

BankExamsToday Editorial

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

Martyrs Day: 30 January

- Martyrs day in India is celebrated to pay homage to the victims who fought for the freedom, welfare and progress of the India and sacrificed their lives. It is celebrated every year all over the country on 30th of January.
- India is the country among other 15 countries of the world where Martyrs Day is celebrated every year to pay homage to the freedom fighters

- martyrs Day (Sarvodaya Day or Shaheed Diwas) in India 2017 will be celebrated on 30th of January

PM Narendra Modi announces task force to prepare for next three Olympics

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced that his government would set up a task force to create a strategy to help sportspersons prepare for the next three Olympics.
- The task force would cover infrastructure, training and selection.

- PM Modi made the announcement at a Cabinet meeting and said the task force would be set up in the next few days.
- The PM announced that "a task force will be set up to prepare a comprehensive action plan for effective participation of Indian sportspersons in the next three Olympic Games - 2020, 2024 and 2028
- The task force will prepare the overall strategy for sports facilities, training, selection procedure and related matters.
- The task force will comprise of members who are inhouse experts as well as those from outside
- The announcement comes against the backdrop of India's two medals at the recently concluded Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, which brought into focus the lack of facilities and support+ for sportspersons in the country. The task force may also look into steps to make officials accountable, to address repeated charges of apathy and lack of interest.

'Vampire' star caught in the act by Indian space observatory ASTROSAT

- India's first dedicated space observatory, ASTROSAT, has captured the rare phenomenon of a small, 6-billion-year-old "vampire" star "preying" on a bigger celestial body.
- Scientists say the smaller star, also called a "blue straggler", feeds off its companion star by sucking out its mass and energy, causing its eventual death.
- The most popular explanation is that these are binary systems in which the smaller star sucks material out of the bigger companion star to become a blue straggler, and hence is called a vampire star.

- The small star becomes bigger, hotter and bluer, which gives it the appearance of being young, while the ageing companion burns out and collapses to a stellar remnant
- The stars are part of a "cluster" called NGC 188 formed some 6 billion years ago, and are much older than the sun, which is believed to have come into existence nearly 4.5 billion years ago.

PV Sindhu wins maiden Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold title

- Ace Indian shuttler PV Sindhu on Sunday came out with yet another dominating performance as she defeated Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska to clinch her maiden Syed Modi Grand Prix Gold women's singles title.
- Sindhu, the Rio Olympic medalist, defeated Mariska 21-13, 21-14 in an arguably one-sided contest.
- Top seed Sindhu, earlier in the semis, had to do little to brush aside fourth seed Fitriani Fitriani of Indonesia 21-11, 21-19 to make it to her maiden final.

Supreme Court appoints Vinod Rai to handle BCCI's affairs

- The Supreme Court appointed a four-member committee headed by former comptroller and auditor general of India Vinod Rai to manage the Indian cricket board, pressing ahead with its efforts to reform the country's richest sporting body.
- Others named to the panel to oversee the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) were Vikram Limaye, managing director and CEO of IDBI Bank; former Indian women's cricket captain Diana Edulji; and historian and writer Ramchandra Guha.

- The court selected the administrators from names suggested by the BCCI, the central government and lawyers Gopal Subramaniam and Anil Diwan, amicus curiae in the case.

INSAT-3DR to map farm fires in Haryana, Punjab

- Next generation satellite INSAT-3DR has opened new frontiers in India's weather forecasting and is set to equip the country with the ability to detect farm fires, which intensifies air pollution in the northern region seasonally, leaving Delhi gasping for breath.
- A team of the Satellite Meteorology Division of India Meteorological Department (IMD), housed in New Delhi's Mausam Bhawan, has amassed a huge tranche of data relayed by it over the past few months, at an average rate of a whopping 142 GB per day.
- Launched in September last year, INSAT-3DR works in tandem with INSAT-3D, operational since 2014, in sending raw data and high-resolution images, zoomed up to 1 kilometre near the earth's surface, every 15 minutes.

Amulya Patnaik is new Delhi Police Chief

- Amulya Kumar Patnaik, a 1985-batch IPS officer, was appointed the next Delhi Police Commissioner on Monday.
- Having become the police chief at a relatively younger age of 57, Mr. Patnaik will have one of the longest tenures till January 2020 when he is scheduled to retire. He replaces Alok Kumar Verma, who was appointed as the CBI Director.
- Currently Special Commissioner of Police (Administration), Mr. Patnaik has handled several critical assignments in the Delhi Police, the key among which was heading the Crime Branch and the Southern Range as Joint Commissioner.

- In 1995, Patnaik took the initiative to launch 'Pratidhi', a Delhi Police programme to extend counselling and other assistance to victims of traumatic crimes, an initiative that is working successfully till date.

Ashok Amritraj Appointed UN in India Goodwill Ambassador for the Sustainable Development Goals

- Award-winning Hollywood film producer and Wimbledon tennis player, Ashok Amritraj has been appointed the United Nations in India Goodwill Ambassador for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Chairman and CEO of the Hyde Park Entertainment Group, Mr. Amritraj is the first Ambassador for the UN in India.
- Accepting the honour, Mr. Amritraj said "I look forward to working with the United Nations in India to amplify awareness about the SDGs. It is a tremendous opportunity that brings together my personal desire to serve the country of my birth, and my passion to leverage the power of the media for the creation of diverse, socially-relevant content".
- The United Nations has a long history of close co-operation with the Government of India and today the United Nations system in India includes 26 organisations that have the privilege to serve in the country.

Dushyant Chautala is new TTFI president

- A new set of office-bearers, led by president Dushyant Chautala, today took charge of affairs at the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) following the Annual General Body meeting where they were elected unopposed.
- The election to all posts, conducted and supervised by Justice Ranjit Singh (Retd.) of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, was as

smooth as it had been all these years, as they were returned unopposed.

- Chautala, incidentally, is the youngest president of the apex body and his term and that of others, which is for four years, extends until 2021.

Miss Universe 2017: Miss France Iris Mittenaere lifts the crown; Miss India not in top 13

- Iris Mittenaere, a 23-year-old dental student from France, won the Miss Universe crown in Manila, the Philippines, where it was held this year.
- However, Miss India, the 22-year-old Bengaluru-based Roshmitha Harimurthy failed it to make it to the top-13.
- It's been over 17 years since an Indian contestant was crowned at this pageant. Sushmita Sen (1994) and Lara Dutta (2000) are the only two winners of the Miss Universe crown from India so far.
- Miss Haiti, Raquel Pelissier, a 25-year-old survivor of the devastating 2010 earthquake that destroyed her hometown, was named first runner up while Miss Colombia, 23-year-old, Andrea Tovar, was second runner up.

Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence Bags Rs. 916 Crore Contract From Indian Coast Guard To Build 14 Fast Patrol Ships

- Reliance Defence and Engineering Ltd (RDEL) has signed Rs 916 crore contract with Defence Ministry for design and construction of 14 fast patrol vessels for Indian Coast Guard.
- RDEL is a wholly-owned arm of Reliance Infrastructure Ltd (RInfra).
- RDEL emerged winner through a competitive bidding process undertaken by Ministry of Defence with participation from almost all the private sector and public sector shipyards

namely, L&T, Cochin Shipyard Ltd, Goa Shipyard Ltd, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd (GRSE)

- Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) are medium range, high speed vessels; they are primarily utilised for patrol within Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), coastal patrol, anti-smuggling, anti-piracy, search and rescue operations. They also support front line warships in the hour of need.
- Reliance Shipyard, with the largest dry-dock of the country, has successfully mastered the block-construction technique through unique 'modular construction technology' for building large ships for both commercial usage and Navy

FGII enters into bancassurance tie-up with Bank of Maharashtra

- Future Generali India Insurance Company (FGII) has entered into a corporate agency tie-up with Bank of MaharashtraBSE 1.08 %.
- Bancassurance is one of the key avenues to distribute products. Our focus is to offer customised products, best customer service and sustain the trust of customers of Bank of Maharashtra
- Currently bancassurance accounts for 5 per cent of Future Generali's total business. It has tie-up with over 100 banks across the country.
- Through this partnership, we aim to immensely benefit our customers by providing them an ease of access while choosing from a diverse range of non-life insurance products, all under one roof

President Trump bans people from seven majority Muslim nations from entering the US

- American President Donald Trump has signed an executive order on January 27, 2017 to

temporarily ban visas for refugees belonging to seven Muslim-majority countries namely Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

- The decision aims at protecting United States from the entry of foreign terrorists to keep the nation safe.
- The ban is not aimed at restricting Muslim countries from entering US.
- As per the order, the travelers including legal permanent US residents residing in any of the seven mentioned countries would be prohibited from entering US for 90 days. Besides, refugee admission would also be banned for 120 days.
- The ban is not limited to these 7 nations. A further expansion of the list may be done as per the order of the US president.
- However, the ban would not apply to diplomats and members of international organizations.

In a first, India gets its own multi-sports museum at Kolkata

- Sporting exploits, achievements, records and memorabilia frozen in time and feted across the world are set to be showcased in the country's first multi-sports museum.
- Presented jointly by sports historian Boria Majumdar and industrialist Harsh Neotia, the Fanatic Sports Museum (FSM) at EcoSpace in New Town, Rajarhat, will showcase rare artefacts collected by the former over two decades. Cricket legends Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly and Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra and Para-Olympic medalists Devendra Jhajharia and Deepa Malik inaugurated the museum.
- The gloves which Sachin Tendulkar wore while scoring his 100th hundred, a boot owned by

Lionel Messi, a Chelsea shirt of the 2012 Champions League winning team member Didier Drogba, a chess board signed by Viswanathan Anand, Pele's 1970 Brazil shirt are some of the reference points for sports nuts at the Fanatic Sports Museum, India's first multi-sports museum.

GAAR will be effective April 1, 2017

- Addressing investors' concerns ahead of GAAR implementation from April 1, the tax department said it will not interplay with their right to choose a method of transaction and won't apply if routing of funds through a jurisdiction is "based on non-tax commercial considerations".
- The General Anti-Avoidance Rules (GAAR), which seek to prevent companies from routing transactions through other countries to avoid taxes, can be invoked through a two-stage process involving a nod at the level of principal commissioner of income tax and a panel headed by a high court judge.
- Seeking to assuage concerns of investors, CBDT said GAAR provisions shall be effective from the assessment year 2018-19 onwards and "shall not be invoked merely on the ground that the entity is located in a tax efficient jurisdiction.

Founder of Indian supercomputing Dr Bhatkar appointed new VC Nalanda University

- Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar, a technocrat who is considered the father of the Indian Supercomputer, has been appointed the new Vice-Chancellor of Nalanda University, Rajgir, in Bihar.
- He will hold the office for a three-year period from the date of his appointment as per the Nalanda University Act, Sec 11(3). Bhatkar, 70,

replaces Gopa Sabharwal who resigned on November 24 last year, followed by the resignation of Chancellor George Yeo, after the dissolution of the Mentor Group which functioned as the governing body of the university.

- Bhatkar has served as member, Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet at the Centre, and governing board of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.
- He has also been honoured with the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan, the fourth and third highest civilian honours in India.

Dr G N Rao inducted to Ophthalmology Hall of Fame

- Dr Gullapalli N Rao, Founder and Chair, L V Prasad Eye Institute, has been selected as one of two inductees for the prestigious 2017 Ophthalmology Hall of Fame instituted by the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS).
- He would be honoured at the induction ceremony in Los Angeles on May six at the ASCRS annual meeting, according to an LVPEI statement.
- The Hall of Fame honours pioneers in ophthalmology for their distinguished careers and contributions, with the physicians selected by their peers - more than 30,000 ophthalmologists across the world
- The Ophthalmology Hall of Fame inductees are "individuals whose contribution to the field of ophthalmology have shaped the way modern ophthalmology is practiced" and "who have trained thousands of ophthalmologists who practice throughout the world, and developed institutions that will continue ophthalmic research for years to come."

Telangana government signs MoU with French Aero campus Aquitaine

- The Telangana government signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with French Aero campus Aquitaine to set up a world-class aero skills academy in the city in collaboration with academia and industry.
- This partnership focuses on developing skills among youth as well as experienced professionals in tune with the latest trends in the industry.
- The new academy will offer specialized aeronautical courses in engineering, manufacturing and maintenance. The MoU was signed by general manager of the Aero Campus Jerome Verschave and secretary ITE&C department of the state government Jayesh Ranjan.

Abul Hossain wins Kolkata Marathon

- Siliguri lad Abul Hossain won the Kolkata Marathon today as amateur runners from north Bengal and Northeast India dominated the first edition of the meet.
- Hossain won the race with a timing of two hours 34 minutes and two seconds to leave Kolkata lad Biswanath Pal second, five minutes behind. Paritosh Roy finished third with a timing of two hours, 52 minutes 48 seconds.
- Sikkim's Mangali Tamang won the women's half marathon with a timing of one hour 31 minutes and 13 seconds.
- Meghalaya's Kyntimon Marwein and her younger sister Dateibankynmaw finished second and third with a timing of 1:33.04 seconds and 1:35.48 respectively.

Indian Navy launches search to procure 57 carrier-borne fighter jets

- The Indian Navy has launched a Request for Information to procure 57 multi-role combat aircraft for its carrier.
- Last month, Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba had said the "present LCA does not meet the carrier capability required by the Navy". He had said the service would continue to support its development but "at the same time we will seek aircraft elsewhere which can operate on the aircraft carrier".
- At present, the Navy operates 45 MIG-29K jets, which from time-to-time face serviceability issues. Currently, six planes are compatible for aircraft carrier flying.
- They are Rafale (Dassault, France), F-18 Super Hornet (Boeing, US), MIG-29K (Russia), F-35B and F-35C (Lockheed Martin, US) and Gripen (Saab, Sweden). While F-18, Rafale and MIG-29K are twin engine jets, the remaining three have single engine.

Desh' to set up India's largest start-up incubator at Hubballi

- The Deshpande Foundation, the philanthropy arm of Silicon Valley entrepreneur Gururaj 'Desh' Deshpande, will launch the country's largest start-up incubation centre here (earlier Hubli), alongside the new campus of information technology giant Infosys.
- The foundation aims to promote entrepreneurship in India's tier-II and tier-III cities. It is investing Rs 30 crore in the centre, to be opened this September and able to seat 1,200 people at any point.
- While Bengaluru has emerged as the country's start-up capital, Deshpande believes smaller cities and towns can play a crucial role in creating new companies and jobs.
- This led him to invest in setting up the foundation a decade earlier at this city,

establishing a 'sandbox' location to allow entrepreneurs to test and nurture their ideas into businesses.

India Post gets payments bank licence to start services

- India Post has received payments bank licence from the Reserve Bank of India to start rollout of banking operations commercially under the permit.
- "India Post has received payments bank licence. The service will be launched as per schedule," a Department of Posts official said. India Post Payments Bank is the third entity to receive payments bank permit after Bharti Airtel and Paytm.
- Payments banks can accept deposits up to Rs1 lakh per account from individuals and small businesses.
- The new model of banking allows mobile firms, supermarket chains and others to cater to banking requirements of individuals and small businesses.
- It will be set up as a differentiated bank and will confine its activities to acceptance of demand deposits, remittance services, Internet banking and other specified services.
- Out of eight companies in fray — Airtel has launched its commercial operation across India with an investment of Rs3,000 crore offering interest rate of 7.25% on deposits, free money transfer from Airtel to Airtel numbers within Airtel Bank, money transfer to any bank account in the country.
- Paytm, promoted by Vijay Shekhar Sharma and backed by Chinese e-commerce major Alibaba, plans to roll out payments bank within initial investment of about Rs400 crore.

- Others are — Aditya Birla Nuvo, Fino PayTech, National Securities Depository, Reliance Industries Ltd and Vodafone m-pesa.
- AP Singh has been appointed as interim MD and CEO of the India Post Payment Bank. He was joint secretary in the Department of Disinvestment and one of the member of founding team that launched Aadhaar.

Abu Dhabi to set up court for non-Muslims to strengthen culture of tolerance

- Abu Dhabi will set up a court for non-Muslims to strengthen the culture of tolerance and acceptance of other communities and ensure access to services for all segments of the society
- Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Judicial Department, has issued a resolution for the setting up of a Personal Status and Inheritance Court for non-Muslims in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, the largest of the UAE's seven emirates.
- The move is in line with the strategic goals of the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the judicial procedures and ensure access to services for all segments of the society, the official WAMnews agency reported.
- This will also ensure prompt justice and strengthen the culture of tolerance and acceptance of others by creating institutional infrastructure, it added.
- Chancellor Yousef Saeed Al Ibry, under-secretary of the department, said an integrated action on all the social, educational and institutional levels, is required to spread the culture of tolerance in the judicial domain.

- He also pointed out that the UAE legislative system practically promotes the culture of tolerance and acceptance of others values at the judiciary level, in harmony with the prevailing norms in the community.

Australian Open 2017: Serena Williams beats Venus Williams to set Grand Slam record

- Serena Williams beat sister Venus in straight sets to win her seventh Australian Open and an Open-era record 23rd Grand Slam singles title.
- Serena, 35, won 6-4 6-4 to pass Steffi Graf in the all-time list of major winners since the Grand Slams accepted professional players in 1968.
- The American regains the number one ranking from German Angelique Kerber.
- Australia's Margaret Court, with 24, is the only player still ahead of Serena in terms of Grand Slam singles titles.
- Serena paid tribute to her sister, who was playing her first major final for eight years, saying: "There's no way I would be at 23 without her. There's no way I'd be at one without her. She's my inspiration.

Tokyo Olympics unveils Goku from Dragonball Z as a brand ambassador

- The Tokyo Olympic Committee has now announced that Son Goku, a cult anime character from Dragonball Z, will serve as one of its brand ambassadors.
- In their efforts to draw the attention of youngsters, the organizers have revealed a list of "popular animated celebrities" who will double up as the ambassadors of the quadrennial event.
- Goku will have Naruto, Shin Chan, Sailor Moon, Petty Cure, Luffy and Astroboy for

company in the ambassadorial role with their faces plastered over the official merchandises.

- With just three years remaining before the next Olympics, Japan has stepped up its effort to promote the extravaganza that will see participation of elite athletes from all over the world in various disciplines when Tokyo hosts them in 2020.
- Tokyo was announced as the host in 2013 and the Games are scheduled to be held from July 24 to August 9 2020.

CASHe integrates Paytm Wallet for direct cash transfers

- Aeries Financial Technologies Pvt. Ltd., a fin-tech company promoted by serial entrepreneur and private equity investor Mr. V. Raman Kumar announced that CASHe, India's fastest loan giving app for young salaried professionals, has partnered with Paytm, India's largest mobile payments and commerce firm to allow its users to deposit cash transfers from CASHe to their Paytm wallets.
- CASHe offers multiple loan options ranging from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 payable over 15, 30 and 90 days.
- With this integration, users of CASHe now have an option to transfer their loan amounts into their Paytm Wallets in part or in full and credit the rest of the amount into their bank accounts. This is an industry-first innovation from CASHe.
- CASHe provides hassle-free loans with its app enabled documentation and loan disbursal or repayment process. Powered by its industry-first algorithm driven credit scoring platform, The Social Loan Quotient (SLQ), CASHe quickly determines a user's credit worthiness by using

multiple unique data points to arrive at a distinct credit profile of the customer.

ORF emerges top Indian think tank in Asia category, ranks 5th out of 90

- The Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has emerged as the top ranked think tank in India in the China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea category, according to the latest Global Go To Think Tank Index Report
- In the Asia region, ORF finished 5th out of 90 think tanks in this category, improving its position from 6th(out of 65) last year, while the first rank was retained by the Korea Development Institute, Republic of Korea in the Index, prepared annually by the Lauder Institute, Pennsylvania University, US. Japan Institute of International Affairs came second while Korea Institute for International Economic Policy came in third.
- ORF was ranked the highest think tank in India in the 'Top Foreign Policy and International Affairs Think Tanks' category. In the world ranking, it came 64th out of 133 think tanks, moving up from the 85th position in the last Index report. Brookings Institution came in the first place.
- In the 'Top Education Policy Think Tanks', only ORF featured from India. It came 63rd out of 65 think tanks.
- ORF was ranked the highest Indian think tank in the categories of 'Best Managed Think Tanks', 'Think Tanks with Best Use of Internet','Best Institutional Collaboration Involving Two or More Think Tanks' and 'Think Tanks with the most Innovative Policy Ideas/Proposals'.
- ORF once again became the most featured Indian think tank across categories, appearing in 26 places while the IDSA and Gateway

House have 9 appearances and TERI 8 appearances.

CWC inks pact with IIT Madras and IISc Bengaluru to enhance their dam safety capacity building

- The Central Water Commission (CWC) under the Ministry of Water Resources River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation signed two separate MoUs with IIT Madras and IISc Bengaluru in New Delhi.
- These two premier educational institutes will help CWC for the procurement of specified equipment and software for enhancing their capability to support dam rehabilitation efforts of CWC.
- The Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has taken on board selected premier academic and research institutes, for capacity building in the areas of dam safety through World Bank assisted Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).
- The scope includes strengthening the testing laboratories, enhancing analytical capabilities, exposure visits to best global institutions and on ground exposure to dam safety concerns to the faculty of these institutions.

Three-day long Brahmaputra Literary festival begins in Guwahati

- The three-day long Brahmaputra Literary festival will begin in Guwahati today.
- Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar will inaugurate the festival in presence of Chief Minister Sarbanand Sonowal and others.
- The festival is being organized by National Book Trust and state government.
- Authors from ten countries will take part in the festival.

- Javadekar will also inaugurate a colourful carnival to mark the festival.
- Seminars ,discussions ,film show, book fair, music concert will be held as a part of the festival.

President appoints Banwarilal Purohit as Governor of Meghalaya

- A day after Shanmuganathan decided to step down as Governor of Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh, President Pranab Mukherjee, accepting his resignation, gave Assam Governor, Banwarilal Purohit additional charge of Meghalaya
- President Mukherjee also appointed P. B. Acharya, the Governor of Nagaland to discharge functions as the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh.
- Former Meghalaya Governor V Shanmuganathan resigned on January 26 after nearly 100 members of his staff alleged in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that he had "compromised the dignity" at the Governor's House and turned it into a "young ladies club".

Sports Minister Vijay Goel reconstitutes committee to identify athletes under TOP Scheme

- The Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vijay Goel has reconstituted TOP committee with the objective of identifying and supporting potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games under the "Target Olympic Podium" scheme.
- The committee will select elite athletes to provided financial assistance for their customized training at Institutes having world class facilities and other necessary support.

- According to the Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vijay Goel Committee will decide on its own procedures and will be competent to invite subject experts as and when required. The Initial tenure of the

committee will be one year from the date of notification.

- The reconstituted committee is as follows:

Shri Abhinav Bindra, Olympic Gold Medalist	Chairman
Shri Anil Khanna, Sports Administrator	Member
Shri Prakash Padukone, Renowned Ex Badminton Player and Coach	Member
Ms. Karnam Malleshwari, Olympic Medalist (Bronze/ Weightlifting)	Member
Ms. P. T. Usha Renowned Olympian	Member
Shri Murlidhar Raja, President, Sports Administrator	Member
Ms. Anjali Bhagwat, Renowned Shooter	Member
Ms. Rekha Yadav, Secretary Railway Sports Promotion Board	Member
Dr. S.S. Roy, ED (Teams) SAI	Member
Shri Inder Dhamija, Joint Secretary (Sports)	Member Secretary

ISRO Cryogenic Upper Stage for GSLV Mk III tested successfully

- ISRO has successfully tested its indigenously developed cryogenic engine in a major step forward for its landmark 'GSLV Mk III' rocket, scheduled for launch within the first quarter this year.
- Cryogenic engines are used in the upper stage of a rocket launch as they provide the maximum thrust to a launcher vehicle.
- The cryogenic upper stage, designated as C25, was tested on January 25 for 50 seconds at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu, demonstrating all the stage operations
- The development of C25 cryogenic stage began with the approval of GSLV MkIII, the next generation launch vehicle of ISRO,

capable of launching 4 ton class spacecraft in Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).

- The vehicle consists of two solid strap-on motors, one earth storable liquid core stage and the cryogenic upper stage.
- The C25 stage is the most powerful upper stage developed by ISRO and uses Liquid Oxygen and Liquid Hydrogen propellant combination.

Alibaba's financial arm acquires MoneyGram for \$880 millions

- Ant Financial, e-commerce giant Alibaba's financial arm, has reached an agreement to acquire American money-transfer major MoneyGram for \$880 million, in a deal that will expand the firm's business in the US after India and Thailand.
- The company owns Alipay, one of China's biggest online payment platforms and controls

the company that manages the country's largest money market fund, Yu'eobao.

- The transaction will connect MoneyGram's money transfer network of 2.4 billion bank and mobile accounts and 350,000 physical locations with Ant Financial's users.
- MoneyGram will remain headquartered in Dallas and continue to operate under its existing brand,
- The transaction will help expand Ant Financial's business following its partnering with Paytm in India and Ascend Money in Thailand,

National Geoscience Award for Keshav Krishna and N Purnachandra Rao

- A Keshav Krishna, a scientist at the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) has been selected for the National Geoscience Award for 2016.
- The award given by the Union Ministry of Mines is in recognition of his work in the field of geo-environmental studies.
- Krishna is presently involved in studies on environmental risk assessment related heavy metal contamination in soil, sediments and water in industrial areas, abandoned mine sites and their interactions with the environmental pollutants.
- Dr N Purnachandra Rao, Chief Scientist and an CSIR Professor at the CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), here has been selected for the prestigious National Geoscience Award by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India for the year 2016 in the field of Geophysics. Dr Rao has made significant contributions in the field of Earthquake studies towards understanding the

geodynamics of the Indian plate margins, particularly the Burma-Andaman arc, the Himalaya-Tibet region and the diffuse Indian Ocean deformation zone

Three Indian-origin conferred with Australia's highest civilian award

- Three Indian-origin persons have been awarded Australia's highest civilian honour this year for their contributions in the field of medicine and work towards the community.
- Purushottam Sawrikar, a Sydney-based medical practitioner, received Order of Australia medal for the year 2017 announced on the Australia Day in General division category for his service to medicine, and to the Indian community.
- Sawrikar was a former president of Australian Indian Medical Graduates Association and also founded a community radio called Akashwani Sydney.
- Makhan Singh Khangure from Perth was given the award for his for significant service to medicine in the field of neuroradiology, to education, and to a range of professional medical associations.
- Vijay Kumar, a nuclear medicine specialist and a researcher, was given the award for his significant service to medical research in the disciplines of nuclear medicine and biology, to professional organisations, and to the community.
- Kumar, a founding member of Sydney Tamil Sangam Association, was also awarded Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation Award in 2007 and 2014.

HPCL, GAIL sign pact with AP for Rs 40K crore petrochem project

- State-owned refiner Hindustan Petroleum BSE - 1.47 % Corp Ltd (HPCL) and gas utility GAIL India Ltd BSE 1.36 % today signed a pact with Andhra Government for setting up a Rs 40,000 crore petrochemical plant in the state.
- The 50:50 joint venture will set up a 1.5 million tons Ethylene Derivatives plant, which will produce a wide range of petrochemical raw materials for the manufacture of detergents, paints and coatings, cosmetics, textiles and adhesives.
- Andhra Pradesh government will support the project by providing infrastructure, power, roads and other clearances.
- The plant will be set up at the Petroleum, Chemical and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR) sites identified by the state government at Kakinada.
- The MoU was signed by Tripathi, HPCL Chairman and Managing Director Mukesh K Surana and Kartikeya Misra, Director, Industries in Government of Andhra Pradesh.
- The project is a truncated version of the earlier proposed refinery-cum-petrochemicals complex in Andhra Pradesh. HPCL has for the time being shelved plans to build a new refinery and is only pursuing petrochemical project.
- HPCL and GAIL decided to do the petrochem plan together after their plans to team up with France's Total, Lakshmi N Mittal Group and Oil India Ltd BSE 0.22 % (OIL) for a 15 million tonnes a year refinery-cum-petrochemical plant at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh

- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched 'SBI Exclusif,' its wealth management offering, in Kochi. will be rolled out in other cities in the state during the course of the year.
- Launching the product, S Venkataraman, Chief General Manager, SBI, Kerala Circle, said that wealth management has been one of the strategic priorities of the bank.
- The bank has introduced an 'open platform' where customers will also have access to the best products across categories from market-leading institutions
- SBI Exclusif offers what he described as 'many firsts' in wealth banking – for instance an 'e-Wealth Center' that can deliver quality relationship management services remotely for extended hours.
- Similarly, Exclusif customers will have the flexibility to view their portfolio, transact and invest through digital channels such as internet and mobile.
- SBI has tied up with leading technology and product partners to provide an extensive suite of privileged products and lifestyle benefits. These include top-tier credit and debit cards and concessions/waivers in charges, among others.

Surya Namaskar Yajna now recognised in US Congress

- The annual "Surya Namaskar Yajna" or "Health for Humanity Yagathon" has been recognised in the US House of Representative on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.
- Surya Namaskar integrates simple yoga postures in ten steps that along with teaching easy breathing techniques, can provide immense health benefits to both the body and

SBI wealth management product launched in Kochi

the

mind

India ranked 79th in the Corruption Perception Index 2016

- India has been ranked 79th among 176 countries in the Corruption Perception Index 2016 released by the Transparency International organisation. Its score marginally improved from 38 in 2015 to 40 in 2016. India had a score of 36 in 2012.
- The organisation has used the World Bank data, the world economic forum and other institutions to rank countries by perceived levels of corruption in public sector. The score runs from zero to 100, from highly corrupt to 100. Belarus, Brazil, & China shared the same ranks as India.
- The list was topped by New Zealand and Denmark with a score of 90 each. Higher-ranked countries tend to have higher degrees of press freedom, access to information about public expenditure, stronger standards of integrity for public officials, and independent judicial systems.
- Somalia was ranked the most corrupt country with a score of 10

Navy's Theatre Level Exercise, TROPEX 17, gets underway

- The Indian Navy's Annual Theatre Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX) got underway on 24 Jan 17.
- The month long exercise will have ships and aircraft of both the Western and Eastern Naval Commands, as also assets from the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard exercising together.

- The exercise is being conducted off the Western Seaboard. The last edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2015.
- TROPEX has grown in scale and complexity over the years and will see participation of major surface combatants and air assets of the Indian Navy including the aircraft carrier Vikramaditya, nuclear submarine Chakra, Landing Platform Dock (LPD) Jalashwa, the recently commissioned destroyer Chennai, the P-8I long range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft operating alongside SU-30 MKI, Jaguars, AWACS, IL-78 Flight Refuelling Aircraft of the Indian Air Force and Infantry units of the Indian Army.
- The exercise will be conducted in various phases, both in harbour and at sea encompassing the various facets of war-fighting and combat operations.
- TROPEX 17 assumes special significance in the backdrop of the current security scenario.
- The exercise is aimed at testing combat readiness of the combined fleets of the Indian Navy, and the assets of the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard.
- It will also strengthen inter-operability and joint operations in a complex environment.

Gujrat in Walnut's cashless score card

- Telangana ranked second in the 'Cashless India Scorecard' prepared by Walnut app to track the growth of digital payments in the country.
- The scorecard is meant for comparing how each state is moving towards a cashless economy post- demonetisation based on an aggregate and anonymised analysis of Walnut's over five million user data.

- It ranked States based on percentage increase in overall cashless transactions, growth in shoppers using debit or credit card for the first time and growth in merchants accepting digital payments.
- Based on these parameters, Gujarat, Telangana and Haryana emerged as the top three states with the highest growth in going cashless.

UAE will fill up half of Mangalore oil reserve as Modi-Abu Dhabi Crown Prince sign deals

- India signed a deal with the United Arab Emirates on Wednesday that allows the Gulf OPEC country to fill half of an underground crude oil storage facility at Mangalore that is part of New Delhi's strategic reserve system.
- New Delhi announced a series of pacts with the UAE ranging from defence, trade, maritime cooperation to energy after a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan.
- UAE's Abu Dhabi National Oil Co will store about 6 million barrels of oil at Mangalore, taking up about half of the site's capacity, said Sunjay Sudhir, joint secretary for international cooperation at the Indian oil ministry.

Hyderabad Literary Festival begins

- Celebrating creativity in all its forms, the seventh edition of Hyderabad Literary Festival-HLF 2017 open at Hyderabad on Friday.
- The three-day festival is being organised by Hyderabad Literary Trust at Hyderabad Public School in association with the Telangana government with the support of several

academic, literary, cultural organisations and publishing houses, according to HLF website.

- Ambassador of the Republic of Philippines Ma Teresita C Daza will be the guest of honour while poet Ashok Vajpeyi will be chief guest
- Philippines is the 'Guest Nation' at HLF 2017 and will showcase its literature, art and culture.

Republic Day 2017: Wife Of Army Hero Hangpan Dada, Receives His Ashoka Chakra

- The nation paid homage to Havildar Hangpan Dada, awarded the Ashoka Chakra, the highest award to an army man during peace-time operations, for killing four terrorists who had infiltrated into north Kashmir last year.
- The Havildar killed three of the intruders and fatally injured a fourth before he died of bullet wounds at 13,000 feet in the icy Himalayas.
- His wife Chasen Lowang received the medal from President Pranab Mukherjee at Rajpath
- The soldier's bravery and presence of mind saved the lives of his other team members. The fierce encounter in the Shamsabari range of north Kashmir lasted for over 24 hours.

For first time UAE military contingent participates in parade at Rajpath

- For the first time, a military contingent of UAE participated in the 68th Republic Day parade on Rajpath in the presence of their country's Deputy Supreme Commander Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who was the chief guest.
- A 149-member UAE contingent led by Lieutenant Colonel Abood Musabeh Abood Musabeh Alghfeli, constituting UAE Presidential Guard, the Air Force, the Navy and

Army contingent led by a UAE band consisting of 35 musicians march-passed at the Rajpath and presented a ceremonial salute to the President Pranab Mukherjee.

- The UAE is the second country after France to send its troops to participate in the Republic-Day parade of India,

Made-in-India Tejas combat aircraft debuts at R-Day parade

- India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas' made its debut by flying past the Rajpath on the country's 68th Republic Day.
- Three Tejas jets flew at a height of 300-metre from the ground at a speed of 780 km/hour in 'VIC' formation.
- This was for the first time in two decades that an indigenously developed aircraft flew on R-Day.

Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar conferred Raksha Mantri Padak to Ten girl cadets

- Ten girl cadets and one Girls Cadets Instructor (GCI) were conferred with Raksha Mantri Padak by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar on his visit to the NCC Republic Day Camp 2017 in Delhi. Defence Minister also distributed certificates of commendation to NCC cadets for their praiseworthy performance at their Investiture ceremony
- The Cadets and GCI who received the Raksha Mantri Padak
- successfully summited Mt Everest in May 2016 and created world record for maximum number of women from a single team and single country.

NSG commandos debut at Republic Day parade

- In a first, 'black cat' commandos of elite counter-terror force National Security Guard (NSG) participated in the Republic Day parade at Rajpath in New Delhi.
- A contingent of about 140 personnel in black overalls, balaclava headgear and carrying special assault rifle MP-5 added dashing sheen to the parade.
- The commandos were given a rapturous round of applause by the spectators as they marched down Rajpath singing the NSG song "Hum haina haina hindustan" penned by renowned poet and lyricist Javed Akhtar.
- The march past by the NSG also displayed 'Sherpa'—a specially designed hijack intervention vehicle and two gypsies used for anti-hijack operations.
- The NSG, which selects the best of the officers and men from the Indian Army as well as from various central armed police forces, was raised in 1984.

India's Republic Day coincides with Australia Day

- 26th of January is a day of celebration for both Australia and India. While India celebrates in Republic Day, Australia too celebrates its Foundation Day.
- Interestingly it was on Jan 26, 1788 that Captain Arthur Phillip, commander of First Fleet of British Admiralty, along with his officers rowed to Sidney Cove in eastern Australia and took possession of the land in the name of King George III.
- Australia Day marks the beginning of the European settlement in Australia and the

foundation of the modern Australian state

National Action Plan for Children, 2016 released by WCD Ministry

- National Action Plan for Children, 2016 (NPAC) was launched at a special function held to celebrate the National Girl Child Day in New Delhi
- The Action Plan has four key priority areas; survival, health and nutrition; education and development; protection and participation.
- The NPAC defines objectives, sub-objectives, strategies, action points and indicators for measuring progress under the four key priority areas and also identifies key stakeholders for the implementation of different strategies.
- The plan also puts focus on new and emerging concerns for children such as online child abuse, children affected by natural and man-made disasters and climate change, etc.
- The plan takes into account the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provides a roadmap towards achieving them through co-ordination and convergence with different stakeholders.

Mysuru gets India's 1st post office passport kendra

- In a bid to expand passport services and to ensure wider coverage, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Posts (DOP) have agreed to utilise the Head Post Offices (HPO) across the country as Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) for delivering passport-related services.
- Mysuru got India's first Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK), which will offer all passport related services on the lines of PSKs,

on Wednesday. The service will soon be expanded to neighbouring districts too.

- It has been named as POPSK because the ministry of external affairs (MEA) has tied up with the postal department to offer passport related services through a network of post offices.
- Mysuru is the fifth place in Karnataka to get a passport office after Bengaluru (two centres), Mangaluru, Hubballi and Kalaburgi.

e-Health Kerala scheme launched at Peroorkada hospital

- Thiruvananthapuram: e-Health Kerala, the project envisaged by the health department in association with the state IT Mission, was launched officially by chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan at a function held at Peroorkada District Hospital.
- The project envisages to create an effective IT-enabled integrated framework to ensure effectual health care to the common citizen and create a centralized database of healthcare information.
- Vijayan inaugurated the project by handing over electronic medical record (EMR) to Shanthakumari, a resident of Peroorkada.

'Dulari Kanya' scheme launched by Arunachal Pradesh

- Arunachal Pradesh launched 'Dulari Kanya', a special scheme to check infant mortality in the state, on the occasion of the 68th Republic Day today.
- Governor V Shanmuganathan launched the scheme, under which the government will deposit Rs 20,000 in the bank account of a girl

child, born in any government hospital. It would be paid along with the accrued interest after she attains 18 years of her age.

- Terming it as a "visionary programme" of the state government, he said it would not only arrest infant mortality but also keep a track of all pregnant mothers so that they avail of pre-natal and ante-natal care in the government health centres and go for institutional deliveries.

Trump orders wall to be built on Mexico border

- President Donald Trump has issued an executive order for an "impassable physical barrier" to be built along the US border with Mexico.
- He also signed an action to strip funds from US cities that are sanctuaries for undocumented immigrants.
- Building a 2,000-mile barrier along the Mexican border was one of Mr Trump's key pledges in the election campaign.

RBI prohibits investments in 'non-cooperative countries'

- Reserve Bank prohibited Indian entities from making direct investments in any entity located in 'non co-operative countries and territories', as identified by the inter-governmental body FATF.
- The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) currently comprises two regional organisations and 35 member jurisdictions, including India, US, UK, China and the European Commission.
- The prohibition on investment is "in order to align" instructions under FEMA with the objectives of the FATF.

- At present, there is no restriction on an Indian entity with regard to the countries where it can undertake Overseas Direct Investment.

MakeMyTrip launches India's 1st social luxury travel magazine

- India's largest online travel portal MakeMyTrip has launched the first ever social luxury travel magazine called 'Luxury Travel Times'.
- The mobile only magazine is targeted at luxury travellers and is released through innovative ad platforms like Facebook Canvas & Instagram-Stories. 'Spa-cation', 'Heaven on Earth' & 'Heritage' were first few themes of the magazine presenting exotic choices to explore fine living.

Trump appoints Indian-American attorney to key White House post

- US President Donald Trump has appointed prominent Indian-American attorney Uttam Dhillon to a key White House position to assist him on ethics and compliance matters.
- Dhillon, who served as chief oversight counsel for the House of Representatives Financial Services Committee, has been appointed as special assistant to the President.
- In this position, he would be part of the legal team to serve under White House Counsel Donald F McGahn with respect to compliance and ethics matters.
- Prior to joining Financial Services, Dhillon served as chief of the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement.

Johnson & Johnson to buy pharma group Actelion for \$30 billion

- US pharmaceuticals giant Johnson & Johnson on Thursday announced it was buying Europe's biggest bio-pharmaceutical firm, Switzerland's Actelion, for \$30 billion (€27.9 billion) in a deal that creates a new spin-off company.
- The deal between the world's biggest producer of healthcare goods and Actelion, a leader in medicines treating high blood pressure, will create a new Swiss-listed firm called R&D NewCo focusing on the research and development of new drugs, the two companies said in a joint statement.
- Johnson & Johnson will acquire all the outstanding shares of Actelion for \$280 per share in a deal approved by the boards of both companies, with the tender offer to start by mid-February.

Pankaj Advani wins World Billiards Championships title

- Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won his 11th World Billiards (150-Up format) Championships title by beating Peter Gilchrist of Singapore in the summit clash
- Advani beat multiple world champion Gilchrist by six games to three in a gripping final contest to wrap up his 16th world title overall.
- Advani won his 16th world title overall.
- Advani was satisfied with going for short break points to put pressure on his rival.

Japan gets first sumo champion in 19 years

- Japan has formally named its first home-grown sumo grand champion in almost two

decades, in a boost to the traditional wrestling sport.

- Kisenosato, 30, was promoted to the top-most yokozuna rank after his win in the first tournament of the year.
- He is the first Japanese-born wrestler to make it since Wakanohana in 1998. Five wrestlers from American Samoa and Mongolia have made it in the interim.
- Kisenosato, who comes from Ibaraki to the north of Tokyo and weighs 178kg (392 pounds), has been an ozeki - the second-highest rank - since 2012.
- After being runner-up on multiple occasions, he finally clinched his first tournament victory - and thereby his promotion to yokozuna - in the first competition of 2017.

Usain Bolt loses 2008 Olympic relay gold after Nesta Carter's positive test

- Usain Bolt has lost one of his nine Olympic gold medals in a doping case involving teammate Nesta Carter.
- Carter tested positive for methylhexanamine, a banned stimulant, in re-analysis of samples from the 2008 Beijing Olympics.
- Olympic rules state that the entire relay team can be disqualified and stripped of medals if one runner fails a doping test.
- Carter and Bolt were teammates on the winning 4x100-metre team, which set a world record of 37.10 seconds. Carter ran the opening leg, and Bolt took the baton third in a team that also included Michael Frater and Asafa Powell.

Republic Day: January 26

- India celebrates its 68th Republic Day today.

- The Republic Day Parade and ceremony is currently in progress on Rajpath. On January 26, 1950, the Constitution of India came into force, and Republic Day is celebrated to honour that day.
- On this day in 1950, the first President of India, Dr Rajendra Prasad took oath. President Pranab Mukherjee will start the ceremony by hoisting the Indian flag, following which the Republic Day Parade will begin from Rajpath.
- The parade starts from Rajpath and ends at Red Fort in Delhi.
- Every year on Republic Day, India invites a visiting head of state, who is the state guest of honour (chief guest) for the ceremony.
- This year's guest of honour is the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who personally received the Prince at the airport, said that United Arab Emirates is India's valued partner and close ties between the two countries are important for the entire region.
- India and UAE have signed 13 agreements, including one on strategic cooperation.
- Though Republic Day is celebrated on January 26 with the Parade on Rajpath, the celebrations are spread over three days and ends with the Beating Retreat ceremony on January 29.

National Voters' Day: 25 January

- On January 25 India celebrated its sixth National Voters Day.
- Since 2011, NVD is annually celebrated on Jan 25.
- This year's theme of NVD is "Inclusive and Qualitative Participation" and slogan is 'no voter should be left behind'.

- The significance of this day is to encourage youngsters, who have reached the age of 18, of the country to participate in the electoral process, by enrolling or registering themselves in electoral rolls and to exercise their franchise.

Four female umpires appointed for ICC Women's WC Qualifier 2017

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has named four women in a strong field of nine umpires to officiate in next month's ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier 2017 in its continued efforts and commitment for the overall growth and development of women's cricket.
- The February 7 to February 21 event in Colombo, Sri Lanka, will see experienced Kathleen Cross of New Zealand lead the group of women umpires, who all have international experience and are being groomed for more future responsibilities by the ICC.
- Cross, who was the first woman to be named in an ICC umpires' panel in 2014 when she was named in the Associates and Affiliates panel, is the most experienced of the four officials with Sue Redfern of England, Claire Polosak of Australia and Jacqueline Williams of the West Indies the other women figuring in the list of umpires.

AIFF launches professional league for women footballers

- The All India Football Federation (AIFF) launched the first-ever Indian Women's League (IWL) to be held at the Ambedkar

Stadium in New Delhi from January 28 till February 14.

- The inaugural edition of the IWL will feature six teams — Jeppiar (Puducherry), Eastern Sporting Union (Imphal), Rising Student's Club (Cuttack), Football Club Alakhpura (Haryana) and a team each from I-League and ISL clubs, Aizawl FC and Pune City FC.
- Indian women's team is ranked 54 in the world which is higher than the men's ranking of 129 which means that for the upcoming FIFA women's World Cup in 2019

Biologists created the world's first stable semi-synthetic organism

- There's a new form of life crawling around in a California laboratory.
- It's neither fully organic nor fully artificial, but falls somewhere in between.
- Created by a team of biochemists from The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI), the semisynthetic organism has DNA made up of both natural and manmade bases.
- A semi-synthetic organism (SSO) is an organism that relies on a manmade part to function as part of its essential biology,
- The organism is the product of about 14 years worth of research, developing an X-Y base pair and testing its stability (it's ability to be copied) as the cell divides.

Pune cops launch app to map real-time locations of patrolling teams

- Pune City Police have started using a 'Beat Marshall Monitoring Mobile App' on experimental basis to map the real-time

locations of patrolling teams from police stations.

- The data collected would then be used for effective response during the emergencies.
- the mobile phone-based application will record timings of the patrolling, its route and the stops taken during the rounds.
- The application will be installed on the cell phones of Beat Marshals or patrolling cops so their movements can be mapped real-time by the control room staffers.
- The locations can be seen on the city's map, which would make dispatch of the nearest patrolling parties easier.
- Police officials said the application will help increase the patrolling frequency in times of emergency.

Japan's military launches first communications satellite

- Japan successfully launched its first military communications satellite that is designed to upgrade its network in the face of China's increasingly assertive maritime activity and North Korea's missile threat.
- The Kirameki-2 (kee-RAH-meh-kee 2) satellite was on an H-2A rocket that lifted off from the Tanegashima (tah-neh-GAH-shee-mah) Space Center in southern Japan.
- The satellite separated from the rocket and entered a designated orbit
- It is the first of three satellites that will replace three civilian ones currently used by Japan's military. The new satellites will allow military units to communicate on a high-speed and high-capacity network.

- The new satellites are also aimed at stepping up Japan's emergency response capability in case of natural disaster.
- China's maritime activity from southern Japanese waters to the South China Sea, as well as missile threats from North Korea.

Indian-Origin Mauritius PM Steps Down, Son To Take Over

- Mauritius is set to have a new Prime Minister, two days after the 86-year-old Indian-origin Anerood Jugnauth resigned and handed over the post to his son.
- Pravind Jugnauth, 50, leader of the main political party Militant Socialist Movement (MSM), has already formed his ministerial cabinet after receiving an appointment letter from President Ameenah Gurib-Fakim,
- In a televised address, Anerood Jugnauth said he was resigning in favour of a "younger and more dynamic leader". His son is currently the Finance Minister.
- According to the country's Constitution, the President appoints a member of the National Assembly as Prime Minister who has the support of the majority of members.
- Pravind Jugnauth's party has the majority in the National Assembly with 32 members.

Damodar Valley Corporation receives NTPC award 2015-16

- Damodar Valley Corporation received NTPC award 2015-16 from Union Power Minister, Piyush Goyal.
- DVC chairman Andrew WK Langstieh, received the prize by Goyal amongst the power sectors

under for implementation of Official Language.

Nita Ambani honoured by The Met in NY for her philanthropic work

- Nita Ambani, founder and chairperson, Reliance Foundation, has become the first South Asian to be honoured by the Metropolitan Museum of Art(The Met) in New York for her philanthropic work in the areas of education, sports, healthcare, rural transformation, urban renewal, disaster response, women's empowerment and promotion of the arts.
- The Met, recognised as one of the most iconic museums in the world, is currently located at three celebrated sites of New York — The Met Fifth Avenue, The Met Breuer, and The Met Cloisters — and houses over 5,000 years of art from around the world.

GOI Announced Padma Awards

- The government on Wednesday announced Padma awards to citizens of the country in recognition of their distinguished contribution in various spheres.
- These awards are conferred by the President of India at ceremonial functions which are held at Rashtrapati Bhawan usually around March/ April every year. This year the President of India has approved conferment of PadmaAwards to 89 persons as per the list below.
- The list comprises of 7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri Awardees. 19 of the awardees are women and the list also includes 5 persons from the

category of foreigners, NRIs, PIOs and 6 posthumous awardees.

Boeing launches engineering and tech centre in Bengaluru

- Global aerospace major Boeing on launched its engineering and technology center in Bangalore.
- According to the global aerospace giant, 'Boeing India Engineering and Technology Center' (BIETC) will leverage a 'talent pool of employees' to increase productivity and long-term competitiveness to support its engineering growth in strong international markets such as India.
- The company elaborated that BIETC will undertake 'high quality technology-driven work' to support diverse areas such as the development of advanced environment friendly coatings, and data analytics for next generation 'Airplane Health Management' tools.
- Besides, BIETC is expected to be engaged in the development of software tools for airlines and airports to improve their operations and reduce costs, automation for more efficient next-generation manufacturing, systems, infrastructure and analytics.

France issues first 'green bonds' with record 7 billion euro sale

- France has issued its first "green bonds" with a record seven billion euro (\$7.5 billion) sale, paving the way for the establishment of a genuine market in renewable energy bonds.
- Credit Agricole-CIB, which was one of the banks handling placement of the bonds with

institutional investors, said it was a "historic" event for the green bonds market because of the size and long maturity of the loan.

- The initiative was first announced in April 2016 by President Francois Hollande who has championed his country's role as a leader in energy transition.
- Poland was the first country to enter the green bond market with a more modest 750 million euro issue in December.
- Previously they had only been issued by companies or finance institutions such as the World Bank.

NABARD to raise Rs 20,000 cr for on-lending to co-op banks

- Cabinet permitted Nabard to raise about Rs 20,000 crore from the market for on—lending to cooperative banks at 4.5 per cent interest with an aim to provide cheaper crop loans to farmers.
- Nabard will make short term borrowings at prevailing market rate of interest for approximately Rs 20,000 crore for on-lending to cooperative banks at 4.5 per cent.
- National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) will also coordinate the conversion of operative/live Kisan Credit Cards (KCCs) into RuPay/ATM—enabled KCCs by cooperative banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in a mission mode.

India, France sign pact on maritime information sharing in Indian Ocean Region

- India and France has signed White Shipping agreement to enable information sharing on maritime traffic and maritime domain

awareness in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) amid China's expanding naval forays in the area where India wants to establish itself as the net security provider.

- The agreement was signed when the two sides held their second dialogue on maritime cooperation for the Indian Ocean Region.
- The White Shipping Agreement will be implemented over the next few months enabling Navies of India and France to coordinate their roles in stabilising Indo-Pacific region, persons familiar with the developments indicated.
- It will enhance Indo-French maritime security cooperation in the region.
- Delhi and Paris have been coordinating their naval movements and surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region over the last couple of years.
- France retains interests and assets with territories like Reunion Islands in the IOR.

Russia, Turkey and Iran Agree on Syria Truce Monitoring

- Russia, Turkey and Iran, the sponsors of the peace talks between the Syrian government and rebels, have agreed to act as joint monitors for the war-torn country's fragile ceasefire - in a promising step towards ending the violence.
- The sides will "establish a trilateral mechanism to observe and ensure full compliance with the ceasefire and prevent any provocations," according to a final statement read by Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Kazakhstan's foreign minister, following the talks in Astana.
- The accord was signed by Moscow and Ankara - the two major powers brokering the

negotiations - and Tehran, on behalf of the Syrian government and armed rebel groups, which have not officially endorsed it.

Rijju lays foundation for integrated check-post at Dawki

- Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijju on Tuesday laid the foundation stone for a Rs 92.34 crore integrated check-post (ICP) at the India-Bangladesh international border here in Meghalaya to boost bilateral ties.
- The ICP will generate employment opportunities and provide a major fillip to the economy of the state and the region. The ICP will strengthen the already good relations between India-Bangladesh
- Dawki is about 85 km from Shillong, the state capital of Meghalaya, which is the largest trade route with Bangladesh.
- The ICP is being built on an area spread over 22 acres, which includes a two-floor cargo terminal building of 2,456 square metres, two-floor passenger terminal building 4,625 sq metres, warehouse 1,420 sq m and parking 60,000 sq metres.

National Girl Child Day: 24 January

- National girl child day is celebrated every year on 24th of January as a national observance day for the girl child.
- This celebration was started to offer more supports and new opportunities to the girls in the country. It is celebrated to increase the awareness among people about all the inequalities faced by the girl child in the society.
- Inequality about girl child is a vast problem which includes many areas like inequality in

education, nutrition, legal rights, medical care, protection, honour, child marriage and so many.

India rejects attempts by EU, Canada for global investment agreement

- India, along with Brazil, Argentina and some other nations, has rejected an informal attempt by the European Union (EU) and Canada to work towards a global investment agreement at the World Trade Organisation (WTO)-level that would incorporate a contentious Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism.
- The ISDS mechanism has become contentious as it permits companies to drag governments to international arbitration without exhausting the local remedies and claim huge amounts as compensation citing losses they suffered due to reasons, including policy changes.
- The EU and Canada have inked an investment pact that has incorporated the contentious ISDS. At the meeting (of trade ministers of select countries held on the sidelines of the recently held World Economic Forum in Switzerland), they wanted the investment pact to be the template for a similar multilateral agreement. India summarily rejected such an idea.

Centre shifts disinvestment advice to new department

- In keeping with its ongoing efforts to streamline the disinvestment process, the government transferred the role of advising the government on how to utilise the proceeds from disinvestment from the Department of

Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) to the Department of Economic Affairs.

- This comes days after the Union Cabinet approved an alternative mechanism to decide the modalities to do with stake sales in public sector undertakings (PSUs), so as to speed up the process.
- Department of Economic Affairs in the Finance Ministry will now be in charge of "financial policy in regard to the utilisation of the proceeds of disinvestment channelised into the National Investment Fund

BCSBI to organise 'know your rights' programme

- To educate awareness on banking codes at grass root level, The Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI) will organise "know your rights" programme in all the states.
- For this, the organisation will adopt a three-fold approach in the awareness programme focussing Tier II cities, metros and other backward areas.
- With the opening up of innumerable Jan-Dhan accounts and increased usage of formal and transparent modes of financial transactions.
- It is now imperative for the lesser privileged section of the society to understand their rights.
- Conducting an educational programme through an interactive session would prove to be more beneficial as people relate things better when delivered in simple language with situational references than conducting a mere class-room session.

T-hub launches GIS Innovation Hub powered by Esri India

- Telangana government backed startup incubator T-Hub launched GIS Innovation Hub (GIH) for startups in the city, powered by Esri India, the geographic information system, or GIS, software and solutions provider.
- As part of this partnership, Esri India will induct startups into a three year startup program where they would receive free access to Esri's ArcGIS, a cloud-based mapping platform, software development tools and ready-to-use content.
- They will also provide training and technical support to make the adoption of GIS technology conducive for the startups.

Assam launches 'Chief Minister's Award' to reward districts adopting digital payments

- Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal mooted for cashless transactions through grassroot level programmes, saying his government has initiated several steps to digitise payment methods. "Cashless payment has the potential to root out corruption from the system and citizens must adopt cashless transactions as a way of life," the Chief Minister said inaugurating the 'DigiDhan Mela'
- Sonowal announced that a 'Chief Minister's Award' would be given to the best performing district in adopting digital payment methods and familiarising cashless transactions among a large section of people.
- A prize of Rs 50,000 would be presented at the end of financial year 2016-2017 after March 31, 2017 to Deputy Commissioner for the best performing district.

- Assam has performed better than many states in the country in ushering in cashless transactions at tea gardens and other interior places of the state

UN appoints Director of UNIC António Guterres in New Delhi

- UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed a senior Dutch official as head of the world body's information centre in New Delhi, covering India and Bhutan.
- Derk Segaar of the Netherlands has been appointed Director of the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in New Delhi, covering India and the Kingdom of Bhutan.
- From 2011 to 2013, Segaar was the Head of Communications of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in New York, where he directly managed its global media and communications activities, including the development and implementation of its corporate advocacy and communications strategy.

Siddhartha Murarka is now ICSI Chairman

- Siddhartha Murarka has been appointed as the Chairman of the Eastern India Regional Council of The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI). His term began from January 19,
- Murarka, a fellow member of the ICSI, was the head of risk management and compliance at a member firm of the PwC before starting his own practice.
- Murarka is also a "regular faculty" at ICAI and other professional bodies and chambers of commerce like the Merchant Chamber of

Commerce and the BCCI.

Kansas rep Mike Pompeo confirmed as CIA director

- The Senate has confirmed controversial candidate Mike Pompeo to head the CIA in President Donald Trump's new administration.
- His appointment was confirmed despite opposition from some Democrats, who highlighted the Kansas Republican's varying viewpoints on key issues such as surveillance, torture and Russia's "influence campaign" in the 2016 Presidential election.
- Mr Pompeo will lead the major agency as the intelligence community has been thrust into the spotlight and become an increasingly partisan issue.
- Mr Pompeo's appointment comes the same evening that Rex Tillerson, an oil tycoon with links to Russia, was confirmed as secretary of state.

Commerce & Industry Minister launched Rubber Soil Information System (RubSIS)

- Commerce & Industry Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman launched Rubber Soil Information System (RubSIS), an online system for recommending application of appropriate mix of fertilizers to the specific plantations of rubber growers depending upon their soil nature in New Delhi today. Smt Rita Teotia, Commerce Secretary and other senior officials of the Ministry and Rubber Board were present at the occasion.
- RubSIS, developed by Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII) under the Rubber Board in collaboration with three agencies viz

Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management, Kerala

- Apart from preventing indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and soil degradation, adoption of RubSIS will lead to reduction in the cost of production of rubber, increase in productivity and reduction in environmental pollution.
- The scientific and user friendly online fertiliser recommendation system was launched for Kottayam (Kerala), the largest rubber growing district of India which will be extended to the entire traditional rubber growing region i.e. the states of Kerala and Tamilnadu this year.

PVR launches theatre on demand service Vkaao, eyes 100 screens

- Multiplex chain operator PVR today launched theatre on demand service 'Vkaao' and plans to add 100 screens by end of next fiscal across the country.
- Vkaao is an online platform that enables consumers to watch any movie of their choice at a theatre of their choice.
- Vkaao is very disruptive and gives control to a customer to choose what they want to watch, when and where," PVR Pictures CEO Kamal Gianchandani said.
- Vkaao, a part of PVR Pictures, will initially begin service with 500 film titles across different languages and genres.
- Minimum requirement for a show to be confirmed would be 50 seats.

UK experts launch project to tackle Delhi air pollution risks

- Indian and British experts are joining hands on a project to help tackle health problems associated with air pollution in Delhi, which affect some 46 million people in and around the country's capital city. With air pollution levels at times up to 30 times greater than those found in the UK, Delhi was rated the most polluted city in the world for ambient air pollution by World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2014.
- Experts will measure airborne particulate matter and analyse how the pollution is being generated.
- The project runs for four years and will involve a series of field studies and follow-on analyses to determine the sources and processes responsible for airborne particulate matter in Delhi, linking with other projects funded in parallel to develop mitigation options.
- Following the Jan. 20 inauguration of Donald Trump as the United States 45th president, the newly sworn-in leader and chief made quick work in designating Indian American senior GOP member of the Federal Communications Commission Ajit Pai as the commission chairman.
- Pai is one of the two Republican commissioners on a five-member panel that regulates the country's communications infrastructure, including TV, phone and internet service.
- The Republicans' FCC majority would help them roll back pro-consumer policies that upset many phone and cable industry groups, including net neutrality rules that bar internet service providers from favoring some websites and apps over others, according to an Associated Press report.
- Pai opposed online privacy regulations that force broadband providers to ask consumers for permission before using their data, saying they are more onerous than the requirements for internet companies like Google and Facebook.
- In addition to Pai, Trump has nominated two Indian Americans to high-level positions: Nikki Haley as the cabinet-level ambassador to the United Nations and Seema Verma as the head of the agency for government health insurance programs.

Ronnie O'Sullivan beats Joe Perry to win record seventh Masters title

- Ronnie O'Sullivan created history as he sealed a record seventh Dafabet Masters title after coming back to defeat Joe Perry in a 10-7 triumph at Alexandra Palace in London .
- O'Sullivan's victory means he has surpassed Stephen Hendry's tally of six Masters trophies as the 41-year-old fought back from 4-1 down to retain the crown that he won in emphatic fashion in last year's final against Barry Hawkins.
- It also ensured the world number 13 ended a run of three defeats in finals this season and defended the title he won last year by thrashing Barry Hawkins 10-1.

Indian-American Ajit Pai is new FCC head

China builds world's largest solar farm

- China has reportedly built the world's largest solar park which can produce about 850 MW of power in Qinghai province.
- The Longyangxia Dam Solar Park occupies 27 square kilometres and has been expanded

several times since its construction began in 2013.

- The farm was built at the cost of around \$875 million (around Rs.6,000 crore), according to reports.

ISRO plans to launch 103 satellites on a single rocket

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will set a record when it launches 103 satellites in one go on a single rocket in the first week of February
- The satellites will be separated from the launch vehicle in different directions. The separation angle and time of separation will be such that one satellite will not collide with another
- In June last year, ISRO launched 20 satellites in one go. It took about 26 minutes to launch all the 20 satellites. In 2008, ISRO launched 10 satellites in a single mission. The highest number of satellites launched in a single mission so far has been 37 by Russia in 2014; NASA launched 29 satellites in one go in 2013.
- ISRO's workhorse PSLV (C37) with 103 satellites will be launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh

India,UAE launch dialogue on security situation in Afghanistan

- In a first India and UAE have launched dialogue on the security situation in Afghanistan in the backdrop of recent assassination of five diplomats from the Gulf country by suspected Taliban.

- The two sides in their maiden strategic dialogue in Delhi last Friday -- ahead of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan visit -- explored counter-terror cooperation & security coordination in landlocked Afghanistan where five UAE diplomats were killed in a recent terror attack, persons familiar with the development indicated to ET.
- The strategic dialogue led by respective deputy foreign ministers discussed various aspects of strategic and defence partnership

Ola names PepsiCo's Vishal Kaul as COO

- India's largest cab aggregator Ola has named Vishal Kaul, a former PepsiCo executive as its chief operating officer, a trend that is picking up among large Indian start-ups of bringing experienced hands to run operations as investors look at returns.
- Ola's peers in the Indian startup space such as Flipkart and Snapdeal have also brought in outside professionals to steer the company's path forward. Early this month, Snapdeal named Jason Kothari, former CEO of Housing.com, who turned the company and help merge with larger rival NewsCorp's PropTiger, as its chief strategy officer.
- Kaul, who has expertise in sales and marketing was till PepsiCo's General Manager of PepsiCo's Thailand, Myanmar and Laos units. He replaces Pranay Jivrajka, Ola's first employee, who has been elevated as Founding Partner to drive strategy.

2017 Asia Arts Awards India

- Asia Society Museum has been a pioneer in identifying and fostering avant-garde artists and engaging new audiences with their work.
- With this mission in mind, Asia Society inaugurated the Asia Arts Awards—A Gala Celebration honouring the Asia Arts Game Changers.
- This special event, now in its fifth year, will be held for the first time in New Delhi in February. Asia Arts Awards India is an opportunity to recognize and honour ground-breaking artists.

Himachali film awarded at US film festival

- For the first time, a film made in a Himachali dialect "Saanjh" gets international recognition by grabbing best feature film award at international Borrego Springs Film Festival held in California, US
- Saanjh, a Himachali feature film finally breaks this jinx and has brought laurels to the state by bagging two international awards.
- The best film award was received at the festival by film's co-producer Anil Chandel.
- Prior to this, the film also received award of merit at the Accolade Global Film Competition, California, US.
- The movie will now be screened at Bayou Film Festival, Louisiana, US, on January 26 and

Desh Prem Diwas 2017 - January 23

- Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's birthday or Netaji Jayanti is celebrated in the light of patriotism and a breeze of love for country as "Desh Prem Divas" on 23rd January.
- Bose was one of the most prominent leaders of the Indian Independence Movement. He spread the feeling of national integration,

sacrifice and communal harmony among the masses.

- In the course of struggle for freedom Netaji formed Azad Hind Fauz and led the Indian National Army. He advocated a revolutionary and violent way to protest as opposed to non-violent approach by Mahatma Gandhi.
- Following the differences with Mahatma Gandhi he separated from Indian National Congress (INC) and founded his own party on 3rd May 1939 in the name of "All India Forward Block."

Himachal Pradesh beats Kerala in learning outcomes: ASER

The Annual Status Education Report (ASER) 2016 found that Himachal Pradesh is doing well in many regards, on the education front, as compared to the rest of the states.

- It has the country's highest reading and mathematics learning levels, shooting past even Kerala, which has an almost spotless track record of maintaining its position as the most literate state.
- Himachal Pradesh has the highest rate of children who can read a standard II level of text in the country.
- This stands at 47 per cent for standard III level of learning, a 70.5 per cent for standard V and an 87.9 per cent for standard VIII.
- Even in mathematics, the students of the state are faring better than most of the nation.
- Although it came up second after Manipur in the standard III level of learning in mathematics, it maintained the highest rates for standards V and VIII at 53.7 and 59.2 per cent.

With Russia's help, India to increase train speed to 200 kmph

- Russian Railways is helping India's national transporter increase the speed of its passenger trains up to 200 km per hour.
- Russian Railways is at present collaborating with Indian Railways on a 575-km stretch between Nagpur and Secunderabad and submitted a preliminary report last week.
- To reach the desired speed limit, Russian Railways has proposed several technical and technological solutions, including reconstruction of railway alignment as well as treating the earth ..
- A protocol for this project was signed between the railway ministries of the two countries in October last year.
- The high-speed project will be jointly financed and the cost will be split equally between the two countries.
- Currently, the fastest train in India is Gatimaan Express with top speed of 160 km per hour.

Hong Kong withdraws visa-free facility for Indians

- In a setback to Indian travelers, Hong Kong, a special administrative region of China, has withdrawn the visa-free facility for Indians who will have to complete a pre-arrival registration from Monday.
- The Pre-arrival Registration for Indian Nationals will be implemented on January 23.
- The online service for Pre-arrival Registration for Indian Nationals is now open
- Till now Hong Kong has permitted Indians to enter with valid passport for a period up to 14 days without a visa.

- But the facility has been withdrawn despite representations from India ostensibly on the ground that the number of Indian asylum seekers was on the rise .

PNB launches Contactless Credit Card

- In another digitalisation initiative, Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched a Contactless Credit Card.
- This new credit card, which has been named PNB Wave N Pay --Contactless Card, was launched by Usha Ananthasubramanian, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, PNB in the capital.
- This card could be used by just waving it across the terminal and the transaction will be through. There is no need to enter any PIN for transactions up to Rs 2,000.
- The cardholder has full charge back rights on the misuse.

Ex-BCCI president Anurag Thakur to head Himachal Olympic Association

- Ousted as BCCI President following a Supreme Court order, Anurag Thakur was today unanimously elected head of the Himachal Pradesh Olympic Association (HPOA) for a four-year term.
- Thakur, who had to step down as BCCI President owing to the Supreme Court ruling on Lodha Committee reforms, was elected at the HPOA's Annual General Meeting
- The HPOA decided to have a Himachal Olympic Bhawan at Shimla and to organise the state Olympic festival on the lines of the national games at hamirpur from June 23 to

26.

CCI clears MakeMyTrip, ibibo Group merger

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved MakeMyTrip's acquisition of rival, ibibo Group, according to documents filed by Nasdaq-listed MakeMyTrip to US Securities and Exchange Commission
- On January 20, 2017, ibibo Group Holdings (Singapore) Pte. Ltd. (ibibo Group) received a letter from the Competition Commission of India stating that the proposed combination of MakeMyTrip and ibibo Group has been approved by the Commission
- The deal will bring all brands of the Ibibo Group such as Goibibo, redBus, Ryde and Rightstay under MakeMyTrip.
- Together, Ibibo and MakeMyTrip processed 34.1 million transactions in 2015-16
- MakeMyTrip founder Deep Kalra will remain group chief executive and executive chairman of MakeMyTrip Group and co-founder Rajesh Magow will remain chief executive of MakeMyTrip's India business.
- Founder and chief executive of ibibo Group, Ashish Kashyap, will join MakeMyTrip's executive team as a co-founder and president of the organization.

Sunish wins ITF Juniors title

- Dhruv Sunish finally got the taste of ITF Juniors title when he won the boys singles crown downing Kazakhstan's Dostanbek Tashbulatov at the Dakshin Kalikata Sansad clay courts.
- The under-18 India number two, who had lost in the finals of the Chandigarh Grade 3 ITF Juniors in the first week of 2017 and 2 ITF

Juniors in 2016, played flawless to drub the Kazakh 6-2 6-3.

- Bhan, the winner of Under-18 in the 2016 Fenesta Nationals, could almost do nothing as she got overpowered by the stronger Mareen in a mere 55 minutes.

Saina Nehwal Lifts Malaysia Masters Grand Prix Gold Title

- Saina Nehwal started the new year in the best possible manner after beating Thailand's Pornpawee Chochuwong 22-20, 22-20 in the women's singles final of the \$120,000 Malaysia Masters Grand Prix Gold in Sibul
- The Indian badminton ace recovered from a poor start in the first game to stave off the 19-year-old Chochuwong in the final. Saina's last title win was at the Australian Open in June 2016.

AIFF president Praful Patel becomes a member of Fifa's finance committee

- All India Football Federation president Praful Patel was on Thursday appointed as a member of FIFA's finance committee for a period of four years, PTI reported.
- The development follows just a month after Patel was made the senior vice-president of the Asian Football Confederation.
- According to the report, the FIFA finance committee takes care of the financial management and advises the FIFA executive committee on financial matters.
- The committee will also inspect FIFA budgets and financial statements prepared by the general secretary and submits them to the FIFA executive committee for approval.

India's biggest ship INS Vikramaditya gets ATM

- Indian Navy's biggest aircraft carrier, INS Vikramaditya gets an ATM onboard. State Bank of India will launch the ATM facility onboard premier warship in Karwar, Karnataka.
- This was made possible after the Navy approached SBI, the country's largest bank. The cash dispensing machine will operate via a satellite communication link and facility would be inaugurated on Saturday in Karwar. INS Vikramaditya is based in Karwar and the jetty is located quite far away from the town. The topography of the area is such that travelling either from the jetty to the town or from the sailors' colony to the town can be arduous task.

Donald Trump appointed 45th President of United States

- Businessman-turned-politician Donald Trump was sworn-in as the 45th President of the United States at the Inauguration Day ceremony in Washington DC.
- Trump, who was elected on his campaign promise of 'Make America Great Again', took his oath on two Bibles– the Lincoln Bible and one that had been gifted to him by his mother.

Physicists have created a new form of hydrogen

- Physicists from Austria have created new form of Hydrogen i.e. negatively charged hydrogen clusters.
- It is a previously unseen form of hydrogen.
- For the past forty years, existence of hydrogen in ion clusters was known and is positively-

charged clusters have already exists.

Shri Kalraj Mishra Inaugurates Workshop on MSME Cooperation among IORA

- Union Minister of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Shri Kalraj Mishra inaugurated a Workshop on MSME Cooperation amongst Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Member countries on January 19, 2017 in New Delhi
- Organizing a workshop on MSME Cooperation amongst IORA member countries was committed by India in the Economic Business Conference – II (EBC- II) held in Dubai in April, 2016.
- The Ministry of MSME in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs and IORA Secretariat organized this Workshop.
- The workshop was participated by 23 representatives from 13 member countries, including Mozambique, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, South Africa, Comoros, Kenya, Seychelles, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore, Australia, UAE and Yemen.

Civil Aviation Ministry Announces First Flight under UDAN Scheme to Take off in February 2017

- The Minister of State for Civil Aviation Jayant Sinha, on January 19, 2017 announced that the under UDAN (Ude Desh Ke Aam Naagrik) Scheme is likely to take off in February 2017.
- Presently there are 75 operational airport in the country and after the implementation of UDAN scheme 43 new airports will be added.
- The UDAN scheme aims to boost regional air connectivity to and from un-served and under-served airports and make flying more

affordable. Besides, it also aims to provide various incentives to airlines.

- The ministry announced that total 11 bidders have come forward to connect 30 airports which are currently operational, 12 which are underserved and 43 where not a single flight lands under the scheme.
- The fare for a one hour journey of approximately 500 km on a fixed wing aircraft or for a 30 minute journey on a helicopter has been fixed at Rs. 2500 under the scheme.

Dharamsala declared the second capital of Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh chief minister Virbhadra Singh announced Dharamsala as the second capital of the tiny hill state with a population of about 70 lakh.
- Dharamsala already figured prominently in national and international map due to its significance owing to many reasons including religious, natural and adventurous tourism and also being abode of Tibetan Spiritual head Dalai Lama.
- Dharamsala nestling in the lap of majestic snow-clad Dhauladhar ranges has a significance and history of its own and fully deserved to be the second capital of the state.

President Mukherjee inaugurated 28th Dantan Gramin Mela in West Bengal

President Pranab Mukherjee will inaugurate the 28th Dantan Gramin Mela in West Midnapore district in West Bengal in a few hours time. He is on a four-day visit to West Bengal. The fair will display the rural handicraft skills of the people of the region.

The different goods ranging from textile to terracotta will be on display.

ISKCON's Govardhan eco village bags UN award

- ISKCON's Govardhan eco village at nearby Wada taluka in Thane district has been conferred the United Nations award for taking innovative measures of 'sustainable tourism' in country.
- This is for the first time India has won such recognition from the UN in the NGO sector, an ISKCON release said on Friday.
- The award was presented at the annual United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism at Madrid in Spain

Adama Barrow sworn in as Gambia's president in Senegal

- Mr Barrow was sworn in as President in exile on Thursday afternoon, in the country's embassy in neighbouring Senegal, while incumbent Yahya Jammeh continues to cling on to power.
- Mr Barrow's inauguration ceremony was held in a small conference room at the Dakar embassy, and attended by dignitaries including the President of the Commission from the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas).

Punjab Royals wins Pro Wrestling League 2017

- Riding on Pankaj Rana and Nirmla Devi's brilliant show, Punjab Royals made the finals of the Pro Wrestling League Season 2 after beating defending champions Mumbai

Maharathi 5-4 in the second semifinal in New Delhi.

- Haryana Hammers, who were beaten to the title in the final of the inaugural edition by the now renamed Mumbai Garudas, saw the trophy slip narrowly from their grasp for the second year in succession.

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Raisina Dialogue In Delhi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi told 69 nations participating in the flagship geo-political conference "Raisina Dialogue" that reform would not be enough "unless it transforms economy and society".
- Pointing out that he had got a "mandate to take bold decisions", he said for his government, this means a "path of international engagement" -- focused on "restoring bridges, shaping relationships, making India human resource to be reckoned with".
- More than 250 representatives of 65 nations are participating in the second Raisina Dialogue.
- With a theme of "New Normal: Multi-lateralism with Multi-Polarity", the meet is focussing on deliberate on strategic issues including new challenges and cyber security.

Delhi Police Commissioner Alok Verma appointed Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi today approved the appointment of Delhi Police Commissioner Alok Kumar Verma as the new Director of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

- Verma will take over from interim director Rakesh Asthana, who was handed the reins of the investigating agency after former director Anil Sinha retired on December 2. He'll serve for a period of two years.
- Verma, a 1979 batch IPS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territory cadre, was the Director General of Tihar jail before he took charge as the Commissioner of Delhi Police in February last year.
- He has served the Delhi Police in number of positions, including Deputy Commissioner of Police (south district), Joint Commissioner of the Crime Branch, Joint Commissioner of Police (New Delhi Range), Special CP (Intelligence) and Special CP (Vigilance).

Govt. launches 'ShaGun' - a web-portal for Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

- To put an innovative progress in elementary education sector of the country by continuous monitoring of the flagship scheme - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar yesterday launched a dedicated web portal 'ShaGun', which has been prepared by World Bank in collaboration with Ministry of Human Resource Development.
- On this occasion, the Union Minister also reiterated government's commitment for improving the 'Quality' of Education.
- Learning Outcomes are assessment standards indicating the expected levels of learning that children should achieve for that class. These outcomes can be used as check points to evaluate learning at different points of time.

- The learning outcomes would help teachers to understand the learning levels of children in their respective classes individually as well as collectively. Learning outcomes should be the point of reference for conducting achievement surveys.
- Hence it is necessary that the defined Learning Outcomes are also shared with parents and community at large

Birender Singh Yadav concurrently accredited as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Sierra Leone

- Shri Birender Singh Yadav (IFS: 1997), presently High Commissioner of India to Republic of Ghana, has been concurrently accredited as the High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Sierra Leone, with residence in Accra (Ghana).
- He is expected to take up his assignment shortly

"Quantico" actress Priyanka Chopra wins her 2nd People's Choice Award

- Priyanka Chopra has become a star in the west, all thanks to her larger than life role of Alex Parrish on the popular TV show Quantico.
- The Indian actress has won her second People's Choice Award for Favourite Dramatic TV Actress.
- This is Priyanka's second award in a row and we are so proud of her.

PNB to provide technology platform for pilot launch of IPPB

- State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) will provide technology platform for pilot launch of India Post Payments Bank (IPPB).
- The memorandum of understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed between PNB and IPPB.
- As per the agreement, PNB shall provide technology platform for pilot launch of IPPB on receipt of regulatory approval from Reserve Bank of India, the bank said in a regulatory filing to stock exchanges.
- The bank will be headquartered in New Delhi and plans to launch 650 branches across the country during the year.
- The first PSU under the Department of Posts, IPPB expects to complete the rollout of its branches all over the country by September 2017.
- IPPB aims to become the most accessible bank in the world, riding on advanced banking and payments technology.
- Coupled with physical presence across 1.55 lakh post offices and the reach of the postman, it plans to become a powerful and effective vehicle of real financial inclusion in the country.

Govt inks MoU to set up 1,000 Janaushadhi Kendras

- The government signed an agreement with the National Yuva Cooperative Society to set up 1,000 Janaushadhi Kendras across the country and targets to open such medical stores in every block and gram panchayat to provide quality medicines at an affordable price.
- At present, 750 Janaushadhi Kendras, providing more than 600 medicines and 150 medical devices, are operational and the target is to open 3,000 by end of this fiscal for achieving health safety

- BPPI is the nodal implementation agency for the PMBJP, which is an initiative of the Department of Pharmaceuticals under the Chemicals and Fertilisers ministry to make quality medicines accessible to all citizens at an affordable price.
- The PMBJP scheme would drastically reduce the out of pocket health expenditure for the common man and give an impetus to the Make in India mission in the pharma sector.

- Addressing the media in Mangaluru, State Food and Civil Supplies Minister UT Khader said that the government has issued an order to this effect.
- Those interested in selling white kerosene in open market can approach the office of the Food and Civil Supplies in their districts
- Sunflower oil will be distributed to PDS cardholders below poverty line in Bengaluru and Mangaluru from next month, he said people from these regions did not prefer palm oil

Entrepreneurship Development Scheme inaugurated in Mizoram

- Mizoram Chief Secretary Lalmalsawma inaugurated the Entrepreneurship Development Scheme (EDS) under the New Economic Development Policy (NEDP), an official statement said.
- Lalmalsawma said the state government gave high priority to entrepreneurship development and has allocated Rs two crore under the NEDP during the current fiscal.
- Planning Secretary Dr C Vanlalramsanga said entrepreneurship was important for acquiring sustainable resources, knowledge and market, which would be instrumental in the state government's efforts to achieve market economy from subsistence economy.
- The EDS could be instrumental in implementation of 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations with minimum harm to the environment.

10th Jaipur Literature festival begins

- The 10th edition of the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF) begins with Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, veteran lyricist Gulzar, American poet Anne Waldman and spiritual writer Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, inaugurating the five-day event.
- Touted to be world's largest free literary festival, this year JLF has been themed on "The Freedom to Dream: India at 70" and will see over 250 authors, thinkers, politicians and popular culture icons engaging in stimulating discussions and sessions at the historic Diggi Palace.

58th India International Garment Fair begins in New Delhi

- The 58th edition of India International Garment Fair (IIGF) is beginning today in New Delhi.
- Organized by Apparel Export Promotion Council India, the event is one of the largest and most popular platforms in Asia, from which overseas garment buyers can source products and forge business relationships with

Karnataka allows sale of kerosene in open market

- The Karnataka government has decided to allow the sale of white kerosene in open market.

India's finest players in the apparel and fashion accessories domain.

- Textiles Minister Smriti Zubin Irani will inaugurate the three-day long fair.
- A total of 312 participants from 14 states are participating in the Fair.
- The major participating states are Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat and Karnataka.
- The sellers will be showcasing women's wear, accessories, kids wear and menswear.
- The event will have fashion shows for exhibiting the collections and developing business.

Bengaluru is Most Dynamic City in the World, Says WEF Report

- At the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting being held in Davos, Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) has published its list of world's most dynamic cities - the main ranking factors being rapid adoption of technology and innovation - and Bengaluru has taken the top spot, leaving behind global tech hub Silicon Valley.
- In fact, six of the top 30 cities are from India, hinting that the country's urbanisation rate is exponential.
- In JLL's 2017 City Momentum Index, Bengaluru secures the pole position, followed by Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, while Silicon Valley in the US comes in at third. After Bengaluru, the next Indian city to be in the top ranks is Hyderabad - securing the fifth spot, lagging behind Shanghai.

- This also makes India the only country in the world to have two cities in the top five.

Kapil Dev Inducted Into Legends Club 'Hall Of Fame'

- Cricket icon Kapil Dev was inducted into Legends Club 'Hall of Fame' in presence of former India captains Ajit Wadekar, Sunil Gavaskar and Nari Contractor at the Cricket Club of India in Mumbai. Dev, who led India to the emphatic World Cup victory in 1983, is considered as the country's greatest all-rounder.
- He was presented with a citation by former India player and Legends Club President Madhav Apte.
- Gavaskar, who was the first batsman to score 10,000 runs in Test cricket, was also presented a citation by Wadekar. He was already inducted into the club's Hall of Fame on July 11, 2013.

Shabana Azmi nominated for Asian Film Awards for 'Neerja'

- Actress Shabana Azmi has been nominated in the Best Supporting Actress category for the upcoming 11th Asian Film Awards, to be held on March 21 in Hong Kong.
- She has been nominated for her role in the film 'Neerja'.
- Shabana is the only person from Indian cinema who has received a nomination for an award this year.

Bharti AXA General appoints Sanjeev Srinivasan as CEO, MD

- Bharti AXA General Insurance has appointed Sanjeev Srinivasan as CEO and Managing Director.
- Srinivasan joined Bharti AXA General Insurance in August 2016 as Chief Commercial and Principal Officer and now takes over the role of CEO and MD.
- His main focus will be to drive Bharti AXA's go-to-market strategy of creating a balanced portfolio, driving new distribution tie-ups and creating a customer centric brand to drive profitable growth.
- European Parliament election: Antonio Tajani new president

Italian conservative Antonio Tajani elected the new president of the European Parliament

- Mr Tajani, 63, is a former spokesman for Italy's Silvio Berlusconi and an ex-European commissioner.
- He defeated another Italian, Gianni Pittella, and will take over from Germany's Martin Schulz.
- The European Parliament has the power to block or amend EU laws, and will have the final say on whether to approve a Brexit deal with the UK.
- Mr Tajani secured 351 votes, against 282 for Mr Pittella, a socialist. The contest ran to the maximum four rounds.
- Mr Tajani's European People's Party (EPP) group benefited from a new coalition with the parliament's liberals, the ALDE, who hope to curb the influence of anti-EU populist

25 children win National Bravery Awards

- Twenty five children from different parts of the country have been selected for Indian Council for Child Welfare's (ICCW) National Bravery Awards to be presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 23.
- Four of the awards are posthumous.
- The Bharat Award has been conferred to 8-year-old Tarh Peju of Arunachal Pradesh, who sacrificed her life in an attempt to save two of her friends from drowning.
- Roluahpuii and Lalhriatpuii from Mizoram, and Tushar Verma from Chattisgarh have been given Bapu Gaidhani Award posthumously.
- The Geeta Chopra Award has been conferred on 18-year-old Tejasweeta Pradhan and 17-year old Shivani Gond
- The Sanjay Chopra Award has been conferred to 15-year-old Sumit Mangain of Uttarakhand who displayed outstanding bravery in fighting a leopard to save his cousin.

IIMC introduces a PG diploma course in Urdu journalism

- In a bid to promote Urdu language the Indian Institute of Mass Communication launched a full-fledged postgraduate diploma course. The institute was earlier offering a five-month journalism course in the Urdu language.
- According to the institute, it has kept the fee of the course lower than what is being charged for any other course
- The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC) is one of India's premier institute for journalism. Besides Delhi, it has five other branches in Odisha, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala. The institute offers PG diploma courses in English, Hindi,

and Oriya languages as of now.

Kangra first ever district to geo-tag all assets under MGNREGA

- Kangra has become the first district in the country to geo-tag 100 per cent of the assets generated under the MGNREGA. Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh felicitated all the rural development officers for the achievement, at the cabinet Hall in the Mini Secretariat.
- The geo-tagging of assets under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is being done as to ensure online recording of the assets generated under the welfare programme.
- It allows the workers to click photo of the asset and upload it to a ISRO-run web portal thus digitally recording its time and location.
- It allows the ease in tracking the assets.

Meghalaya's Mawlynnong village has become Asia's cleanest village

- Mawlynnong village in Meghalaya has become a role model for other states in maintaining cleanliness.
- Known as Asia's cleanest village, Mawlynnong has become tourists' hotspot.
- To maintain its reputation as clean village, all 550 villagers carry cleanliness drive on every Saturday. Through cleanliness, the villagers have created opportunities to earn money as the village has become tourists' prime destination in North East.
- Recently, the village headman of Mawlynnong was invited to Vibrant Gujarat to explain its success story.

Anandam Scheme Launched in Madhya Pradesh to Help Poor

- Shivraj Singh Chouhan Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh launches Anadam Scheme to help the poor and the needed person. Under this scheme the people who are economic sound can donate items for the needed person.
- The state government of Madhya Pradesh has fixed the places in each district of the state where the people can donate items for the poor people.
- People can donate items like jackets, sarees, blankets, utensils, school bags for the poor people under Anadam Scheme.
- Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has appealed to the citizens to get them registered voluntarily as Anadak under Anadam Scheme.
- They will be imparted training and they will play an important role to publicize Anadam.

Suresh Prabhu unveils Mission 41k energy plan for Railways

- Railway minister Suresh Prabhu on unveiled Mission 41k, a plan that would save Rs 41,000 crore over 10 years through an integrated energy management system
- In this initiative, railways will electrify 24,000 km of rail tracks over the next five years by doubling the annual rate of electrification from 2,000 km to 4,000 km in the next two years.
- The railways will award contracts on engineering, procurement, and construction (EPC) model for railway electrification projects, to achieve this target.

- It also plans to mechanize the execution through self-propelled wiring trains among other initiatives.
- Under Mission 41k, change in the carrier's energy mix by using more green energy through 1,000 megawatt (MW) solar and 200MW wind plants, installation of LED lights and bulbs across all railway stations, trains and offices are also included.

India becomes Associate member of CERN

- India became an Associate member of CERN on Monday with the Indian government completing its internal approval procedures in respect of the agreement it had signed with CERN on November 21, 2016.
- As an Associate member India will have full access to all data generated at CERN. As there are many experiments in CERN, there will be plenty of information available. When we were not an Associate member, India could data only from those experiments where we were participating
- There are other benefits of becoming an Associate member. Whenever any CERN facilities get upgraded and go through maintenance, it will provide opportunities for Indian industries to participate

India among top 6 promising markets

- India features among top six for global executives when it comes to overall growth prospects over the next 12 months, but enthusiasm for investing in the country has dropped from three years ago, finds out a survey.

- According to the annual global CEO survey of consultancy giant PwC, released at the WEF annual meeting, the top two markets from the growth point of view are the US, as voted by 43 per cent of respondents, followed by China (33 per cent). Others in the pecking order are Germany (17 per cent), UK (15 per cent), Japan (8 per cent) and India (7 per cent).
- Last year, India was among the top five most promising markets globally.

South Korea ranked world's most innovative economy

- South Korea is the world's most innovative economy, followed by Germany, Sweden, Japan and Switzerland, according to the latest Bloomberg Innovation Index.
- South Korea notched top scores worldwide for manufacturing value-added as well as for tertiary efficiency, and was in the second place in R&D intensity, high-tech density and patent activity.
- The Asian tech powerhouse was ranked sixth in terms of researcher concentration.
- Rounding out the top 10 under the Innovation Index were Singapore, Finland, the United States, Denmark and France.

Manipur's Karang is India's first cashless island

- Karang, a small lake island in Manipur, has become the country's first cashless island.
- The Union ministry of electronics and information technology under its Digital India programme announced Karang as the first cashless island in India on Friday. Confirming it, deputy commissioner M Harekrishna of

Bishnupur district said the island fulfilled the Centre's necessary criteria.

- The Karang island is located in the middle of Loktak, the largest freshwater lake in Northeast India.
- The campaign was held from January 9 to 12. Karang Island Boat Association and Panthoibi Khoyol Standard Association extended help in holding campaigns on cashless transactions.

Poet Jacob Polley wins 2016 TS Eliot Prize for Jackself, 'a firework of a book'

- Jacob Polley has won the 2016 TS Eliot Prize for poetry, joining the ranks of previous winners including Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney and Carol Ann Duffy.
- Polley won the coveted £20,000 award with his fourth collection, Jackself, a sequence of narrative poems partly inspired by his childhood in Cumbria.
- The chair of the judging panel, poet Ruth Padel, called Jackself "a firework of a book; inventive, exciting and outstanding in its imaginative range and depth of feeling".

UNESCO recognises sitalpati or cool mat from Cooch Behar district as 'intangible cultural heritage'

- Sitalpati or cool mat from Cooch Behar district has been recognised as an "intangible cultural heritage" by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), according to a statement issued by West Bengal government.
- These mats are used for sitting or to hang on doors or windows during summer. The mats are made up of weaved green cane slips of

murta plants which are indigenous to the region.

- The gradual decline of sitalpati weaving was arrested by the by the proactive efforts of chief minister Mamata Banerjee who helped this traditional product gain global recognition.

Yes Bank launches customisable savings account

- Mid-sized private sector lender Yes Bank claimed to have launched the industrys first customisable savings account which will protect customers from "unwanted charges" levied in current offerings.
- Customers can choose from options like debit cards, alternatives to minimum balance requirements, and banking benefits such as ATM usage, digital banking products, branch banking and family grouping

Yes Bank launched "Yes Fintech", a business accelerator program

- Yes Bank, in collaboration with T-Hub, has launched 'Yes Fintech', a business accelerator program. T-hub is a startup incubator set up by the Telengana government and Anthil – a speed scaling platform for early growth stage start-ups.
- Yes Bank has been collaborating with more than 100 fintech start-ups and supporting them to provide creative solutions to the corporate, SME and retail customer base as a part of its Alliances, Relationship & Technology (ART) approach to digitised banking

India 60th in inclusive development index

- India has been ranked 60th among 79 developing economies, below neighbouring China and Pakistan, in the inclusive development index, according to a WEF report.
- WEF's 'Inclusive Growth and Development Report 2017' said that most countries are missing important opportunities to raise economic growth and reduce inequality at the same time because the growth model and measurement tools that have guided policymakers for decades require significant readjustment
- The Inclusive Development Index (IDI) is based on 12 performance indicators. In order to provide a more complete measure of economic development than GDP growth alone, the index has three pillars — Growth and Development, Inclusion and Intergenerational Equity, and Sustainability.
- Lithuania tops the list of 79 developing economies that also features Azerbaijan and Hungary at second and third positions, respectively

Petroleum awareness 'Saksham 2017' launched in Nagaland

- Every year the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MOP & NG) conduct mass awareness drive on oil and gas conservation across the country on January 16.
- From this year onwards the theme of the programme has been redesigned as Saksham – 2017 and the programme duration has been extended to one month.
- Saksham – 2017 was inaugurated for the state of Nagaland in a small function organised at Unity College, Dimapur on January 16 amidst

gatherings comprising of people from State Government, people from Oil sector, petroleum Dealers community in Nagaland, people from business community, college students particularly girl students etc.

Timothy Gonsalves Committee Suggests 20 Percent Reservation for Girl Students in IITs

- A committee formed by the IIT Joint Admission Board (JAB) has recently given its suggestion to create 20 percent reservation seats for the girl students in IITs out of the total number of seats available.
- The committee headed by professor Timothy Gonsalves recommended the supernumerary seats to address the issue falling number of female students entering the institute.
- However, the recommendation of the committee will get the final approval after the decision of the Joint Admission Board (JAB) who will decide whether the reservation will come in effect from 2017 or 2018.
- The decision will not affect the number of seats available for male candidates and only those candidates who have already qualified in JEE-Advanced will be considered. The decision will enable IITs to achieve the 1 lakh target by 2020.

Reserve Bank of India raises daily withdrawal limit from ATMs to Rs 10,000

- The Reserve Bank of India on Monday more than doubled the daily withdrawal limit from automated teller machines (ATMs) to Rs 10,000 but retained the weekly ceiling at Rs 24,000 with the supply of more five hundred notes.

- RBI has increased the limit on withdrawal from current accounts from the existing limit of Rs 50,000 per week to Rs 1,00,000 per week. This hike will be applicable to overdraft and cash credit accounts.

January 16: Religious Freedom Day

- Urging his countrymen to stand against religious intolerance, US President Barack Obama has proclaimed January 16 as Religious Freedom Day in accordance with a yearly tradition.
- Each year, by Presidential Proclamation, January 16 is declared Religious Freedom Day in the US. Obama urged the country's citizens to reject politics that seeks to target people because of their religion

IMF cuts India's GDP growth forecast to 6.6% on note ban woes

- The International Monetary Fund on Monday cut India's growth forecast for the current fiscal to 6.6% from its previous estimate of 7.6%.
- The cut is a consequence of the currency crunch following the demonetisation decision, said the IMF.
- The cut in India's growth rates comes days after the World Bank decelerated India's GDP growth for 2016-17 to 7% from 7.6%.

Indian Women Boxers Shine At Nations Cup In Serbia; Win Six Medals

- It's all Dangal with the Indian Women's boxing team as they went on to finish 3rd in the 6th Nations Cup in the Serbian city of Vrbas.

- India finished 3rd just after Kazakhstan and Russia in the elite category wherein the tournament also featured School Girl, Junior and Youth Division competition.
- The medal tally for India stands at one gold, four silver and four bronze.
- The solo gold for India goes to Neeraj of Haryana.
- This exceptional talent acquired the gold by defeating the top-seeded Jaina Shekerbekova of Kazakhstan.
- Surprisingly this is Neeraj's first International appearance.
- The four silvers were acquired by Sarjubala Devi (48 Kg), Priyanka Chowdhary(60kg), Pooja(69 Kg). They lost to Russia's Yulia Chumgalakova, Kazakhstan's Rimma Volosenko, Valentina Khalzova respectively in their bouts.

Rajeev Singh to take charge as interim CEO of Prasar Bharti

- Rajeev Singh, Member (Finance) in Prasar Bharati Board, will take charge as interim CEO of the public broadcaster after S C Panda retires in February.
- The previous CEO Jawhar Sircar had quit in October last year, a few months before his tenure was due to end, following which Panda, who is Member (Personnel), was made the acting CEO. However, Panda is also due to retire in February.
- The issue of vacancies arising due to Panda's retirement was discussed in a meeting headed by Prasar Bharati chairman A Surya Prakash in Hyderabad yesterday, sources said. "In a key decision, the public broadcaster decided that its Member Finance Rajeev Singh will take over

as interim CEO, after the present incumbent S C Panda retires in February

India Signs Financing Agreement with World Bank for US\$ 48 Million for Nagaland Health Project

- A financing agreement for IDA credit of US\$ 48 million (equivalent) for the 'Nagaland Health Project' was signed with the World Bank .
- The Financing Agreement was signed by Mr. Raj Kumar, Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs on behalf of Government of India and Mrs. Genevieve Connors, Acting Country Director, World Bank (India) on behalf of the World Bank.
- A Project Agreement was also signed by Dr. L. Watikala, Principal Director, Directorate of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Nagaland and Ms. Genevieve Connors, Acting Country Director, World Bank.
- The Objectives of the project are to improve health services and increase their utilization by communities in targeted locations in Nagaland.

Kiran Doshi wins 'The Hindu Prize 2016'

- Kiran Doshi, a retired diplomat and educationist from Gujarat, won The Hindu Prize 2016 for his third major work of fiction, Jinnah Often Came to Our House, a book set against the political turmoil of the subcontinent from the early part of the 20th century, ending with the Partition and Independence.
- Mr. Doshi was among the five authors shortlisted from nearly 60 entries for the seventh edition of the prize. The shortlisted

works included Anil Menon's Half Of What I Say, Hansda Sowvendra Shekhar's The Adivasi Will Not Dance, Kunal Basu's Kalkatta and Manjula Padmanabhan's The Island of Lost Girls.

Central & SBI Card launch premium co-branded card

- Future Group's fashion and lifestyle departmental store Central and SBI Card announced the launch of a co-branded credit card, to offer benefits to consumers in the premium lifestyle and fashion space.
- The Central SBI co-brand Card is the second by SBI Card and Future Group, after fbb SBI StyleUp Card introduced earlier in partnership with Big Bazaar and targeted at the value conscious consumer looking for affordable fashion.
- The Central SBI SELECT and SELECT+ Cards offer an accelerated reward points structure, where cardholders earn 20 reward points for every Rs 100 spent in Central stores.

India slips 3 places to 92nd rank on global talent competitiveness

- India has slipped 3 places to 92nd rank on the global index of talent competitiveness that measures how countries grow, attract and retain talent, a list topped by Switzerland.
- India's ranking is worst among the five BRICS countries. While China was ranked at the 54th place, Russian Federation was placed at 56th, followed by South Africa at 67th and Brazil 81st.

- Switzerland topped the overall index, followed by Singapore and the United Kingdom in second and third places respectively
- List was released by INSEAD Produced in partnership with The Adecco Group and the Human Capital Leadership Institute of Singapore (HCLI).

62nd Filmfare Awards 2017: Shatrughan Sinha honoured with the Lifetime Achievement

- Shatrughan Sinha, who completed close to five decades in the film industry, was presented the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 62nd Jio Filmfare Awards 2017
- Shatrughan Sinha thanked everyone on stage for the award. He said, "I've received my first Filmfare today.
- It's late in my career, but if you have the passion and determination, nothing can stop you from achieving what you want.

Sena Medal for braveheart who survived 6 days under snow

- Siachen braveheart Lance Naik Hanamanthappa Koppad, who survived miraculously for six days under a huge ice-and-snow debris after an avalanche hit his post before losing life to multiple organ failure, was awarded the Sena Medal.
- Dubbed as the 'miracle man', the soldier had managed to stay alive for six days in minus 45 degrees Celsius temperature

Virat Kohli breaks Sachin Tendulkar's record for most centuries in successful chases

- Team India's skipper and batting masterclass Virat Kohli on Sunday (Jan 15) surpassed Master Blaster Sachin Tendulkar's yet another milestone.
- Kohli, batting for the first time as a full-time skipper, scored 122 off 108 deliveries against England in the first ODI at Pune and powered India to a historic win
- After slamming his 17th ODI hundred during the run chase, Kohli - the Run Machine - also equalled Tendulkar's record of most ODI centuries, batting second.
- He also broke Tendulkar's record in bringing up most successful centuries while chasing. Kohli slammed a record 15th ODI century in successful chases and surpassed Tendulkar's previous record of 14 tonnes, which transformed into a win.

India, US sign MoU for collaboration in third world countries

- India and the US have signed an MoU to collaborate in the fields of developmental activities and aid in third world countries.
- The MoU has been signed between the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs of India.
- MCC is a US agency providing eligible countries with grants to fund country-led solutions for reducing poverty through sustainable economic growth. DPA looks after implementation of India's development cooperation programmes with partner countries.
- The two countries would collaborate on exchange of information and experience in sectors or issues pertaining to project

development or implementation in partner countries.

- India and US might also provide advisory or technical assistance to third countries regarding sector policy reform, project and sector management, project implementation, and economic growth promotion strategies in relevant sectors.

Simbu, Kitur win Mumbai Marathon

- Tanzania's Alphonse Simbu won the men's elite full marathon event while Kenya's Bornea Kitur bagged the women's title at the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon on Sunday.
- Simbu clocked two hours, nine minutes and 32 seconds to clinch the gold medal. Kenya's Joshua Kirkorir took the second spot with a time of 2:09:50 in a tough competition.
- Kirkorir's compatriot Eliud Barbogetuny came third as he completed the distance in 2:10:39.

A new mobile app for tourists by Tamil Nadu Tourism Department

- For the benefit of both domestic and international tourists, Tamil Nadu Tourism Department has launched a mobile app 'pinakin' with information on tourism in Tamil Nadu with audio facilities.
- The app, in two languages — Tamil and English — covers world heritage tourist sites like Mamallapuram, Thanjavur Big Temple, Gangaikonda Cholapuram and Darasuram. The app can be downloaded free of cost from iStore or Playstore.

App named 'SEZ India' launched by Commerce Ministry

- A Mobile app named SEZ India has been launched by the Commerce Secretary on 06 January 2017.
- SEZ Division, Department of Commerce under its broader e-Governance initiative i.e. SEZ Online System, has developed mobile app for Special Economic Zones (SEZs)
- App would help the SEZ Units and Developers to find information easily and track their transactions on SEZ Online System.
- Now the SEZ Developers & Units can file all their transactions digitally through SEZ Online system and track the status on the go through the SEZ India mobile app

BSNL launches "Sanchar Aadhar" for Aadhar based eKYC and digital customer engagement

- BSNL the national carrier, having the largest network across India with highest rural penetration recognizes the need to deliver consistent and personalized digital engagement to their customers.
- BSNL has launched its prestigious Customer Acquisition and Customer Communication Management (CACMS) project that digitalizes mission critical, customer centric business process to provide compelling customer experience across all channels throughout the customer lifecycle.

NPCI declares Rs 54.90 crore prize money for NITI Aayog's lucky draw schemes

- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) declared Rs 54.90 crore prize money to over

3.42 lakh winners for NITI Aayog's lucky draw schemes for consumers and merchants.

- The two schemes are - Lucky Grahak Yojna (LGY) and Digi-Dhan Vyapar Yojna (DVY).
- They were launched on December 25 last year and shall remain open till April 14, 2017.
- Schemes are aimed at incentivising both consumers and merchants to promote digital payments.

Prasar Bharti hosts International Television Dance Festival in Hyderabad

- Prasar Bharti hosts International Television Dance Festival in Hyderabad
- The first edition of Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) International Television Dance Festival is scheduled to be held in Hyderabad; the city with royal patronage for arts, literature and architecture, on January 15. Prasar Bharati is hosting the event. The Dance Festival is conceptualised so as to bring the cultural diversities from across the world into limelight, by breaking cultural barriers.
- The festival will showcase dancers from various countries which include Maldives, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Philippines, Fiji, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, India and Indonesia. The finalists from each country will participate in the grand finale of the first (ABU) International Television Dance Festival. All the participants are between the age group of 18-25 years.
- The festival's objective is to create a "bridge" between young people from different parts of the world through dance

BSF launches operation 'Sard Hawa' at Rajasthan border

- Border Security Force (BSF) launched operation 'Sard Hawa' at the western international border of Rajasthan, under which vigil will be beefed-up to check the instances of infiltration due to the dense fog in the area.
- The operation will continue till January 28.
- "The purpose of the operation is to keep a hawk's eye on the international border, where vigil has been beefed-up and officers have also been asked to be part of operation to motivate jawans

Madhya Pradesh Launches Digital Dakiya Scheme For Digital Literacy

- Madhya Pradesh government inaugurated a first of its kind scheme of the country, "Digital Dakiya" in Indore on January 14, 2017 to encourage cashless transaction in the state.
- Under the scheme, a Digital Postman referred as Digital Dakiya would visit door to door in both urban and rural areas to train households specially women and elderly people about digitized transactions.
- The scheme was inaugurated by the State Finance Minister Jayant Malliya. State government will provide Identity cards to the volunteers deployed in this programme.

Army Day: 15 January

- Army Day in India is celebrated with great enthusiasm every year on 15th of January. It has been started celebrating to respect the Lieutenant General of India, K. M. Cariappa (Kodandera Madappa Cariappa) who was the first Indian Army's Commander-in-Chief. It is celebrated every year at all the Army

Command headquarters and national capital by organizing army parades including many other military shows.

- Army day 2017 will be celebrated on 15th of January, at Sunday. It would be celebrated as 69th Indian Army day in the national capital.

62nd Filmfare Awards 2017: Best Film Dangal

- 62nd Jio Filmfare Awards 2017, held on January 14 at the NSCI Dome in Worli, Mumbai. Aamir Khan bagged the Best Actor Award for his performance in 'Dangal'. Alia Bhatt was honoured with the Best Actress Award
- 'Dangal' again- the wrestling drama was awarded the Best Film and Nitesh Tiwari bagged the Best Director Award.
- Sonam Kapoor won the Critics Award for Best Actor (Female) for her portrayal of Neerja Bhanot in the biopic 'Neerja'. Actors Shahid Kapoor and Manoj Bajpayee got the Best Actor (Male) nod for their performances in 'Udta Punjab' and 'Aligarh' respectively.

Parthiv Patel stars in Gujarat's maiden Ranji Trophy title win

- Gujarat clinched their maiden Ranji Trophy title as they rode on Parthiv Patel's innings of 143 to beat defending champions Mumbai by five wickets on the final day at the Holkar Stadium.
- Parthi and Manprit Juneja put up a 116-run stand after Gujarat were reduced to 89 for the loss of three wickets. Gujarat became the 17th team to lift the title.
- With this title, Gujarat have won the domestic titles in T20, one-day and Ranji.

- They are only the fourth team to achieve this feat.

India & Sri Lanka sign MoU to construct 3,000 rain water harvesting systems

- India and Sri Lanka today signed an MoU to construct 3000 rain water harvesting systems at a cost of 30 crore Sri Lankan Rupees in northern Jaffna District.
- The project envisages construction of rainwater harvesting systems for 3000 households in selected divisions of Tamil majority Jaffna District.
- The scope of the project also includes training of the households on operation and maintenance of the systems. It aims to assist people by supporting resettlement efforts focused on reintegrating internally displaced families in Jaffna by providing clean drinking water supply facility to households.

Guided rocket Pinaka Mark-II test fired successfully

- Pinaka rocket, which has now transformed into guided Pinaka, was successfully test fired from a defence test facility off Odisha coast
- The guided Pinaka has been combinedly developed by Pune-based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), Hyderabad-based Research Centre Imarat (RCI) and Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL).
- Pinaka Rocket Mark-II, which has evolved from Pinaka Mark-I, is equipped with navigation, guidance and control kit and is converted to a guided Pinaka. This conversion has facilitated enhancement of its strike range and considerably improved its accuracy

Kerala's first solar-powered boat launched

- Chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan has said that the government has taken up the development of water transport in the state with utmost seriousness.
- He was speaking after inaugurating the first solar-powered boat of the state water transport department, 'Aditya' at Vaikom.
- The boat will do service between Vaikom and Thavanakkadavu.
- The construction of the Rs 1.50-crore boat took nearly two years. The boat has a seating capacity of 75. The boat was manufactured based on the studies conducted at the ship technology department of the Cochin University of Science and Technology (Cusat).

India reach their best FIFA ranking in over a decade

- The Indian national football team moved up six places to the 129th position in the latest FIFA rankings, its best ranking since December 2005, when it was at the 127th position.
- Notably, the Indian team has won nine of its last 11 matches, which has helped it jump 42 places in less than two years.

NTPC to take over Rajasthan's Chhabra power plant

- The Rajasthan government on Wednesday night said that it has agreed to transfer its 1,000 megawatt (MW) Chhabra thermal power plant to NTPC Ltd, a central government power utility, in an asset-for-equity deal.

- AES India, Adani Power, Tata Power-ICICI were in race for acquiring the Rajasthan power project
- The deal was given effect through a tripartite agreement among NTPC, Rajasthan Raja Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd (RVUN), the state government's power generation utility, and power trading firm Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Ltd (RUVNL) in the presence of chief minister Vasundhara Raje in Jaipur.

Airtel Payments Bank to Get Rs. 3,000 Crores Investment from Bharti Airtel

- Bharti Airtel Ltd, India's top wireless carrier, has committed an initial investment of Rs. 3,000 crores (\$441 million) to build its new pan-India Airtel Payments Bank.
- Airtel Payments Bank is the first among several such niche banks to start operations, after the central bank handed over new permits to bring financial services within the reach of millions who still lack access to formal banking. Private-sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank owns a minority stake in Airtel Payments Bank.
- Payments banks can take deposits and remittances but are not allowed to lend. This new set of banks is expected to increase competition in the sector by offering higher interest rates on deposits.

46 UP constituencies to have Urdu electoral rolls

- For the first time, electoral rolls in as many as 46 assembly constituencies spread across 22 districts in UP would be printed in Urdu as well. In Uttar Pradesh, the voters' list is generally prepared in Hindi.

- According to the official website of the chief electoral officer of UP, among the 46 assembly constituencies, three are reserved for scheduled castes.
- These are Nagina and Nehtaur in Bijnor district and Chandausi in Sambhal district. In Lucknow, voters in Lucknow Central and Lucknow West would find their names appearing in Urdu.

Sachin Tendulkar-inspired cricket game 'Sachin Saga Warm Up' launched

- JetSynthesys, a digital and technology company, today announced the launch of a game on cricket, 'Sachin Saga Warm Up' under its gaming arm Playizzon.
- The company is associated with cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar, who trains the players to gain expertise in playing the game.
- Sachin Saga Warm Up is a batting game, where players across the globe can compete in real time. This 2 minute powerplay allows users to get assistance from Sachin himself on shot selection based on where the ball pitches and what kind of delivery it is.

Indians set Guinness record for most layered bed of nails

- Seven martial artists from Kerala, India established the Guinness World Record for the 'most layered bed of nails'.
- The record required the man at the bottom to lie on a bed of nails and a layer of nails was placed between each person that formed the human tower.

- Previously, the most layered bed of nails had four layers.

Sarita Devi, will mark her plunge as India's first woman boxing professional

- Former world and Asian champion, L Sarita Devi, will mark her plunge as India's first woman boxing professional when she takes on seasoned Hungarian Zsofia Bedo in her first bout in Imphal, Manipur on January 29, organisers announced on Thursday.
- After Vijender Singh put India on the map of professional boxing, the 31-year-old Sarita will follow suit but her initiation in the professional ranks is expected to be tough as Zsofia has 59 professional bouts to her credit, with 19 victories.

Rajesh Gopinathan appointed TCS CEO & MD, NGS named COO

- The board of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) appointed Rajesh Gopinathan as the new chief executive officer and managing director in place of N Chandrasekaran who has been appointed as the chairman of Tata Sons, effective February 21, 2017.
- TCS has also named N Ganapathy Subramaniam who is currently president, TCS Financial Solutions as the president and chief operating officer and appointed him as a director on the board of the company.

On Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary, National Youth Day Celebrated

- The 154th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, one of India's most revered

spiritual leaders, is being celebrated as National Youth Day on 12 January

- Vivekananda is an inspiration to youth all over the world, officials say, explaining the significance of National Youth Day.
- Born Narendra Nath Datta in an affluent family and raised in Kolkata, Swami Vivekananda died at the age of 39. He was always intrigued by spirituality and philosophy and, in his short life, managed to inspire millions.

Tewari named Senior Fellow of Atlantic Council

- Former Union minister Manish Tewari has been appointed as a Distinguished Senior Fellow at the South Asia Center of the Atlantic Council, a leading US think-tank on policy matters.
- At the council, Tewari will focus on developing programmes aimed at strengthening US-India ties, a statement released by his office said.

Europe's first underwater museum opens

- Europe's first underwater sculpture museum featuring over 300 life-sized figures has been inaugurated.
- The Lanzarote attraction, Museo Atlantico, took almost three years to complete and has 12 sprawling underwater installations by artist Jason deCaires Taylor.
- With the sculptures placed at 39 feet on the sea bed, divers can now tour the underwater museum off the coast of Bahia de Las Colorada

India, Kenya sign MoU on cooperation in agriculture sector

- India and Kenya have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the agriculture sector and allied sector and Line of Credit for USD100 million for agricultural mechanisation.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta held delegation level talks and praised the strength of the re-invigorated partnership between the two countries, which serves to increase stability, prosperity, and security in the Indian Ocean region and in the Asia-Pacific.

Obama Awards Biden Presidential Medal Of Freedom

- President Obama awarded outgoing Vice President Biden the Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- The two have enjoyed an unusually close working relationship over the past eight years, and Obama himself even joked at the outset of the ceremony that "this also gives the Internet one last chance to talk about our 'bromance.' "

2nd Kalvari class submarine INS Khanderi launched in Mumbai

- INS Khanderi – the second of the Kalvari class submarines – was launched at the Mazagaon Dock Limited in Mumbai.
- It has superior stealth capabilities and also precision guided weapons that can be launched while underwater or on surface.
- The submarine will now undergo rigorous tests and trials, both in the harbour and at sea, till December 2017.

BMW India appoints ex-Harley-Davidson India MD as President

- BMW has appointed former Harley-Davidson India MD Vikram Pawah as the President of its India operations.
- Pawah has previously worked with Honda Cars in India and Australia as the Assistant Vice President and Operating Head of Sales.
- Current acting President Frank Schloeder will assume the position of Head of Business Steering - Luxury Class in Germany.

UK becomes first country to recognise parkour as a sport

- The United Kingdom has become the world's first country to officially recognise parkour as a sport.
- Parkour, also known as freerunning, is similar to military obstacle training and involves a participant getting from one point to another, tackling terrain using only his/her natural body strength.
- The sport has been considered controversial since it uses minimal protection gear.

Citibank launches voice verification for phone banking

- Citibank has launched voice verification for its phone banking clients to replace the current authentication process of remembering PINs or answering verification questions.
- The bank said identifying a user's unique voiceprint will take 15 seconds, down from an average 45 seconds it takes currently.
- The authentication will be completed automatically while the customers speak to the bank official.

Flipkart's Binny Bansal invests in 3D printing startup

- Flipkart's Co-founder and Group CEO Binny Bansal along with four other angel investors has invested Rs. 6.6 crore in Supercraft3D, a 3D printing startup focused on health and medicine applications.
- Founded in 2016, the startup provides visualisation solutions to help hospitals, doctors and academicians get a better understanding of anatomy.
- It also manufactures customised body implants for patients.

Indian Railways launches new IRCTC Rail Connect app for Android

- Indian Railways has launched new IRCTC Rail Connect app that will replace the previous IRCTC app that was launched back in 2014.
- Indian Railways E-ticketing System caters to over 10 lakhs passengers daily (comprising 58% of total reserved passengers), said Minister of Railways Shri Suresh Prabhakar Prabhhu launching the app.
- The new app will increase the ease to users in booking and has been developed to bring the power of next generation e-ticketing system with enhanced security.
- The IRCTC Rail Connect will also be interconnected with IRCTC AIR, Food on Track mobile apps to facilitate booking of air tickets and food through e-catering.

Scientists Finally Discover The Function of the Human Appendix

- For generations the appendix was thought to have no purpose. But now, researchers say

they have discovered the true function of this organ, and it is anything but redundant.

- Researchers now say that the appendix acts as a safe house for good bacteria. The body uses this to essentially "reboot" the digestive system when one suffers from a bout of dysentery or cholera.
- Conventional wisdom used to claim that this small pouch protruding from the first part of the large intestine was simply redundant or an evolutionary shadow of a once useful organ.
- For years doctors advised people have their appendix removed and in spite of it's now-apparent use, most seem none the worse for having it removed.

HDFC ERGO Launches Trade Credit Insurance Policy Securing Trade Receivables

- HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, India's third largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, announced the launch of its new policy for corporate, the Trade Credit Insurance Policy.
- The new policy, also known as Credit Insurance Policy, safeguards suppliers against the risks of non-payment for the goods or services delivered to the buyers.
- Under this, the insurer covers a portfolio of buyers and pays an agreed percentage of the invoice or receivables that remain unpaid as a result of insolvency, bankruptcy or protracted default.

Delhi Airport first in world to adopt digital platform Arc

- Delhi Airport claimed it has become the first aerodrome in the world to adopt unique

performance and benchmarking digital platform, Arc, which helps in tracking and monitoring building performance.

- Developed by Green Business Certification Inc (GBCI) and US Green Building Council (USGBC), the global certifying body for all Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) projects, this dynamic platform at T3 would be used by airport operator to measure, manage and improve performance of airport on resource consumption, carbon emissions and quality of passenger space.

Modi inaugurates India's first international stock exchange at Gift city

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first international exchange-India INX-at International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in Gujarat International Financial Tech City (GIFT) located in Gandhinagar
- India International Exchange (INX), the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), through its global bourse, will start trading initially in equity derivatives, currency derivatives, commodity derivatives including Index and Stocks.
- Subsequently, depository receipts and bonds would be offered once the required infrastructure for the same is in place.
- India INX is one of the world's most advanced technology platforms with a turn-around time of 4 micro seconds. It will operate for 22 hours a day to allow international investors and Non Residents Indians to trade from anywhere across the globe

UAE's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed to be chief guest at 2017 Republic Day celebrations

- In a first, Arab soldiers will be marching in New Delhi during the parade.
- Visiting dignitary will bring a marching band from the UAE's defence forces at the parade on Republic Day.
- It would be the second time when any foreign contingent will be participating in the parade on January 26.
- Last year, the French marching band had joined the parade in honour of Francois Hollande, who was the chief guest.
- India has, however, nixed the UAE's proposal to send a military paratrooper team for live display during Republic Day Parade, citing security concern.

Cyber Pathshala: A for ATM, B for BHIM, C for Cashless

- A for ATM, B for BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money), C for cashless, D for Demonetisation is the new way alphabets have been associated to popular terms related to demonetisation in a new book "Cyber Pathshala" authored by former Rajya Sabha MP Tarun Vijay.
- The book by the ex-parliamentarian from Uttarakhand was launched by Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar at the ongoing World Book Fair here.
- The book relates H to Honest Money and describes demonetisation decision as "NDA government's initiative to get rid of dishonest money".

IBM becomes first company to get 8,000 US patents in a year

- American technology company IBM has become the first company to receive more than 8,000 US patents in one year in 2016. With 8,088 patents.
- IBM received an average of 22 patents per day last year.
- IBM was followed by Samsung and Canon with 5,518 and 3,665 patents respectively.
- Technology major Google received the fifth most number of patents at 2,835.

Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017

- Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2017 was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi.
- He also met Nobel Laureates at maiden Nobel Prize Series.
- This meeting is held at the Science City in Ahmedabad where the Nobel Media is holding the first Nobel Prize Series in the country in conjunction with the biennial summit of Vibrant Gujarat.
- Nobel Prize Series is a unique programme combining a conference, lectures, roundtables, and exhibitions. By bringing together Nobel Laureates, other experts and lifelong learners the programme aims to stimulate innovation and creative thinking

8-year-old Manipur boy breaks limbo skating world record

- Tiluck Keisam, an 8-year-old boy from Manipur, set a new world record in limbo skating in Delhi, for the farthest distance in limbo skating under bars.
- Tiluck covered 145 metres in 41 seconds with cones under bars, set at a height of 30 cm.

- Tiluck bettered his previous record of 116 metres in 31.87 seconds, set in 2015.

Pankaj Advani wins Kolkata Open National Snooker C'ship

- Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won the 3rd Kolkata Open National Invitation Snooker Championship.
- The 16-time world champion defeated Aditya Mehta 5-1, who won the previous two editions of the tournament in 2015 and 2016.
- Notably, this was Advani's maiden title win at the Kolkata Open.

World Hindi Day: 10 January

- Every year, the World Hindi Day is celebrated on January 10, marking the anniversary of the first World Hindi Conference held in 1975. The first World Hindi Conference was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- Since 1975, the World Hindi Conference has been organised in different countries like India, Mauritius, United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago, United States etc.

Indian, French space agencies ink pact on satellite launch technology

- Indian Space Research Organisation and French Space agency (CNES) today signed a partnership agreement in satellite launch technology.
- The agreement was signed between ISRO Chairman Kiran Kumar and CNES President Jean-Yves Le Gall in the presence of visiting French Minister of Foreign Affairs Jean-Marc Ayrault.

- ISRO is the second partner of CNES, in terms of volume, after NASA. Of comparable size and sharing similar objectives, the space programmes of both countries are complementary, it was noted.

China launches 1st commercial space mission with new rocket

- China successfully sent three satellites into space in its first commercial mission using an updated version of the low-cost Kuaizhou-1A rocket, amidst the Communist giant's determined bid to expand its ambitious space programme.
- The rocket, carrying the satellite JL-1 and two CubeSats XY-S1 and Caton-1, blasted off from northwestern China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in Gansu province at around 12:11 pm Beijing Time, according to a statement from the center.

Pakistan test-fires first nuclear-capable submarine cruise missile Babur-3

- Pakistan on Monday successfully test-fired its first Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead up to 450km from an undisclosed location in the Indian Ocean, giving the country a "credible" second-strike capability
- The missile, Babur-3, was fired from an underwater, mobile platform and hit its target with precise accuracy, the Inter Services Public Relations, the media wing of the Pakistani military
- Babur-3, which has a range of 450km, is a sea-based variant of Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) Babur-2+ , which was

successfully tested earlier in December, last year.

Shreyas bags Scottish Junior Open title

- India U-13 squash player Shreyas Mehta scripted a remarkable comeback to win the Scottish Junior Open title.
- Shreyas,, who had earlier won the US junior open, added another title to his kitty with a comeback from the jaws of defeat to post a five game win over Colombia's Juan Jose Torres Lara. The 9/12 seeded Indian won 8-11, 8-11, 11-5, 11-6, 11-7.

Eight-year-old Kashmiri boy becomes national boxing champion

- An eight-year-old boy from Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri has won gold medal in Thai Boxing Championship at the national level.
- Abbu Ammaz, a class 2 student was felicitated by the district authorities and the civil administration as well as by the police.

Obama selects four Indian-Americans for presidential awards

- US President Barack Obama on Tuesday chose four Indian-American scientists for the highest honour given by the US government to science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers. The honour is recognition for keeping the US on the cutting edge with their innovations.
- The four are part of the list of 102 scientists and researchers who are recipients of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE).

- These scientists are Pankaj Lal from Montclair State University, Kaushik Chowdhury from Northeastern University, Manish Arora from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Aradhna Tripathi from University of California, Los Angeles.

Axis Bank becomes third lender to offer block chain service

- Private sector Axis Bank on Monday became the third lender in the country to announce usage of block chain solutions for its operations, after its peers ICICI Bank and Yes Bank.
- Block chain solutions is a distributed database that maintains a continuously growing list of ordered records called blocks. It is said to reduce turnaround times, is transparent and also ensures zero errors. Axis Bank has tied up with fintech firm Ripple to offer the solution.

Gurgaon admin gets e-governance award for using GIS technology

- The Gurgaon district administration was conferred with a national e-governance award for its innovative use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technology in solving land disputes.
- Deputy commissioner TL Satyaprakash received the award in a function held at the 20th National Conference on e-Governance at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- The award has been given to the district administration for its G-Triangulation project awarded gold under category 4 for innovative use of GIS. G-Triangulation is a concept in which a minimum of three points on a map are

required to identify an area.

First student startup fund has Rs 200 crore

- Gujarat government has come up with India's first student startup and innovation policy, which aims to provide Rs 200 crore in the form of grants to ideas developed by them. The policy aims to support over 1,000 innovation per year and create pre-incubation support in all universities of the state.
- Under the pre-incubation support, it would help convert ideas of students from proof of concept (PoC) upto minimum viable proto-type (MVP), besides providing support for patent filing.
- Under the policy, Gujarat government would provide Rs 200 crore as State Innovation Fund during the next five years, of which Rs 100 crore will be allocated by the state government and the remaining amount will be created by internal sources, like university funds and CSR funds.

World's Largest LED Street Light Replacement Project Launched

- Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal launched the "world's largest" LED street light replacement project completed by SDMC in south Delhi wherein two lakh conventional street lights have been replaced with energy efficient LEDs.
- The initiative under the Street Lighting National Programme being implemented by the Energy Efficiency Services Limited of Ministry of Power, will save 6.10 crore units of electricity per year thus reducing the electricity bill by 54 per cent.

SBI Pension Funds appoints Kumar Sharadindu new MD & CEO

- SBI Pension Funds, a subsidiary of State Bank of India, has appointed Kumar Sharadindu as its managing director and chief executive. SBI Pension Funds is one of the three pension fund managers appointed by the regulator PFRDA to manage the pension corpus of employees enrolled under the National Pension System for government employees.
- Sharadindu was a general manager at SBI Corporate Centre, Mumbai, heading the private equity business.
- He has held several crucial assignments in his banking career spanning over three decades in areas of credit, treasury, risk and large corporate lending.

IIT-Kharagpur alumnus garners prestigious 'Technical Oscar'

- An IIT Kharagpur alumnus has won the prestigious Technical Achievement Award (the Scientific & Technical Awards prize), popularly called the 'Technical Oscar', awarded by the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences.
- Parag Havaldar, who graduated from IIT-Kharagpur in 1991 with a degree in computer science and engineering, has been awarded for "the development of expression-based facial performance-capture technology at Sony Pictures Imageworks".
- Havaldar's popular works include 'Watchmen', 'Green Lantern', 'The Amazing Spider-Man', 'Beowulf' and 'Hancock'.

- He will be awarded a certificate from the Academy at Beverly Hills on Feb 11.

- Icelandair – 41.05% El Al – 56% are on first and second position respectively.

Anti-avoidance tax rule GAAR to kick in from April 2017

- Tax anti-avoidance rule GAAR will kick in from April 1, 2017
- In May last year, CBDT had started consultation with stakeholders asking them to give their views where they require clarity before GAAR is implemented.
- General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR) was part of the 2012-13 Budget speech of the then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee to check tax evasion and avoidance.
- However, its implementation was repeatedly postponed because of the apprehensions expressed by foreign investors.
- It contains provision allowing the government to prospectively tax overseas deals involving local assets.
- There have been fears that the government may use it to target P-Notes. Through the use of GAAR, government may try to tax P-Notes as indirect investments, which could attract a tax rate of up to 15 per cent, experts say.
- To avoid tax altogether under GAAR, an investor may have to prove that P-Notes were not set up specifically to avoid paying taxes.

Humanoid robot Ira to be deployed at HDFC Bank branch

- Private lender HDFC Bank launched what it claimed to be the first 'humanoid' in the domestic banking space, and also said it is looking to partner with start-ups having technological solutions for rural operations.
- The bank showcased human-sized robot Ira, developed in association with Kochi-based Asimov Robotics,
- The robot will perform a limited role and act largely as a receptionist, though the humanoid can also move around in the branch. Chugh claimed this is the first 'humanoid' in the domestic banking space.

Assam govt comes up with e-Wallet

- The Assam government will be shortly launching its indigenously-developed e-Wallet, Tokapoisa.in, to enable the people of the state for hassle-free online transactions in local language.
- The mobile application Tokapoisa.in has been developed by the Assam Electronics Development Corp. Ltd. Besides being an e-Wallet, it will be a virtual payment terminal.

Air India ranked third-worst performing airline in the world

- Every year, the aviation insights company FlightStats puts together a list of the international airlines with the best on-time performance records.
- Air India ranked third-worst performing airline in the world

Big B awarded by US embassy for spreading awareness on TB

- Actor Amitabh Bachchan was given an award on Sunday by the US Embassy for his contribution to the US-India partnership on tuberculosis.

- Bachchan, who suffered from tuberculosis in 2000, is a brand ambassador for the initiative.
- "I hope to continue to do my bit in this partnership to end tuberculosis in India," said Amitabh.

Netherlands' KLM rated best international airline of 2016

- Netherlands' flag carrier KLM has been rated the best international airline of 2016 by aviation insights company FlightStats, which ranked carriers on their on-time performance records.
- KLM, with an 11.47% chance of a flight delay, was followed by Spain's flag carrier Iberia (11.82%) and Japan's flag carrier JAL (12.2%).
- Qatar Airways and Austrian Airlines completed the top five.

Flipkart replaces Binny Bansal with Kalyan Krishnamurthy as CEO

- Flipkart has elevated former Tiger Global Management executive Kalyan Krishnamurthy as its new chief executive, replacing co-founder Binny Bansal, who has been named as the group chief executive of India's largest online marketplace.
- Co-founder Sachin Bansal continues to be executive chairman.
- Under the new structure and in his new role as Flipkart CEO, Krishnamurthy will be responsible for the Flipkart profit and loss account, the company said. He will report to Binny Bansal.

9 La Liga players in FIFA FIFPro World XI

- Five Real Madrid players and four Barcelona players were included in the 2016 FIFA FIFPro

World XI, along with Juventus player Dani Alves and Bayern Munich goalkeeper Manuel NEUER.

- The five Real Madrid players are Sergio Ramos, Marcelo, Luka Modric, Toni Kroos and Cristiano Ronaldo.
- On the other hand, Barcelona's four players were announced to be Gerard Pique, Andres Iniesta, Luis Suarez and Leo Messi.

Cristiano Ronaldo is crowned Fifa's Best Player in the World

- Cristiano Ronaldo has been named Fifa's Best Player in the World – before aiming a cheeky dig at his great rival Lionel Messi.
- The Real Madrid man beat off Barcelona's Messi, who wasn't at the event, and Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann to collect the award

Claudio Ranieri wins Best FIFA Men's Coach of the Year

- Leicester City's Claudio Ranieri won the Best FIFA Men's Coach of the Year award after beating Portugal's Fernando Santos and Real Madrid's Zinedine Zidane on the shortlist.
- Ranieri beat strong competition from Zidane, who led his Real Madrid side to their 11th UEFA Champions League title in his first season as a manager and also won the 2016 UEFA Super Cup and 2016 FIFA Club World Cup.
- Silvia Neid won the Best Women's Coach award after Germany won the Olympics gold medal.

- It's the third time she has been honoured by FIFA after winning the World Women's Coach of the Year in 2010 and 2013.

USA's Carli Lloyd wins 2nd straight best female player award

- USA women's football team captain Carli Lloyd was named as FIFA's Best Female footballer of the year for the second straight time, during The Best FIFA Football Awards in Zurich.
- Lloyd, who plays for American football club Houston Dash, is a World Cup winner and a two-time Olympic gold medal winner.

Mumbai WiFi becomes India's largest public WiFi service

- Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis on Monday activated 500 WiFi hotspots at various locations across the city of Mumbai, and announced that Mumbai WiFi is the largest public WiFi service in the country.
- Claiming that it is one of the largest in the world too, Fadnavis said, "As committed, 1,200 WiFi hotspots will be activated by May 1, 2017."

Shri Rajnath Singh lays the Foundation Stone of New NDRF Campus in Andhra Pradesh

- The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone of the new NDRF campus at Konda Pavuluru, Gannavaram (Mandal), Krishna, Andhra Pradesh,
- This campus will come up in 50 acres land provided by the Andhra Pradesh Government and the expenditure for construction will be

borne by the Central government. The campus will be completed in two years.

- 10th Battalion of NDRF is responsible for looking after the areas of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka for disaster response.

Vijayawada to host 1st Digi Dhan Mela in Andhra Pradesh

- In Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada will be host to the first Digi Dhan Mela in the State this afternoon. Digi Dhan Melas are being organized across the country to promote cashless transactions.
- Union Minister for Urban Development and Information Broadcasting M. Venkaiah Naidu along with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu will launch the Mela at Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium, Vijayawada.

The ninth edition of Jaipur International Film Festival (JIFF) begins

- The ninth edition of Jaipur International Film Festival (JIFF) began here in the presence of renowned film makers including Hariharan.
- The ceremony opened with tributes to veteran actor Om Puri who died of a massive heart attack
- This years Life Time Achievement Award was presented to internationally acclaimed cine-visionary Ramesh Prasad hailed as creator of specialised post production facilities.

PM Modi announces scheme to skill Indian youth seeking jobs abroad

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the government will shortly launch the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY) which is aimed at skilling Indians seeking employment abroad.
- The prime minister was speaking at the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Bengaluru.
- The Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana is targeted at Indian youth seeking overseas employment.
- PKVY will train and certify Indians, who are keen on overseas employment in select sectors, in line with international standards.
- It will be implemented by the National Skill Development Corporation through its training partners and in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Skill Development Ministry

Sania Mirza wins Brisbane International title

- Sania Mirza picked up her first title of the season, combining with American Bethanie Mattek-Sands to lift the Brisbane International women's doubles title.
- She ended up losing the World No.1 crown to her partner.
- Sania Mirza held the No.1 ranking in doubles for 91 weeks
- Her position was taken over by Mattek-Sands.

Olympic champion David Rudisha to be Mumbai Marathon Ambassador

- Reigning Olympic and world 800m champion and world record holder, David Rudisha is the International Event Ambassador for the 14th Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon to be held on January 15

- He retained his Olympic 800m title with an imperious display at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games in August with a run of 1:42.15, the fastest time in the world.
- He took the gold in London four years before in a world record 1:40.91.

EPFO makes Aadhaar mandatory for pensioners, members

- Retirement fund body Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has made it mandatory for its about pensioners and subscribers to provide either Aadhaar or a proof that they have applied for it till month-end to remain a beneficiary of its social security schemes.
- Since the government provides subsidy to an EPFO member, it has invoked Section 7 of the Aadhaar Act.
- Section 7 of the Act provides that where government provides subsidy, benefit or service from Consolidated Fund of India, an individual can be asked to undergo authentication, or furnish proof of possession of Aadhaar number.
- It also provides that where an individual to whom no Aadhaar number has been assigned, such individual can apply for enrollment.

Agra and Sikkim have bagged positions in New York Times' top travel destinations list

- Agra and Sikkim featured in New York Times' list of '52 Places to go to in 2017'.
- While Agra has ranked third in the list, Sikkim has bagged the 17th position among the top travel destinations for this year.

- Canada, on the other hand, has been declared the top travel destination of the year.

Indian teenagers win prestigious Travel Photographer Of The Year award 2016

- Darpan Basak, 14 years of age, won the Young Travel Photographer Of The Year, and Ankit Kumar, 13, won the Young Travel Photographer (14 years old and under) in the Places and Experiences category.
- Travel Photographer Of The Year award was founded by photographers Chris and Karen Coe in 2003.
- It's an annual award that receives entries from over 100 countries. It's also an award that has some of the most beautiful picture you'll ever see as its entries.

Kerala Ranks 8 in '12 Destinations to Watch' in 2017 by ABTA

- Kerala figures at number eight in the "12 destinations to watch in 2017" by Britain's largest and prominent travel and tours operators association.
- The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) has ranked Kerala higher than premier destinations like the US, Sardinia (island of Italy), South Africa and Vietnam
- The rankings consist of locations that are expected to capture traveller's imaginations over the next year.

Velavan Senthilkumar wins British Junior Open Under-19 Squash title

- Velavan Senthilkumar created history by winning the first-ever all-Indian Boys' Under-19 final at the British Junior Open in Sheffield.

- India also secured the bronze medal in this category after 9/16th seeded Adhitya Raghavan finished third.
- In the 91-year history of this event, considered the world's second most prestigious junior tournament after the World Championships, this was the first time two Indians faced off in a summit clash.

Visually Impaired Indian Will Participate in the Boston Marathon

- Sagar Baheti, who has Stargardt's disease, will be the first visually-impaired runner to participate in the upcoming 121st Boston Marathon on April 17.
- He will be running to raise funds for the Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- "It will be great if our society could be more inclusive...of those who live with disabilities," said Sagar

Qantas named world's safest airline 4th year running

- Australia's flag carrier Qantas Airways Ltd's fatality free record in the jet age means it is the world's safest airline, for the fourth year running.
- Ratings website AirlineRatings.com announced the carrier atop its Top 20 list, ahead of Cathay Pacific, Middle-eastern giant Etihad Airways, Singapore Airlines and local rival Virgin Australia.
- Qantas was the leader in the Future Air Navigation System, the Flight Data Recorder, which was developed by Australia's chief scientific body the CSIRO, to monitor plane

and crew performance, as well as advances in automatic landings and precision approaches in mountainous regions.

Rohan Bopanna-Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan win Chennai Open doubles title

- Rohan Bopanna and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan, playing only the second time together, notched up a memorable victory in a historic all-Indian doubles final, as they outplayed compatriots Divij Sharan and Purav Raja in the Chennai Open.
- It is the first time that an Indian team has clinched the Chennai Open trophy since the legendary Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi took the title in 2011.

Aadhaar mandatory for MGNREGS work from April

- From April 1, people living in rural areas need to have Aadhaar to work under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) that mandates 100 days work for a household annually.
- People registered under the scheme will be required to give proof of possession of Aadhaar or undergo the enrolment process till March 31, 2017
- Those who have applied for Aadhaar can show their enrolment slip or copy of application made to the authorities concerned for getting the 12-digit unique identification number which acts as a proof of identity and address anywhere in the country.

Novak Djokovic ends Andy Murray's winning run to clinch Doha title

- Novak Djokovic brought world No 1 Andy Murray's 28-match winning streak to an end in Doha on Saturday to retain the Qatar Open title in a three-set thriller.
- Serbian Djokovic won 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 in a high-quality, action-packed match between the two best players in the world lasting almost three hours.
- It is Djokovic's 25th career victory over Murray and puts down an early-season marker against his great British rival, before the Australian Ope

Portuguese PM gifts Cristiano Ronaldo jersey to Narendra Modi

- A jersey of Portugal's famous football player Cristiano Ronaldo was gifted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by his Portuguese counterpart Antonio Costa after bilateral talks between them.
- The red jersey bearing Ronaldo's trademark 'No.7' was handed over to Modi by Costa
- The jersey was personally signed by Ronaldo.

Russia removes LinkedIn from local App stores

- Russia has directed Google and Apple to remove LinkedIn from the local Android and iOS App stores.
- The directive comes weeks after a Russian court blocked the networking platform for disregarding a rule which requires companies to store Russian citizens' data within the country's borders.
- Google and Android have complied with the order and the app is no longer available.

Virat Kohli named captain of Indian ODI, T20I teams

- Virat Kohli has been named India's limited-overs captain following a meeting of the selection committee on Friday to announce the squad for the England series beginning January 15.
- Former skipper MS Dhoni has been included as wicketkeeper-batsman in the squad, which also features Yuvraj Singh.
- Suresh Raina has been named in the T20I squad but has been excluded from ODIs.

Michelle Obama selects Indo-American for education campaign

- US First Lady Michelle Obama has selected a 16-year-old Indian-American to serve in the inaugural Student Advisory Board of the 'Better Make Room' education campaign.
- Swetha Prabakaran, the only Indian-American on the list, has been chosen in recognition of her efforts to educate the youth in computer sciences.
- She has previously been honoured as a White House Champion of Change.

Sir Tim Barrow appointed as Britain's EU ambassador

- UK's government has appointed career diplomat Sir Tim Barrow as its ambassador to the EU.
- The office of Britain's PM Theresa May said that Barrow is a seasoned and tough negotiator who will bring energy to Brexit talks.
- The former ambassador Sir Ivan Rogers had resigned after accusing the government of "ill-

founded arguments and muddled thinking" over the Brexit negotiation.

World Book Fair begins in Delhi from Jan 7

- The World Book Fair which is being organised in the national capital from January 7-15 at Pragati Maidan,
- The fair will have 'Manushi' as the theme of the year and will focus on writings on and by women.
- Prominent writers and scholars such as Kailash Satyarthi and Hemant Singh Katoch

Norway to become first country to switch off FM radio

- Norway is set to become the first nation to switch off its FM radio network, with the parliament approving a proposal to shift to Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB).
- This was opposed by 66% Norwegians over concerns that they may miss emergency warnings broadcasted via radio.
- The shutdown will begin on January 11 in the northern city of Bodoe.

30 Indian-origin men, women in Forbes list of super achievers

- Over 30 Indian-origin innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders have been featured in the 2017 edition of Forbes' list of super achievers under the age of 30 who seek to break the status quo and transform the world.
- The Forbes list has 30 game changers in 20 industries including healthcare, manufacturing, sports and finance.
- The 600 in the list are "challenging the conventional wisdom and rewriting the rules

for the next generation of entrepreneurs, entertainers, educators and more. They are passionate and formidable bunch, and for good reason. Their goal is nothing short of breaking the status quo and transforming the world."

Arun Jaitley chairs 16th meeting of Financial Stability and Development Council

- The government expects its measures on elimination of the shadow economy and tax evasion to have a positive impact on GDP and fiscal consolidation in the long run, finance minister Arun Jaitley said while chairing the Sixteenth Meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC).
- The Council, which has heads of all financial sector regulators as its members, reviewed the major issues and challenges facing the economy in its 16th meeting held
- The Council also reviewed the status of NPAs of public sector banks and the measures were taken by the government and the RBI for tackling the stressed assets and discussed further action to be taken in this regard

MS Dhoni gives up India's ODI and T20 captaincy

- MS Dhoni has stepped down as captain of India's limited-overs teams ahead of the ODIs and T20Is against England in January. He will still be available for selection as a wicketkeeper-batsman for the series
- Dhoni had given up the Test captaincy in December 2014, when he retired from the format after the Melbourne Test. However, he stayed on as ODI and T20 international

captain after having taken on those roles in 2007.

- He was India's most successful captain, leading the team to victory in the 2007 World T20 in South Africa, the 2011 World Cup in India, and the 2013 Champions Trophy in England. Dhoni captained India in 199 ODIs, of which he won 110 and lost 74. He was captain in 72 T20Is, of which India won 41 and lost 28.
- He was also India's most successful Test captain, with 27 wins, 18 defeats and 15 draws.
- Dhoni is also the only captain to have led India to ODI and T20I series wins in Australia, and an ODI series win in New Zealand.

India win record 4th straight SAFF Women's C'ship title

- India's women's football team defeated Bangladesh 3-1 in Siliguri to win the 2016 South Asian Football Federation Women's Championship for the fourth consecutive time.
- Dangmei Grace opened the scoring for India, with Sasmita Malik and Indumathi Kathiresan scoring second-half goals for the hosts.
- India have won all editions of the eight-nation tournament, which started in 2010.

Veteran actor Om Puri passes away at 66

- Veteran actor Om Puri passed away at the age of 66 after suffering a heart attack early on Friday.
- The two-time National Award winning actor was awarded the Padma Shri in 1990, the fourth highest civilian award of India.
- During his career, the actor appeared not only in Bollywood movies, but various Pakistani,

British and Hollywood movies.

libraries in India over the next few months.

Japan to help develop Chennai, Varanasi as smart cities

- Japanese Ambassador to India Kenji Hiramatsu said Japan has decided to be associated with the development of Chennai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi as smart cities in the country.
- This comes as a part of government's scheme to develop 100 cities as smart cities. The last list of 27 cities to be developed as smart cities was released in September.

Donald Trump appoints Indo-American to key White House post

- US President-elect Donald Trump has appointed an Indian-American, Raj Shah, as the Deputy Assistant to the President, Deputy Communication Director, and Research Director.
- Shah, whose origins are in Gujarat, was reportedly born and raised in the US.
- During the election campaign, Shah had led a team to carry out research against Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Presidential candidate.

Guwahati's first Braille library opens

- The first Braille library in Guwahati opened at the Blind High School on Wednesday, on the occasion of World Braille Day.
- The library houses an estimated 200 books, including those on self-help and general knowledge.
- The Amway Opportunity Foundation, which opened the library, plans to open 31 such

World record for largest tennis lesson set at Chennai Open

- As many as 956 kids showed up for a tennis training session at Chennai's SDAT Tennis Stadium on Tuesday, setting a world record for the 'largest tennis lesson'.
- The previous record stood at 803 participants and was set in Liverpool, United Kingdom in June 2015.
- The kids trained with leading Indian players like Rohan Bopanna and Leander Paes.

IIM Calcutta to host business summit Intaglio

- IIM Calcutta will be conducting its international business summit Intaglio 2017 from January 6 to 8, 2017.
- The event has been themed 'India towards Epitome of Excellence' this year.
- Intaglio will see participants from over 500 Indian institutes competing in multiple business events pertaining to strategy, finance, marketing among others and witnessing speakers like Meera Sanyal and Harish Iyer.

China launches its longest bullet train

- China on Thursday launched its longest bullet train 'Shangri-la of the World' from Kunming, in Yunnan Province, to Beijing.
- This has expanded China's high-speed train network to about 20,000 kilometres. It takes nearly 13 hours for the train to cover a distance of 2,760 kilometres.
- A ticket for a second-class seat on the train costs 1,147 yuan

Cabinet approves Agreement between India-Uruguay regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters

- The Union Cabinet has approved signing and ratifying an Agreement between India and Uruguay regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters.
- The Agreement will help in the availability of relevant information for the prevention and investigation of Customs offences. The Agreement is also expected to facilitate trade and ensure efficient clearance of goods traded between the countries
- Uruguay is an important trading partner of India among members of the MERCOSUR, a trading block in Latin America. India signed a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) with the MERCOSUR which came into effect from 1st June, 2009.
- Trade between India and the Uruguay has been expanding gradually

Sitharaman launches IPR Enforcement Toolkit for police

- Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched an IPR Enforcement Toolkit for Police that would help in dealing with IP crimes, specifically Trade Marks counterfeiting and Copyrights piracy.
- The toolkit has been jointly prepared by Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- In addition to details of offences under various laws, it provides for checklists for registering a complaint and conducting search and seizures.

- It also lays down general guidelines for search and seizure in case of IP crimes

Book titled The People's President: Dr A P J Abdul Kalam released

- S M Khan Vice President Hamid Ansari on 4 January 2017 released a book titled The People's President: Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. The book was released at a function in New Delhi which was attended by Union Finance
- The book is written by SM Khan who is a senior IIS officer

S Padmanabhan nominated as Tata Power chairman

- Tata Sons Ltd has nominated S Padmanabhan as the chairman for Tata Power Co Ltd with immediate effect using its rights according to the company's articles of association, Tata Power said on Wednesday.
- In its statement to BSE , Tata Power said in terms of the company's article of association, Tata Sons Ltd, as the promoter of the company has the right to nominate the chairman of the company's board "as long as the word 'TATA' is associated with the name of the company.
- Padmanabhan at present serves as an additional director on the company's board

Capgemini appoints IBM's Anil Jalali as India HR head

- Capgemini said it appointed Anil Jalali as Chief Human Resources Officer for its India operation, effective January 1, 2017.

- Jalali joined Capgemini India from IBM India where he was the executive director of human resource.
- Jalali takes over from BL Narayan who is joining Capgemini's Business Services Strategic Business unit as head of solutions and sales support.

SIDBI ties up with LIC for capital support to enterprises

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) on Thursday said it has tied up with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) for augmenting capital support to enterprises in the country.
- The idea behind tying up with the state-run insurance behemoth is to give a boost to the venture capital ecosystem for MSMEs, it said.
- Under fund of funds operations, SIDBI handles various schemes, namely India Aspiration Fund (corpus of Rs 2,000 crore, ASPIRE Fund (Rs 60 crore) and Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) (Rs 10,000 crore).
- In April 2016, SIDBI and LIC had signed a Memorandum of Understanding to supplement funds under India Aspiration Fund.
- Under the MoU, the insurance major had earmarked an amount of Rs 200 crore for investment.

Three Days International Conference on "Yoga for Diabetes" Organised in New Delhi

- The Minister of State for AYUSH (Independent Charge), Shri Shripad Yesso Naik inaugurated the International Conference on "Yoga for

Diabetes" which began in New Delhi on January 4, 2017.

- The three days conference aims to generate discussions on the role of Yoga in the prevention and management of Diabetes and draw up a roadmap to be adopted for the control of Diabetes through Yoga.
- The Conference consists of main and parallel sessions on different aspects of Yoga & Diabetes including research, policy making and panel discussion. It provides a common platform for the Allopathy and AYUSH practitioners, Researchers, Academicians, Policy makers and students to come together in the fight against diabetes

IBM India appoints Karan Bajwa as Managing Director

- Software major IBM India on Wednesday announced the appointment of Karan Bajwa as Managing Director.
- Bajwa succeeds Vanitha Narayanan, who has been elevated as the Chairman of the company.
- Prior to joining IBM in 2016, Bajwa was Microsoft India's Managing Director, where he led the company's cloud transition.

'World's largest open-air theatre' fest begins in Odisha

- Dhanu Yatra, said to be the world's largest open-air theatre, began in Odisha's Bargarh district on Monday.
- The 11-day festival is based on Krishna Leela and will showcase the mythological story of Krishna and his uncle Kansa.

- At least 3,000 artistes from 120 cultural troupes from across the country will perform during the festival.

Google launches 'Digital Unlocked' for small-scale Indian firm

- Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Wednesday announced a tool to allow small businesses in India to set up a free website using a smartphone in under 10 minutes.
- Pichai also launched a training program called Digital Unlocked for small business enterprises in partnership with FICCI.
- Over the next three years, Google will hold 5,000 training workshops across 40 Indian cities.

Many New Projects Under Namami Gange Approved For Haridwar and Varanasi

- Many new projects under Namami Gange programme in Haridwar and Varanasi have been approved by National Mission for Clean Ganga.
- In Haridwar, approval for 68 MLD sewage treatment plant (STP) in Jagjeetpur and 14 MLD STP in Sarai have been approved at an indicative cost of Rs 110.30 crore and Rs 25 crore respectively under Hybrid Annuity based PPP mode.
- Apart from this, while Rs 8.34 crore has been allocated for tertiary treatment of existing 27 MLD plant in Jagjeetpur, Rs 5.32 crore has been allocated for tertiary treatment of existing 18 MLD plant in Sarai under Design, Build, Operate and Transfer (DBOT) mode.
- Also, I&D works at Jagjeetpur and Sarai would be done at an indicative cost of Rs 81.15 crore

and Rs 29.75 crore respectively under DBOT mode

Swachh Bharat survey in 500 cities

- In a bid to encourage competition to improve sanitation standards, the government will kick start a survey, Swachh Survekshan from Wednesday to rank 500 cities across the country on cleanliness.
- The survey will be conducted by Quality Council of India.
- The areas of evaluations include waste collection, sweeping and transportation, open defecation free and toilets, municipal solid waste-processing and disposal, information, education and behaviour change, and Capacity building - Swachh Bharat Mission e-learning portal.

World Braille Day: 4 January

- Every year World Braille Day is observed on 4th January across the world to World Braille Daycommemorate the birthday of Louis Braille who is credited with inventing the Braille language which helps blind people to read as well as write.
- The language developed by Louis Braille is today known as the Braille language which was very useful for those with visual impairment.

UN declares 2017 as International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development

- The United Nations (UN) General Assembly has approved the adoption of 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

- The decision to adopt 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development comes at a particularly important moment as the international community embraces the new Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), approved by the UN General Assembly last September.
- Tourism is included as targets under three of the SDGs - SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all; SDG 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production and SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Arthur Morris inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame

- Former Australia cricketer Arthur Morris was inducted into the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Hall of Fame by Steve Waugh at a ceremony during the tea break on the opening day of the third and the final Test between Australia and Pakistan in Sydney.
- Morris, who became the 82nd player to be inducted into the ICC Cricket Hall of Fame, was given the honour posthumously.

Haiti: Jovenel Moise confirmed as new president

- Jovenel Moise has been declared the winner of Haiti's November 20 presidential election, ending a protracted electoral process that has paralysed the Caribbean country's politics for more than a year.
- The Haiti provisional electoral council said on Tuesday that Moise was the majority winner

with 55.6 percent of the vote. Turnout was low at a reported 21 percent.

- Haiti election 'better organised this time'
- Moise, previously a little-known businessman, was chosen to run on behalf of the Tet Kale party of former president Michel Martelly, who ended his term without an elected successor.

Yes Bank ties-up with Bajaj Electricals for vendor financing using blockchain

- Mid-sized private lender Yes Bank entered into a tie-up with Bajaj Electricals for vendor financing using blockchain solution, and announced to use the technology more aggressively as it saves over 70 per cent in cost.
- As part of the tie-up, the bank has completely digitalised its processes when it comes to transactions with Bajaj Electricals and its vendors in such a way that blockchain solutions can be implemented.
- Blockchain solutions is a distributed database that maintains a continuously-growing list of ordered records called blocks. The spokesperson said it reduces turnaround times, is transparent and also ensures zero errors.

Finland introduces basic income for unemployed

- Finland has become the first country in the world to pay a basic income to randomly picked citizens on a national level in an experiment aiming at dismissing poverty, motivate people to join work force and decrease unemployment.
- The experiment is conducted with 2,000 randomly picked unemployed participants

between the ages of 25 and 58. For two years, participants from different parts of the country will receive an unconditional monthly tax-free basic income of 560 euros (\$586).

Telangana, Assam to join UDAY scheme

- Telangana and Assam are slated to join the UDAY scheme meant for revival of loss making discoms.
- It will result in overall net benefits of Rs 6116 crore and Rs 1,663 crore to them respectively.
- The scheme provides that the state government are required to take over 75 per cent of their respective discom debt outstanding as on September 30, 2015. UDAY mandates that the balance debt (25 per cent) would be re-priced or issued as state guaranteed discom bonds.

HDFC bank, Bank of India announce cut in lending rates

- Housing finance major HDFC has cut benchmark lending rates by up to 0.90 percentage point
- The state-run Bank of India has also announced cut in lending rates
- Taking a cue from the top PSU banks, country's largest mortgage lender HDFC today reduced its home loan rates by up to 0.45 per cent.
- Loans up to Rs 75 lakh will attract interest rate of 8.7 per cent per annum, while it will be 8.75 per cent for higher amounts, HDFC said in a statement. A woman applicant will get a discount of 0.05 per cent in interest rate.

- HDFC's earlier benchmark rate was 9.1 per cent.

Paytm gets RBI approval for payments bank

- Paytm has received final approval of the Reserve Bank to formally launch its payments bank and it expects to start operations next month.
- Payments banks can accept deposits from individuals and small businesses of up to Rs 1 lakh per account.
- Last month, One97 Communications had restructured its business ahead of the launch of the Payments Bank, merging the wallet business with payments bank operation.

AIIMS Partners Mobikwik For Cashless Payments

- The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi has partnered with digital payments firm MobiKwik.
- This partnership was announced to enable a cashless payment facility for doctors, staff and patients using the company's mobile wallet.

Anshu Jain, Ex-Deutsche Bank Boss, To Head Scrapy Wall Street Underdog

- Anshu Jain, the former Deutsche Bank AG co-chief executive officer, is joining Cantor Fitzgerald LP as president, restarting his career at a much smaller firm after leaving Germany's largest bank amid mounting legal and regulatory problems.
- Jain, 53, will help the closely held company expand in areas including fixed-income and equities trading as well as prime brokerage, Cantor Chairman and CEO Howard W. Lutnick said Monday in a phone interview.

- The firm is looking to capitalize as stiff regulations force global investment banks, including many in Europe, to pare businesses and pull back from some clients.

RBI Appoints Surekha Marandi As Executive Director

- The Reserve Bank has appointed Surekha Marandi as Executive Director and will look after financial inclusion, among other departments. Marandi took charge yesterday. She replaces U S Paliwal, who retired on December 31, 2016.
- As Executive Director, Marandi will look after Consumer Education and Protection Department, Financial Inclusion and Development Department and Secretary's Department, the central bank said in a notification.
- Prior to being promoted as ED, Marandi was Principal Chief General Manager and Chief Vigilance Officer in the Reserve Bank

Get Rs. 5 Discount On Online Payment Of LPG Cylinder

- After petrol and diesel, buying and paying for cooking gas (LPG) online will get consumers a discount of Rs. 5 per cylinder.
- State-owned fuel retailers, Indian Oil Corp (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) will offer "an upfront discount of Rs. 5 on every LPG refill to all LPG customers who will book and pay for it online," an official statement said here.
- To provide cash-less transactions, the government had asked oil companies to pay

consumers 0.75 per cent discount on cashless fuelling of petrol and diesel at petrol pumps.

Ludhiana district administration develops mobile app for Election Commission of India

- For the benefit of voters, candidates, election staff as well as the Election Commission of India (ECI), the district administration of Ludhiana has developed a mobile application named "ECI360". Developed by Harpreet Singh Chandoke from a company named "01 Synergy" on behalf of the district administration and a brainchild of deputy commissioner Ravi Bhagat, this mobile app would prove beneficial for all the stakeholders of upcoming assembly elections.
- Besides, a web-based application to be used by ECI, CEO, DEO and RO named "RoNET" has been developed that would specifically to enable them to know what exactly they are required to do and when; without burdening them with an additional reporting forum.

Piyush Goyal To Launch A New Mobile APP and Web Portal on UDAY

- Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Power, Coal & New and Renewable Energy and Mines, Piyush Goyal will launch the web portal and a Mobile App for one of India's most talked about scheme—or the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY) for operational and financial turnaround of state power distribution companies.
- The App and the web portal, to be launched by Goyal on Wednesday will provide all details on the scheme including the number of states joining the scheme as also the progress

achieved by each state under various parameters listed under the scheme—including AT&C losses, cost of electricity, bonds issued and others.

Air Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa Takes Charge As IAF Chief

- Air Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa took over as the Chief of the Indian Air Force after Former Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha retired from post.
- The present Air Chief Marshal BS Dhanoa developed the country's aerial targeting philosophy against potential adversaries and transformed the concepts of air operations of the Indian Air Force to contemporary war fighting practices.
- Dhanoa, who is the 25th chief of the IAF since Independence, was commissioned in the IAF in June 1978 as a fighter pilot

Mobile app for Indian Merchant Navy officers launched

- The Maritime Union of India (MUI), country's oldest union representing Indian Merchant Navy Officers since 1939, has launched android based mobile app named MUI.
- The app was launched in the presence of MPs Kirit Somaiya (Mumbai North-East constituency) and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat (Jodhpur) recently, said a senior member of the Union.
- The app is aimed at connecting the maritime fraternity across the country to facilitate and enable Indian merchant navy officers to share

comments, knowledge and other things related to their profession.

David R Syiemlieh appointed new UPSC chairman

- David R Syiemlieh has been appointed today as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) by President Pranab Mukherjee.
- Syiemlieh, a UPSC member, has been asked to take over charge on January 4 and will remain the head of the organisation till his retirement on January 21, 2018 or till further orders.
- He will take over from Alka Sirohi, a former IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre.

PSPCL AWARDED BY CBIP

- Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL) has been awarded as "Best Performing Power Distribution Utility in Power Sector" by Central Board of Irrigation & Power (CBIP).
- The award was presented to Karan Deep Chaudhri, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, PSPCL by Union Minister Sanjeev Kumar Balyan Minister in Ministry of Water Resources River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation, in New Delhi.
- PSPCL has been awarded on the basis of outstanding contribution to Punjab by providing reliable 24x7 cost effective electricity to all categories of consumers and over all development through optimization of available resources, bringing transparency and ensuring ease of doing business through information Technology initiatives specially in distribution sector.

Bank of Baroda ties up with CNX Corporation

- Public sector lender Bank of Baroda BSE 0.60 % has entered into a partnership with CNX Corporation (CNX) with an objective to provide collateral management services towards the loans against warehouse receipt sanctioned to the farmers through the network of the bank's branches across the country.
- CNX is engaged in providing warehouse management services relating to commodities and inventories which include collateral management services, field warehousing arrangements, inventory audit services, storage and preservation services, procurement services, testing and certification services, inspection services, monitoring services.

Purse seine fishing nets banned across Maharashtra

- In a bid to safeguard fingerlings, fish species and increase their population, all purse seine nets — large fishing nets used to catch fish in bulk — were banned across Maharashtra from January 1
- Purse seine nets can stretch from 500 metres up to 1 kilometres and sometimes fishermen attach two or three such nets and cover an area of 3 kilometres, pulling out a large proportion of fish population. The nets have mesh spanning from 25 mm to 35mm that blocks small fish, fishlings and fish eggs from falling back into the ocean, thereby stopping them from multiplying.

World famous 11-day gala festival Bargarh Dhanua Jatra begins

- Odisha's World famous 11-day gala festival Bargarh Dhanua Jatra is all set to begin on 2 January 2017. All rituals were performed before Goddess Samaleswari, the presiding deity of the event.
- Dhanu Jatra is an annual drama-based open air theatrical performance celebrated in a 6 km radius in and around Bargarh municipality.
- It is considered to be the world's largest open air theatrical festival.

Naidu launches Arogya Raksha for a healthy AP

- Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu launched a new health scheme christened Arogya Raksha offering medical insurance to those who were not covered under any of the existing health schemes of the state government.
- It was the first file signed by the Chief Minister in the new year.
- To avail of the benefits of Arogya Raksha, all one needs to do is pay `100 per month per head. The health insurance cover is offered up to `2 lakh and free treatment can be had for 1,044 listed health ailments in any of the 432 corporate hospitals and 80 government hospitals in the state.
- One can register for the scheme at any of the Mee Seva centres till February 28.

Indo-Bangladesh border to get laser walls, smart sensors

- In order to check infiltration and terrorism, the Border Security Force (BSF) will be installing laser walls and smart sensors along the Indo-Bangladesh border in West Bengal.
- The satellite-monitored smart sensors will have night and fog operability tools and will

blip and alert the border guards. The laser walls are set to become operational from next year.

Indian-origin entrepreneur gets Kyrgyzstan's top army post

- An entrepreneur of Indian origin, Sheikh Rafik Mohammed, has assumed a top position in the defence department of Kyrgyzstan.
- Rafik, who also holds Kyrgyzstan nationality, had worked as an adviser to former Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Saliyevich Bakiyev. Rafik belongs to Kerala and has earlier worked in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kyrgyzstan, his media adviser said.

Justice Mian Saqib Nisar appointed as Chief Justice of Pak

- Justice Mian Saqib Nisar on Saturday took oath as the 25th Chief Justice of Pakistan. The oath was administered by the country's President Mamnoon Hussain at the President House.
- The event was attended by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and other dignitaries.
- Justice Nisar has replaced Justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali who retired after serving as Chief Justice for 15 months.

Credit guarantee for MSMEs doubled to Rs. 2 crore: PM Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday declared an increase in the credit guarantee for the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to Rs. 2 crore from the previous limit of Rs.1 crore.
- He also announced that all banks have been asked to raise the cash credit limit for small

businesses to 25% from 20%.

3% interest waiver on Rs. 12 L loans for constructing rural homes

- PM Narendra Modi said the government will waive off 3% interest on loans up to Rs. 2 lakh taken for construction, repair, and renovation of houses in rural areas.
- Poor and middle-class citizens will get a 4% interest waiver on loans up to Rs. 9 lakh, and a 3% exemption on loans below Rs. 12 lakh, PM Modi added.

4% rebate on home loans up to Rs. 9 lakh, 3% on Rs. 12 lakh: PM

- While addressing the nation on New Year's eve, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a new housing loan scheme, under which poor and middle-class citizens will get a 4% exemption on interest on loans up to Rs. 9 lakh.
- Further, home loans of up to Rs.12 lakh will also get an exemption of 3% on the interest.

Sikkim becomes India's first fully organic state

- Sikkim has become the first state in India to go fully organic.
- Around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land were gradually converted to certified organic land in accordance with guidelines laid down in National Programme for Organic Production, as per reports.
- Sikkim was also accorded the status of the cleanest state in India by the National Sample Survey Office in September

Karjakin pips Magnus Carlsen to win World Blitz Chess C'ship

- Russia's Sergey Karjakin pipped Norway's Magnus Carlsen on the basis of a better tiebreak record to win the World Blitz Chess Championship title in Doha, Qatar
- Karjakin, who lost his Classical Chess World Championship match to Carlsen last month, ended at par with Carlsen, but was awarded the title for having better individual results between the two.

Britain's Andy Murray conferred with Knighthood

- World number one tennis player, Britain's Andy Murray, has been conferred the Knighthood in the New Year's honours list in Britain. 2016 was Murray's most successful year after winning the Wimbledon title for the second time and defending his gold medal at the Rio Olympics.
- Four-time Olympic gold-winning distance runner Mo Farah was also included in the list.

India's 1st transgender school opens in Kerala

- India's first transgender school, Sahaj International, was inaugurated in Kochi (Kerala)
- The alternative learning centre, which works in collaboration with the National Institute of Open Learning, will help the transgenders who dropped out of school to appear in Class X and XII examinations.
- The school is headed by six transgenders and a woman and has 10 students.

India's Somdev Devvarman announces retirement

- Somdev Devvarman, one of India's best singles players in over a decade, announced his retirement from the sport after he decided to give Chennai Open a miss.
- One of India's most exciting singles careers that briefly promised to leap to the next level as he hared around the court retrieving, seems to have skidded to an inexplicable stop.
- Somdev led the Indian charge in the Davis Cup singles since his debut in 2008, and has played 14 rubbers – including inspiring victories against Jiri Vesely of Czech Republic and Serbia's Dusan Lajovic in the World Group Playoffs of 2015 and 2014 respectively. His efforts were instrumental in India making the World Group in 2010.

Rafael Nadal Wins Mubadala Tennis Championships 2016

- Spanish tennis veteran Rafael Nadal defeated Belgian David Goffin 6-4, 7-6 to win the Mubadala World Tennis Championships.
- The world No.9 disrupted 11th ranked Goffin's rhythm as he had planned before the final, by switching sides and changing from slice balls to high balls on the center court of the International Tennis Centre in Abu Dhabi's Zayed Sports City, reports Xinhua.

Bharatiya Jananpith announces Navlekhan award 2016

- Two new Hindi writers Shraddha and Ghyansham Kumar Devansh have been chosen for Bharatiya Jnanpith Navlekhan Award for the year 2016, the literary organisation announced

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NHPC CMD K M Singh honoured at 10th ENERTIA Awards 2016

- State-run National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Chairman and Managing Director K M Singh has been conferred the 'Power & Energy Persona's Award for Individual Excellence' at the 10th ENERTIA Awards 2016 -- India and South Asia's awards for excellence in sustainable energy and power.
- Singh received the award from Former Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, Upendra Tripathy

Govt permits 12 PSU banks to raise Rs 3,000 cr from market

- In a bid to strengthen capital base of public sector banks (PSBs), the government has allowed 12 lenders to raise nearly Rs 3,000 crore via preferential shares over and above the Rs 22,915 crore capital support committed to them in July last year.
- Budgetary provision of Rs 25,000 crore has been made for 2016-17 and the government has already allocated Rs 22,915 crore to 13 PSBs on July 19, 2016 of which 75 per cent has been allocated in first tranche while remaining amount will be released on assessment of performance of PSBs, the Department of Finance in its year-end review for 2016.

LIST OF RECENTLY APPOINTED BRAND AMBASSADORS

Person	Brand Name	Remarks
Amitabh Bachchan	City Compost Campaign	A part of the 'Swachh Bharat Mission'
John Abraham	Arunachal Pradesh Tourism Ambassador	To promote tourism in Arunachal Pradesh
Narendra Modi	Incredible India	
Nawazuddin Siddiqui	UP farmers' scheme Kisan Beema Yojna	Samajwadi The scheme provides for cashless treatment up to Rs 2.5 lakh and Rs. one lakh for the organ transplant.
PV Sindhu	Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)	

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Sachin Tendulkar	Anti- liquor and antidrug campaign of Kerala	It will create awareness among people against alcoholism and drug abuse.
Sakshi Malik	Beti Bachao, Beti Padao campaign" in Haryana	chosen to promote the tourism of Arunachal Pradesh
Virat Kohli	Punjab National Bank	
Vidya Balan	Samajwadi Pension Yojna	Launched by Uttar Pradesh Govt.
Piruz Khambatta	Make In India	Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi
Shah Rukh Khan	West Bengal Brand Ambassador	The campaign started with shortlisting 200 places from all of the Indian states.
Steffi Graf	Kerala's Ayurveda	to promote tourism and position the state of Kerala as home of ayurveda.
Shilpa Reddy	Confederation of Women Entrepreneurs (COWE)	Create centres of excellence for women to gain knowledge, develop skills, provide infrastructure, access to resources to their business.
Baba Ramdev	Brand Ambassador of yoga and Ayurveda in Haryana	promote yoga and Ayurveda in a big way
Ankit Fadia	Digital India	It was launched on 1 July 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
Amitabh Bachchan	Swachh Bharat Abhiyan	Started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
Amitabh Bachchan	Pulse Polio	To promote Polio Eradication Campaign
Dia Mirza	Swachh Saathi	Swachh Bharat Mission's youth-based

		Swachh Saathi (student internship) programme
Madhuri Dixit	MAA- Mother's Absolute Affection'	
Deepika Padukone	Indian Psychiatric Society	The largest association of Indian Psychiatrists

UDAAN SCHEME: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

INTRODUCTION

- UDAN is a regional connectivity scheme to promote the aviation sector
- Tag line of the scheme is "*Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik*"
- Launched by PM Mr. Modi

UDAAN COVERAGE

- UDAN applicable on all flights covering a distance between 200 KM and 800 KM
- UDAN seats are available at subsidized rates
- Minimum seats per carrier is 9 and maximum is 40 per carrier
- There is no lower limit set for remote, hilly, security and island regions
- UDAN caps the fare for short distance flights
- Geographical means of coverage viz. North East, North, South, West and East
- Airports selection under UDAN operations would be done with the consultation of the state government
- Accordingly concessions would be made available under UDAN
- Most of the un served and under served airports would be covered under UDAN
- Tenure of UDAN scheme is fixed at ten years

FUNDING

- Viability Gap Funding (VGF) provided to airlines to kick off operations under UDAN keeping passenger fares affordable
- Market based model will be followed for VGF
- First, operators submit their proposals to implementing agencies
- Operators selected through competitive bidding process
- Reverse bidding adopted to select the lowest VGF quote
- Regional connectivity fund (RCF) created to meet VGF under UDAN
- RCF levy for domestic flights from the states is fixed at 20%
- Financial stimulus in the way of Central and State government concessions, tax concessions
- Exemptions given on landing and parking charges for airlines under UDAN
- Funding support given for first three years of operation only

LIMITATIONS

- Airlines is a luxury product and often seen as alienated from common man

- UDAN tries to break this idea but the subsidies given under UDAN will be a burden to Government
 - No mechanism to monitor the beneficiaries of UDAN
 - Regional connectivity would increase but already the existing airlines are operating flights with more passengers and exceeding their quota of regional connectivity
 - UDAN finances and supports airlines only for three years under the perception that within three years the routes will become sustainable
 - It does not consider the hike in fuel cost within these three years
 - Airlines high levy of ATF tax is an area of concern
 - Increase in air traffic due to UDAN may cause environmental hazards in the form of air pollution
- UDAN would help in reviving existing airports and air strips
 - Employment would be generated
 - Indian Economy would see a boost
 - The scheme ensures growth, affordability, development and connectivity
 - Business would enhance with quick movement of goods and export products
 - Remote areas would get developed
 - Commerce, tourism and trade would enhance
 - New form of air transport in the form of small aircrafts and helicopters would increase connectivity
 - Start up airlines will increase with new opportunities in aviation sector
 - Incumbent airlines will get more passengers and new routes
 - Overall, common man will get to enjoy the luxury of air transport at affordable rates under UDAN scheme

WAY FORWARD

RIVERS IN INDIA - LENGTH, TOUCHING STATES AND FACTS

Name of Rivers	Touching States	Length	Originates From	Ends in
Ganga	Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal	2,525 K.M.	Gangothri	Bay of Bengal
Yamuna	Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi	1,376 K.M.	Garhwal Yamunotri	in Bay of Bengal
Brahmaputra	Assam, Arunachal, Tibet	2,900 K.M.	Lake Manasarovar	Bay of Bengal
Mahanadi	Chhattisgarh, Odisha	858 K.M.	Amarkantak Plateau	Bay of Bengal

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Godavari	Maharashtra, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry	1,465 K.M.	Nasik Hills	Bay of Bengal
Krishna	Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh	1,400 K.M.	Near Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra	Bay of Bengal
Narmada	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat	1,315 K.M.	Amarkantak hill in Madhya Pradesh	Arabian sea
Tapti	Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat	724 K.M.	Bettul	Arabian sea
Gomti	Uttarpradesh, Gujarat,	900 K.M.	Gomat Taal	Saidpur, Ghazi pur
Koshi	Shigatse Prefecture, Janakpur, Sagarmatha, Koshi, Mechi Zones, Bihar	720 K.M.	Ganga	Ganga
Gandaki	Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar	630 K.M.	Nepal	Ganga
Betwa	Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh	590 K.M.	Vindhya Range	Rajghat Dam
Son	Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar	784 K.M.	Ganga	Yamuna
Sutlej	Himachal Pradesh, Punjab	1,500 K.M.	Mount Kailash	Ropar
Ravi	Himachal Pradesh, Punjab	720 K.M.	Himachal Pradesh	Chenab
Beas	Himachal Pradesh, Punjab	470 K.M.	Sutlej	Mandi Plain
Chenab	Himachal Pradesh, Punjab	960 K.M.	Panjnad	Jammu and Kashmir
Jehlam	Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir,	725 K.M.	Pir Panjal Range	Chenab
Kaveri	Karnataka, Tamilnadu,	765 K.M.	Hills of Coorg, Karnataka	Bay of Bengal
Ghaggar	Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan	1080 K.M.	Shivalik Hills, Himachal Pradesh	Indus
Hugli (Hooghly)	West Bengal, Kolkata	260 K.M.	Ganga	Bay of Bengal;

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Damodar	Jharkhand, Bengal	592 K.M	Hoogly Howrah	River, Chota Nagpur plateau.
Indus	Gilgit-Baltistan, Jammu and Kashmir Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh Tibet	3180 K.M	In Tibet Range 5080 mts.	Kalish Arabian sea
Tungabhadra	Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana	531 K.M	Krishna	Krishna
Mahi	Madhya Pradesh, Vindhyas	580 K.M	Gulf Khambhat , ian Sea	of Arab Sevalia
Bhagirathi	Uttarakhand,	205 K.M	Ganga	Ganga
Sabarmati	Aravalli Range, Udaipur	371 K.M	Dhebar Lake	Gujarat
Alaknanda	Uttarakhand	190 K.M	Ganga	Nanda Devi
Teesta	Sikkim, India, West Bengal, India, Rangpur, Bangladesh	309 K.M	Brahmaputra	Rangeet River.
Indravati	Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra	535 K.M	Kalahandi	Godavari
Bhima	Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana	861 K.M	Krishna River	Pandharpur
Subarnarek	Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal	395 K.M	Bay of Bengal	Bay of Bengal
Konya	Maharashtra	130 K.M	Krishna Rive	Maharashtra
Ramganga	Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh	596 K.M	Ganga	Ramganga Dam
Peena	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka	597 K.M	Nandi Hills	Bay of Bengal
Brahmani	Odisha	480	Bay of Bengal	Ganga
Periyar	Kerala, Tamil Nadu	244 K.M	Cardaman Hills	Bay of Bengal
Mahanada	West Bengal, Bihar	360 K.M	Lakshadweep Sea, Vembanad Lake	Bay of Bengal
Benas	Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh	512 K.M	Rohtang Pass	Chambal

Vaigai	Tamil Nadu,	258 K.M	Periyar Plateau	Bay of Bengal
Sharda	Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh	350 K.M	Ganga	Ghaghra River

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA: KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

NABARD (NATIONAL BANK FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT)

Established: NABARD was established on 12th July 1982 on the recommendation of CRAFTCARD committee which is also known as the Sivaraman Committee.

Headquarter: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Chairman: Harsh Kumar Bhanwala.

Primary Function:

- NABARD is the apex organisation related to financing in the agricultural sector.
- It looks after matters concerned with policy, planning and operations in rural areas in India.
- Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) are operated by NABARD.

SIDBI (SMALL INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT BANK OF INDIA)

Established: Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI in short) was established on 2nd April 1990 under the Small Industries Development Bank of India Act 1989 as a subsidiary of Industrial Development Bank of India.

Headquarter: Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

Chairman: Dr. Kshatrapati Shivaji.

Primary Function:

- SIDBI is an independent financial institution which provides help for the growth and development of micro, small and medium-scale enterprises (MSME's).

SEBI (SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA)

Established: SEBI was first set up as a non statutory body in April 1988, to regulate the working of stock exchange. Later it was made an autonomous body on 12 April 1992 via SEBI Act 1992.

Headquarter: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Chairman: Upendra Kumar Sinha.

Primary Function:

- SEBI is the security market regulator in India.

IRDAI (INSURANCE REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF INDIA)

Established: IRDDAI was set up in the year 1999 by the Insurance Regulatory and Development

Authority Act, 1999, which was passed by the Government of India.

Headquarter: Hyderabad, Telengana.

Chairman: T.S. Vijayan.

Primary Function:

- The IRDAI is an autonomous, statutory agency tasked with regulating and promoting the insurance and re-insurance industries in India.

EXIM BANK (EXPORT IMPORT BANK)

Established: EXIM Bank was established on January 1, 1982 for the purpose of financing, facilitating and promoting foreign trade of India.

Headquarter: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Chairman: Yaduvendra Mathur.

Primary Function:

- The Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of India is the principal financial institution in India for coordinating the working of institutions engaged in financing export and import trade.

NHB (NATIONAL HOUSING BANK)

Established: The bank started its operations from July 1988. National Housing Bank was established under section 6 of National Housing Bank Act (1987).

Headquarter: New Delhi

Chairman: Sriram Kalyanaraman.

Primary Function:

- The National Housing Bank (NHB), the apex institution of housing finance in India, was set up as wholly owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India.

ECGC (EXPORT CREDIT GUARANTEE CORPORATION OF INDIA)

Established: ECGC Ltd. was established on 30 July, 1957 to strengthen the export promotion by covering the risk of exporting on credit.

Headquarter: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Chairman: Geetha Muralidhar

Primary Function:

- Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India. This organisation provides risk as well as insurance cover to the Indian exporters.

INDIA'S RANK IN DIFFERENT INDEXES 2016-17

Index	India's Rank
World Press Freedom Index	133
Crony Capitalism	9
Defence (Expenditure)	4
Happiness Index	118
Remittance Index	1
Ease Of Doing Business	130

Intellectual Property (IP) Index	37
FDI Confidence	9
Global Connectivity	44
Corruption Perception Index	76
World Prosperity Index	104
Nuclear Material Security	23
Access To Electricity	137
Green Energy Spending	5
Milk Production	1
Global Gender Index	108
Global hunger index	97
Human Development Index	130
Global talent competitiveness	89

LIST OF PADMA AWARDS 2017

Awardee	Field
Shri K J Yesudas	Art-Music
Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev	Others-Spiritualism
Shri Sharad Pawar	Public Affairs
Shri Murli Manohar Joshi	Public Affairs
Prof. Udipi Ramachandra Rao	Science & Engineering
Late Shri Sunder Lal Patwa (Posthumous)	Public Affairs
Late Shri PA Sangma (Posthumous)	Public Affairs

PADMA BHUSHAN

Awardee	Field
Shri Vishwa Mohan Bhatt	Art-Music
Prof. (Dr.) Devi Prasad Dwivedi	Literature & Education
Shri Tehemton Udwadia	Medicine
Shri Ratna Sundar Maharaj	Others-Spiritualism
Swami Niranjana Nanda Saraswati	Yoga
H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn	Literature & Education

(Foreigner)

Late Shri Cho Ramaswamy (Posthumous)

Literature & Education – Journalism

PADMA SHRI

Awardee	field
Smt. Basanti Bisht	Art-Music
Shri Chemanchery Kunhiraman Nair	Art-Dance
Smt. Aruna Mohanty	Art-Dance
Smt. Bharathi Vishnuvardhan	Art-Cinema
Shri Sadhu Meher	Art-Cinema
Shri T K Murthy	Art-Music
Shri Laishram Birendrakumar Singh	Art-Music
Shri Krishna Ram Chaudhary	Art-Music
Smt. Baoa Devi	Art-Painting
Shri Tilak Gitai	Art-Painting
Dr. Prof. Aekka Yadagiri Rao	Art-Sculpture
Shri Jitendra Haripal	Art-Music
Shri Kailash Kher	Art-Music
Smt. Parassala B Ponnammal	Art-Music
Smt. Sukri Bommagowda	Art-Music

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Shri Mukund Nayak	Art-Music
Shri Purushottam Upadhyay	Art-Music
Smt. Anuradha Paudwal	Art-Music
Shri Wareppa Naba Nil	Art-Theatre
Shri Tripuraneni Hanuman Chowdary	Civil Service
Shri T.K. Viswanathan	Civil Service
Shri Kanwal Sibal	Civil Service
Shri Birkha Bahadur Limboo Muringla	Literature & Education
Smt. Eli Ahmed	Literature & Education
Dr. Narendra Kohli	Literature & Education
Prof. G. Venkatasubbiah	Literature & Education
Shri Akkitham Achyuthan Namboothiri	Literature & Education
Shri Kashi Nath Pandita	Literature & Education
Shri Chamu Krishna Shastry	Literature & Education
Shri Harihar Kripalu Tripathi	Literature & Education
Shri Michel Danino	Literature & Education
Shri Punam Suri	Literature & Education
Shri VG Patel	Literature & Education
Smt. V Koteswaramma	Literature & Education
Shri Balbir Dutt	Literature & Education Journalism

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Smt. Bhawana Somaaya	Literature & Education Journalism
Shri Vishnu Pandya	Literature & Education Journalism
Dr. Subroto Das	Medicine
Dr. (Smt.) Bhakti Yadav	Medicine
Dr. Mohammed Abdul Waheed	Medicine
Dr. Madan Madhav Godbole	Medicine
Dr. Devendra Dayabhai Patel	Medicine
Prof. Harkishan Singh	Medicine
Dr. Mukut Minz	Medicine
Shri Arun Kumar Sharma	Others-Archaeology
Shri Sanjeev Kapoor	Others-Culinary
Smt. Meenakshi Amma	Others-Martial Art
Shri Genabhai Dargabhai Patel	Others-Agriculture
Shri Chandrakant Pithawa	Science & Engineering
Prof. Ajoy Kumar Ray	Science & Engineering
Shri Chintakindi Mallesham	Science & Engineering
Shri Jitendra Nath Goswami	Science & Engineering
Shri Daripalli Ramaiah	Social Work
Shri Girish Bhardwaj	Social Work
Shri Karimul Hak	Social Work
Shri Bipin Ganatra	Social Work

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Smt. Nivedita Raghunath Bhide	Social Work
Shri Appasaheb Dharmadhikari	Social Work
Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal	Social Work
Shri Virat Kohli	Sports-Cricket
Shri Shekar Naik	Sports-Cricket
Shri Vikasa Gowda	Sports-Discus Throw
Smt. Deepa Malik	Sports-Athletics
Shri Mariyappan Thangavelu	Sports-Athletics
Smt. Dipa Karmakar	Sports-Gymnastics
Shri P R Shreejesh	Sports-Hockey
Smt. Sakshi Malik	Sports-Wrestling
Shri Mohan Reddy Venkatrama Bodanapu	Trade & Industry
Shri Imrat Khan (NRI/PIO)	Art-Music
Shri Anant Agarwal (NRI/PIO)	Literature & Education
Shri H.R. Shah (NRI/PIO)	Literature & Education Journalism
Late (Smt.) Suniti Solomon (Posthumous)	Medicine
Shri Asoke Kumar Bhattacharyya (Posthumous)	Others-Archaeology
Dr. Mapuskar (Posthumous)	Social Work
Smt. Anuradha Koirala (Foreigner)	Social Work

WINNERS LIST OF TENNIS GRAND-SLAMMS 2016-17

Australian Open 2016 Winners

Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
Women's Singles	Angelique Kerber (GER)
Men's Doubles	Jamie Murray (GBR) & Bruno Soares (BRA)

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Women's Doubles	Martina Hingis (SUI) & Sania Mirza (IND)
Mixed Double	Elena Vesnina (RUS) & Bruno Soares (BRA)
<i>French Open 2016 Winners</i>	
Men's Singles	Novak Djokovic (Serbia)
Women's Singles	Garbiñe Muguruza (Spain)
Men's Doubles	Feliciano López(Spain) & Marc López(Spain)
Women's Doubles	Caroline Garcia(France) & Kristina Mladenovic(France)
Mixed Double	Martina Hingis(SUI) & Leander Paes(IND)
<i>Wimbledon 2016 Winners</i>	
Men's Singles	Andy Murray (Great Britain)
Women's Singles	Serena Williams(USA)
Men's Doubles	Pierre-Hugues Herbert(SUI) & Nicolas Mahut(SUI)
Women's Doubles	Serena Williams(USA) & Venus Williams(USA)
Mixed Double	Heather Watson(Great Britain) & Henri Kontinen(Finland)
<i>US Open 2016 Winners</i>	
Men's Singles	Stan Wawrinka(SUI)
Women's Singles	Angelique Kerber(Germany)
Men's Doubles	Bruno Soares(Brazil) & Jamie Murray(Great Britain)
Women's Doubles	Bethanie Mattek-Sands(USA) & Lucie Šafářová(Czech)
Mixed Double	Laura Siegemund(Germany) & Mate Pavic(Croatia)

BANKS IN INDIA, THEIR HEADQUARTERS AND HEADS

Bank	Headquarter	Heads / Managing Directors
Allahabad Bank	Kolkata, West Bengal	Rakesh Sethi
Andhra Bank	Hyderabad	Suresh N. Patel
Bank of Baroda	Vadodara (Baroda), Gujarat	P.S. Jayakumar
Bank of India	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Melwyn O. Rego

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Bank of Maharashtra	Pune, Maharashtra	R	K	Gupta
Bharatiya Mahila Bank	New Delhi	Usha	Ananthasubramanian	
Canara Bank	Bengaluru, Karnataka	Rakesh Sharma		
Central Bank of India	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Rajeev Rishi		
Corporation Bank	Mangalore, Karnataka	Jai Kumar Garg		
Dena Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Ashwani Kumar		
Indian Bank	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	Mahesh Kumar Jain		
Indian Overseas Bank	Chennai, Tamil Nadu	R. Koteeswaran		
Oriental Bank of Commerce	Gurgaon, Haryana	Animesh Chauhan		
Punjab National Bank	New Delhi	Usha	Ananthasubramanian	
Punjab & Sind Bank	New Delhi	Jatinder Bir Singh		
Syndicate Bank	Manipal, Karnataka	Arun Shrivastava		
Union Bank of India	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Arun Tiwari		
United Bank of India	Kolkata, West Bengal	P. Srinivas		
UCO Bank	Kolkata, West Bengal	Ravi Krishan Takkar		
Vijaya Bank	Bengaluru, Karnataka	Kishore Kumar Sansi		
State Bank of India	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Arundhati Bhattacharya		
State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur	Jaipur, Rajasthan	Jyoti Ghosh (MD)		
State Bank of Hyderabad	Hyderabad	Shri Santanu Mukherjee		
State Bank of Mysore	Bengaluru, Karnataka	N. Krishnamachari		
State Bank of Patiala	Patiala, Punjab	S. A. Ramesh Rangan		
State Bank of Travancore	Thiruvananthapuram, Kerela	Jeevandas Narayan		
Axis Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Shikha Sharma		
Catholic Syrian Bank	Thrissur, Kerela	Anand Krishnamurthy		
City Union Bank	Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu	Dr. N. Kamakodi		
Development Credit Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Murali M. Natrajan		
Dhanlaxmi Bank	Thrissur, Kerela	Shri. G. Sreeram		
Federal Bank	Aluva, Kochi, Kerela	Shyam Srinivasan		
HDFC Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra,	Aditya Puri		
ICICI Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Chanda Kochhar		
IndusInd Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Romesb Sobti		
ING Vysya Bank	Bengaluru, Karnataka	Shailendra Bhandari		
Karnataka Bank	Mangalore, Karnataka	Polali Jayarama Bhat		
Karur Vysya Bank	Karur, Tamil Nadu	K Venkataraman		

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Kotak Mahindra Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Uday Kotak
Lakshmi Vilas Bank	Karur, Tamil Nadu	Parthasarathi Mukherjee
Nainital Bank	Nainital, Uttarakhand	Mukesh Sharma
South Indian Bank	Thrichur, Kerela	V. G. Mathew
Yes Bank	Mumbai, Maharashtra	Rana Kapoor
UP Agro Corporation Bank	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	Jai Kumar Garg

LIST OF INTERNATIONAL SUMMITS IN 2016-17

Summits	Location, Year, Headquarters
BRICS Summits	<p>Countries (5) - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6th BRICS Summit 2014 – Fortaleza, Brazil ▪ 7th BRICS Summit 2015 – UFA, Russia ▪ 8th BRICS Summit 2016 – Benaulim, Goa, India
G-20 Summits	<p>Headquarters - Cancún, Mexico</p> <p>Establishment - 20 August 2003</p> <p>Chairperson- Angela Merkel,</p> <p>Total Member Countries- 20</p> <p>Countries = Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, European Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9th G 20 Meeting 2014 – Brisbane, Australia ▪ 10th G 20 Meeting 2015 – Antalya, Turkey ▪ 11th G 20 Meeting 2016 – Hangzhou, China ▪ 12th G 20 Meeting 2017 – Germany ▪ 13th G 20 Meeting 2018 – Argentina, Buenos Aires
G-7 Annual Summits (Earlier it was G8, Now Russia suspended Temporarily)	<p>Establishment - 1975</p> <p>Group of Seven Countries – France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 40th G8 Summit 2014 – Brussels, Belgium ▪ 41st G8 Summit 2015 – Schloss Elmau, Germany ▪ 42nd G8 Summit 2016 – Shima, Japan ▪ 43rd G8 Summit 2017 – Italy ▪ 44th G8 Summit 2018 – Canada ▪ 45th G8 Summit 2019 – France

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 46th G8 Summit 2020 - United States ▪ 47th G8 Summit 2021 - United Kingdom
SAARC Summits (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)	Headquarters – Kathmandu, Nepal Formation - 16 January, 1987 First holder - Abul Ahsan Secretary General– Arjun Bahadur Thapa Countries (8)– Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

SAARC Summit Held –

- 18th SAARC Summit 2014 – Kathmandu, Nepal
- 19th SAARC Summit 2016 – Islamabad, Pakistan
- 20th SAARC Summit 2018

ASEAN Summits (Association of South East Asian Nation)	Headquarters - Jakarta, Indonesia Establishment - 8 August 1967 Total Countries – 10 (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam) Secretary General – Le Luong Minh (Vietnam) Chairman - Philippines Rodrigo Duterte
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Summits held –

- 24th ASEAN Summit 2014 (May)– Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
- 25th ASEAN Summit 2014 (November)– Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
- 26th ASEAN Summit 2015 (April)– Langkawi, Malaysia
- 27th ASEAN Summit 2015 (November)– Manila, Philippines
- 28th ASEAN Summit 2016 (April) – Vientiane – Laos
- 29th ASEAN Summit 2016 (November)-Vientiane- Laos
- 30th ASEAN Summit 2017 (April) - Philippines, Metro Manila
- 31st ASEAN Summit 2017 (November) – Philippine, Clark, Freeport Zone

East Asia Summit (EAS) **Establishment** - 1991 by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

Countries: Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, United States, Vietnam

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- The East Asia Summit (EAS) is a forum held annually
- EAS meetings are held after annual ASEAN leaders' meetings.
- The first summit was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 December 2005.

Summits Held –

- 9th East Asia Summit 2014 – Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
- 10th East Asia Summit 2015 – Kuala Lumpur .Malaysia
- 11th East Asia Summit 2016 – Vientiane, Laos
- 12th East Asia Summit 2017 – TBD, Philippines

IBSA Summits	Headquarters - Stafford St, Abbotsford, Victoria	Established – 6 th June, 2003
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IBSA Dialogue Forum – India, Brazil, South Africa.

- 1st: March 5th, 2004, in New Delhi
- 2nd: March 3rd, 2005, in Cape Town
- 3rd: March 30th, 2006, in Rio de Janeiro
- 4th: July 16th and 17th, 2007, in New Delhi
- 5th: May 11th, 2008, in Somerset West
- 6th: August 31st to September 1st, 2009, in Brasília
- 7th: March 8th, 2011, in New Delhi

APEC Summits (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation)	Headquarters – Establishment -	Singapore 1989
	Total Countries – (Australia, Canada, Brunei, Chile, china, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, United States, Vietnam). These are total 21 countries.	
	Executive Director –	Alan Bollard

Summit Held –

- 26th APEC Summit 2014 – Beijing, China
- 27th APEC Summit 2015 – Philippines, Manila
- 28th APEC Summit 2016 – Peru, Lima
- 29th APEC Summit 2017 – Vietnam, Danang
- 30th APEC Summit 2018 - Papua, New Guinea Port Moresby
- 31st APEC Summit 2019 - Chile
- 32nd APEC Summit 2020 - Malaysia

- 33rd APEC Summit 2021 - New Zealand
- 34th APEC Summit 2022 – Thailand
- 35th APEC Summit 2023 - Mexico
- 36th APEC Summit 2024 - Brunei
- 37th APEC Summit 2025 - Republic of Korea
- 38th APEC Summit 2026 - Peru

BIMSTEC Summits (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) **Headquarters** – Dhaka
Establishment - 6 June 1997
Chairmanship – Nepal (since 2014)
Total Countries - Bangladesh, India, Burma, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is an international organisation involving a group of countries in South Asia

Summits Held –

- 1st BIMSTEC Summit 2004 – Thailand, Bangkok
- 2nd BIMSTEC Summit 2008 – India, New Delhi
- 3rd BIMSTEC Summit 2014 - Myanmar, Nay Pyi Taw
- 4th BIMSTEC Summit 2017 - Nepal, Kathmandu

Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) (2010) **Establishment** – 2009
Total Countries – 58 Countries
 European Union members represented by the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission only (as observer)

Summits Held -

- 1st NSS 2010 – Washington, D.C, USA
- 2nd NSS 2012 - South Korea, Seoul
- 3rd NSS 2014 – Hague, Netherlands
- 4th NSS 2016 – Washington, D.C, USA

OPEC International Seminar **Headquarters** - Vienna, Austria
Establishment - 1960, Baghdad
Secretary General - Mohammed Sanusi Barkindo
Total Countries – (Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela).
OPEC – Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries

6th International OPEC – Veinna, Austria				
NATO	Headquarters	- Brussels,	Belgium	
	Establishment	- 4	April,	1949
	Secretary	General -	Jens	Stoltenberg
	Total	Member	Countries -	28
	NATO – North Atlantic treaty Organization			
Summit Held in –				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NATO Summit 2014 – Wales (Britain), UK (Britain last hosted the summit in 1990, when Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister) ▪ NATO Summit 2016 – Poland, Warsaw ▪ NATO Summit 2017 - Belgium, Brussels ▪ NATO Summit 2018 – Turkey, Istanbul 				
Asian development Bank meeting	Headquarters	- Mandaluyong, Metro	Manila,	Philippines
	Establishment	- 19	December	1966
	President	- Takehiko Nakao		
	Total	Member	Countries -	67 countries
ADB – Asian Development Bank				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual meeting of the board of governors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) held every year. ▪ ADB Annual Meeting 2014 – Astana, Kazakhstan ▪ ADB Annual Meeting 2015 – Baku, Azerbaijan ▪ ADB Annual Meeting 2016 - Messe Frankfurt, Frankfurt, Germany ▪ ADB Annual Meeting 2017 - Pacifico Yokohama, Yokohama, Japan 				
Earth Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Global earth hour 2015 – Seoul ▪ Global earth hour 2016- Australia 			
NAM Summit	Headquarters	- Jakarta,	Indonesia	
	Establishment	- 1961, Belgrade		
	Secretary	General	- Nicolás Maduro	
	Total	Member	Countries -	120 countries
NAM Summit Full Form – Non-Allied Moment				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 16th NAM(Non-Aligned Movement) Summit 2012 was held in Tehran, Iran. ▪ It has 120+2 (Two nations namely Azerbaijan Republic and Fiji) members. 				

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				▪ 17th NAM summit 2016 was held in Caracas,Venezuela.
Global Insurance Summit				▪ 8th Global insurance Summit Was held in 2015 – Mumbai
CHOGM Summit			Establishment	– 1907
			Chairman	- Joseph Muscat
		Total	Members	Countries – 52 countries
			CHOGM Full Form – Common Wealth Heads of	
			▪ Government Meeting held After Gap of Every Two years	
			▪ Next CHOGM Will held In United Kingdom 2018	
			▪ In 2015 CHOGM Meeting Was held In – Malta	
UN Climate Change Summit			Meetings :-	
			▪ 1st meeting 2000 - The Hague, Netherlands	
			▪ 2nd meeting 2001 - Bonn, Germany	
			▪ 3rd meetibg 2001 - Marrakech, Morocco	
			▪ 4th meeting 2002 - New Delhi, India	
			▪ 5th meeting 2003 - Milan, Italy]	
			▪ 6th meeting 2004 - Buenos Aires, Argentina	
			▪ 7th meeting 2005 - Montreal, Canada	
			▪ 8th meeting 2006 - Nairobi, Kenya	
			▪ 9th meeting 2007 - Bali, Indonesia	
			▪ 10th meeting 2008 - Poznań, Poland	
			▪ 11th meeting 2009 - Copenhagen, Denmark	
			▪ 12th meeting 2010 - Cancún, Mexico[edit]	
			▪ 13th meeting 2011 - Durban, South Africa	
			▪ 14th meeting 2012 - Doha, Qatar	
			▪ 15th meeting 2013 - Warsaw, Poland	
			▪ 16th meeting 2014 - Lima, Peru	
			▪ 17th meeting 2015 - Paris, France	
			▪ 18th meeting 2016 - Marrakech, Morocco	
			▪ 19th meeting 2017 - Bonn, Germany	
22nd CII Partnership Summit & 1 st Sunrise AP Investment Meet		Headquarters	- New Delhi,	India
		Establishment		– 1895
		Executive Vice Chairperson	- Shobana Kamineni	
		Place - Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh		
India Investment Summit	Date -	4th and 5th	February,	2016
	Place - New Delhi			

LIST OF GOVERNORS AND CHIEF MINISTERS - 2017

State	Governor	Chief Minister
Andhra Pradesh	ESL Narasimhan	Nara Chandrababu Naidu
Arunachal Pradesh	V. Shanmuganathan	Pema Khandu
Assam	Banwarilal Purohit	Sarbananda Sonowal
Bihar	Ram Nath Kovind	Nitish Kumar
Chhattisgarh	Balram Das Tandon	Raman Singh
Goa	Mridula Sinha	Laxmikant Parsekar
Gujarat	OP Kohli	Vijay Rupani
Haryana	Kaptan Singh Solanki	Manohar Lal Khattar
Himachal Pradesh	Acharya Dev Vrat	Virbhadra Singh
Jammu-Kashmir	NN Vohra	Mufti Mohammad Sayeed
Jharkhand	Draupadi Murmu	Raghuvar Das
Karnataka	Vajubhai Rudabhai Val	K. Siddaramaiah
Kerala	P. Sathasivam	Pinarayi Vijayan
Madhya Pradesh	Om Prakash Kohli	Shivraj Singh Chouhan
Maharashtra	C. Vidyasagar Rao	Devendra Fadnis
Manipur	Najma A. Heptulla	Okram Ibobi Singh
Meghalaya	V. Shanmuganathan	Mukul Sangma
Mizoram	Nirbhay Sharma	Lal Thanhawla
Nagaland	PB Acharya	TR Zeliang
Odisha	S.C. Jamir	Naveen Patnaik
Punjab	Kaptan Singh Solanki (Add. Charge)	Parkash Singh Badal
Rajasthan	Kalyan Singh	Vasundhara Raje
Sikkim	Shriniwas Patil	Pawan Chamling
Tamil Nadu	C. Vidyasagar	O. Panneerselvam
Telangana	E.S.L. Narasimhan	K. Chandrashekar Rao
Tripura	Tathagata Roy	Manik Sarkar
Uttar Pradesh	Ram Naik	Akhilesh Yadav
Uttarakhand	K.K. Paul	Harish Rawat
West Bengal	Keshari Nath Tripathi	Mamata Banerjee

BLOCKCHAIN SYSTEM: ALL YOU MUST KNOW

INTRODUCTION

- These days the transactions in the banking sector is becoming a very tedious task and so as to ensure that this tedious task to be removed, our banking sector is trying to emerge towards block chain technology. To simplify the transactions without the help of any third party in a secure manner is really a great challenge, but to overcome this challenge an anonymous online ledger (collection of financial accounts) which uses the data structure to simplify it is called block chain technology.
- We can still see what comes in and gets out, and to whom. But now all these information's are present in the form of a digital format at one particular place. In banks we see physical financial collections, now we can get rid of it, and we can keep the records directly in block chain as it is framed even for record keeping.
- As mentioned about the block chain system that it is an anonymous part which protects the identities of the user. So, by this, it is very clear that the transactions will be done in a more secured manner. A bank's ledger is connected to a centralised network.

WORKING:

- Blockchain is a distributed database which takes in a number of inputs and they try to place them in a block. There will be blocks lined and each block is said to be chained to another block using a cryptographic signature. This ensures that block chains used as a ledger are accessed by anyone provided if he has the permission to seek the details.

HOW IS IT UNIQUE?

- For any transaction to be done we need to have a reconciliation so as to ensure that the transaction is done in a genuine way. Every time having a reconciliation is a tougher task to ensure that the transactions are done in a smoother manner.
- To eradicate this problem block chain built applications will play a key role by not allowing reconciliation of any transactions as all the information will be readily available and verification will be done to see that if anyone is a part of particular block chain ecosystem.

EXAMPLE

- A person X wants to send his money to a person Y. So, here we have lender and beneficiary. Once the deal is sealed, in the block chain world this transaction gets recorded with all important details such as date, transaction value and the names also will be recorded. Next time when they want to repeat the process they wouldn't face any problems as their data is already stored in it. It is a decentralised ledger, and all the system numbers can store the information. Verifications by any intermediaries are not required at all.

WHY ARE BANKS INTERESTED?

- As we are in the digital era and even our country is advancing towards digital India and cashless society so we need to adopt good technologies so as to be in the forefront in terms of competition with the entire world.

- The first Indian bank to complete the block chain transaction successfully was ICICI bank. Even all major banks are also trying to implement this block chain system as it will be really beneficial for all sort of money transfers and for storing the records.
- In banks, we see a lot of hectic work is done by just making more paper-intensive works, but now this block chain application will just replicate this paper-intensive work into an electronic decentralised ledger which enables all participators the ability to access a single source of information. We can track any documents easily and we can validate ownership of assets digitally, by not allowing any changes in the real time.
- Block chain mechanism is to create a core banking platform. This technology is being developed by the Indian IT service providers like TCS and INFOSYS.

ADVANTAGES:

- Block chain technology validates each and every transaction which makes it more secure and reliable.
- The technology is decentralised and if any third party tries to enter he wouldn't get any chance as it will discard off in peer-to-peer transactions.
- Block chain technology is a cost-saving factor for banks as manual intervention is not required for reconciliation purposes. It is basically done by intermediaries but now with the help of block chain, there is no need of any manual interventions.
- This technology is cryptographically encrypted with our digital signatures and it is difficult to

hack into. If in case there is any fraudulent transactions every node of it can detect it and it will deny the proceedings.

- A lot amount of aggressiveness is amounted in banks by looking at block chain technology. The banks can keep a track of debit and credit data. Even, in the forex market, the back office of the respective banks they need to speak with the back office of another bank which is said to be a tedious process. In this case block chain technology will play a pivotal role as it doesn't support any back office, so automatically back offices will be eliminated in the banking sector.

HUGE POTENTIAL

- Banks tend to invest a lot of time in moving money, thus creating a problem, whereas the blockchain technology can free up the movement of money, instead of leaving it clogged in slow banking. It's very secure and till now no blockchain technology has never been hacked successfully. Transaction process will also become easy by this technology and in the same way, tracking also will become easy. It will play a crucial role particularly with bonds and stocks as banks spend a lot of money and time on tracking it.

CONCLUSION

Block chain technology will be a huge benefitting factor to the banking sector and even this technology is not limited to only this sector but rather, it can be used even in many other areas also. There will be no human intervention at all if we adopt block chain technology as it will verify all the transactions solely. The block chain architecture can

significantly bring down the costs and even it can reduce the inefficiencies in the financial sector.

LATEST LIST OF CHIEF MINISTERS OF VARIOUS STATES OF INDIA - JANUARY 2017

State	Chief Minister
Andhra Pradesh	Nara Chandrababu Naidu
Arunachal Pradesh	Pema Khandu
Assam	Sarbananda Sonowal
Bihar	Nitish Kumar
Chhattisgarh	Raman Singh
Delhi (NCT)	Arvind Kejriwal
Goa	Laxmikant Parsekar
Gujarat	Vijay Rupani
Haryana	Manohar Lal Khattar
Himachal Pradesh	Virbhadra Singh
Jammu and Kashmir	Mehbooba Mufti
Jharkhand	Raghuvar Das
Karnataka	Siddaramaiah
Kerala	Pinarayi Vijayan
Madhya Pradesh	Shivraj Singh Chouhan
Maharashtra	Devendra Fadnavis
Manipur	Okram Ibobi Singh
Meghalaya	Mukul Sangma
Mizoram	Lal Thanhawla
Nagaland	T R Zeliang
Odisha	Naveen Patnaik
Puducherry (UT)	Narayanasamy
Punjab	Parkash Singh Badal
Rajasthan	Smt. Vasundhara Raje
Sikkim	Pawan Kumar Chamling
Tamil Nadu	O. Panneerselvam
Telangana	K Chandrasekhar Rao
Tripura	Manik Sarkar
Uttar Pradesh	Akhilesh Yadav
Uttarakhand	Harish Rawat

INX: INDIA'S FIRST INTERNATIONAL STOCK EXCHANGE: KEY POINTS

INTRODUCTION

January 9, 2017, brought a great day for Indian Market as Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted India its first International Stock Exchange Market. This initiative of GOI has taken India a step ahead in the global stock market and it was a proud moment for all the Indian. In this article we will discuss the key points of INX because in the upcoming bank exams this will be the hot topic for discussion and one or two objective type questions will be surely based on INX.

FEATURES OF INX

1. SPEED

It is world's fastest stock exchange in terms of response. The highly advanced technology based stock exchange will work on four microsecond response time.

2. WORKING HOURS

To match the pace of global economy and stock market, INX will remain open for 22 hours a day.

The stock exchange will open at 4 am and will close at 2 am. This time span is matched with Japan and US's stock exchange time. Japan Stock exchange open at 4 am according to Indian time and US Stock exchange closes at 2 am according to Indian time.

3. INVESTMENT TARGETS

Bombay Stock Exchange has kept the target of investing 500 crores in the market within three years.

4. EMPLOYEES

To function perfectly, the staff of BSE has relocated to Gujrat. 100 BSE employees have shifted to INX. There is a team of local and foreign personnel too.

5. TRADING

INX will trade in securities and products along with Indian Rupee. It will indulge in the trading of equity shares of companies incorporated outside India, depository receipts, debt securities, currency and interest rate derivatives, index-based derivatives, commodity derivatives. For the first six months, it will offer only derivative products.

6. SECURITY

To prevent money laundering and to manage risks and money manipulation, INX has a robust security system.

TAX BENEFITS

- The people who will invest via INX will get following tax benefits
- No income tax for fixed time span
- Low commodity transaction tax
- Beneficial for dividend distribution tax
- Renunciation in long-term capital tax

- Beneficial in Security Transaction tax

FAST FACTS FOR QUICK REVISION

Launched on	January 9, 2017
Launched by	Narendra Modi
Situated in	Gandhinagar, Gujrat
Situated at	Gujarat International Finance-Tec (GIFT) City
Working hours	4 am- 2 am (22 hours)
Response Time	4 microsecond (fastest in the world)
Investment	500 crores in 3 years
Products	Derivative Products: equity, currency 7 commodity
Tax Benefits for	transaction tax, distribution tax capital tax
Income Tax	No income tax for three years

GAAR-GENERAL ANTI-AVOIDANCE RULES: EXPLAINED WITH EXAMPLES

INTRODUCTION

General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR) is an anti-tax avoidance regulation of India. It was introduced by then Finance Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, on 16 March 2012 during the Budget session.

TAX AVOIDANCE

Avoidance means nothing but an attempt to reduce the tax liability through the legal means. **The difference between Tax Avoidance and Tax Evasion**

Evasion & Avoidance are two different entities. In Avoidance, tax reduction is done legally but in evasion, it is done illegally.

GAAR IN SIMPLE TERMS

Tax Avoidance is one of the major concerns across the world. Different countries framed different rules to minimise such tax avoidance. Such rules in simple terms are known as General Anti-Avoidance Rule (GAAR). Thus GAAR is nothing but the set of rules ratified so as to check the avoidance of tax.

HISTORY OF GAAR IN INDIA

- In India, the actual discussions started on 12th-Aug-2009, when the draft of Direct Taxes code Bill (DTC) released.

SOME OF THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ABOUT GAAR ARE

- On 16th-Mar-2012: Finance Minister, Pranab Mukherjee takes a tough decision & announces that the government will curb on

tax avoidance effective from the fiscal year 2012-13.

- On 7th-May-2012: Finance Minister, Pranab Mukherjee forced to change his opinion and agreed to defer GAAR by a year as his announcements spooked overseas investors.
- On 28th-Jun- 2012: Finance Ministry releases the first draft on GAAR, there was the wide criticism of the provisions.
- On 14th-Jul-2012: PM, Manmohan Singh, formed a review committee under Parthasarathi Shome, for preparing a second draft by 31st August and final guidelines by 30th September 2012.
- On 1st-sept- 2012: Shome Committee recommends to defer GAAR by three years.
- On 14th-Jan-2013: Govt. of India partially accepts the recommendations of Shome Committee and has decided to defer the same for 2 years and will now be effective from the year 2016-17.
- On 27th-sept-2013, as per the notification issued by Govt. of India, GAAR would be valid for foreign institutional investors that have not taken the benefit of an agreement under Section 90 or Section 90A of the I-T Act or Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).

Thus

- GAAR will not be applicable for the investments made by foreign investors prior to Aug-2010
- GAAR provisions that will come into effect from April 2016 and
- apply only to business arrangements with a tax benefit exceeding Rs3 crores.

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS OF PARTHASARATHI SHOME PANEL

- Defer implementation of GAAR by 3 years.
- The threshold of tax benefit is Rs.3 crores & additional with changes in 1962 Income Tax Rules.
- Mauritius Issue- GAAR should not appeal to inspect the realness of the residency FII from Mauritius. The government should hold the provisions of the CBDT circular that was issued in the year 2000 on acceptance of TRC (Tax Residence Certificate) issued by Mauritius government.
- The Approving panel is Five-member committee, two members must be non-government persons & of renown from the fields of Accountancy, Business or Economics.
- The other two members must be chief commissioners of IT dept., chaired by a retired High court judge.

TWO EXAMPLES TO UNDERSTAND GAAR PROVISIONS:

EXAMPLE -1

Facts:

A choice made by a company between leasing an

asset and purchasing the same asset. The company would claim a deduction for leasing rentals rather than depreciation if it had their own asset. Would the lease rent payment be disallowed as an expense

under

GAAR?

Interpretation:

GAAR provisions, would not, prima facie, apply to a decision of leasing (as against purchase of an asset). However, if it is a case of circular leasing, i.e. the taxpayer leases out an asset and through various sub-leases, takes it back on lease, thus creating a tax benefit without any change in economic substance, Revenue would examine the matter for invoking GAAR provisions.

EXAMPLE -2

Facts:

`A` company borrowed money from a company `B` and used that to buy shares in three 100% subsidiary companies of `A`. Though the fair market value of the shares was Rs. Y, `A` paid Rs. 6Y for

each share. The amount received by the said subsidiary companies was transferred back to another company connected to `B`. The said shares were sold by „A“ for Rs. Y/5 each and a short-term capital loss was claimed and this was set-off against other long-term capital gains.

Interpretation:

By the above arrangement, the taxpayer has obtained a tax benefit and created rights or obligations which are not ordinarily created between persons dealing at arm's length. Revenue would invoke GAAR with regard to this arrangement.

LIST OF IMPORTANT DAYS FOR BANK EXAMS

Day	Observed As
January 1	Global Family Day
January 9	NRI Day
January 10	World Laughter Day
January 12	National Youth Day
January 15	Army Day
January 25	National Voters Day , National Tourism Day
January 26	India's Republic Day, International Customs Day
January 28	Data Protection Day
January 30	Martyrs Day; World Leprosy Eradication Day
February second Sunday	World Marriage Day
February 4	World Cancer Day
February 6	International Day against Female Genital Mutilation
February 12	Darwin Day ,World Day of the Sick
February 13	World Radio day
February 20	World Day of Social Justice
February 21	International Mother Language Day

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February 22	World Scout Day
February 24	Central Excise Day
February 28	National Science Day
March second Monday	Commonwealth Day
March second Thursday	World Kidney Day
March 4	World Day of the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation
March 8	International Women's Day
March 15	World Consumer Rights Day, World Disabled Day
March 16	National Vaccination Day
March 18	Ordnance Factories Day(India)
March 20	World Sparrow Day
March 21	World Forestry Day
March 22	World Water Day
March 23	World Earth Day, World Meteorological Day
March 24	World TB Day
March 27	World Drama Day
April 2	World Autism Awareness Day
April 5	International Day for Mine Awareness, National Maritime Day
April 5	National Maritime Day
April 7	World Health Day
April 17	World Haemophilia Day
April 18	World Amateur Radio Day
April 18	World Heritage Day
April 21	Secretaries Day
April 21	National Civil Services Day
April 22	Earth Day
April 23	World Book and Copyright Day
April 25	World Malaria Day
April 26	World Intellectual Property Day
April 29	International Dance Day
May 1	International Labour Day
May 1st Tuesday	World Asthma Day
May 3	Press Freedom Day
May-2nd Sunday	Mother's Day
May 4	Coal Miners' Day
May 8	World Red Cross Day
May 9	World Thalassaemia Day
May 11	National Technology Day
May 12	World Hypertension Day
May 12	International Nurses Day
May 14	World Migratory day
May 15	International Day of the Family
May 17	World Tele-communication Day

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May 18	International Museum Day
May 21	Anti-Terrorism day (Rajiv Gandhi dead)
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity
May 24	Common wealth Day
May 28	World Hunger Day
May 31	Anti-tobacco Day
June 4	International Day of Innocent Children
June 4	Victims of Aggression
June 5	World Environment Day
June, 3rd Sunday	Father's Day
June 8	World Ocean Day
June 12	World Day against Child Labour
June 14	World Blood Donor Day
June 15	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
June 17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
June 20	World Refugee Day
June 21	World Music Day
June 23	International Olympic Day
June 23	UN Public Service Day
June 26	International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
June 27	International Diabetes Day
July 1	Doctor's Day
July 6	World Zoonoses Day
July 11	World Population Day
July 12	Malala Day
July 18	Nelson Mandela International Day
July 30	International Day of Friendship
August first Sunday	International Friendship Day
August 6	Hiroshima Day, Organ Donation Day
August 7	Forgiveness Day
August 8	World Senior Citizen Day
August 9	Quit India Day ,Nagasaki Day
August 12	International Youth Day
August 15	Indian Independence Day
August 18	International Day of the World Indigenous Peoples
August 19	Photography Day, World Humanitarian Day
August 20	Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Divas
August 29	National Sports Day
September 2	Coconut Day
September 5	Teachers Day ,International day of charity and Sanskrit Day
September 8	International Literacy Day (UNESCO)
September 14	Hindi Diwas, World First Aid Day
September 15	Engineer Day
September 16	World Ozone Day

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September 21	Alzheimer Day
September 21	Day for Peace and Non- violence (UN)
September 22	Welfare of cancer patients (Rose Day)
September 25	Social Justice Day
September 26	Day of the Deaf
September 27	World Tourism Day
September 28	World Rabies Day
September 29	World Heart Day
October 1	International Day for the Elderly
October 2	Gandhi Jayanthi
October 3	World Habitat Day
October 4	World Animal Welfare Day
October 8	Indian Air Force Day
October 9	World Post Office Day
October 10	National Post Day
October, 2nd Thursday	World Sight Day
October 11	International Day of the Girl Child
October 12	World Arthritis Day
October 13	UN International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction
October 14	World Standards Day
October 15	World White Cane Day (guiding the blind)
October 15	International Day of Rural women
October 16	World Food Day
October 17	The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
October 20	World Statistics Day
October 20	World Osteoporosis Day
October 21	Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day
October 24	World Development Information Day
October 24	World Polio Day, UN Day
October 28	International Animation Day
October 30	World Thrift Day
November 5	World Radiography Day
November 9	Legal Services Day
November 12	World Pneumonia Day
November 12	Public Service Broadcasting Day
November 14	Children Day
November 14	World Diabetes Day
November 16	International Day for Tolerance
November 17	National Epilepsy Day
November 17	National Journalism Day
November 19	Citizens Day
November 19	World Toilet Day
November 19	National Integration Day
November 20	Africa Industrialisation Day

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November 21	World Television Day
November 21	World Fisheries day
November 25	International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women
November 26	Constitution Day
November 29	International Day of Solidarity with Palestinian People
December 1	World AIDS Day
December 2	World Computer Literacy Day
December 3	World Day of the Handicapped
December 4	Indian Navy Day
December 5	International Volunteer Day
December 7	Indian Armed Forces Flag Day
December 7	International Civil Aviation Day
December 10	Human Rights Day
December 10	International Children Day of Broadcasting
December 14	World Energy Day
December 18	Minorities Rights Day
December 22	National Mathematics Day
December 23	Farmer's Day(India)
December 25	Good Governance Day
December 25	Christmas Day