International World Cup in 2023 as well as the Champions Trophy in 2021. It has been for the first occasion that India would be hosting an ODI World Cup completely as it had earlier co-hosted ODI World Cup in 1987, 1996 and 2011. The 2021 ICC Champions Trophy to be held in India, is the 9th edition of ICC Champions Trophy, a One Day International (ODI) cricket tournament. 2023 Cricket World Cup will be the 13th Cricket World Cup competition to be held in India.



Saurabh Chaudhary qualified for 2018 Youth Olympics Games

India's Saurabh Chaudhary registered his place by qualifying with a gold medal for the 2018 Youth Olympics Games and a junior world record in 10m air pistol at the Asia Youth Olympics Games qualification tournament held in Wako City, Japan. With this, he became third Indian to register a qualifying place for the 2018 Youth Olympic Games at the 10th Asian Airgun Championship. 10th Asian Airgun Championship is a qualifying event for the 3rd Youth Olympic Games, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2018).



Rohit Sharma became first batsman to hit third double century in ODIs

Rohit Sharma became the first batsman to score three double hundreds in one-day international cricket. No other batsman in the world has more than one. Rohit scored an unbeaten 208 off just 153 balls. He scored his first double hundred against Australia with 209 off 158 balls. He hit his second double hundred for 264 off 173 balls, against Sri Lanka, which still remains the highest score in ODI cricket.



India became first-ever team to register their 100th '300 plus' score of team total

India played the second ODI against Sri Lanka to score their 100th 300-plus score of team total. With this total team's 100th 300+ scores, India became first-ever team to receive such achievement. Indian team is closely followed by Australian team at 2nd position with 96 instances of scoring 300-plus team total scores. It will also be considered as 25th occurrence of India scoring 350+ scores in an ODI innings, closely following leading team South Africa with 26 such instances in total.



Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma claimed Joburg Open title

Veteran Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma won maiden European Tour victory in the Joburg Open, in South Africa. With this triumph, he became fifth Indian to win a European Tour event. Other Indian players who won this title were Arjun Atwal, Jeev Milkha Singh, SSP Chowrasia and Anirban Lahiri. Shubhankar Sharma recently took to professional golf and has bagged Professional Golf Tour of India title for five times. The Joburg Open is a trio event by the European, Asian and South African Sunshine Tours with 240 players playing on two golf courses.



BCCI lifted ban on Rajasthan Cricket Association

The Board of Control for Cricket in India has lifted the ban on the Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA) provided former IPL chief Lalit Modi stays away from its functioning. The Rajasthan Cricket Association was suspended in 2014 after Lalit Modi, ex-Indian Premier League (IPL) Commissioner, was re-elected its president. Ever since, the RCA's cricket affairs were controlled by BCCI. BCCI has also added a clause that the ban could be reinstated if Modi returns in any capacity.



Roger Federer named BBC overseas sports personality of the year

Roger Federer has been voted BBC overseas sports personality of the year for a record fourth time. Federer previously won the award in 2004, 2006 and 2007. Muhammad Ali and Usain Bolt have each won it three times. Federer became the first man to win Wimbledon eight times and extended his record to 19 Grand Slam titles in 2017. The BBC Overseas Sports Personality of the Year is an award presented to a non-British sportsperson considered to have made the most substantial contribution to a sport in that year.



Four-day test to have minimum of 98 overs per day

A minimum of 98 overs will be played on each day of the inaugural four-day test between South Africa and Zimbabwe starting December 26 in Port Elizabeth. The International Cricket Council (ICC) has granted official status to the new format. The play will be extended for an extra 30 minutes to accommodate the additional eight overs in the 4-day format. A first-innings lead of 150 will be enough to enforce the follow-on in the day-night fixture in Port Elizabeth.



Sachin Siwach Named ABC's Best Youth Boxer

World Youth Champion Sachin Siwach was named the Asian Boxing Confederation's best youth boxer of the year. Sachin won an online poll conducted by Asian Boxing Confederation with 36.2% of the votes in his category. India's Lenny D'Gama won the Best Asian International Technical Official (ITO) award with 45.5% of the total votes. He officiated at the ASBC Asian Confederation junior boxing championships in Puerto Princesa and also in the Asian Women's boxing championships in Ho Chi Minh City.



Narinder Batra Elected IOA President

International Hockey Federation (FIH) Chief Narinder Batra has been elected as the new President of the Indian Olympic Association for a four-year term from 2018-22. Batra received 143 of the 160 votes polled. His rival Anil Khanna, honorary life president of the All India Tennis Federation, got 13. Rajeev Mehta was re-elected as Secretary General for a second term. Anandeshwar Pandey was elected as treasurer while R K Anand was elected as senior vice president.



Official emblems for Beijing 2022 Winter Games unveiled

The Beijing 2022 Organising Committee (BOCOG) unveiled the official emblems of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter games Beijing 2022. The emblem resembles a skater at the top and a skier at the bottom. The flowing ribbon-like motif between them symbolises the host country's rolling mountains, Olympic venues, ski pistes and skating rinks. It also points to the fact that the Games will coincide with the Chinese New Year. The emblem was designed by artist Lin Cunzhen.



Sushil Kumar won Gold at Commonwealth Wrestling Championships

India's Sushil Kumar clinched a gold medal at the Commonwealth Wrestling Championship in Johannesburg, South Africa. He defeated New Zealand's Akash Khullar via a pinfall in the final of the 74kg freestyle category. Sakshi Malik also clinched a gold medal in the championship after she defeated New Zealand's Tayla Tuahine Ford by a score of 13-2 in the final of the 62 kg women's freestyle category. India returned with a total of 29 gold, 24 silver and 6 bronze medals from the championships.



PV Sindhu won silver at BWF World Superseries Finals

PV Sindhu lost to World No. 2 Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in the women's singles summit clash of the BWF World Superseries Finals. Sindhu won the first game but Akane Yamaguchi registered an incredible comeback to take home the title. Sindhu had won two super series titles at India Open and Korea Open, besides reaching the finals at Hong Kong Open and World Championship this year. Viktor Axelsen of Denmark won the men's singles final against Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia.



Mo Farah won BBC's Sports Personality of the Year award

Sir Mo Farah was named the winner of the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year award. He got the most votes. World Superbike champion Jonathan Rea came second and two-time Paralympic champion Jonnie Peacock came in third place. The BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award is the main award of the BBC Sports Personality of the Year ceremony, which takes place each December. The recipient must either be British or reside and play a significant amount of their sport in the United Kingdom.



Real Madrid presented with the FIFA World Champions Badge

Real Madrid has been presented with the FIFA World Champions Badge. Real Madrid have earned the honour of being able to wear the official FIFA World Champions Badge on their competition jerseys for the duration of 2018. Real Madrid defeated Gremio in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup UAE 2017. The FIFA World Champions Badge is awarded to each winning team at a major FIFA event. The design of the badge includes the respective tournament trophy along with the tournament edition.



Lionel Messi won La Liga Best Player Award

Lionel Messi has won the Marca's award for the best player in La Liga in 2016-17. It was the fifth career Alfredo Di Stefano Award for the Barcelona star after he scored 37 goals and provided nine assists during the 2016-17 La Liga season. Cristiano Ronaldo, who won the award last year, has won it four times. Messi also won the Pichichi award for finishing as top scorer in La Liga. Atletico Madrid's Jan Oblak was honoured with the Zamora trophy as the top goalkeeper.



India's Prasad and Shaikh to officiate in 2018 Hockey World Cup

India's Raghu Prasad and Javed Shaikh were named in the panel of umpires for 2018 Hockey World Cup to be held in Bhubaneswar. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced that 25 officials representing 19 countries from all five continents will officiate at this prestigious event taking place at the Kalinga Stadium. During 'Vitality Hockey Women's World Cup London 2018' appointments, both men and women will undertake officiating roles at this event, further enhancing FIH's drive to enhance gender parity across all areas of the sport.



Mithali Raj and Ekta Bisht selected for ICC Women's ODI Team of the Year

India captain Mithali Raj was named in the ICC Women's ODI Cricket Team of the Year while left-arm spinner Ekta Bisht was the lone cricketer to find a place in the both the ODI and T20 Teams of the year announced by the world body. Besides the duo, Harmanpreet Kaur has found out a place in the ICC Women's T20I Team of the Year. Bisht is the only cricketer to feature in both the ODI and T20I teams of the year.



2022 Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham, England

2022 Commonwealth Games are scheduled to be held in Birmingham, England. Prior to England, Durban city of South Africa was announced as host city but due to financial difficulties faced by South Africa, Commonwealth Games Federation reopened the bid process for the 2022 games. Birmingham is a city in the West Midlands of England, standing on the small River Rea. XXII Commonwealth Games will be an international multi-sport event for members of the Commonwealth. The motto of 2022 Commonwealth Games is 'Heart of the UK, Soul of the Commonwealth'.



Sushil Kumar became highest paid wrestler at PWL Auction

Sushil Kumar emerged as the most expensive wrestler in the history of Pro Wrestling League. Delhi Sultan paid Rs 55 lakh to acquire his services. Sushil was bought for Rs. 38 lakhs in the first season. Vladimir Khinchegashvili was the previous highest sold wrestler for Rs 48 lakh. The third season of Pro Wrestling League will commence on 9th January. Sushil won the National Championship and gold medal at the Commonwealth Wrestling Championships in South Africa.



IOC banned 11 Russians for life over alleged Sochi Games doping violations

Sochi luge silver medallists Albert Demchenko and Tatyana Ivanova were among a group of 11 Russians disqualified for doping and handed lifetime bans by the International Olympic Committee. Demchenko and Ivanova were punished along with two speed skaters, three cross country skiers, two bobsledders and two ice hockey players. Russia has been banned from taking part at next year's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea due to this widespread doping. However, athletes who prove themselves to be clean can compete under strict conditions, and under a neutral flag.



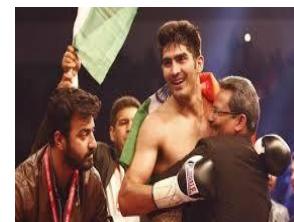
Indian boxers claimed 3 gold medals at Galym Zharylgapov Boxing Tournament

Indian boxers claimed three gold, a silver, and a bronze medal at the Galym Zharylgapov Boxing Tournament in Karaganda, Kazakhstan. India's Gold Medal winners were K Shyam Kumar in 49kg, Naman Tanwar in 91kg and Satish Kumar in the +91kg category. 19-year-old Tanwar was adjudged the best boxer of the tournament. The silver medal came through national champion Manish Kaushik in 60kg, while Mandeep Jangra accounted for the Bronze in the 75 kg category after going down in the semifinals. The season-ending tournament featured five international and 15 local teams, adding up to 154 boxers in all.



Boxer Vijender Singh retained WBO Oriental and Asia Pacific Super Middleweight titles

Vijender Singh went into the offensive to defend his WBO Oriental and Asia Pacific Super middleweight titles with an unanimous verdict over African champion Ernest Amuzu in Jaipur, continuing his unbeaten run in the pro circuit. With this victory, Vijender has now won 10 pro bouts on the trot and retains twin titles. The 32-year-old Olympic bronze medallist won all his nine fights in the professional career. He has emerged as the king of 'Rumble Rajasthan'.



Team India rose to 2nd place in ICC T20 Rankings

Team India rose to 2nd place in ICC T20 Rankings. Aussie opener Aaron Finch emerged as the top-ranked batsman in the Twenty20 format dethroning Indian skipper Virat Kohli as per the latest ICC rankings. Kohli was pushed to the third position. As per ICC rules, players lose two per cent of their ratings for each T20 match they miss. Kohli's points, therefore, dropped from 824 to 776. On the bowlers list, Jasprit Bumrah was pushed to third position. Pakistan with 124 points topped the team rankings.



India finished as runners-up in SAFF U-15 Women's Championships

India finished as runners-up in the SAFF Under-15 Women's Championships. India lost to Bangladesh 0-1 in the final at Dhaka. In a closely contested game, Shamsun Nahar's strike in the 41st minute helped Bangladesh to bag the title. India defeated Bhutan and Nepal in the first two games at group stage. The 2017 SAFF U-15 Women's Championship was 1st ever edition of the SAFF U-15 Women's Championship, an international football competition for women's under-15 national teams organized by SAFF. India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan participated in this South Asian Football Federation tournament.



Association of Indian Football Coaches launched in Mumbai

The Association of Indian Football Coaches, AIFC, was launched in Mumbai, with the recognition of the All India Football Association to provide a platform and for the welfare of the coaches. The aim of AIFC is to develop 65,000 coaches in the next five years. Dinesh Nair, former India captain I M Vijayan, former international player Derrick Pereira, Sanjoy Sen and Thangboi Singto form the board of Directors of the AIFC. The AIFC is supported by Sporting Lions Foundation.



Viswanathan Anand won World Rapid Chess Championship

India's Viswanathan Anand won the World Rapid Chess Championship in Riyadh. He remained unbeaten all through. He defeated Magnus Carlsen in the ninth round and went to win over Russia's Vladimir Fedoseev in the final in a tie breaker. Anand had last won this title in 2003. India's P. Harikrishna finished 16th, Surya Shekhar Ganguly 60th and Vidit Gujarathi 61st. The women's title was won by China's Ju Wenjun. Dronavalli Harika was the best-placed Indian, finishing 19th.

