

CURRENT GK

for MBA Entrance Exams



Current GK Theory for MBA Entrance Exams

(IIFT, SNAP, XAT, CMAT, MAT, etc...)

(March 2017 - Oct 2017)



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AWARDS & HONOURS

Indian captain Virat Kohli and spin ace Ravichandran Ashwin, were honoured for their phenomenal run of form through the season at the **BCCI annual awards**. Kohli won the Polly Umrigar award for best international player of 2015/16, and also became the first player to get the award three times. The BCCI Awards are a set of annual cricket awards given by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The awards were first given in 2006–07. Recipients are:-

- **Col. CK. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award:** Rajinder Goel, Padmakar Shivalkar
- **BCCI Lifetime Achievement Award for Women:** Shantha Rangaswamy
- **BCCI Special Awards:** VV Kumar, Late Ramakant Desai
- **Polly Umrigar Award:** Virat Kohli
- **Dilip Sardesai Award (For India's best cricketer in the West Indies series, 2016):** Ravi Ashwin
- **Lala Amarnath Award (Best all-rounder in the Ranji Trophy 2015-16):** Jalaj Saxena (Madhya Pradesh)
- **Lala Amarnath Award (Best all-rounder in domestic limited-overs competitions 2015-16):** Axar Patel (Gujarat)
- **Madhavrao Scindia Award (Highest scorer in the Ranji Trophy 2015-16):** Shreyas Iyer (Mumbai)
- **Madhavrao Scindia Award (Highest wicket-taker in the Ranji Trophy 2015-16):** Shahbaz Nadeem (Jharkhand)
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy (Highest scorer in U-23 Col. CK. Nayudu Trophy 2015-16):** Jay Bista (Mumbai)
- **M.A. Chidambaram Trophy (Highest wicket-taker in U-23 Col. CK. Nayudu Trophy 2015-16):** Satyajeeet Bachhav (Maharashtra)
- **NKP Salve Award (Highest scorer in U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy in 2015-16):** Arman Jaffer (Mumbai)
- **NKP Salve Award (Highest wicket-taker in U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy in 2015-16):** Ninad Rathva (Baroda)
- **Raj Singh Dungarpur Award (Highest scorer in U-16 Vijay Merchant Trophy in 2015-16):** Abhishek Sharma (Punjab)
- **Raj Singh Dungarpur Award (Highest wicket-taker in U-16 Vijay Merchant Trophy in 2015-16):** Abhishek Sharma (Punjab)

- **Jagmohan Dalmiya Award (Best Woman cricketer (Sr.) of 2015-16):** Mithali Raj (Railways)
- **Jagmohan Dalmiya Award (Best Woman cricketer (Jr.) of 2015-16):** Deepti Sharma (Uttar Pradesh)
- **Best Umpire in Domestic Cricket:** Nitin Menon
- **Best Performance in BCCI Domestic Tournaments:** Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA)
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Madras won the 2017 **IEEE Spectrum Technology in the Service of Society Award** for its solar-direct current (DC) inverter system.
- Noted Konkani writer Mahabaleshwar Sail was selected for the prestigious **Saraswati Samman** 2016 for his novel Hawthth.

The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters announced to award the **Abel Prize** for 2017 to Yves Meyer (77) of the École normale supérieure Paris-Saclay, France "for his pivotal role in the development of the mathematical theory of wavelets". Yves Meyer was the visionary leader in the modern development of this theory, at the intersection of mathematics, information technology and computational science. The Abel Prize recognizes contributions of extraordinary depth and influence to the mathematical sciences and has been awarded annually since 2003. It carries a cash award of 6 million NOK (about 675,000 Euro or 715,000 USD).

Photojournalist Raghu Rai was conferred with a **Lifetime Achievement Award** by the information and broadcasting (I&B) ministry for "his remarkable contribution to the field." Rai was honoured with the award by I&B minister M. Venkaiah Naidu at 6th National Photography Awards.

Maggie MacDonnell, a teacher from the Canadian Arctic was named as the winner of the annual Global Teacher Prize.

Indian-American Indrani Das (17) won the top prize of \$2,50,000 in the **Regeneron Science Talent Search competition** in the United States (US) for her research on treating brain injury and disease. Regeneron Science Talent Search competition is the oldest science competition in US for students and is nicknamed as the "Junior Nobel Prize".

The 64th **National Film Awards** were announced on April 7, 2017. Sonam Kapoor and Akshay Kumar were among the big winners. While Sonam's Neerja was declared the Best Hindi Film of 2016, Rustom won Akshay Kumar the Best Actor award. Following is the complete list of winners at the 64th National Film Awards for 2016:-

- **Best Feature Film -** Kasaav (Marathi).
- **Non-Feature Film -** Fireflies in the Abyss.
- **Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment -** Sathamanam Bhavathi
- **Best stunt choreography -** Peter Hein (Pulimurugan)
- **Best Children's Film -** Dhanak (Hindi)
- **Best Film on social issue -** Pink

- **Best Direction** - Rajesh (Ventilator)
- **Best Actor** - Akhay Kumar (Rustom)
- **Best Actress** - Surabhi Lakshmi (Minnaminungu)
- **Best Supporting Actress** - Zaira Wasim (Dangal)
- **Best Child Artist** - Adhish Praveen (Kunju Daivam), Saj (Noor Islam), Manohara (Railway Children)
- **Best Male Playback Singer** - Sundara Iyer (Joker)
- **Best Female Playback Singer** - Thume jaake
- **Best Screenplay (original)** - Syam Pushkaran (Maheshinte Prathikaram)
- **Best Screenplay (adapted)** - Sanjay Krishnaji patel (Dashakriya)
- **Best Editing** - Rameshwar Ventilator
- **Sound designer** - Jayadevan (Kaadu Pookunna Neram)
- **Best production design** – 24
- **Best Costume Designer** - Sachin (Marathi film)
- **Best Environmental film including agriculture** - The Tiger who crossed the line
- **Best Make-up Artist** - MK Ramakrishna
- **Best Music Direction** - Babu Padmanabha (Kannada Lama)
- **Special Mention** - Kadvi Hawa Mukthi bhava (Hindi)
- Special Jury award for Mohanlal for Pulimurugan, Janatha Garage and Munthirivallikal Thalirkkumbol

The Underground Railroad, an inventive and searing take on slavery in 1850s Georgia, won the **Pulitzer Prize** for fiction, adding to author Colson Whitehead's list of accolades and bolstering the case for the book to be included in the pantheon of Great American Novels. The complete list of winners is as under:-

- **Letters, Drama & Music**
 - ❖ **Fiction:** *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead. Drama: *Sweat* by Lynn Nottage.
 - ❖ **History:** *Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy*, by Heather Ann Thompson.
 - ❖ **Biography or Autobiography:** *The Return: Fathers, Sons and the Land in Between*, by Hisham Matar.
 - ❖ **Poetry:** *Olio*, by Tyehimba Jess (Wave Books)
 - ❖ **General Nonfiction:** *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, by Matthew Desmond.
 - ❖ **Music:** *Angel's Bone*, by Du Yun.

➤ **Journalism**

- ❖ **Public Service:** New York Daily News and ProPublica
- ❖ **Breaking News Reporting:** Staff of East Bay Times, Oakland.
- ❖ **Investigative Reporting:** Eric Eyre of Charleston Gazette-Mail, Charleston
- ❖ **Explanatory Reporting:** International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, McClatchy and Miami Herald
- ❖ **Local Reporting:** The Salt Lake Tribune Staff
- ❖ **National Reporting:** David A. Fahrenthold of The Washington Post
- ❖ **International Reporting:** The New York Times Staff
- ❖ **Feature Writing:** C. J. Chivers of The New York Times
- ❖ **Commentary:** Peggy Noonan of The Wall Street Journal
- ❖ **Criticism:** Hilton Als of The New Yorker
- ❖ **Editorial Writing:** Art Cullen of The Storm Lake Times, Storm Lake.
- ❖ **Editorial Cartooning:** Jim Morin of Miami Herald
- ❖ **Breaking News Photography:** Daniel Berehulak, freelance photographer
- ❖ **Feature Photography:** Jason Wambsgans of Chicago Tribune

This is the 101st year of the prestigious Pulitzers, which is an annual award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States.

Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai was appointed a **UN Messenger of Peace** to promote girls' education, more than four years after a Taliban gunman shot her in the head. At 19, Yousafzai is the youngest Messenger of Peace, the highest honour given by the UN for an initial period of two years. She was also the youngest person to win the Nobel peace prize in 2014 when she was 17.

Dawit Isaak, an imprisoned Eritrean-Swedish journalist, was chosen to receive the 2017 **UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize**. Mr. Isaak was arrested in a crackdown on the media that occurred in September 2001. The last time he was heard from was in 2005. His present location is unknown.

Renowned filmmaker and actor Kasinadhuni Viswanath, best known for his award-winning movies in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi, won the **Dadasaheb Phalke award** for the year 2016 for his outstanding contribution to the film industry.

Dr. Paduru Gururaja Bhat Award 2017 was conferred upon Prof. A.V. Narasimha Murthy, for his contribution to Indian Archaeology.

State-owned Gujarat Narmada Valley Fertilisers and Chemicals Ltd (GNFC) won the prestigious **Golden Globe Tigers Award for Excellence and Leadership in CSR** in the category of 'E-Payment Leadership' for the implementation of digital transactions in its township at Bharuch, Gujarat. The award recognises "Tigers" in

marketing, branding CSR and social innovation, education and academic across leadership levels in an individual and organization. This is the second award for GNFC in this category. Earlier it had won the Golden Peacock Award in the category of Innovative Product/Service for its cashless innovation.

UNESCO named Giuseppina Nicolini, Mayor of Lampedusa (Italy) and the non-governmental organisation SOS Méditerranée (France) as the winners of **Felix Houphouet-Boigny Peace Prize 2017** “for their work to save the lives of refugees and migrants and welcome them with dignity”.

Produced by Manish Mundra and directed by Amit Vasurkar, ‘Newton’ won the **Jury Prize for the Best Film** at the 41st Hong Kong Film Festival 2017. The film had its Asia Premiere at the festival where it was screened in the Young Cinema Competition category. The jury awarded the film “*For the intelligent and human presentation of a political situation in a country. The film balances the humour, disillusion and – against all odds – a steadfast belief in the meaning of democracy*”

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare selected Tripura for the **Krishi Karman Award 2015-16** for commendable increase in food grain production in small category states (less than 1 million tonnes). Tamil Nadu got the award in large category (production more than 10 million tonnes) and Himachal Pradesh in medium category (1 to 10 million tonnes).

National Safety Council Awards 2016 were given to 70 Organisations under four categories: SarvaShreshtha Suraksha Puraskar, Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar, Suraksha Puraskar PrashansaPatra. Indian Oil, National Fertilizers, L&T and Godrej & Boyce were among those that won the top National Safety Council (NSC) award — Sarva Shreshtha Suraksha Puraskar. The National Safety Council is a self-supporting non- profit autonomous society, set up by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in 1966.

Bhubaneswar, the capital city of the Odisha, became the first Indian city to win the elusive **Pierre L'enfant International Planning excellence award** 2017. The award is given out by the American Planning Association (APA) for good and advanced town planning and engaging its residents in the planning process.

Social activist **Prafulla Samantra** was announced one of the six winners of the Goldman Environmental Prize. Mr. Samantra was one of the key leaders responsible for rallying tribes, indigenous to Odisha's Niyamgiri region, and using legal provisions to thwart mining-to-metals conglomerate, Vedanta. The company has been forced to suspend plans to mine bauxite. The annual prize honours grassroot environmentalists, who undergo risk to their lives, to protect the environment and empower those who have most to lose from industrial projects threatening their traditional livelihood. Other winners this year include Mark Lopez, United States; Uroš Macerl, Slovenia; Rodrigo Tot, Guatemala; Rodrigue Katembo, Democratic Republic of Congo; and Wendy Bowman, Australia. Since 1990 when the awards were first instituted, five Indians — Medha Patkar, M.C. Mehta, Rasheeda Bi, Champaran Shukla and Ramesh Agrawal — have won the prize. Mr. Samantra is the sixth.

Hollywood actor Emma Watson picked up the first-ever **Genderless Acting Award** for the Best Actor category at the MTV Movie and TV Awards.

Sanjay Pratihari, a scientist at Tezpur University, was chosen for the the prestigious Indian National Science Academy (INSA) **medal** for the Young Scientist Award for the year 2017.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu was selected for the '**Transformative Chief Minister Award**' by the US-India Business Council (USIBC) in recognition for his role in advancing the US-India partnership at the state level.

Saqib Majeed, a Srinagar based freelance photographer did Kashmir proud, pocketing the prestigious **2016 Wisden-MCC (Melbourne Cricket Council) Cricket Photograph of the Year** for a stunning image, which captured boys playing cricket in the outskirts of Srinagar. Majeed is the first Kashmiri and second Asian after Atul Kamble to receive the prestigious award. Every year MCC publishes a book titled Wisden Cricketer Almanack, which includes best sports pictures from across the globe.

Comedian-actor Kapil Sharma and Baywatch star Priyanka Chopra will be honoured with **Dadasaheb Phalke Academy Award**. The Dadasaheb Phalke Academy has been honouring talent from the Hindi and regional film industry since the year 2000. This award is different from the Dadasaheb Phalke Award which is India's highest award in cinema.

Rifleman Brijesh Thapa who served with the UN Organisation Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and Private Ravi Kumar who was deployed with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) were honoured with the **Dag Hammarskjöld Medal** on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers observed on May 24.

Indian scientist Shrinivas Kulkarni won the prestigious **Dan David Prize** for his contribution in the field of astronomy. He is a professor of astrophysics and planetary science at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena. The \$1 million prize is a joint international enterprise endowed by the Dan David Foundation headquartered at Tel Aviv University. Three Dan David prizes of \$1 million each are given every year in the categories of "Past," "Present" and "Future" to people around the world who have made outstanding contributions to humanity in the sciences, humanities, or through their work in civil society. The "Future" category this year is dedicated to astronomy and will be shared by Prof. Kulkarni, Andrej Udalski of the University of Warsaw and Neil Gehrels of NASA for their discoveries on time-domain astrophysics.

The President of India presented the **Hindi Sevi Samman Awards** for the year 2015. These Awards were instituted by Central Hindi Institute, Agra in 1989. The scholars received awards in 12 different categories for their contribution in the field of Hindi language and literature.

Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez received the **International Humanitarian Award** and writer Jeffrey Archer the Lifetime Achievement Award at a ceremony that recognised the work of charity organisations in the UK and abroad.

Munnar, Kerala's popular hill station with sprawling tea plantations and winding lanes, won the award for 'Best Destination for Romance' at the **Lonely Planet Magazine Indian Travel Awards 2017**.

Satyabrata Rout, a professor from the Department of Theatre Arts, S N School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad (UoH) was awarded the **Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar** for the year 2016. The Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar (Akademi Award) is an award given by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, India's National Academy of Music, Dance & Drama. It is the highest Indian recognition given to practising artists.

Rohan Chakravarty, a young Indian wildlife and environment cartoonist won this year's **WWF International President's Award** for his efforts to inspire change and attitudes towards nature. The award is the global conservation organization's top accolade to recognize outstanding leadership in young conservationists from around the world.

The Fifth **Bhupen Hazarika National Award** 2017 was conferred on eminent writer from Arunachal Pradesh Yeshe Dorjee Thongshi. The prestigious Award, instituted by Sarhad, a Maharashtra-based organization, is

honouring a person every year since 2012, who has rendered an outstanding literary work at national and international level. The award consists of 51,000 rupees, a memento and a certificate.

World Health Organization conferred **Director General's Special Recognition Award** to India's Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Mr. J P Nadda, for his leadership and commitment to advancing tobacco control. India's recent initiatives include making graphic health warnings covering 85% of all tobacco products mandatory beginning April 2016; establishing National Tobacco Testing Laboratories last year; launching cessation services in 2015, and, as part of this, a National Tobacco Quit line a year ago.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) posthumously awarded the **Exceptional Public Service Medal** to Michael A'Hearn. The NASA Medal is for fundamental work on comets and small bodies of the solar system, leadership in space missions, and ensuring public access to data from NASA missions and related projects.

Legendary Odiya poet, essayist and columnist Haraprasad Das was conferred with the coveted **Kalinga Literary Award** for his work and contribution to literature at the fourth edition of Kalinga Literary Festival. This year, the KLF introduced two new awards — the Kalinga International Literary Award, which was received by Anand Neelakantan for his contribution towards literature, and the Kalinga Karubaki Award, which was given to Paramita Satpathy for her contribution to Odia poetry.

Israeli author David Grossman won the **Man Booker International Prize** for his novel *A Horse Walks Into a Bar*. The award, with a prize of 50,000 pounds, was previously a career honor, but changed last year to recognize a single book in a bid to increase the profile of international fiction in English-speaking countries. Last year the prize was awarded to *The Vegetarian* by South Korea's Han Kang.

'Project Jal Sanchay' - a model of water conservation adopted successfully by the authorities in Nalanda district of south central Bihar, was selected for the **national award for excellence** in the Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee programme (MGNREGP), by the ministry of rural development.

Polish poet and author Adam Zagajewski won Spain's prestigious **Princess of Asturias Award for Literature**. Zagajewski is one of the most pre-eminent contemporary Polish poets, novelists and essayists from the so-called Generation of '68, also known as the "New Wave". The Princess of Asturias Awards were launched in 1981 and are named after the heir apparent to the Spanish throne, who back then was the current king, Felipe VI.

Qatar Airways was named **Best Airline in the World for 2017** by leading consumer aviation website Skytrax. This was Qatar Airways' fourth win in the last 10 years after securing the top spot in 2011, 2012, and 2015.

Actress Sonam Kapoor and her producer-sister Rhea Kapoor's fashion label, Rheson, bagged the **Compassionate Business Award** from the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India for a line of bags made exclusively of vegan materials.

Manushi Chhillar (from Haryana) was crowned fbb Colors **Femina Miss India World 2017**.

Pune's Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute became the first recipient of the **Prime Minister's award for outstanding contribution for promotion and development of yoga 2017**.

Anti-hunger activist Ankit Kawatra was awarded the **Queen's Young Leaders Award for 2017** at a ceremony in the Buckingham Palace. The award recognizes the 25-year-old's exceptional work towards solving hunger and malnutrition in India. Mr. Kawatra is the founder of Feeding India, an organisation that aims to eradicate hunger and food wastage in India.

Nisha Dutt, Chief Executive Officer of Hyderabad-based Intellectap was honoured with the **"Social Entrepreneur of the Year" award** at The 7th Asian Awards in London. She is the first Indian woman leader to have been conferred with this recognition. This award has been presented to her for leading Intellectap to become a globally known enterprise that focuses on social capital and impacts the underserved communities.

Kanyashree Prakalpa, the scheme launched by Mamata Banerjee in October 2013, two years after she became West Bengal chief minister, won her government the **United Nations Public Service Award** at The Hague. India was named first in the Asia-Pacific group for the category: 'Reaching the Poorest and Most Vulnerable through Inclusive Services and Participation'. The government of West Bengal was the awarded institution for Kanyashree which aims to improve status of adolescent girls from disadvantaged families through small cash transfers.

The Sahitya Akademi announced the winners of its **Yuva Puraskar 2017**. Poetry was the top genre with 16 poetry collections across 24 languages winning the award. Other winners included five short story collections, two biographies and a book of essays. The Yuva Puraskar, awarded annually for the first book or best book by an author of age 35 and below, was won among others by Kashmiri poet Nighat Sahiba for her collection Zard Panike Dair and Aswathy Sasikumar for her short story collection in Malayalam.

TERI, The Energy Resources Institute, was ranked number two by the International Center for Climate Governance (ICCG), an internationally-renowned body whose activities focus on the design of climate policy and related governance issues. The New Delhi-based think tank was ranked under the category **'2016 Top Climate Think Tanks in the Rest of the World--Absolute Global Rankings'** during ICCG's 23rd annual conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (EAERE) in Greece. TERI conducts research for sustainable development of India.

Tata Steel won the Prime Minister's trophy for being the **best performing integrated steel plant** in the country during 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Raipur's Swami Vivekananda Airport was ranked **first in Customer Satisfaction** among 49 airports in the country. Raipur Airport achieved 4.84 score on a five point scale index in the latest CSI survey conducted by an independent agency for the period of January-June 2017, followed by Udaipur, Amritsar and Dehradun airports in that sequence.

Indian Railways achieved a major landmark in the field of Eco friendly fuel technologies at Indian Railways Organization for Alternate Fuel (IROAF) which was awarded the coveted National level **"Golden Peacock Award for the Year 2017 for Eco-Innovation"** for substitution of fossil fuels (Diesel) by environment friendly CNG in DEMU passenger train services. Use of CNG in Train Sets for passenger transportation has been done for the first time in the world. Golden Peacock Awards, instituted by the Institute Of Directors (IOD), India in 1991, are now regarded as a benchmark of Corporate Excellence worldwide.

Indian-Americans, Adobe chief Shantanu Narayen and former US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, were among 38 immigrants to be honoured this year for their role in helping advance the country's (US) society, culture and

economy. They were honored with the prestigious '**Great Immigrants' annual award** on US's Independence Day on July 4.

Writer Preeti Shenoy was honoured with the **Indian of the Year award**. Shenoy, who is one of India's top five highest selling women authors, was awarded by Brands Academy, one of the most reputed branding companies in India to recognise the achievements of personalities who have contributed towards building up the reputation of the country.

The U.S. Department of State honored Mr. Mahesh Muralidhar Bhagwat, I.P.S., Commissioner of Police, Rachakonda in Telangana State, as a 2017 **Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report Hero**. At the release of 2017 TIP Report in Washington D.C., Mr. Bhagwat was recognized for his dynamic leadership as the first police commissioner of the Rachakonda Commissionerate in India, his vital role in elevating human trafficking as a government priority, and his innovative approach to investigating cases and dismantling trafficking operations.

Japan named former Union Minister **Ashwani Kumar** for its prestigious 'Order of the Rising Sun' award for his contribution to fostering Japan-India ties. Kumar was selected for the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun, which is the highest category of decoration, in recognition of distinguished accomplishments of individuals.

UNICEF appointed Indian-origin Canadian YouTube star Lilly Singh as its newest **Global Goodwill Ambassador**.

Shahid Kapoor and Alia Bhatt were named Best Actors at the 18th edition of the **International Indian Film Academy Awards** for their brilliant performance in 2016 movie Udta Punjab. The list of winners is as under:-

- **Best Film** : Neerja
- **Best Director**: AnirudhRoy Chaudhary for Pink
- **Best Actor (Male)** : Shahid Kapoor for Udta Punjab
- **Best Actor (Female)** : Alia Bhatt for Udta Punjab
- **Best Actor in Supporting Role (Female)** : Shabana Azmi for Neerja
- **Best Actor in Supporting Role (Male)** : Anupam Kher for MS Dhoni: The Untold Story
- **IIFA Woman Of The Year** : Tapsee Pannu

Veteran BJP leader L.K. Advani received the **Lifetime Achievement Award** for his contributions as a parliamentarian in the Lok Sabha. JD-U leader Sharad Yadav also received the Lifetime Achievement Award as a Rajya Sabha representative.

High profile British Indian actor Dev Patel was elected for the prestigious **Asia Game Changer award** in recognition of him using celebrity to place a spotlight on India's poor. The awards, now in their fourth year, recognize those making a transformative and positive difference for the future of Asia and the world.

James McCloughan, a 71-year-old former Army medic from Michigan who saved wounded comrades under fire during the Vietnam War was given the highest **U.S. military award** by President Donald Trump.

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) conferred the '**best performance award**' for 2015-16 and 2016-17 to Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB) for its work in the field of credit-linking joint liability groups (JLGs). The KVGB is sponsored by syndicate bank.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik conferred the **Biju Patnaik Award** for Scientific Excellence for the year 2016 to Prof Digambar Behera – a senior professor and Head, Department of Pulmonary Medicine, Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) in Chandigarh.

Five Indian-origin persons, including Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, featured in **Fortune's annual list** of 40 young and influential people in the field of business inspiring others with their work. Fortune's 2017 '40 Under 40' list is an annual ranking of the most influential young people who are under 40 in business, whom the magazine termed as "disruptors, innovators, rebels and artists" inspiring others. The list was topped by 39-year-old French President Emmanuel Macron "France's youngest leader since Napoleon" who swept the presidential elections in May "obliterating the two-party system that had governed the country for generations." The Indian-origin persons on the list are 26-year-old Divya Nag, who oversees Apple's ambitious ResearchKit and CareKit programmes that encourage developers to build health-related apps, Rishi Shah, 31, and Shradha Agarwal, 32, who helm more than 10-year-old health-tech firm Outcome Health and CEO and founder of non-profit Samasource 31-year-old Leila Janah. Varadkar, 38, whose father was born in India, has been ranked fifth on the list.

Preethi Srinivasan, the former State under-19 cricket captain, was bestowed with the 2017 **Kalpana Chawla Award** for courage and daring enterprise.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar was selected for the prestigious **National Agriculture Leadership Award-2017** by the Indian Council of Food and Agriculture (ICFA).

National Sports Awards are given every year to recognize and reward excellence in sports. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performance in the field of sports by a sportsperson over a period of four year, Arjuna Award is given for consistency outstanding performance for four years, Dronacharya Award for coaches for producing medal winners at prestigious International sports events, Dhyan Chand Award for life time contribution to sports development.

Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna 2017

S. No.	Name of the Awardee	Discipline
1.	Shri Devendra	Para Athlete
2.	Shri Sardar Singh	Hockey

Dronacharya Awards 2017

S. No.	Name of the Awardee	Discipline
1.	Late Dr. R. Gandhi	Athletics
2.	Mr. Heera Nand Kataria	Kabaddi
3.	Mr. G.S.S.V. Prasad	Badminton (Lifetime)
4.	Mr. Brij Bhushan Mohanty	Boxing (Lifetime)
5.	Mr. P.A. Raphel	Hockey (Lifetime)
6.	Mr. Sanjoy Chakraverthy	Shooting (Lifetime)
7.	Mr. Roshan Lal	Wrestling (Lifetime)

Arjuna Awards 2017

S. No.	Name of the Awardees	Discipline
1.	Ms. V.J. Surekha	Archery
2.	Ms. Khushbir Kaur	Athletics
3.	Mr. Arokia Rajiv	Athletics
4.	Ms. Prasanthi Singh	Basketball
5.	Sub. Laishram Debendro Singh	Boxing
6.	Mr. Cheteshwar Pujara	Cricket
7.	Ms. Harmanpreet Kaur	Cricket
8.	Ms. Oinam Bembem Devi	Football
9.	Mr. S.S.P. Chawrasia	Golf
10.	Mr. S.V. Sunil	Hockey
11.	Mr. Jasvir Singh	Kabaddi
12.	Mr. P. N. Prakash	Shooting
13.	Mr. A. Amalraj	Table Tennis
14.	Mr. Saketh Myneni	Tennis
15.	Mr. Satyawart Kadian	Wrestling
16.	Mr. Mariyappan	Para-Athlete
17.	Mr. Varun Singh Bhati	Para-Athlete

Dhyan Chand Award

S. No.	Name (S/Shri)	Discipline
1 .	Mr. Bhupender Singh	Athletics
2.	Mr. Syed Shahid Hakim	Football
3.	Ms. Sumarai Tete	Hockey

Noted Konkani writer Mahabaleshwar Sail was bestowed with prestigious **Saraswati Samman** 2016 for his novel "Hawthan".

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport bagged the **National Award for 'Excellence' in Energy Management** at a conference hosted by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Infosys co-founder N R Narayana Murthy and scientist Veena Sahajwalla were conferred the **PLuS Alliance Prize** – a prestigious honour that recognises Research Innovation, Education Innovation, Global Leadership and Global Innovation.

Dr Tahir Mahmood, a well-known jurist, won the prestigious **Prof N R Madhava Menon Best Law Teacher Award – 2017** in recognition of his distinguished services to legal education and legal profession.

Acclaimed director S.S. Rajamouli was selected for the **Akkineni Nageswara Rao (ANR) National Award- 2017**, instituted by the Akkineni International Foundation. Mr. Rajamouli had, with his path-breaking films Bahubali - The Beginning and Bahubali - The Conclusion, made the Telugu film industry proud across the world.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, Madhya Pradesh won the '**Best Tourism State**' national award, besides the Most Innovative Tourist Product award for 'Hanuwantia Jal Mahotsav' and Best State for Adventure Tourism.

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan was honoured with **Global Diversity Award** at Britain's House of Commons for his outstanding contribution to Global Diversity.

Amit Masurkar's acclaimed political satire 'Newton' was selected as India's official submission for the Best Foreign Film language category at the **Oscars 2018**.

Zannah Mustapha, a champion for the rights of displaced children growing up amid violence in north-eastern Nigeria to get a quality education, was named the 2017 winner of **UNHCR's Nansen Refugee Award**.

Eminent scientist, Professor C.N.R Rao, became the first Asian to be chosen for the prestigious **Von Hippel Award** for his immense contribution in materials research. The award is the US-based Materials Research Society's (MRS) highest honour.

BUSINESS & CORPORATE

IDFC Bank became the first bank to launch the biometric-based payment system Aadhaar Pay through its network.

The **BBC** has been banned from filming in tiger reserves in India for five years as its documentary on the Kaziranga National Park "misrepresented" the immunity provided to forest staff as a "shoot-to-kill" policy.

Millicom International Cellular (MIC) announced signing an agreement with **Bharti Airtel** to merge their Ghanaian operational subsidiaries, Tigo Ghana and Airtel Ghana.

Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL), Hyderabad, a premier research laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) and Jindal Stainless (Hisar) Limited (JSHL) signed the Licensing Agreement for Transfer of Technology of High Nitrogen Steel (HNS) for armour applications.

India's largest bank **State Bank of India** or SBI announced a one-time settlement scheme for tractor and farm mechanisation loans, which are in the "doubtful or loss assets" category. Loans worth Rs. 6,000 crore would be eligible for the one-time scheme, said Rajnish Kumar, managing director at SBI.

India's largest automobile company by revenues **Tata Motors** and Europe's largest car maker Volkswagen Group signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore a possible joint technical collaboration or joint venture on vehicle architecture, engines and component sourcing.

The government announced its decision to merge the **Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB)** with the State Bank of India (SBI) to ensure greater banking services outreach to more women. SBI group already has 126 exclusive all-women branches across the country while BMB has only seven. The proportion of administrative and managerial cost in BMB is much higher to reach the same coverage. For the same cost, a much higher volume of loans to women could be given through SBI. In the three years since BMB was set up in 2013, it has extended loans of Rs 192 crore to women borrowers. The SBI group has provided loans of about Rs 46,000 crore to women.

The Union Cabinet approved proposals with regard to the Fund of Funds of **Start-ups** (FFS) which was established in June, last year with a corpus of Rs. 10,000 crores. The FFS is being managed and operated by Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

British telecom major **Vodafone Group Plc** announced to combine its Indian unit, Vodafone India Ltd with Aditya Birla Group's Idea Cellular Ltd., paving the way for creating the country's largest — and one of the world's biggest — wireless providers. The merger is a part of the sector-wide consolidation taking place in the Indian telecom space following the arrival of a new entrant, Reliance Jio Infocomm. Jio, a part of the Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd, has captured a significant customer base in a short span of time with its free voice and data services. The Vodafone-Idea merger will create a large, unified telecom operator with a customer base of around 400 million subscribers with a revenue market share of 41 percent and a customer market share of 35 percent.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) commissioned a 800 MW supercritical thermal power plant in Raichur District of Karnataka. This is the second unit of the 2*800 MW Yeramarus Thermal Power Station, the first unit of which was successfully commissioned in early March 2017.

India's largest e-commerce firm **Flipkart** raised \$1.4 billion led by China's internet giant Tencent, with participation from the online auction site eBay and Microsoft, valuing the Bengaluru-based company at \$11.6

billion, post the investment. This marked the largest capital infusion for any privately-held Indian internet venture and surpassed the earlier high set by Flipkart itself when in July 2014 it picked up \$1 billion and set the stage for a funding boom in the local startup ecosystem. As part of this transaction, eBay Inc put \$500 million in Flipkart and sold its India business to the Bengaluru firm.

Grasim Industries received approval from its shareholders to merge its Group company Aditya Birla Nuvo with itself.

Nokia, the Finnish giant, signed MoUs with Indian telecom giants Airtel and BSNL to expand its collaborative technology partnership to work on 5G technology standard and management of connected devices.

Reliance Jio launched a new offer, named Jio Dhan Dhana Dhan, to provide customers with free services for three months. The new offer came soon after the company agreed to withdraw the Jio Summer Surprise offer after a TRAI order asked for it be cancelled. The new Jio Dhan Dhana Dhan offer is open to new and existing customers, and provides unlimited data, free SMSs, Jio apps subscription, and of course free voice calls.

Anil Agarwal's **Vedanta Ltd** concluded the merger of Cairn India with itself. According to an official statement, the merged company will have a larger proforma market cap of \$15.6 billion.

Indian billionaire Anil Agarwal became the second largest shareholder in Anglo American after acquiring 11.44 per cent of the British mining group. The **Volcan Holdings investment company** owned by Agarwal's family now owns 11.44 per cent of the group's capital and voting rights following the share purchase. It is now the second largest shareholder behind South Africa's Public Investment Corporation, which owns more than 13 per cent.

Etihad Airways, the flag carrier of Emirates of Abu Dhabi, appointed Robin Kamark as chief executive officer for the airlines, in which it is a strategic investment partner.

On the occasion of Akshaya Tritiya, Indian e-wallet giant, **Paytm** announced its collaboration with MMTC-PAMP to launch Digital Gold, enabling users to buy gold online and store it in MMTC-PAMP's vault free of charge. This new service will enable users to request their gold to be delivered at their home in the form of minted coins.

State Bank of India (SBI) surpassed Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) to become the country's most valued state-owned company in terms of market valuation. Among the top-10 most valued companies list, SBI is at the fifth position, while ONGC is seventh. IT major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is the most-valued Indian company with a market cap of Rs. 4,54,902.85 crore, followed by Reliance Industries Limited (Rs. 4,45,578.92 crore), HDFC Bank (Rs. 3,70,480.05 crore), ITC (Rs. 3,38,851.25 crore), State Bank of India, HDFC (Rs. 2,35,122.56 crore), ONGC, Infosys (Rs. 2,11,870.18 crore), Hindustan Unilever (Rs. 1,97,464.44 crore) and Maruti Suzuki India (Rs. 1,85,235.49 crore).

TAL Manufacturing Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of **Tata Motors** launched India's first industrial-articulated robot by the name "BRABO". The robot is indigenously developed for micro, small and medium enterprises in India. BRABO is meant to complement the human workforce and perform repetitive, high volume, dangerous and time-consuming tasks from raw material handling to packaging of finished products. The company said it can increase productivity by 15-30 percent, with a payback period of 15 to 18 months. The robot is available in payloads of 2 kilos and 10 kilos and is priced competitively between Rs 5 to 7 lakh.

Jimmy Wales, the co-founder of **Wikipedia**, announced launching a new online publication which will aim to fight fake news by pairing professional journalists with an army of volunteer community contributors.

In its earnings report for the quarter ended April, **Apple** revealed that it has \$256 billion in cash, which is over two-thirds of India's total foreign exchange reserves.

Facebook launched Express Wi-Fi in India along with partnership with Airtel to launch 20,000 new hotspots. Express Wi-Fi is part of Facebook's global initiative to spread internet connectivity. Testing for Express Wi-Fi in India commenced in 2015 and, working with internet services providers (ISPs) and over 500 local entrepreneur retailers, have made it commercially available through nearly 700 hotspots across the four Indian states of Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Meghalaya. Express Wi-Fi is currently live in five countries—India, Kenya, Tanzania, Nigeria and Indonesia. Facebook also announced their partnership with Bharti Airtel to launch additional 20,000 hotspots — allowing Express Wi-Fi to reach more people who require super-fast and affordable connectivity. These hotspots will begin to be deployed over the next few months.

Microblogging platform **Twitter** elevated Taranjeet Singh as its Country Director for India. Mr. Singh was earlier leading the charge for sales and marketing support for Twitter's advertisers in India. India is among the world's fastest growing social media markets. It is already among the largest markets for companies like Facebook, WhatsApp and Google.

Delhi-based **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL)**, an Indian state-owned telecommunications company signed agreements with Facebook, Mobikwik, and Disneyland India to commemorate World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, which is celebrated worldwide on May 17. The tie-up aims to increase BSNL's foothold amongst Indian consumers with its Internet and value-added services. Also, it's a step towards gaining an edge over private players such as Airtel, Vodafone, Reliance Jio and more, currently dominating the market share in the country.

Google's vice-president for South East Asia and India, Rajan Anandan was appointed new chairman of Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI).

Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) signed an agreement with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for fodder acreage assessment using satellite observation and space technology GCMMF markets its products under the brand name of Amul.

In order to promote entrepreneurship in the country, the Government of India amended the definition of a **Startup**. The following significant changes have been made to the definition of Startups –

- ❖ Age of Startup increased: Taking into account the long gestation period by Startups to establish, an entity shall be considered as a Startup up to seven years from the date of its incorporation/ registration (from earlier 5 years). However, in the case of Startups in the Biotechnology sector, the period shall be up to ten years from the date of incorporation/ registration.
- ❖ No Letter of Recommendation required: No letter of recommendation from an incubator/industry association shall be required for either recognition or tax benefits
- ❖ Potential of Job and Wealth Creation: The scope of definition has been broadened to include scalability of business model with potential of employment generation or wealth creation.

Tata Group is the most valuable brand in India at an estimated \$13.1 billion, according to Brand Finance, a global brand valuation and strategy consultancy firm. Tata topped the list of India's 100 most valuable brands once again despite its value declining 4% from \$13.7 billion in 2016. Mobile operator Airtel, with an estimated valuation of

\$7.7 billion, ranked second in the list, followed by insurer Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) with \$6.8 billion.

Anil Ambani owned Reliance Communications finally revealed that the new RCom- Aircel merged entity will be called **Aircom** after the completion of the proposed deal.

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) took over the administration of **Sahara India Life Insurance**, a first of its kind move in the insurance sector. It named RK Sharma, General Manager, IRDAI, as administrator to manage the affairs of the insurer. Lucknow-based Sahara India Life Insurance was the first wholly Indian owned life insurance company in the private sector which launched its operations in 2004 with an initial paid-up capital of Rs.157 crore. It is promoted by Sahara Pariwar Group headed by Subrata Roy. In the long-running SEBI-Sahara case, the Supreme Court in August 2012 had ordered the group to deposit with the regulator over Rs. 24,000 crore collected from nearly three crore investors through issuance of bonds.

Telecom giant Verizon acquired **Yahoo's** core business for \$4.48bn, thus ending Yahoo's two-decade long run as an independent company. Verizon, the No.1 US wireless operator, is combining Yahoo with AOL, which it bought two years ago, to form a new venture called Oath. Oath's more than 50 brands include HuffPost, TechCrunch and Tumblr.

The world's first ATM (automated teller machine) celebrated its 50th anniversary. It was opened on June 27, 1967 at a branch of **Barclays** bank in Enfield, north London.

EU antitrust regulators hit Alphabet (GOOGL.O) unit **Google** with a record 2.42-billion-euro (\$2.7 billion) fine, indicating they will likely take a tough line with the company in two other ongoing cases. The European Commission said the world's most popular internet search engine had 90 days to stop favouring its own shopping service or face a further penalty of up to 5 percent of Alphabet's average daily global turnover.

Anil Ambani's **Reliance Defence Ammunition** (a subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure) entered into a strategic partnership with Serbia's state-run Yugo import to manufacture ammunition in India. The joint venture is expected to target business opportunities worth Rs 20,000 crore from Indian armed forces in the next 10 years.

Reliance Jio launched the Asia-Africa-Europe (AAE-1) submarine cable system, claiming that it is the world's longest 100Gbps technology-based submarine system and will stretch for over 25,000km from Marseille, France to Hong Kong. The project is a combination of leading telecom service providers from Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved sale of government's 51.11% stake along with management control in **HPCL** (Hindustan Petroleum) to ONGC. HPCL will continue as PSU after the acquisition.

Reliance Industries, the most valuable firm on the bourses, added another feather in its cap by crossing the Rs 5 lakh crore market-capitalisation for the first time in its trading history, thus becoming the second only firm to do so after Tata Consultancy Service (TCS), which is now the second most valuable company in terms of market-capitalisation.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the 'She Means Business' programme on **Facebook** for women entrepreneurs in Odisha. Under the scheme, 25,000 women entrepreneurs and self-help-groups (SHG) members will be given training on digital marketing skills within the next one year.

In an apparent bid to take on Google-owned YouTube, **Facebook** rolled out 'Watch' — a redesigned video platform for creators and publishers.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially announced that India and United States will co-host the Global Entrepreneurship Summit 2017 (GES2017) at Hyderabad from 28-30 November.

Engineering conglomerate **Larsen & Toubro** announced a Rs 3,375 crore-worth metro order from the Mauritius government to design and build an Integrated Light Rail-based Urban Transit System in the African island nation.

Rajiv Bansal, a 1988 batch IAS officer of Nagaland cadre, was appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of **Air India**.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) launched its mobile wallet "BSNL Wallet" in partnership with MobiKwik to enable one-tap bill payment for its over 100 million subscribers.

Ashish Kumar Chauhan was re-appointed as the new Managing Director and CEO of **Bombay Stock Exchange** (BSE) for a period of 5 years w.e.f November 2, 2017.

Nandan Nilekani, the Infosys co-founder and the architect of Aadhaar, was appointed as the new non-executive chairman of the board of directors of **Infosys**.

The Karnataka Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with software giant **Microsoft India** to develop a unique "farm price forecasting model" using latest IT tools in a bid to help farmers, administrators and other stakeholders to understand the market behaviour in advance.

Airtel launched 'Office-In-a-Box' for start-ups registered under the Karnataka government's Start-Up Cell initiative. The Office-in-a-Box suite will be available to the over 100 start-ups registered with the Start-Up Cell and will add to their business efficiency.

The Gujarat Government and **Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation** (GCMMF)-Amul, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to save the children of anganwadi from malnutrition.

The Maharashtra Government and **Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetable Pvt. Ltd** signed a lease agreement to set up a state-of-the-art milk and milk products processing plant.

Abhay Firodia, the Chairman of Force Motors, was elected as the new president of the automobile industry body **Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers** (SIAM) for 2017-18.

Star India acquired digital as well as media rights for Indian Premier League for a term of five years 2018-2023 with a bid of Rs. 16,347.50 crore.

- The Assam government set up a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Cell for implementation of DBT across schemes in the Country and to coordinate efforts at the State Level in taking the DBT initiative forward with immediate effect.
- The Union Government told the Supreme Court that an expert committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of former apex court judge Justice BN Srikrishna to identify key data protection issues in India and recommend methods to address them.

- NITI Aayog constituted an Expert Task Force to provide a major thrust to job creation by enhancing India's exports. It will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for release of additional 1% Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners. It will be applicable from 01.07.2017.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Morocco on cooperation in the field of health.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Armenia on Cooperation in the field of Disaster Management.

Airtel Payments Bank became the first payments bank in India to integrate the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on its digital platform. This will add to customer choice and convenience for making secure digital payments to online/offline merchants and making instant money transfers to any bank account in India.

Domestic telecom equipment provider Vihaan Networks Limited (VNL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited** (BSNL) to launch "Relief 123" service to provide disaster management in India. The "Relief 123" service is an integrated disaster response solution for first responders and public safety agencies. The solution is designed and manufactured by VNL and the backhaul connectivity will be provided by BSNL.

Dabur India tied up with e-commerce major Amazon for an online ayurveda marketplace which will house all ayurvedic brands and products of the country.

Internet search giant **Google** launched its Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-based digital payment service by the name 'Tez'. With this move, Google has become the latest international company to enter the fast-growing digital payments industry in India. Taking Google's commitment to the Indian market to the next level, the app is powered by UPI, a payments protocol built by the government-backed National Payments Corporation of India.

Qatar Airways became the world's first Airline to launch double beds in its brand new business class suite "Qsuite" from London to Doha in Qatar.

India's first lithium-ion battery facility will be set up by Japanese automobile giant **Suzuki Motor Corporation** (SMC) at Hansalpur in Gujarat.

BILLS / ACTS / COMMITTEES / SCHEMES / POLICIES

- The Lok Sabha passed the long-pending Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016, which provides power to the government to seize properties left behind by those who migrated to Pakistan or China after wars. The lower house passed the bill through a voice vote after amendments passed by the Rajya Sabha earlier were incorporated. The bill seeks to amend a 49-year-old law, the Enemy Property Act, 1968.
- Parliament passed the Maternity Benefits (Amendment) Bill, 2016 to raise maternity leave for working women from 12 weeks to 26 weeks for two surviving children.
- The Committee constituted under the Chairmanship of Madhukar Gupta, submitted its report to the Government to strengthen border protection and address vulnerabilities in fencing along the Indo-Pakistan border. The Committee gave its recommendations broadly on the issues of Threats and Border Protection, assessment of force level, deployment on the border, infrastructure and technology issues for protection of border and administrative issues.
- The Union Cabinet approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Aids to Navigation (AtoNs) between the Directorate General of Lighthouses & Lightships (DGLL), Ministry of Shipping, Government of India and the Department of Shipping, Government of Bangladesh.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie and Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM).
- The Parliament passed The Employees Compensation (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The Bill amends the Employee's Compensation Act, 1923. It ensures compensation up to Rs 1 lakh to an employee if injured in an industrial accident and imposes hefty penalty in case of any violation by the employers.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved North East Road Network Connectivity Project (NERNCP) Phase I for development of 403 kms of National Highways in Meghalaya and Mizoram. Out of total 403 km, approximately 351 km will be developed in Mizoram and 52 km in Meghalaya.
- The Union Cabinet approved the signing of the Air Services Agreement (ASA) between India and Georgia. The Agreement between the two countries is based on latest International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) template keeping in view of developments in Civil Aviation sector and with an objective to improve the air connectivity between the two countries. Presently there is no Air Services Agreement between these two countries. ASA is the basic legal framework for any air operation between the two countries.
- The Union Cabinet approved closure of the Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) which was set up in 2012 to address the social security-related issues of the Emigration Check Required (ECR)-category workers going abroad for employment to ECR countries.
- The Union Cabinet approved signing of MoU between India and Bangladesh in the field of judicial sector cooperation. It is aimed at developing, promoting and strengthening mutual cooperation between the judiciaries of the two countries.
- The Union Cabinet approved the MoU on Cooperation in the field of Mass Media between India and Bangladesh.
- The Union Cabinet approved the MoU between India and Australia on cooperation in the field of Health and Medicine. The main areas of cooperation include the following:
 1. Communicable diseases such as Malaria and TB;
 2. Mental Health and Non-Communicable Diseases;
 3. Anti-Microbial Resistance and responding to public health emergencies;

4. Regulation of Pharmaceuticals, vaccines and medical devices;
 5. Digital Health;
 6. Tobacco Control
-
- India and Israel inked mega defence deals worth over \$2 billion for advanced surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems, which are designed to destroy hostile aircraft, missiles and drones at a range of 70-km, to further tighten the bilateral strategic partnership.
 - The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Protocol amending the Convention between India and Portugal for avoidance of double taxation. The Protocol will also ensure prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income. Once the Protocol enters into force, both India and Portugal would be able to exchange tax related information, which will help tax authorities of both countries to curb tax evasion.
 - Prime Minister Narendra launched regional connectivity scheme 'UDAN' (*Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik*) on April 27 from Shimla Airport. According to the ministry, it is committed to providing air connectivity to currently underserved and unserved airports through the UDAN air connectivity scheme. An under-served airport is defined as an airport which has no more than seven scheduled commercial flight departures per week, whereas an un-served airport or airstrip is the one which has not even received a single scheduled commercial service during the last two flight schedules. UDAN scheme is a first-of-its-kind scheme globally to stimulate regional connectivity through a market-based mechanism. The UDAN Scheme is a key component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released on 15th June, 2016. Airfare for a one hour journey of appx. 500 km on a fixed wing aircraft or for 30 minute journey on a helicopter would be capped at Rs 2,500.
 - To give farmers more freedom to sell their produce, the agriculture ministry unveiled a model Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) Act which defines each state/UT as a single unified market area. The move will curb the role of APMC mandis. The new Act also proposes to cap mandi taxes at 1% for foodgrain and 2% for fruits and vegetables while pegging arthia or commission agent's levy at 2% of the total transaction cost. With the exception of Bihar, all other states/UTs have agreed to adopt the model Act.
 - Union Health Minister launched the Test and Treat policy for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) patients. As per this new policy, anyone who is tested and found positive will get the necessary treatment free of cost and will be provided with ART (Anti- Retroviral Therapy). The scheme will be a centrally sponsored scheme.
 - Mahatma Gandhi NREGS reached a new milestone today by geotagging one Crore assets and putting them in public domain. The scale of rural assets created under MGNREGA is very large. Since the inception of the programme in financial year 2006-07, about 2.82 Crore assets have been created under the programme. GeoMGNREGA is a unique endeavor of the Ministry of Rural Development in association with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), ISRO and National Informatics Centre. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Ministry of Rural Development with NRSC in June 2016 for geo-tagging the assets created under MGNREGS in each gram panchayat.
 - The Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched a nationwide programme for capacity building of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayats and a training program for Trainers of women panchayat leaders at Ranchi, Jharkhand.
 - The much-awaited Real Estate Act came into force from May 1 with a promise of protecting the right of consumers and ushering in transparency but only 13 states and Union Territories (UTs) have so far notified rules. The Indian real estate sector involved over 76,000 companies across the county. Some of the major provisions of the Act, besides mandatory registration of projects and real estate agents, include depositing 70% of the funds collected from buyers in a separate bank account for construction of the

project. This will ensure timely completion of the project as the funds could be withdrawn only for construction purposes. The law also prescribes penalties on developers who delay projects. All developers are required to disclose their project details on the regulator's website, and provide quarterly updates on construction progress. In case of project delays, the onus of paying the monthly interest on bank loans taken for under-construction flats will lie on developers unlike earlier, when the burden fell on home buyers.

- HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar launched Centre's Vidya Veerta Abhiyan to encourage 1,000 educational institutions to display portraits of war heroes on campus. As part of this campaign, universities and schools will dedicate a 15×20 feet wall on campus to display portraits of Param Veer Chakra awardees. Javadekar clarified that the Centre will not fund this campaign, but this will be done by institutions on voluntary basis with money collected by students and teachers.
- The Union Cabinet approved important proposals relating to modifications in the 7th CPC (Central Pay Commission) recommendations on pay and pensionary benefits in the course of their implementation. Earlier, in June, 2016, the Cabinet had approved implementation of the recommendations with an additional financial outgo of Rs 84,933 crore for 2016-17 (including arrears for 2 months of 2015-16). The benefit of the proposed modifications will be available with effect from 1st January, 2016, i.e., the date of implementation of 7th CPC recommendations. With the increase approved by the Cabinet, the annual pension bill alone of the Central Government is likely to be Rs.1,76,071 crore.
- The Union Cabinet approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the sphere of Civil Aviation between India and Spain. The MoU signifies an important landmark in the civil aviation relations between India and Spain, and has the potential to spur greater trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchanges between the two countries.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for National Steel Policy (NSP) 2017. The new Steel Policy enshrines the long term vision of the Government to give impetus to the steel sector. It seeks to enhance domestic steel consumption and ensure high quality steel production and create a technologically advanced and globally competitive steel industry. Key features of the NSP 2017:
 - ❖ Create self-sufficiency in steel production by providing policy support & guidance to private manufacturers, MSME steel producers, CPSEs
 - ❖ Encourage adequate capacity additions,
 - ❖ Development of globally competitive steel manufacturing capabilities,
 - ❖ Cost-efficient production
 - ❖ Domestic availability of iron ore, coking coal & natural gas,
 - ❖ Facilitating foreign investment
 - ❖ Asset acquisitions of raw materials
 - ❖ Enhancing the domestic steel demand
- The policy projects crude steel capacity of 300 million tonnes (MT), production of 255 MT and a robust finished steel per capita consumption of 158 Kgs by 2030 - 31, as against the current consumption of 61 Kgs.
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Third Line of Credit (LoC) of US \$ 4.5 billion to Bangladesh for implementation of developmental projects. The MoU was signed during the visit of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh to India in April 2017.
- The Union Cabinet approved the Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS) for farmers for the year 2017-18. This will help farmers getting short term crop loan up to Rs. 3 lakh payable within one year at only 4% per annum. The Government has earmarked a sum of Rs. 20,339 crore for this purpose. The interest

subvention will be given to Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Private Sector Banks, Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on use of own funds and to NABARD for refinance to RRBs and Cooperative Banks. The Interest Subvention Scheme will continue for one year and it will be implemented by NABARD and RBI. The objective of the scheme is to make available at ground level, agricultural credit for Short Term crop loans at an affordable rate to give a boost to agricultural productivity and production in the country.

- The Union Cabinet approved the Joint Declaration of Intent (JDI) between Germany and India regarding cooperation in the sector of alternative medicine. The signing of the JDI will enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries in the areas of traditional/alternative medicine. Initiation of collaborative research, training and scientific capacity building in the field of alternative medicine under the JDI between the two countries would contribute to the enhanced employment opportunities in the AYUSH sector.
- In a significant decision to fast-track India's domestic nuclear power programme, and give a push to country's nuclear industry, the Union Cabinet gave its approval for construction of 10 units of India's indigenous Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR). The total installed capacity of the Plants will be 7000 MW. The 10 PHWR project will result in a significant augmentation of nuclear power generation capacity.
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Australia on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism and Transnational Organized Crime.
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval to Pan-India implementation of Maternity Benefit Program which now has been extended to all districts of the country w.e.f. 01.01.2017. The Maternity Benefit Program will provide compensation for the wage loss in terms of cash incentives so that the women can take adequate rest before and after delivery and not be deprived of proper nutrition. The total cost of the proposal for the period from 01.01.2017 to 31.03.2020 including Central and State Government share is Rs.12,661crore.
- The centre launched an aggressive new campaign titled 'Darwaza Band' to promote toilet use and freedom from open defecation across the country's villages. The campaign produced by the MDWS (Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation) under Swachh Bharat Mission has been supported by the World Bank and is being rolled out countrywide immediately after the launch. The Amitabh Bachchan series of ads encourages behaviour change in men who have toilets but are not using them. The Anushka Sharma series of ads is a clarion call for women who are more affected by this problem to stand up for this issue in their village and influence a positive change. These have been developed by Lowe Lintas, Mumbai under a World Bank Project.
- Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha launched a skill development scheme named after RSS ideologue Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya that will train rural youth to maintain mobile towers, repair optical fibres and fix other communication technologies across India. The scheme will be initially implemented in UP, Bihar, Odisha, Punjab and Haryana.
- India and Germany inked 12 agreements on a range of issues like trade, skill development, cyber security and terrorism.
- India and Spain signed seven agreements following talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Mariano Rajoy:-
 - ❖ Agreement for Transfer of Sentence Persons
 - ❖ MoU on Cooperation in Organ Transplantation
 - ❖ MoU on Cooperation in Cyber Security

- ❖ MoU on Cooperation in Renewable Energy
 - ❖ MoU on Technical Cooperation in Civil Aviation
 - ❖ Agreement on visa waiver for holders of diplomatic passports.
 - ❖ MoU between Foreign Service Institute and Diplomatic Academy of Spain.
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- The Union Cabinet approved the Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS) for farmers for the year 2017-18. This will help farmers getting short term crop loan up to Rs. 3 lakh payable within one year at only 4% per annum. The Government has earmarked a sum of Rs. 20,339 crore for this purpose. The interest subvention will be given to Public Sector Banks (PSBs), Private Sector Banks, Cooperative Banks and Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) on use of own funds and to NABARD for refinance to RRBs and Cooperative Banks.
 - The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and the Ministry of Agriculture in the State of Palestine on agriculture cooperation.
 - The Union Cabinet approved the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank) and Export-Import Bank of Korea (KEXIM) for export credit of USD 9 billion for infrastructural development in India and for the supply of goods and services as part of projects in third countries.
 - The Union Cabinet approved the Bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), Iran in relation to mutual cooperation on matters pertaining to securities markets.
 - India and the UN Office for South- South Cooperation launched a partnership fund that will support sustainable development projects across the developing world. The India-UN Development Partnership Fund will implement country-level projects that are catalytic towards achieving the 17 sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda. The collaborative initiative is aimed at reducing poverty and hunger, improving health, education and equality, and expanding access to clean water, energy and livelihoods.
 - The Union Cabinet approved signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Israel on National Campaign for Water Conservation in India. This will benefit the country in conserving water for future generations.
 - The Union Cabinet approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India, and Ministry of the Presidency and of Administrative Modernization, Government of Portuguese Republic, for 'Cooperation in the field of Public Administration and Governance Reforms'.
 - The Union Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the textiles, clothing and fashion sectors between the Ministry of Textiles and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia.
 - The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in Traditional Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy between Ministry of AYUSH of the Government of India and the Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine of the Government of Sri Lanka.
 - India and The Netherlands signed three MOUs - MOU on Cultural Cooperation, MOU on Water Cooperation and Agreement on Amending Social Security Arrangement.
 - The Union Cabinet gave its approval for the Joint Interpretative Notes (JIN) on the Agreement between India and Bangladesh for the Promotion and Protection of Investments. The JIN would impart clarity to the interpretation of the existing Agreement between India and Bangladesh for the Promotion and Protection of Investments (BIPA). The JIN includes interpretative notes to be jointly adopted for many clauses,

including, the definition of investor, definition of investment, exclusion of taxation measures, Fair and Equitable Treatment (FET), National Treatment (NT) and Most Favoured Nation (MFN) treatment, expropriation, essential security interests and Settlement of Disputes between an Investor and a Contracting Party. Joint Interpretative Statements in general play an important supplementary role in strengthening the investment treaty regime.

- India and Israel signed 7 agreements on areas including space, tech and agriculture during the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Israel.
- Six states / Union Territories (UT) - Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Telangana, Puducherry and Arunachal Pradesh - formally adopted the Centre's Government e-Marketplace (GeM) initiative. It aims to ensure that public procurement of goods and services in India worth over Rs. 5 lakh crore annually is carried out through the online platform for transparency.
- President Pranab Mukherjee launched four digital initiatives in the field of education- Swayam — an indigenously designed massive open online course (MOOC), Swayam Prabha — 32 Direct-to-Home channels for transmitting high-quality educational content, the National Digital Library containing 6.5 million books, and the National Academic Depository for authenticating all certificates issued by institutions. These initiatives are aimed to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in the higher education from 24.5 (2015-16) to 30 by 2020.
- The Union Ministry of Power announced that about 97% of the total outstanding debt of all state power distribution companies (discoms) has been covered under the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY).
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for amendment of the Constitution (Application to Jammu & Kashmir) Order. The approval paves the way for applicability of Goods and Services Tax regime in the State of Jammu & Kashmir.
- The Union Ministry of Minority Affairs launched Jiyo Parsi Publicity Phase-2 in Mumbai under the Jiyo Parsi scheme, which aims at containing the declining trend of population of the Parsi community and reverses it to bring their population above the threshold level.
- The Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Development approved construction of 30,000 affordable houses in Maharashtra's Sholapur district for the urban poor on private land under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.
- The Ministry of Rural Development announced to launch a new sub-scheme under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) which will be named as "Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)". The main objectives of AGEY will be to provide an alternative source of livelihoods to members of Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM by facilitating them to operate public transport services in backward rural areas. This will provide safe, affordable and community monitored rural transport services like e-rickshaws, 3 and 4 wheeler motorised transport vehicles to connect remote villages with key services and amenities including access to markets, education and health for the overall economic development of the area. The sub-scheme will be implemented in 250 blocks in the country on a pilot basis for a period of 3 years from 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- The Union Finance Ministry launched Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (PMVVY), a pension scheme exclusively for senior citizens aged 60 years and above. Under this scheme, senior citizens will get a guaranteed interest of 8% for 10 years depending upon the investment made by them.
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed among India and various BRICS countries for establishment of the BRICS Agriculture Research Platform (BRICS-ARP).
- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) constituted a committee on 'fair market conduct', which will be headed by former Lok Sabha secretary and law secretary T K Viswanathan. The panel will have representations from Sebi, mutual funds, brokers, audit firms, stock exchanges, data analytics firms

and legal firms. The committee has been tasked with suggesting improvements to the existing Sebi norms, including on insider trading and fraudulent and unfair trade practices (FUTP).

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a total package of Rs 2,350 crore for all north eastern states hit by floods and immediate release of Rs 250 crore for flood-hit Assam. In addition to that, the prime minister announced a Rs 100 crore corpus for setting up a research project to study Brahmaputra river and its role in creating devastating flood.
- The Government of India announced to launch a new sub-scheme named "Aajeevika Grameen Express Yojana (AGEY)" as part of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM). The Self Help Groups under DAY-NRLM will operate road transport service in backward areas. This will help to provide safe, affordable and community monitored rural transport services to connect remote villages with key services and amenities (such as access to markets, education and health) for the overall economic development of backward rural areas. This will also provide an additional avenue of livelihood for SHGs.
- The Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has come up with the Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017. It is third party survey report by the Quality Council of India (QCI) noting on the effectiveness of Swachh Bharat Mission in rural India.
- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Election Commission of India to enter into Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of electoral management and administration with the Election Management Bodies of other countries/International Agencies. These are as follows:
 - ❖ The National Electoral Council of Ecuador
 - ❖ The Central Election Commission of Albania
 - ❖ The Election Commission of Bhutan;
 - ❖ The Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan
 - ❖ The National Independent Electoral Commission of Guinea
 - ❖ The Union Election Commission of Myanmar
 - ❖ The India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA).

These MoUs would promote bilateral cooperation, aimed at building technical assistance / capacity support for the said Election Management Bodies.

- The Union Cabinet approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Israel on "India-Israel Industrial R&D and Technological Innovation Fund (I4F)". India and Israel will make an contribution of four million US Dollars each for the Fund, both equivalent amount, annually for five years.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the norms for establishing equivalence of posts in Government and posts in PSUs, PSBs etc. for claiming benefit of OBC reservations. This addresses an issue pending for nearly 24 years. This will ensure that the children of those serving in lower categories in PSUs and other institutions can get the benefit of OBC reservations, on par with children of people serving in lower categories in Government.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Sweden on cooperation in the field of Intellectual Property (IPRs). The MoU establishes a wide ranging and flexible mechanism through which both countries can exchange best practices and work together on training programs and technical exchanges to raise awareness on IPRs and better protect intellectual property rights.

- Yogi Adityanath, the Uttar Pradesh chief Minister, launched the Startup Yatra programme in Lucknow. As per programme, the state government will provide financial assistance of Rs 15 thousand per month and maximum Rs 10 lakh rupees in a year to those who will begin startups.
 - Rajnath Singh, the Union Home Minister, inaugurated YUVA – a skill development programme and an initiative by Delhi Police under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY).
 - India and Germany signed a pact on technical cooperation under the Indo-German Energy Programme – Green Energy Corridors (IGEN-GEC). The main purpose of this programme component is to improve the sector framework and conditions for grid integration of renewable energy.
 - The Kerala government launched a new 'E-Waste Disposal' scheme in its state schools with an aim to process the electronic waste in IT labs, offices and stores.
 - The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal (ICAN) to establish mutual co-operation for the advancement of accounting knowledge, professional and intellectual development.
 - NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant launched the Mentor India Campaign in New Delhi - a strategic nation building initiative to engage leaders who can nurture and guide students at more than 900 Atal Tinkering Labs.
 - The Karnataka Government launched an ambitious clouding seeding Project Varshadhari in Bengaluru to deal with poor monsoons in the state.
 - The Telangana government launched an exclusive 24×7 helpline '181' for women welfare.
 - The Karnataka government and Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi launched 'Indira Canteen' in Bengaluru with an aim to reach out to the poorer sections of the society. The canteens will offer breakfast at Rs 5 and lunch and dinner at Rs 10 per plate.
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- ❖ The Assam government set up a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Cell for implementation of DBT across schemes in the Country and to coordinate efforts at the State Level in taking the DBT initiative forward with immediate effect.
 - ❖ The Union Government told the Supreme Court that an expert committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of former apex court judge Justice BN Srikrishna to identify key data protection issues in India and recommend methods to address them.
 - ❖ NITI Aayog constituted an Expert Task Force to provide a major thrust to job creation by enhancing India's exports. It will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Dr Rajiv Kumar.
 - ❖ The Union Cabinet gave its approval for release of additional 1% Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners. It will be applicable from 01.07.2017.
 - ❖ The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Morocco on cooperation in the field of health.
 - ❖ The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Armenia on Cooperation in the field of Disaster Management.
 - ❖ BJP president Amit Shah launched the 'Shaheed Gram Vikas Yojana' during a programme in Khunti district of Jharkhand.
 - ❖ Tripura became the first state in the country to set up family welfare district committees to examine the complaints of women against their husbands and in-laws and find an amicable solution.
 - ❖ Odisha government launched a programme making provision of Rs 1,000 as transport cost for pregnant women to hospital from inaccessible areas. The government launched 'SAMPURNA' (Sishu Abond Matru Mrityuhara Purna Nirakaran Abhijan) programme under the state budget to increase institutional deliveries in order to reduce infant mortality rate (IMR) as well as mother

mortality rate (MMR).

- ❖ The Karnataka government launched 'Vision-2025' project aimed at evolving a draft policy for development of the state in next seven years by seeking the opinion of the public.
- ❖ In an endeavour to combat the menace of child labour, trafficking and sexual abuse Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched portal namely 'PENCIL' (Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour).
- ❖ Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Thaawarchand Gehlot launched the Beta version of 'Divyang Sarathi' - the accessible and comprehensive mobile application for easy dissemination of information to 'Divyangjans' (differently - abled).
- ❖ The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, launched the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana, or Saubhagya, at New Delhi, on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay.

ECONOMY & FINANCE

- State-run NTPC installed India's largest floating solar photovoltaic (PV) plant at Rajiv Gandhi Combined Cycle Power Plant (RGCCPP) at Kayamkulam in Kerala.
- India and Belgium signed a Protocol amending the existing Agreement and Protocol between the two countries for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes.
- The Union Cabinet approved release of an additional installment of Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners w.e.f. 01.01.2017. It has increased by 2% over the existing rate of 2% of the Basic Pay/Pension, to compensate for price rise. This increase is in accordance with the accepted formula, which is based on the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission. The combined impact on the exchequer on account of both Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief would be Rs. 5,857.28 crore per annum and Rs.6,833.50 crore in the Financial Year 2017-18 (for a period of 14 months from January, 2017 to February, 2018). This will benefit about 48.85 lakh Central Government employees and 55.51 lakh pensioners.
- Union Cabinet approved the signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and the United Nations Entity of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The proposal seeks to provide technical support to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in strengthening capacities of governance institutions including Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to better leverage opportunities created for gender equality through legislation, policies and programmes. Activities under this MoU will be implemented at the district and sub-district level in six States i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.
- The Union Ministry of Agriculture launched Mission Fingerling, a programme to enable holistic development and management of fisheries sector in India with a total expenditure of about Rs. 52000 lakh converging in the production of 20 lakh tonnes of fish annually, benefitting about 4 million families. Thrust areas have been identified for enhancing fisheries production from 10.79 mmt (2014-15) to 15 mmt in 2020-21. The Department has identified 20 States based on their potential and other relevant factors to strengthen the Fish Seed infrastructure in the country.
- India marginally improved its position to 87th place on a global energy architecture performance index, but ranked among the worst for pollution, as per a report released by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF). Switzerland topped the annual list and was followed by Norway, Sweden, Denmark and France in the top five. India's rank improved three places from 90th last year. The report, developed in collaboration with Accenture Strategy and launched at the European Commission, ranked 127 countries based on their ability to provide energy across three dimensions of the energy triangle. Being compiled since 2013, the Energy Architecture Performance Index (EAPI) is a composite index that focuses on tracking specific indicators to measure the energy system performance of 127 countries. It has 18 indicators defined across the three sides of the energy triangle -- economic growth and development, environmental sustainability, and energy access and security.
- The government lowered the interest rates on small savings schemes like PPF, Kisan Vikas Patra and Sukanya. Small saving schemes such as Public Provident Fund and Kisan Vikas Patra will earn lesser

return by 0.1 per cent in the new financial year. The Finance Ministry notified the interest rate for small saving schemes for the April to June quarter of 2017-18. The return on the PPF and the Five-Year National Savings Certificate was further lowered to 7.9 per cent from 8 per cent for the first quarter of the fiscal. The interest rate on the KVP was cut to 7.6 per cent from the earlier 7.7 per cent and it will now mature in 113 months as against 112 months previously.

- The Union Cabinet approved amendments to the Nabard (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) Act, 1981, to increase its authorized capital from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 30,000 crore. The Cabinet also approved transfer of 0.4 per cent equity of Reserve Bank of India in Nabard amounting to Rs 20 crore to the Government of India. The transfer of entire shareholding in Nabard held by the RBI to the central government will remove the conflict in RBI's role as banking regulator and shareholder in Nabard. Nabard is an apex development bank of country and is engaged in agricultural credit and other economic activities in rural areas.
- The proposals with regard to the Fund of Funds of Start-ups (FFS) which was established in June, last year with a corpus of Rs. 1,000 crores, was approved by the Government. It was decided that the FFS shall contribute to the corpus of Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) for investing in equity and equity linked instruments of various start-ups at early stage, seed stage and growth stages. The Cabinet approved the proposal for Alternate Investment Funds (AIFs) supported by FFS to invest at least twice the amount of contribution received from FFS in qualifying Start-ups. The FFS is being managed and operated by Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). FFS contributes to SEBI registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs) that may go up to a maximum of 35% of the corpus of the AIF concerned.
- The Union Cabinet approved amendments in the Customs and Excise Act relating to abolition of cesses and surcharges on various goods and services to facilitate implementation of GST. The Cabinet approved amendments to the Customs Act, 1962, the Customs Tariff Act, 1975 and the Central Excise Act, 1944. It also approved repeal of the Central Excise Tariff Act, 1985 and amendment or repeal of the provisions relating to Acts under which cesses are levied. Following this, the Centre will abolish 16 cesses and surcharges on union excise and service tax as it lays down the path for rolling out Goods and Services Tax (GST) from July. The amendments in the Customs Act, 1962, allow furnishing of information relating to import or export of goods by specified persons to enable analysis and detection of cases of under or over-valuation in imports and exports. Cesses to be abolished include Krishi Kalyan and Swachh Bharat. This would lead to a loss of about Rs 65,000 crore by the exchequer. To make up for this dent, the government would have to find resources from the budget.
- The Loan Agreement for New Development Bank (NDB) financing of US\$ 350 Million for Development and Upgradation of Major District Roads Project in Madhya Pradesh was signed between Government of India and the New Development Bank (NDB). This is the First Loan Agreement for NDB assisted project in India. The objective of the Project is upgradation of major district roads in the state of Madhya Pradesh to improve connectivity of the interior areas of the state with the national and state highway networks. The Project would include upgradation, rehabilitation or reconstruction of approx. 1,500 (One thousand Five Hundred Only) km of district roads to intermediate lane, all-weather standards, with road safety features and improved road asset maintenance & management. The project implementation is 5 years. Government of Madhya Pradesh and the MPRDC are the implementing agencies.
- The government sanctioned 101 new integrated cold chain projects across 20 States. The companies whose proposals were approved include Halidram, Bectors Food, Balmer Lawrie, Cremica and milk cooperatives Kaira, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha among others. Of the 101 cold chains sanctioned, 53 are for processing fruits and vegetables, 33 for dairy products and 15 for meat, marine and poultry items.

Close to half of the projects are in three States — 21 in Maharashtra, 14 in Uttar Pradesh and 12 in Gujarat. The cold chain projects will leverage a total investment of Rs. 3,100 crore for creation of modern infrastructure for the food processing sector.

- The World Bank approved a \$175 million loan for the National Hydrology Project to improve India's ability to forecast floods and reduce vulnerability to recurring floods and droughts. The loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) has a six-year grace period in which no interest payments will be due. The loan will mature in 23 years.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for the following:-
 - ❖ Setting up of a Special Purpose Vehicle to be called Government e-Marketplace (GeM SPV) as the National Public Procurement Portal as Section 8 Company registered under the Companies Act, 2013, for providing procurement of goods & services required by Central & State Government organizations. GeM SPV shall provide an end-to-end online Marketplace for Central and State Government Ministries / Departments, Central & State Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs & SPSUs), Autonomous institutions and Local bodies, for procurement of common use goods & services in a transparent and efficient manner.
 - ❖ DGS&D shall be wound up and cease its functions by 31st October, 2017. In case it is not possible to wind up DGS&D by 31st October, 2017, the Department may extend the date of closure with proper justification latest upto 31st March, 2018.
- The Union Cabinet approved measures to increase oil palm area and production in India, including relaxation of land ceiling limit for oil palm cultivation under NMOOP (National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm). This will encourage oil palm plantation on large scale by corporate bodies and to utilize wastelands. By relaxing restrictions under NMOOP, private entrepreneurs/cooperative bodies/joint ventures will show their interest in investment in oil palm plantation and availing the NMOOP support. Oil Palm is one of the world's most efficient crop in terms of yield of vegetable oil per ha and today it is largest source of vegetable oil in the world. Government of India is promoting oil palm by implementing several programmes since 1986-87 and from 2014-15 through NMOOP. NMOOP aims to bring an additional area of 1.25 lakh hectare under oil palm cultivation by the end of 2016-17.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said capital, asset quality and profitability would be the basis of the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework on which the banks would be monitored and defined three kinds of risk thresholds. In a notification issued by RBI, the mandatory action that would be taken when a bank breaches the risk threshold includes restriction on dividend payment/remittance of profits, restriction on branch expansion, higher provisions, restriction on management compensation and director's fees.
- India was ranked 40th among 136 economies of the world in 2017 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) released by the World Economic Forum (WEF). Spain, France and Germany were the top three in descending order.
- India ranked ninth among 41 countries in bribery and corrupt practices in businesses, as per the EY Europe, Middle East, India and Africa (EMEIA) Fraud Survey 2017. India ranked behind Ukraine, Cyprus, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Kenya, South Africa and Hungary, in the perception survey. The ranking improved marginally from the survey findings in 2015 when India was at the sixth position, owing to better regulatory scrutiny and emphasis on transparency and governance.

- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for signing of the Collaborative Agreement with French National Research Agency (ANR), France for supporting the Belmont Forum Secretariat from January, 2015 to December, 2017 at a total estimated expenditure of Euro 40,000. The Cabinet also approved continued financial support to Belmont Forum Secretariat beyond 2017. The Belmont Forum, created in 2009, is a high level group of the world's major and emerging funders of global environmental change research and international science councils. It provides an opportunity to identify study and deliver international environmental research priorities, for the society, in an accelerated way through trans-national research collaboration between natural and social scientists and alignment of international resources.
- RBI governor Urjit Patel-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) kept the key repo rate unchanged in the first monetary policy review of 2017 and after Budget 2017. The policy rates in the policy were as under :-
 - ❖ Repo rate: 6.25%
 - ❖ Reverse Repo Rate: 6%
 - ❖ Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate : 6.5%.
 - ❖ Bank Rate : 6.5%.
 - ❖ Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR): 4%.
 - ❖ Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR): 20.50%.
- ❖ According to figures released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), India became world's fifth largest military spender after the expenditure grew around 8.5 per cent to \$55.9 billion in 2016., India spent in 2016. US remains the world's largest military spender with a growth of 1.7 per cent between 2015 and 2016 increasing the expenditure to \$611 billion.
- ❖ The Central Government successfully divested 9.2% of paid-up capital in National Aluminum Company Ltd. (NALCO) to raise Rs. 1,200 crore. Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), Ministry of Finance, Government of India has set a record target of realizing Rs. 72,500 crore through disinvestment. This follows an all-time high achievement of Rs. 46,247 crore during 2016-17.
- ❖ India's import of total finished steel fell 36 per cent to 7.4 million tonnes (MT) and exports jumped 102 per cent to 8.2 MT in 2016-17, according to Joint Plant Committee's annual report on the sector for 2016-17. The production of crude steel was 97.385 MT during this period. India is the third largest producer of crude steel after China and Japan and is aiming to become the second largest in the near term.
- ❖ The IMF projected the world economy to grow at a pace of 3.5 per cent in 2017, up from 3.1 per cent last year, and 3.6 per cent in 2018. The IMF's new projection for 2017 is marginally higher than what they expected in its last update. This improvement comes primarily from good economic news for Europe and Asia, and within Asia, notably for China and Japan.
- ❖ A tripartite Memorandum of Understanding was signed among BBNL, Department of Posts and BSNL for providing broadband connectivity of BharatNet to Post Offices in rural areas. The MoU is the first tri-partite agreement to provide broadband connectivity to about 1.3 lakh, post offices in rural areas and 25,000 sub-post offices for high speed internet connectivity to the rural masses.

- ❖ India toppled Japan as the world's second-largest importer of liquefied petroleum gas as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pledge to provide cooking gas cylinders to the poor and wean them off polluting fuels drove up consumption. Imports of LPG, mostly used as cooking fuel, soared 23 percent during the financial year that ended March 31 to 11 million tons, according to data from oil ministry's Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell. Japan's imports slipped 3.2 percent during the same period to 10.6 million tons, according to its finance ministry. China remains the world's top importer.
- ❖ The World Bank approved a loan of \$375 million for capacity augmentation of National Waterway-1 (NW-1) between Haldia in West Bengal and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh on the river Ganga under the Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP).
- Indore was declared the cleanest city in India among 434 cities surveyed for the government cleanliness ranking by the Quality Council of India, according to the Swachh Survekshan 2017 report. Madhya Pradesh's capital — Bhopal — came second. Mysuru, which had topped the list in 2016, came fifth this year. State-wise, Gujarat has the highest number, with 12 of its cities among the top 50 clean cities followed by Madhya Pradesh with 11 and Andhra Pradesh with eight. Union Territory Chandigarh, which had stood second last year, slipped to the eleventh position this year.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, gave its approval for re-structuring the schemes of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) under new Central Sector Scheme – SAMPADA (Scheme for Agro-Marine Processing and Development of Agro-Processing Clusters) for the period 2016-20 coterminous with the 14th Finance Commission cycle. SAMPADA with an allocation of Rs. 6,000 crore is expected to leverage investment of Rs. 31,400 crore, handling of 334 lakh MT agro-produce valuing Rs. 1,04,125 crore, benefit 20 lakh farmers and generate 5,30,500 direct/ indirect employment in the country by the year 2019-20. The objective of SAMPADA is to supplement agriculture, modernize processing and decrease agri-waste. SAMPADA is an umbrella scheme incorporating ongoing schemes of the Ministry like Mega Food Parks, Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure, Food Safety and Quality Assurance Infrastructure, etc. and also new schemes like Infrastructure for Agro-processing Clusters, Creation of Backward and Forward Linkages, Creation / Expansion of Food Processing & Preservation Capacities.
- The new-look index of industrial production (IIP) and the wholesale price index (WPI), were declared by the Government. These have been built on the new series of data and paint a healthier picture of the Indian economy in 2016-17 than the old series did. However, the impact of demonetisation still persisted on industrial production, particularly manufacturing, which declined in March over February. The base year for the indices in the new series has shifted to 2011-12, against the earlier 2004-05. The series has been revised after eight years.
- India's forex reserves touched a fresh life-time high of \$375.71 billion after rising by \$2.985 billion in the week ending May 5, helped by increase in foreign currency assets. Foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves, include Foreign currency assets (FCAs), Gold, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and RBI's Reserve position with International Monetary Fund (IMF). Expressed in US dollar terms, FCAs include the effects of appreciation/depreciation of non-US currencies, such as the euro, pound and the yen, held in the reserves.
- As per IMF, India's growth is expected to rebound to 7.2% in the 2017-18 fiscal and 7.7% in 2018-19 after disruptions caused by demonetization. The temporary disruptions (primarily to private consumption)

caused by cash shortages accompanying the currency exchange initiative are expected to gradually dissipate in 2017 as cash shortages ease, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in its regional economic outlook.

- In a major restructuring in the PSU banking space, the government appointed heads of various public sector banks, as under:-
 - ❖ PNB Managing Director (MD) Usha Ananthasubramanian was appointed as the head of Allahabad Bank.
 - ❖ Melwyn Rego of Bank of India will head the Syndicate Bank.
 - ❖ Rajkiran Rai G, currently executive director of Oriental Bank of Commerce will head Union Bank of
 - ❖ R Subramaniakumar, currently executive director of Indian Overseas Bank, has been made as its MD and CEO.
 - ❖ Sunil Mehta, currently the executive director of Corporation Bank will head the PNB in place of Usha Ananthasubramanian.
 - ❖ The executive director of Canara Bank Dinabandhu Mohapatra will be the MD and CEO of Bank of India.
 - ❖ R A Sankara Narayanan, currently executive director of BoI will be the MD and CEO of Vijaya Bank.

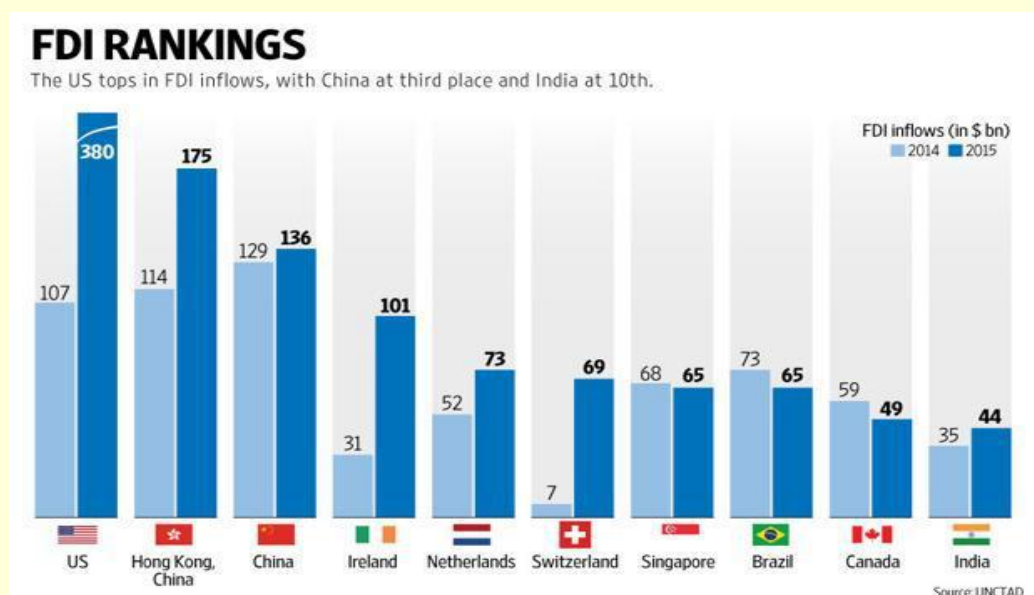
According to experts, the changes were made in these public sector banks after a because of their non-performance in tackling non-performing assets (NPAs). Toxic loans of public sector banks (PSBs) rose by over Rs 1 lakh crore to Rs 6.06 lakh crore during April-December of 2016-17.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) moved to make the joint lenders' forum (JLF) more effective, directing banks to not break any rules and to meet all deadlines. The regulator said any breach of rules would attract a monetary penalty. JLFs are meetings at which banks attempt to red-flag stress early and work to try and keep it in check by putting in place a corrective action plan (CAP). Although the mechanism has been place for some time now, decisions have been few and far between thanks to disagreements between lenders. With a view to facilitating consensus, the RBI lowered the threshold needed for implementing a CAP — decisions agreed to by a minimum of 60% of creditors by value and 50% of creditors by number will now be valid. Earlier, 75% of the lenders by value and 60% by number needed to sign off on a CAP.
- An estimated US\$ 770 billion in black money entered India during 2005-2014, US-based think tank Global Financial Integrity (GFI) said in its latest report. Nearly US\$ 165 billion in illicit money exited the country during the same period, the global financial watchdog said. During 2014 alone, about US\$ 101 billion black money entered the country while US\$ 23 billion exited, the report added.
- Global rating agency Fitch Ratings affirmed India's long-term foreign- and local-currency rating at 'BBB-', which is the lowest investment grade rating. India's sovereign ratings balance a strong medium-term growth outlook and favourable external balances with a weak fiscal position and difficult business environment, as per the report. However, the business environment is likely to gradually improve with the implementation and continued broadening of the government's structural reform agenda. Fitch forecasts India's real GDP growth to accelerate to 7.7 per cent in FY17 and FY18, from 7.1 per cent in FY16. It, however, flagged concerns that have bearing on ratings. First, weak public finances continue to work as

constraining. It is revealed in high general government debt burden of 67.9 per cent of GDP ('BBB' median: 40.9 per cent) and wide fiscal balance of -6.6 per cent of GDP ('BBB' median: -2.7 per cent). Second, a significant contingent liability for the sovereign continues to emanate from public sector banks. The banking sector's non-performing loans (NPLs) problem is well recognised by authorities but continues to linger. NPLs are expected to rise to 9.7% of total loans by end-FY17, from 4.6% in FY15. Third, India's economy is less developed on a number of structural metrics than many of its peers. Average per capita GDP remains low, at \$1,714, compared with the 'BBB' range median of \$ 9,701. Governance standards also remain weak, Fitch added.

- Paytm unveiled the Paytm Payments Bank becoming the first bank to offer cashbacks on deposits. Customers will also be offered zero charges on all online transactions and no minimum balance requirement. The Payments Bank plans to roll out 31 branches and 3,000 customer service points in the first year. The company is aiming to replicate this success in the banking sector and further drive cashless transactions with the Paytm Payments Bank. The current Paytm Wallet will move to the Paytm Payments Bank in the same capacity.
- The Reserve Bank announced that it will reconstitute the oversight committee (OC) under its aegis to operationalise the banking ordinance for resolving the issue of bad loans that have soared to over Rs 8 lakh crore.
- The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council backed the 1 July deadline for rolling out the unified indirect tax that will help create a single national market, and ensured that items of mass consumption bear the least tax burden. The council finalised a 4-slab service tax structure as against the single rate of 15% levied on all taxable services.
 - ❖ Under the new tax, rates will range from 5 to 28 percent, with 12 percent and 18 percent being the standard rates.
 - ❖ Most raw food items including milk will be exempted from tax.
 - ❖ Items such as cereals, which were taxed earlier at 5%, will now be zero-rated. Coffee, sugar, tea and edible oil will attract a lower GST rate of 5%. Capital goods, a key asset for the manufacturing sector, will be taxed at 28%.
 - ❖ Several daily-use items such as hair oil, toothpaste and soap have been kept in the 18%-slab instead of at 28%.
 - ❖ The reduction in the tax incidence is likely to ease inflation.
- The UN World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid- 2017 report, said India is projected to achieve a 7.3 per cent growth in 2017, a downward revision from the 7.7 per cent forecast for the year made when the report was launched in January. The revised report, however, projected that India will achieve an impressive 7.9 per cent GDP growth in 2018, revising upwards its January estimates when it had said India's growth will be 7.6 per cent next year.
- The Union Cabinet approved a policy for providing preference to 'Make in India' in government procurements. The new policy will give a substantial boost to domestic manufacturing and service provision, thereby creating employment. It will also stimulate the flow of capital and technology into domestic manufacturing and services. It will also provide a further thrust towards manufacture of parts, components, sub-components etc. of these items, in line with the vision of 'Make in India'.

- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for allocating 2.5% of the Central Road Fund (CRF) for the development of the National Waterways.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to Raising of Bonds of Rs. 2360 crores for Renewable Energy. The Bonds will be raised by the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) through the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) during 2017-18. These funds will be used by MNRE in the approved programmes/schemes for solar park, green energy corridor, generation-based incentives for wind projects, CPSU and defence solar projects, viability gap funding for solar projects, roof-top solar, off-grid/grid-distributed and decentralized renewable power, investment in corporations and autonomous bodies etc.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the phasing out of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB). The proposal entails abolishing the FIPB and allowing administrative Ministries/Departments to process applications for FDI requiring government approval.
- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal to introduce a Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017. The Bill would provide for a comprehensive resolution framework for specified financial sector entities to deal with bankruptcy situation in banks, insurance companies and financial sector entities.
- China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank approved \$150 million equity investment loan to the India Infrastructure Fund, the bank's first such loan to fund private projects. The Infrastructure Fund aims to invest in mid-cap infrastructure companies in India, and to expand the bank's equity and loan deal sourcing pipelines in the private sector through its equity participation in this fund.
- India's forex reserves surged by USD 2.404 billion to reach life-time high of USD 381.167 billion in the week to June 2 on account of rise in foreign currency assets. The components of India's Foreign Exchange Reserves include: Foreign currency assets (FCAs), Gold, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) and RBI's Reserve position with International Monetary Fund (IMF). Out of all the components, FCAs constitute the largest component of the Forex Reserves.
- India continues to be a favourite FDI destination though tax-related concerns remain a deterrent for some foreign investors, as per an UNCTAD report released in June 2017. The rankings are given below:-



- India is among the top five consumer markets in Asia offering retailers consumer spending growth of an average of 6.1 per cent over the next five years, according to a BMI (a Fitch group company) Research report. China, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, India and Indonesia are the five favourite consumer markets in Asia. According to BMI Research, , these countries offer retailer the strongest consumer spending growth over its forecast period to 2021.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept key rates unchanged while lowering its projections for inflation after recent data showed consumer prices rising more slowly. Repo rate - the rate at which the central bank lends short-term money to banks - was unchanged at 6.25 per cent. CRR or Cash Reserve Ratio - which is a portion of deposits that banks must mandatorily keep with the RBI—was unchanged at 4 per cent. Reverse Repo Rate was unchanged at 6%. SLR or Statutory Liquidity Ratio (the percentage of deposits which the banks are required to invest in specified financial securities like Central Government or State Government securities) was cut by 50 basis points to 20%. The RBI had changed its monetary policy to "neutral" from "accommodative" in February, leaving the option for a rate hike or cut open in months ahead.
- Vijaya Bank announced to develop as many as 100 digital villages in various States of the country as part of its initiative to promote digital banking among the rural population. Vijaya Bank is a public sector bank with its corporate office in Bangalore. It is the only public sector financial institution to develop digital villages with focus on rural areas and it has already developed five villages.
- India surpassed China to secure the top position among 30 developing countries on ease of doing business, according to the 2017 Global Retail Development Index (GRDI) published by London-based business consultancy A T Kearney. The study cited India's rapidly expanding economy, relaxation of FDI rules and a consumption boom as the key drivers. The GRDI, now in its 16th edition, ranks the top 30 developing countries for retail investment worldwide and analyses 25 macroeconomic and retail-specific variables.
- India and South Korea signed an agreement for \$10 billion assistance for infrastructure development projects in India, including smart cities.
- Aiming to reduce emissions and promote sustainability to help India's smart city programme, France and the European Union extended a grant of 3.5 million euros under the 'Mobilise Your City' (MYC) initiative. Three Indian cities -- Nagpur, Kochi and Ahmedabad -- will get the grant as part of the EU's commitment under the Paris Climate agreement.
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) committed USD 10 billion support for infrastructure building and immediate development needs of less-developed states in India. Besides, the Manila-based multi-lateral funding agency decided to increase the annual funding by USD 1 billion to USD 4 billion. ADB expects India to grow by 7.4 per cent in the current financial year and 7.6 per cent in 2018-19.
- The World Bank announced a loan of \$35 million for ASPIRe(Assam State Public Finance Institutional Reforms) project, to strengthen the state's departments of finance, taxation and excise in delivering important public services using information technology and enhanced human resource capacities as the key drivers. The project, to be implemented over a period of five years, will cost \$44 million, of which the World Bank will provide \$35 million and the state government the rest.

- The government notified sections in the GST Act dealing with mandatory registration of current indirect tax payers in the new regime. As many as 18 sections relating to registration of current central excise, service tax and VAT payers with the GST-Network (GSTN) as well as transitional provisions were notified. As a precursor to GST, the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) also notified two rules -- registration and composition levy. GST will unify over a dozen central and state levies into one.
- To finance its 24x7 water supply project, the Pune Municipal Corporation launched India's biggest municipal bonds programme. The project looks to raise Rs 2,264 crore in five years. Municipal bonds are debt instruments through which a corporation or municipality raises money from individuals or institutions. The civic body floating the bonds returns the principal amount on a maturity date with a specific amount of interest. There are usually two kinds of bonds – general bonds, where money is raised without mentioning the cause in particular, and revenue bonds, where funds are raised for income-generating projects and revenue from the projects is used to repay the buyers.
- The GST Council headed by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley comprising of state finance ministers as members announced to set up a five-member anti-profiteering authority. GST rules mandate businesses to pass on the benefits from lower tax incidence, arising from rate reduction and/or input tax credit, to the consumer. Companies held to have not passed on the benefit will be made to forfeit whatever is deemed to be the profiteered amount (from the time the GST takes effect). Also, to reduce their price(s) by the amount commensurate with the reduction in tax incidence. The amount paid as forfeiture will go into a consumer welfare fund.
- Switzerland ratified automatic exchange of financial account information with India and 40 other countries to facilitate sharing of details about suspected black money, even as it sought strict adherence to confidentiality and data security. The Swiss Federal Council said the implementation is planned for 2018 and the first set of data should be exchanged in 2019. The issue of black money has been a matter of great debate in India and Switzerland has been long perceived as one of the safest havens for the illicit wealth stashed abroad by Indians.
- According to data furnished by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's current account deficit (CAD) narrowed during last fiscal due to a contraction in the country's trade deficit. The CAD for last fiscal narrowed to 0.7 per cent of the GDP from 1.1 per cent in 2015-16 on the back of the contraction in trade deficit. The current account is the net difference between inflows and outflows of foreign currencies. India's trade deficit during the fiscal under review narrowed to \$112.4 billion in 2016-17 from \$130.1 billion in 2015-16.
- India contributed \$100,000 to a UN fund –the UN Trust Fund for International Cooperation in Tax Matters- to help developing countries actively participate in the discussion of tax issues, becoming the first country to make the contribution.
- According to the World population Prospectus: The Revision released by the United Nations, India with 1.3 billion inhabitants would surpass China's population of 1.4 billion by 2024, to become the World's populous country.
- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal to introduce a Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017. The Bill would provide for a comprehensive resolution framework for specified financial sector entities to deal with bankruptcy situation in banks, insurance companies and financial sector entities. The Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance, Bill 2017 when enacted, will pave the way for setting up of the Resolution Corporation. It would lead to repeal or amendment of resolution-related provisions in sectoral Acts as listed in Schedules of the Bill. It will also result in the repealing of the Deposit Insurance

and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961 to transfer the deposit insurance powers and responsibilities to the Resolution Corporation. The Resolution Corporation would protect the stability and resilience of the financial system; protecting the consumers of covered obligations up to a reasonable limit; and protecting public funds, to the extent possible.

- European Union (EU) and India announced the establishment of an Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) for EU Investments in India. The mechanism will allow for a close coordination between the European Union and the Government of India with an aim to promote and facilitate EU investment in India. This agreement builds on the Joint Statement of the 13th EU-India Summit held in Brussels in March 2016, where the EU had welcomed India's readiness to establish such a mechanism and leaders from both sides had reaffirmed their shared commitment to oppose protectionism and to work in favour of a fair, transparent and rule-based trade and investment environment.
- India, the world's third-largest oil importer, will import crude oil from the United States for the first time after Indian Oil Corp bought a cargo that will be delivered in October this year. The purchase comes after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US in June when President Donald Trump said his country looked forward to exporting more energy products to India. India is the latest Asian country to buy US crude after South Korea, Japan, China, Thailand, Australia and Taiwan as the countries seek to diversify oil imports from other regions after the OPEC cuts drove up prices of Middle East heavy-sour crude, or grades with a high sulphur content.
- Laying out norms for limiting customer liability in online banking frauds, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) directed banks to credit the amount involved in the unauthorised electronic transaction within 10 working days to the account holder.
- According to BMI Research, a Fitch group company, India is expected to register a growth of 6.9% in this financial year.
- India will be the base to the economic pole of global growth over the coming decade, remaining ahead of China, according to a Harvard University research. The study also warns of a continued slowdown in global growth over the coming decade. India and Uganda top the list of the fastest growing economies to 2025, at 7.7 per cent annually.
- India slipped to the 88th place in terms of money parked by its citizens with Swiss banks, while the U.K. remained on the top, as per an analysis of the latest figures compiled by the Swiss National Bank as on 2016-end. Also, the money officially held by Indians with banks in Switzerland accounted for a meagre 0.04 per cent of the total funds kept by all foreign clients in the Swiss banking system. India was placed at 75th position in 2015 and at 61st in the year before that, though it used to be among top-50 countries in terms of holdings in Swiss banks till 2007. The country was ranked highest at 37th place in 2004.
- The National Multi-Commodity Exchange (NMCE) decided to merge with the Indian Commodity Exchange (ICEX), creating the third-largest commodity exchange in the country. The merged entity will have a net worth of around Rs 200 crore, while its total capital base will be Rs 553 crore. It will offer a wide range of contracts, including bullion, oil and rubber, besides the world's first diamond futures contract, which has already received in-principle approval from the markets regulator. The country's largest exchange by volume is the Multi Commodity Exchange, or MCX, followed by the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX).

- The growth of eight core sectors slowed to 3.6 per cent in May due to fall in output of coal and fertilisers, as per data released by the government. The growth rate of eight infrastructure sectors — coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity — was 5.2 per cent in May last year. Slow growth in key sectors would also have implications on the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) number as these segments account for about 41 per cent to the total factory output.
- As per the official figures published by the UK's Department for International Trade, India has become the fourth largest foreign investor into the UK. The list is topped by the US.
- India ranked third in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Government at a Glance 2017 report, which presents an index of countries that trust their governments the most. Indonesia and Switzerland were ahead of India.
- India was ranked 116 out of 157 nations on the 2017 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Index and Dashboard report released by Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and Bertelsmann Stiftung. Sweden topped the list followed by Denmark and Finland.
- According to recently released OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2017-2026, India will be the world's largest milk producer by 2026 and will account for the biggest increase in wheat production globally.
- FM launched a new tax payer service module 'Aaykar Setu' that compiles various tax tools, live chat facility, dynamic updates, and important links to various processes within the Income Tax Department in a single module. It is aimed at providing better taxpayer services and reducing the direct physical interface between assesses and tax assessing authorities.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval for revision of guidelines of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGB) Scheme with a view to achieve its intended objectives. Two sets of changes have been made in the scheme:
 - ❖ Specific changes have been made in the attributes of the scheme to make it more attractive, mobilise finances as per the target and reduce the economic strains caused by imports of gold and reduce the Current Account Deficit (CAD).
 - ❖ Flexibility has been given to Ministry of Finance to design and introduce variants of SGBs with different interest rates and risk protection / pay-offs that would offer investment alternatives to different category of investors.

Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme was notified by the Government of India on November 05, 2015. The main objective of the scheme was to develop a financial asset as an alternative to purchasing metal gold. The target was to shift part of the estimated 300 tons of physical bars and coins purchased every year for Investment into 'demat' gold bonds. The target mobilisation under the scheme at Rs. 15,000 crore in 2015-16 and at Rs.10,000 crore in 2016-17. The amount so far credited in Government account is Rs. 4,769 crore.

- The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) July World Economic Outlook Update retained India's projected GDP growth rate for 2017-18 at 7.2%, and at 7.7% for 2018-19. The IMF added that while activity slowed following demonetisation, growth for 2016-17 was higher than anticipated on the back of government spending and stronger momentum in the first part of that year.
- Markets regulator Sebi entered into a pact with the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) for exchange of information concerning Central Counterparties (CCPs). Central counterparties are entities that

help facilitate clearing and settlement activities. It reduces counterparty, operational, settlement, market, legal and default risk for traders.

- In a move designed to reduce tax litigation, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) signed seven more unilateral Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs) with Indian taxpayers, taking the total number of APAs entered into by the CBDT to 77. APAs provide for signing an agreement between a taxpayer and the income tax department on an appropriate transfer pricing methodology for determining the value of assets and taxes on intra-group overseas transactions. The scheme attempts to provide certainty to taxpayers in the domain of transfer pricing by specifying the methods of pricing and setting the prices of international transactions in advance.
- India is the world's third-biggest exporter of beef and is projected to hold on to that position over the next decade, according to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation (OECD). Brazil is the top exporter followed by Australia.
- The Union Cabinet approved the new wage code bill which will ensure a minimum wage across all sectors by integrating four labour related laws. The proposed legislation is expected to benefit over 4 crore employees across the country. The Labour Code on Wages Bill will consolidate the Minimum Wages Act, 1948; the Payment of Wages Act, 1936; the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965; and the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.
- The Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Arun Jaitley. It seeks to amend the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to insert provisions for handling cases related to stressed assets. Stressed assets are loans where the borrower has defaulted in repayment or where the loan has been restructured (such as by changing the repayment schedule). It will replace the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017.
- India's factory output, as measured in the terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), declined by 0.1% in the month of June, compared to a 1.7% rise in the previous, its first fall since June 2013. In terms of industries, eight of the 22 industries showed growth; pharmaceuticals and furniture posted the highest growth followed by tobacco and leather products.
- The Multi Commodity Exchange Ltd (MCX) received markets regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India's (Sebi) approval to launch country's first gold options contract.
- The Logistics Data Bank (LDB) project, unveiled in July 2016 to make India's logistics sector more efficient through the use of Information Technology, will soon expand operations to the country's southern region. So far, it had covered only the western logistics corridor. The facility — where every container is attached to a Radio Frequency Identification Tag (RFID) tag and then tracked through RFID readers — aids importers and exporters in tracking their goods in transit.
- The government announced the launch of its second exchange-traded fund (ETF), Bharat 22, which will comprise 22 stocks including those of central public sector enterprises (CPSEs), public sector banks and its holdings under the Specified Undertaking of Unit Trust of India (SUUTI). Finance minister Arun Jaitley said the ETF will have a diversified portfolio of companies from six sectors with a 20% cap on each sector and a 15% cap on each stock. Exchange-traded funds (ETFs) are essentially index funds that are listed and traded on exchanges like stocks. An ETF is a basket of stocks with assigned weights that reflects the composition of an index.
- In its third bimonthly policy review for the financial year 2017-18, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India reduced short-term lending rate, or repo rate, by 25 basis points to 6%. Reverse repo rate was also cut by 0.25 per cent to 5.75 per cent.

- The Rajya Sabha passed the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2017, which will enable the government to empower the RBI to direct lender banks to act against big loan defaulters. The bill, which amends the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, will replace the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance, 2017. The Lok Sabha had passed the bill earlier.
- The government ordered State-run oil companies to raise the price of subsidised cooking gas (LPG) by Rs. 4 a cylinder every month to eliminate all subsidies by March next year.
- The government announced that anti-dumping duty is in force on 93 products including chemicals and machinery items imported from China. The other Chinese products on which India has imposed this duty include steel and other metals; fibres and yarn; rubber or plastic; electric and electronics; and consumer goods. Countries impose anti-dumping duties to guard domestic industry from surge in below-cost imports.
- India ranked last at 43rd position in 2017 Global Retirement Index (GRI) published by French asset management company Natixis Global. The index ranks 43 countries on the basis of four factors namely the material means to live comfortably in retirement (Material Well-being); access to quality health services (Health); access to quality financial services to help preserve savings value and maximize income (Finances) and a clean and safe environment (Quality of Life). The Top three countries in 2017 GRI are Norway, Switzerland, and Iceland.
- The Union Cabinet gave its in-principle approval for Public Sector Banks to amalgamate through an Alternative Mechanism (AM). The decision would facilitate consolidation among the Nationalised Banks to create strong and competitive banks. The salient features of the approval Framework for Consolidation of Public Sector Banks are as follows:
 - ❖ The decision regarding creating strong and competitive banks would be solely based on commercial considerations.
 - ❖ The proposal must start from the Boards of Banks.
 - ❖ The proposals received from Banks for in-principle approval to formulate schemes of amalgamation shall be placed before the Alternative Mechanism (AM).
 - ❖ After in-principle approval, the Banks will take steps in accordance with law and SEBI's requirements.
 - ❖ The final scheme will be notified by Central Government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India.
- The Union Cabinet approved a new Metro Rail Policy that seeks to enable realization of growing metro rail aspirations of a large number of cities but in a responsible manner. The policy opens a big window for private investments across a range of metro operations making PPP component mandatory for availing central assistance for new metro projects. Private investment and other innovative forms of financing of metro projects have been made compulsory to meet the huge resource demand for capital intensive high capacity metro projects. The new Metro Rail Policy provides for rigorous assessment of new metro proposals and proposes an independent third party assessment by agencies to be identified by the Government. Taking note of substantial social, economic and environmental gains of metro projects, the Policy stipulated a shift from the present 'Financial Internal Rate of Return of 8%' to 'Economic Internal Rate of Return of 14%' for approving metro projects, in line with global practices.

- The Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (SFB) Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ujjivan Financial Services Ltd., was included in the Second Schedule of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934. With this, Ujjivan SFB attained the status of a Scheduled Bank. The headquarters of Ujjivan SFB is located in Bengaluru.
- The Indian Commodity Exchange (ICEX) became the world's first derivatives exchange to launch diamond futures contract, creating an entirely new market for the diamond players where sellers can deliver their certified diamonds to different buyers.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed committee on Household Finance recommended that banks should link their home loan rates to the RBI's repo rate, the rate at which it lends to banks. The committee was chaired by Dr Tarun Ramadorai, who is Professor of Financial Economics, Imperial College Business School in London.
- The Union Cabinet increased the 'creamy layer' ceiling for the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category to Rs 8 lakh per annum from the existing Rs 6 lakh for central government jobs. With this, those in the OBC category earning up to Rs 8 lakh per annum would now get reservation benefits.
- The Government of India (GoI) signed Global Environment Facility (GEF) Grant Agreement with the World Bank (WB) for \$24.64 million for Ecosystems Service Improvement Project (ESIP).
- The Union government set up an online service facility that can be used by importers and exporters to resolve all foreign trade-related issues. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), which comes under Ministry of Commerce, asked all exporters and importers to use the system – Contact@DGFT – for resolution of their matters.
- The Punjab National Bank (PNB) and state-run owned BSNL signed an agreement to roll out open mobile wallet Speedpay across 10 states in the country.
- According to a study conducted by the Associated Chambers of Commerce of India (ASSOCHAM), Karnataka ranks first among states in terms of manufacturing excellence. Kerala stood second despite poor industrial growth over a five-year period from 2009.
- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched a nationwide online platform 'FoSCoRIS' to bring in transparency in food safety inspection and sampling.
- The Union Finance Ministry constituted a Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi to monitor and resolve the IT challenges faced in the implementation of GST.
- The Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) and Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) signed a MoU for automatic and regular exchange of information to curb the menace of shell companies, money laundering and black money in the country.
- India was ranked 103 out of 130 nations in the 2017 Global Human Capital Index (GHCI) compiled by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF). It takes into account 'the knowledge and skills people possess that enable them to create value in the global economic system' to measure the 'human capital' rank of a country. The list was topped by Norway, Finland, Switzerland and United States.
- India signed a loan deal of \$76 million with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for a project to upgrade the environment management plan at Alang-Sosiya ship recycling yards. The total cost of the project will be \$111 million, out of which \$76 million will be provided as soft loan from JICA. The project will be executed by Gujarat Maritime Board and is likely to be completed by 2022.

- The Union Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley constituted a Committee on Exports under the convenorship of the Revenue Secretary, Dr Hasmukh Adhiato, look at the issues of export sector and to recommend to the GST Council suitable strategy for helping the export sector in the post-GST scenario.
- IDBI Bank launched 'Project Nishchay' in partnership with The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to accelerate its turnaround programme and improve financial performance. Coordinating across multitude of initiatives, the Bank will focus on four key areas - revenue enhancement, cost control and reduction, asset productivity and overall program management in consultation with BCG.
- India was ranked the 40th most competitive economy — slipping one place from last year's ranking — on the World Economic Forum's global competitiveness index, topped by Switzerland. On the list of 137 economies, Switzerland is followed by the US and Singapore in second and third places, respectively. Other countries in the top 10 are the Netherlands (4th rank), Germany (5), Hong Kong SAR (6), Sweden (7), United Kingdom (8), Japan (9) and Finland (10). The Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) is prepared on the basis of country-level data covering 12 categories or pillars of competitiveness - Institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication and innovation. According to WEF's Executive Opinion Survey 2017, corruption is the most problematic factor for doing business in India. The second biggest bottleneck is 'access to financing', followed by 'tax rates', 'inadequate supply of infrastructure', 'poor work ethics in national labour force' and 'inadequately educated work force', among others.
- The Asian Development Bank announced to increase its annual lending to India to a maximum of \$4 billion between 2018 and 2022 to help fasten inclusive economic transformation towards upper middle income status. The new lending programme, which includes private sector operations, is much higher than the average \$2.65 billion a year in loans extended during 2012 and 2016.
- The government set up a Dairy Processing and Infrastructure Development Fund (DPIDF) worth Rs 10,881 crore to boost the dairy sector, aimed to benefit 95 lakh farmers from about 50,000 villages.
- The Asian Development Bank scaled down India's growth forecast from 7.4% to 7 per cent for the current financial year as demonetisation and implementation of the new goods and services tax regime have dented consumer spending and business investment.
- Putting economic growth revival in the spotlight, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reconstituted the Economic Advisory Council under the chairmanship of NITI Aayog member Bibek Debroy.
- The Asian Development Bank and the Government of India signed a \$300 million loan to continue a series of fiscal reforms in the State of West Bengal to improve the quality of public service delivery.

PEOPLE IN NEWS

Senior IAS officer **Ajay Tyagi** took charge as the Chairman of the markets regulator, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). He is the ninth Chairman of the Sebi and took over from U K Sinha, who completed his six-year tenure.

Nigeria's former Minister for Environment, **Amina Mohammed**, was officially sworn in as Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Amjad Hussain B. Sial, a special secretary at Foreign Service of Pakistan, was named as the new secretary general of the Saarc—a regional forum of eight South Asian countries.

Union Finance Minister **Arun Jaitley** took additional charge of the Defence Ministry. He held the dual position for around six months in 2014. Mr. Jaitley was given the charge of the Defence Ministry after Manohar Parrikar stepped down from the position to go back to Goa as its Chief Minister.

Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir appointed **Bakri Hassan Saleh**, a top aide as prime minister, reinstating a post he had abolished after coming to power in a 1989 coup.

The European Council re-elected **Donald Tusk** as its president for a second term of two and a half years, from 1 June 2017 to 30 November 2019. Donald Tusk was also re-appointed as President of the Euro Summit for the same period. He is the second full-time President of the European Council, following the creation of the post on 1 December 2009 under the Treaty of Lisbon.

Telecom Secretary **J S Deepak**, a 1982 batch IAS officer from Uttar Pradesh, was named India's next Ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) from June this year.

Prof Dr **K Srinath Reddy** was appointed as the adviser to the Odisha government, on proper implementation and smooth delivery of the ongoing health service programmes. The eminent cardiologist, epidemiologist and president of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) would be accorded the rank of a cabinet minister in the state. Reddy, a Padma Bhushan awardee, was the former head of the Department of Cardiology at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi

Manohar Parrikar, who quit as defence minister, took oath as the chief minister of Goa to head a coalition government.

Union Government appointed **Narendra Kumar** as the new chairman of the Central Water Commission (CWC).

Ending 15 years of Congress rule in Manipur, BJP leader **Nongthombam Biren Singh** was sworn in as the state's chief minister.

P K Purwar was appointed Chairman and Managing Director of state-run telecom major Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

Former Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer and parliamentarian **Syed Shahabuddin**, 82, passed away. Shahabuddin had strongly opposed the demolition of the Babri Masjid and was the leader of the Babri Action Committee.

Ashokamitran, one of the most prolific writers who played a key role in contemporary Tamil literature, died at the age of 86.

United Nations announced the appointment of **David Beasley** of the United States as Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP). David Beasley brings to the position extensive experience with key governmental and business leaders and stakeholders around the world, with very strong resource mobilisation skills.

Renowned Meteorologist and former director of the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (Pune) **Dev Raj Sikka** passed away at 85. He is famously known as Monsoon Man and the Father of Indian Meteorology.

Madhabi Puri Buch took charge as Whole Time Member of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for a tenure of three years or until further orders. Prior to joining, Buch served as the Consultant to the New Development Bank in Shanghai and as the Head of the Singapore office of the Private Equity Firm, Greater Pacific Capital. She also served as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer at ICICI Securities Limited and as the Executive Director, on the Board of ICICI bank.

Former BJP legislator from Gujarat, **Manhar Valjibhai Zala**, assumed charge as the chairperson of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK), which was headless for almost a year. The NCSK was established in 1994 to deal with the grievances of persons engaged in manual scavenging.

Dr **Randeep Guleria**, the head of the department of pulmonary medicine, was appointed the director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

BJP leader **Trivendra Singh Rawat** was sworn in as Uttarakhand chief minister after a massive victory in the assembly elections. A former RSS pracharak, Rawat is the fifth BJP chief minister in Uttarakhand.

Mr. **Upendra Tripathy** was appointed as the Interim Director General (IDG) of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on a full time basis. Mr. Upendra Tripathy was the Former Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Karnataka Cadre. The International Solar Alliance (ISA) was launched on 30th November, 2015 as a coalition of the solar resource rich countries.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader, often labelled a firebrand politician for his hard Hindutva stance, **Yogi Adityanath**, was sworn in as the 21st Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. He was elected as a MP of Lok Sabha from the Gorakhpur Constituency, Uttar Pradesh for five consecutive terms (1998, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014).

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres appointed **Achim Steiner** of Germany as the new Administrator of UNDP for a term of four years. Mr. Steiner succeeds Helen Clark of New Zealand. A highly effective communicator and champion of development, environmental protection, democratic governance and institutional reform, she has advocated for the rights of the poor and marginalized, particularly women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex persons, refugees and migrants, and people with HIV/AIDS.

Congress leader and former Union Minister **Akhilesh Das Gupta** passed away. Akhilesh Das had been Minister of State for Steel in UPA-I, served as a mayor of Lucknow and held many posts in the Congress for nearly two decades. Akhilesh was the son of former UP chief minister Banarasi Das.

B.P. Kanungo, a long-serving official with India's central bank, took over as a deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India for a three-year term, overseeing a portfolio including currency management, debt management, and payment and settlements.

Former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir **Girish Chandra Saxena** passed away at the age of 90. An Indian Police Service officer of the 1950 batch from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, he served two terms as the governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

Justice **Gita Mittal**, the senior-most judge of Delhi High Court, was appointed as the acting Chief justice of Delhi High Court with effect from April 14.

Justice **Indira Banerjee**, currently a judge of the Delhi High Court, was appointed by the President as the Chief Justice of Madras High Court. Ms. Justice Banerjee would be the second woman after Justice Kanta Kumari Bhatnagar to head the chartered court.

Padma Vibhushan recipient classical singer **Kishori Amonkar** passed away at the age of 84. One of the finest Hindustani classical singers, Amonkar was a recipient of the Rashtrapati Award, Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and Sangeet Samragini Award, among others.

Pakistan announced death sentence to Indian 'spy' **Kulbhushan Jadhav**, arrested in March 2016, for espionage and waging war against Islamabad. India reacted angrily, saying Jadhav had been sentenced to die "without observing basic norms of law and justice" and if this was carried out, it would amount to "premeditated murder".

McGill University virologist **Mark Wainberg**, a pioneering HIV researcher whose research contributed to the discovery of the antiviral drug lamivudine, died unexpectedly.

Mukta Dutta Tomar was appointed as India's new Ambassador to Germany. Tomar, a 1984 batch IFS officer is presently working as the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) appointed **Raman Roy** as its chairman for 2017-2018. Roy, Chairman and Managing Director of Quattro, has been a member of Nasscom's Executive Council and was the vice-chairman for 2016-17. He will take over from CP Gurnani (Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Tech Mahindra).

Diplomat **Vipul**, a 1998 batch Indian Foreign Service officer, took charge as the new Consul General of Dubai. Dubai is recognized as the commercial capital and tourism center of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Allan Holdsworth, hailed by his peers as one of the most technically gifted guitarists of his time, died at the age of 70.

Devendra Kumar Sharma, managing director of Himachal Pradesh Power Corporation Limited, was appointed as the new chairman of the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB). The BBMB manages the release of water in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan as it controls Bhakra, Pong and other dams.

The world's oldest person, **Emma Morano**, died in Italy at the age of 117. She was born on 29 November 1899 in Italy and was officially the last person born in the 1800s still living. Her life not only spanned three centuries but also survived an abusive marriage, the loss of her only son, two World Wars and more than 90 Italian governments.

Filmmaker **Jonathan Demme**, whose Oscar-winning thriller "The Silence of the Lambs" terrified audiences and introduced one of the most indelible villains in movie history, died at the age of 73.

India's first woman International Olympic Committee member **Nita Ambani** made it to two important commissions of the global sports governing body, including the prestigious Olympic channel, thus becoming one of the 16 members of the Olympic Channel Commission headed by United States Olympic Committee Chairman Lawrence Francis Probst. Besides the Olympic Channel, the 53-year-old Ambani was also made a member of Olympic education Commission for 2017.

Astronaut **Peggy Whitson** set a new space record for 'most days in space by a US astronaut', breaking the previous record set by Jeff Williams who had spent a total of 534 days in space.

IPS officer **Rajiv Rai Bhatnagar** was appointed as the Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The CRPF was functioning without a head after the retirement of K. Durga Prasad on February 28, 2017.

President Donald Trump announced the appointment of **Randolph Alles** as the director of the U.S. Secret Service.

One of the founding fathers of the internet, **Robert Taylor**, died at the age of 85. While working at the Pentagon in the 1960s, he instigated the creation of Arpanet - a computer network that initially linked together four US research centres, and later evolved into the internet. At Xerox, he later oversaw the first computer with desktop-inspired icons and a word processor that formed the basis of Microsoft Word.

Bengaluru-based 31 years old **Sagar Baheti** became the first visually impaired Indian runner to complete the historic Boston Marathon.

Adding yet another first to his huge repertoire of firsts, Bollywood superstar **Shah Rukh Khan** addressed the audience in a conference at TED Talks (Technology, Entertainment and Design talks) in Canada, thus becoming the first Bollywood actor to grace the stage delivering TED talks.

Srishti Kaur from India was crowned Miss Teen Universe 2017, beating out 25 other contestants from around the world in the annual beauty pageant.

Veteran Bollywood actor **Vinod Khanna**, who was sitting Bharatiya Janata Party member of the Lok Sabha from the Gurdaspur constituency in Punjab passed away at the age of 70. He had starred in more than 100 films in a career spanning over five decades. At the height of his popularity, Khanna surprised his fans when he took a break from acting for five years to join Osho Rajneesh at his ashram in Pune in 1982. But he returned to cinema in the late eighties, and courted success again. He was last seen in the Shah Rukh Khan-starrer "Dilwale" in 2015.

World Health Organization appointed **Amitabh Bachchan** as its Goodwill Ambassador for Hepatitis in South-East Asia Region to boost awareness and intensify action to stop the spread of hepatitis, which sickens and is one of the leading causes of liver cancer and cirrhosis.

Thirty-nine-year-old **Emmanuel Macron** was elected as the president of France, thus becoming the youngest President of the country.

Three Indian Scientists were elected as the Fellows of The Royal Society, a premier scientific academy of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, for their "outstanding contributions to science". They are: **Krishna Chatterjee** from Cambridge University, Subhash Khot from New York University and Yadvinder Malhi from Oxford University.

Justice **Leila Seth**, the first woman judge of Delhi High Court, passed away at the age of 86. Seth, who broke many a glass ceiling in the legal field, was the first woman to have topped the London Bar exam, first woman judge of the Delhi High Court and also the first woman chief justice of a state high court (Himachal Pradesh). Seth was also one of the three members of the Justice Verma Committee which was constituted in 2012 to recommend amendments to the Criminal Law so as to provide for quicker trial and enhanced punishment for criminals accused of committing sexual assault against women, post the gruesome December 16 gangrape in Delhi.

South Korea elected **Moon Jae-in**, a human rights lawyer who favors dialogue with North Korea, as its president, returning the nation's liberals to power after nearly a decade in the political wilderness and setting up a potential rift with the United States over the North's nuclear weapons program.

Justice (Retd.) **Mukul Mudgal** was elected as head of FIFA's governance committee at the world football governing body's 67th Congress in Bahrain's capital city of Manama.

US President Donald Trump nominated Indian-American **Neil Chatterjee** as a Member of Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) - an agency responsible for overseeing America's power grid and deciding on multibillion-dollar energy projects.

Prabhat Kamal Bezboruah and M S Boje Gowda were appointed chairmen of the Tea Board and the Coffee Board, respectively. Bezboruah is a leading tea association industrialist and Gowda is a renowned coffee grower. Bezboruah's tenure will run till November, 2018 and Gowda will be in the post till December, 2018. The Kolkata-based Tea Board of India is largely entrusted with regulating tea cultivation and export of tea. The Coffee Board, based in Bengaluru, looks after the interests of the country's coffee growers.

Seasoned diplomat **Vinay Mohan Kwatra**, currently a joint secretary in the Prime Minister's Office, was appointed as the next ambassador to France. A 1988-batch foreign service officer, Kwatra will succeed Mohan Kumar, who is retiring.

Amul Thapar became only the second Indian-American judge of an appeals court with the United States senate confirming his appointment to the Cincinnati-based Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Union environment minister **Anil Madhav Dave** passed away at the age of 60. He was a Member of Parliament from Madhya Pradesh.

Anshu Jamsenpa, the Arunachal Pradesh mountaineer, scripted history by becoming the first Indian woman to conquer the 8,848 feet Mount Everest for a fourth time.

Senior bureaucrat **Anurag Tripathy** was appointed as the secretary of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE).

French President Emmanuel Macron appointed **Edouard Philippe** as France's new prime minister. This is the first time in modern French history that a president has appointed a prime minister from outside his party without being forced to by a parliamentary defeat.

Kerala Bharatiya Janata Party leader **George Kurian** was appointed Vice-Chairperson of the National Commission for Minorities or NCM. The National Commission for Minorities is responsible for safeguarding the constitutional rights of minorities in India.

In a rare feat, a young Indian IAS officer, **Haulianlal Guite**, who hails from Manipur, published a book titled "Confessions of a dying mind: the blind faith of atheism". The book billed as "the world's first philosophical novel for God", whose author is arguably the first Indian civil servant to write on philosophy since John Stuart Mill published On Liberty way back in 1858.

Former Punjab director general of police **Kanwar Pal Singh Gill**, popularly known as KPS Gill, died at the age of 82. Gill, a Padma Shri awardee, was known as the "supercop" for his extraordinary work in Punjab, when he was serving as the DGP of Punjab from 1988 to 1990 and then again from 1991 until his retirement. In former prime minister Indira Gandhi's regime, Gill commanded Operation Black Thunder to flush out militants hiding in the Golden Temple in 1988. Apart from his contribution in Punjab, he also worked for the Chhattisgarh Government as a security adviser to help control Naxal activities in 2006. Apart from working for the Indian Police Service, Gill

was also an author, editor, speaker, consultant on counter-terrorism, president of the Institute for Conflict Management and president of the Indian Hockey Federation (IHF).

Reliance Industries Chairman **Mukesh Ambani** topped the Forbes list of 'Global Game Changers'. This is Forbes' second annual Global Game Changers list and includes 25 "intrepid business leaders" who are known to transform their industries and effect changes to the lives of billions of people around the globe.

Sir **Roger Moore**, the suave English actor best known for playing James Bond and Simon Templar in The Saint TV series, died at age of 89. He was appointed as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador in 1991, was Knighted for his service to charity by Queen Elizabeth II in 2003 and was appointed as a Commander of the Ordre des Arts et des Letters by the French Government in 2008.

Ovais Sarmad, a senior Indian official, was appointed as the deputy executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), under which the landmark Paris agreement was negotiated and adopted.

The government named Road Transport and Highways Secretary **Sanjay Mitra** as its new defence secretary in a top-level bureaucratic reshuffle. Mitra, 58, a 1982 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the West Bengal cadre, will have a fixed two-year tenure.

The World Health Organisation appointed Dr **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, the former Ethiopian health minister, as its first ever director-general from Africa.

Eminent poet, litterateur and Jnanpith awardee **C. Narayana Reddy**, popularly known as CiNaRe, passed away at the age of 85. CiNaRe was known for his use of Telugu in its pure form, was awarded the Padma Shri in 1977 and the Padma Bhushan in 1992. His compilation of poems, titled 'Viswambhara', got him the Jnanpith award in 1988. In 1997, he was nominated as a Member of the Rajya Sabha.

US President Trump nominated lawyer and former Justice Department official **Christopher Wray** as the new FBI director.

Ganeshan Neelakanta Iyer, the only assigned competition manager of International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF), became the first Indian to be nominated as a member of the Umpires and Referees Committee (URC). Ganeshan is also the chairman of the South Asian Federation technical committee and a member of the Technical Committee of the Commonwealth Table Tennis Federation.

Ireland's governing Fine Gael party elected **Leo Varadkar** as its new leader, choosing the gay, 38-year-old son of an Indian immigrant to succeed Enda Kenny as prime minister in a striking sign of the country's rapid social change.

Eminent social rights activist **Mehrunnisa Dalwai**, wife of prominent Muslim activist and thinker late Hamid Dalwai and the protagonist of a reformist movement Muslim Satyashodhak Mandal, passed away at the age of 87.

Dr. **Neeru Chadha** was elected as the Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), becoming the first Indian woman to be elected to ITLOS. With this election, Dr. Chadha also became the first Indian woman to occupy a top UN position, after Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, who served as the President of the United Nations General Assembly. ITLOS is an intergovernmental organisation under the ambit of the United Nations, established in 1996.

Veteran Cong (I) leader and Rajya Sabha member from Telangana, **Palvai Govardhan Reddy**, died.

Preet Kaur Gill became the first Sikh woman and Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi the first turban-wearing Sikh politician to be elected to the UK House of Commons. The House of Commons will have a record 12 Indian-origin MPs, which will be two more than the present record of 10 (five each from Labour and Conservative).

Raja Chari, a 39-year-old Indian- American Lieutenant Colonel with the US Air Force, is among 12 astronaut candidates selected from a record 18,000 applicants by NASA for missions into Earth orbit and deep space.

Cricketer **Sachin Tendulkar** joined a roster of global celebrities, including David Beckham and Novak Djokovic, for a special UNICEF campaign that highlighted the critical role played by fathers in children's early development. The UNICEF initiative 'Super Dads', came just days ahead of Father's Day.

Sahithi Pingali, a Class 12 student of Inventure Academy, Bengaluru, joined an elite league of people to have a minor planet in the Milky Way named after them. The honour came after she excelled in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), the world's largest pre-college science competition.

Telecom czar **Sam Pitroda** resigned from the post of IT (information technology) advisor to the Odisha government. He had been appointed the state's IT advisor and given the rank of a Cabinet minister in January 2016.

Shashi Shekhar Vempati, a former principal architect of Infosys Technologies, was appointed the new chief executive officer (CEO) of public broadcaster Prasar Bharati. An IIT Bombay alumnus, Vempati's tenure will be for five years from the date of assumption of office.

Veteran politician **Sher Bahadur Deuba** was sworn in as the 40th prime minister of Nepal. The 70-year-old leader, who became Nepal's prime minister for the fourth time, succeeded Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda who had resigned after nine months to honour a power-sharing deal and proposed Mr. Deuba's name.

Italian fashion legend, **Carla Fendi**, one of the five sisters who helped create the family's leather goods business into an international fashion house, passed away at the age of 79.

Desh Bandhu Gupta, Founder and Chairman of pharma major Lupin, passed away at the age of 79.

Former Chancellor **Helmut Kohl**, the architect of Germany's 1990 reunification and mentor to Angela Merkel died at age 87. Germany's longest serving post-war chancellor from 1982 to 1998, Kohl was a driving force behind the introduction of the euro currency, convincing sceptical Germans to give up their cherished deutschmark.

Former chief economic advisor **Kaushik Basu** took over as president of the International Economic Association (IEA) with a three year term. The IEA is a leading organisation for professional economists and it seeks to shape global economic policy and research. Among IEAs past presidents are Nobel laureates Kenneth Arrow, Robert Solow, Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz.

As per an announcement by White House (US), **Kenneth Juster**, deputy director of National Economic Council, will be appointed as the U.S. Ambassador to India.

U.S. President Donald Trump appointed an Indian-American named **Krishna R Urs** as the new US Ambassador to Peru.

Romania's president appointed **Mihai Tudose**, the outgoing economy minister, as prime minister citing the need to quell a political crisis that risked damaging the country's record economic recovery.

The UN children's agency (UNICEF) announced the appointment of its youngest goodwill ambassador — 19-year-old Syrian refugee and education activist **Muzoon Almellehan**, making her the first goodwill envoy with official refugee status.

Former Chief Justice of India **P N Bhagwati**, considered a pioneer of judicial activism in the country for introducing the concept of PILs, died. The 17th Chief Justice of India, Bhagwati remained on the highest judicial post between July 1985 and December 1986.

Palbinder Kaur Shergill became the first turbaned Sikh woman to be appointed as Canada's Supreme Court judge.

United Nations appointed **Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov** of the Russian Federation as Under-Secretary-General of the newly created United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, leader of Islamic State, died, according to a Syrian war monitor.

The Centre named Election Commissioner **Achal Kumar Joti** the next Chief Election Commissioner of India. An IAS officer of 1975 batch from Gujarat cadre, he had served as chief secretary of Gujarat during Narendra Modi's tenure as chief minister.

Carrie Lam was sworn in as the first female Chief Executive (CE) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), an autonomous territory of China on the Pearl River Delta.

Hayden Cross, a 21-year-old man became the first in Britain to give birth after he put his sex transition on hold to get pregnant by a sperm donor.

Senior advocate and constitutional expert **K K Venugopal** was appointed as the new Attorney General of India. He succeeds Mukul Rohatgi as the country's top law officer.

Liu Xiaobo, one of China's most famous pro-democracy advocates and political prisoners, died in Chinese custody at a hospital at the age of 61. Liu was moved from prison, where he was serving an 11-year sentence for calling for democracy in China, to a hospital. He is the first Nobel Peace Prize winner to die in state custody since the days of Nazi Germany.

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced a direct Delhi-Mumbai-Tel Aviv flight and simplified rules for getting Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards during his visit to Israel- the first time in 70 years that an Indian Prime Minister got the opportunity to visit Israel!

Renowned forensic expert and Padma Bhushan awardee Prof Dr **P Chandra Sekharan** died at the age of 83. Chandrasekaran served for over three decades as director of the Department of Forensic Sciences, Government of Tamil Nadu, and played a key role in numerous sensational cases including the assassination case of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

Senior IPS officer **R K Pachnanda** took charge as the new (29th) Director General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

Saima Wazed Hossain (daughter of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina) was appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador for World Health Organisation (WHO) for Autism in South-East Asia region for a two-year period. As WHO Goodwill Ambassador, Saima will be promoting the Thimphu Declaration which also emphasises integrating the needs of autism-affected people into national health and socioeconomic development plans.

Himachal Pradesh director general of police (DGP) **Sanjay Kumar** was appointed as the new chief of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF). NDRF is India's top disaster mitigation combat force headquartered in New Delhi. It functions under Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Supreme Court appointed a four-member panel to run the daily affairs of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Former Comptroller and Auditor General of India **Vinod Rai** will head the panel that also includes Ramachandra Guha, Vikram Limaye and Diana Edulji.

Freedom fighter **K.E. Mammen**, who had participated in the Quit India Movement and had always followed Gandhian principles, passed away at the age of 96.

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and National Conference chief **Farooq Abdullah**, who won the by-poll to the Srinagar parliamentary seat, took oath as member of Lok Sabha. Abdullah had defeated the ruling Peoples Democratic Party's Nazir Ahmad Khan.

Pakistan Prime Minister **Nawaz Sharif** resigned from his post after the Supreme Court disqualified him in the Panama Papers case.

Bihar Governor invited caretaker Chief Minister **Nitish Kumar** to take oath as Chief Minister. Nitish Kumar had resigned, citing irreconcilable differences with ally RJD on the issue of corruption charges against his deputy Tejashwi Yadav.

Preet Kaur Gill, who won the Edgbaston seat for the Labour party in the June 2017 snap general election, was elected to the Home Affairs Select Committee in the UK Parliament.

Ram Nath Kovind was sworn in as India's 14th President replacing Pranab Mukherjee. Kovind, former Governor of Bihar and nominated by the BJP-led NDA, won the presidential election by defeating Opposition candidate Meira Kumar. Kovind, who practiced at both the Delhi High Court and Supreme Court for 16 years, is India's second Dalit president after KR Narayanan. The 71-year-old has also been a Rajya Sabha MP for two terms.

Actress-turned-politician, **Smriti Zubin Irani** was appointed as India's new Minister for Information & Broadcasting. Irani is already in the cabinet as Union Minister of Textiles; Information & Broadcasting is an additional portfolio. She is the fourth I&B minister in three years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The cabinet reshuffle was necessitated by the decision of outgoing I&B minister Venkaiah Naidu to stand as a candidate for India's vice presidency.

Senior Naga People's Front (NPF) legislator **TR Zeliang** was sworn in as the 19th chief minister of Nagaland.

Globally renowned space scientist and former chairman of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization), **Udupi Ramachandra Rao** passed away at the age of 85. He was awarded both the Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan for his contribution to space technology. He is the first Indian space scientist to be inducted into the prestigious 'Satellite Hall of Fame' in Washington DC.

Internationally renowned physicist, academic and higher education reformer Professor **Yash Pal** passed away at the age of 90. He was awarded the Padma Bhusan (1976) and Padma Vibhushan. He also received the Kalinga Prize awarded by UNESCO for the popularization of science.

Justice **Dipak Misra** was sworn in as the 45th Chief Justice of India (CJI). He will have a 14-month tenure till October 2018. He takes over from chief justice J.S. Khehar.

Air Marshal **Hemant Narayan Bhagwat** took over as Air Officer-in-Charge Administration of Indian Air Force.

Ustad **Hussain Sayeeduddin Dagar**, maestro and custodian of the venerable Dhrupad tradition of Hindustani classical music and a member of the eminent Dagar family, passed away at 78.

Former Union Minister **M Venkaiah Naidu** was sworn in as 13th Vice President of India.

The Centre appointed **Mohammad Mustafa**, a 1995 batch IAS officer, as Chairman and Managing Director of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

Dr **PM Bhargava**, the founder-director of Hyderabad-based Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) died at 89. He belonged to the generation of nation building scientists, who built the edifice of Indian science. He was an internationally recognized molecular biologist, thinker, and institution builder.

Noted Bollywood lyricist-screenwriter and ad guru **Prasoon Joshi** replaced Pahlaj Nihalani as CBFC (Central Board of Film Certification). Prasoon Joshi, who was conferred with the Padma Shri in 2015, has written lyrics for songs in Bollywood films such as Lajja, Fanaa, Rang De Basanti, Taare Zameen Par, Black and Delhi 6 among others.

The Union Government appointed economist **Rajiv Kumar** as the new vice-chairman of National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog.

S. Aparna, an IAS officer from Gujarat cadre was appointed as Executive Director, World Bank to represent the constituency of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka for three years. A 1988-batch IAS, she is currently Principal Secretary to Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani. At the World Bank, she will replace Subhash Garg, who was recently appointed Economic Affairs Secretary, Ministry of Finance.

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, a politician educated in the United States, and Pakistan's Petroleum Minister was elected the 18th Prime Minister of Pakistan. Parliament held a special election to replace his predecessor and mentor, Nawaz Sharif, who was disqualified on corruption charges.

Renowned economist and journalist Dr. **Sanjaya Baru** was appointed as the secretary general of FICCI.

Poet and writer **Vijay Nambisan**, who became the first All India Poetry Champion in 1988, passed away at 54.

Arun Jaitley, the Union Finance Minister, chaired the 17th meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) in New Delhi. The Council discussed the issues and challenges facing the Indian economy.

The Union Government appointed **Ashwani Lohani** as the new Chairman of the Railway Board (Ministry of Railways).

Dr **Bhakti Yadav**, the first woman doctor of Madhya Pradesh, passed away in Indore at 92.

Brian Aldiss, one of the most prolific and influential science fiction writers of the 20th century, passed away in Oxford, England at 92.

Dhruv Garg, an Indian-origin boy in south east England, got the highest possible score of 162 on a Mensa IQ test that placed him in the top 1% people in the world who achieved this feat.

Justice **Dipak Misra** (64) was sworn in as the 45th Chief Justice of India (CJI). He succeeds Chief Justice J S Khehar and will have tenure of 14 months till October 2018.

After Kalpana Chawla, **Jasleen Kaur Josan** has become the 2nd Indian woman and first Sikh woman to be selected by NASA for the Mars Expedition happening in 2030.

Jay Thomas, a well-known comic and character actor, passed away in California, United States at 69.

Jerry Lewis, a famous comedian and Filmmaker, passed away in Las Vegas, United States at 91.

Dr. **Mamta Suri** took charge as Executive Director of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) in New Delhi.

Kolkata-based **Nitasha Biswas** was crowned India's first-ever Miss TransQueen 2017 in Gurugram, Haryana.

Dr. **R.K. Raghavan**, a 1963 cadre IPS officer, was appointed as the new High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Cyprus.

Rahul Doshi (12), an Indian-origin boy, was crowned as the UK's 'Child Genius' in a popular television quiz competition, after answering all questions correctly.

Rajiv Gauba, a 1982-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, took charge as the Union Home Secretary after incumbent Rajiv Mehrishi retired from service.

Rajiv Mehrishi, the former home secretary, will be the new Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. He will replace the present incumbent Shashi Kant Sharma who completes his term on September 30, 2017.

Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** launched a digital police portal under Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems Project (CCTNS).

Former Manipur Chief Minister and veteran Congress leader **Rishang Keishing** passed away at 96. He was a freedom fighter and a member of India's first parliament (1952-57). He had served as the Chief Minister of Manipur for four terms from 1980 to 1988 and 1994 to 1997.

Noted photographer **S Paul** passed away at the age of 88.

Sunil Arora, a 1980 batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre, was appointed as the new Election Commissioner (EC).

Sushma Swaraj, the Union External affairs minister, led the Indian delegation at the Indian Ocean Conference 2017 (IOC 2017), which is started in Colombo, Sri Lanka on August 31, 2017.

Sumiteru Taniguchi, a prominent nuclear disarmament campaigner and peace activist, passed away at the age of 88 in Japan.

Tony de Brum passed away at 72. He was a leading advocate for the landmark Paris Agreement and a noted climate awareness activist.

Ajay Bhushan Pandey, the CEO of Unique Identification Authority of India's (UIDAI) was appointed as interim chairman of the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN).

Dharmendra Pradhan, the Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, was promoted as Cabinet Minister and got additional charge of Union Ministry of Skill Development after the latest Union cabinet reshuffle.

Gauri Lankesh, a noted journalist and activist, was shot dead at her residence in Bengaluru. She was the editor of popular Kannada tabloid Lankesh Patrike founded by her father and well-known writer P Lankesh. Lankesh was also part of a panel formed by State government to help surrender Naxals to reform.

Halimah binti Yacob was declared the President-elect of Singapore, becoming Singapore's first female President.

Dr **Inderjit Singh**, a 1985 batch IAS officer, was given additional charge of the post of Chairperson of National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC).

Arunachal Pradesh Health and Family Welfare Minister **Jomde Kena** passed away at the age of 52.

Kenneth I. Juster, the Deputy Director of the National Economic Council at the White House, was nominated as the next U.S ambassador to India.

N Bajjendra Kumar, an IAS officer of 1985 batch of Chhattisgarh cadre, took charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of the state-run National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC).

Nirmala Sitharaman, the former minister of state for the commerce and industry ministry, became the new Defence Minister of India after latest Union cabinet reshuffle. She succeeded Arun Jaitley.

Bollywood actress **Parineeti Chopra** became the first Indian woman ambassador for Tourism Australia to encourage Indians to visit the country. She was presented the Friend of Australia (FOA) recognition for her contribution to promote Australia.

Peter Thomson, the outgoing president of the General Assembly, was appointed as the first special envoy for the oceans by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

Raj Kumar Singh took charge as new Union Minister of State in Ministries of Power & New & Renewable Energy after latest reshuffle in the Union Cabinet.

Lt. Col. (Retd.) **Rajyavardhan Rathore**, the Olympic silver medallist and a former professional shooter, was appointed as a Cabinet minister with independent charge for Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in the latest cabinet reshuffle.

Rattihalli Nagendra Sudarshan, the veteran Kannada actor, producer and singer, passed away at 78.

Shirish Pai, a renowned Marathi poet and activist, passed away at the age of 88. She was credited with introducing 'Haiku' to the Marathi speaking world.

The book "How India Sees the World: Kautilya to the 21st Century", authored by former Foreign Secretary **Shyam Saran**, was launched by former Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh.

Sultan Ahmed, a Trinamool Congress MP and former Union Central Minister passed away at the age of 64.

Sushmita Dev was appointed as the new President of All India Mahila Congress.

Vikram Sakhuja, group CEO of Madison Media & OOH at Madison World, was elected as the new president of The Advertising Club. The club is a dynamic platform for professionals from the Advertising, Marketing, Media, Research and Communication fields to gain from each other's expertise.

Viveck Goenka, the CMD of Express Group, was elected as the new Chairman of Press Trust of India (PTI).

Veteran Assamese film and theatre personality **Abdul Majid** died at the age of 86. Assam government had honoured him with the prestigious 'Bishnu Prasad Rabha' award, while several organisations have conferred him with lifetime achievement awards.

Ajay Bisaria was appointed as the new high commissioner to Pakistan. Presently, Bisaria is serving as the Indian ambassador to Poland.

Bollywood actor **Akshay Kumar** was appointed as brand ambassador of the Swachh Bharat Mission for Uttarakhand.

Arjan Singh, who led the Indian Air Force in the 1965 India-Pakistan War, passed at the age of 98. Throughout the 1965 war, Singh showed exemplary leadership, and was awarded the Padma Vibhushan for his leadership during the war and subsequently the rank of the CAS was upgraded to that of Air Chief Marshal.

Renowned Marathi author and senior journalist, **Arun Sadhu** passed away at the age of 75. Sadhu, who was bestowed the Sahitya Akademi Award, had left a lasting impression as an author through his in-depth writing on serious social and political subjects.

Harry Dean Stanton, the veteran American actor, musician, and singer, passed away at the age of 91.

Hugh Hefner (US), the founder of Playboy magazine and iconic frontman of the sexual revolution, died at 91.

Jake LaMotta, the Bronx boxer who captured the world middleweight championship in 1949 and whose turbulent life was later the subject of the 1980 film Raging Bull, died at 95.

Jayantilal Barot, a senior BJP leader and former Rajya Sabha member from Gujarat, passed away at 75.

The Minister of State for Public Grievances and Pensions, Dr **Jitendra Singh** inaugurated the first 'Pension Adalat' in New Delhi. The objective of this workshop is to create awareness about the post-retirement entitlements as well as an advance planning for life after retirement.

Joao Manuel Goncalves Lourenco, the leader of People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), was sworn-in as the new President of Angola.

Kirpal Chugh Chugh, who was fondly called the 'father of nephrology in India', passed away at the age of 85. Chugh was emeritus professor and former head of department of nephrology at the PGIMER. He was a recipient of several national and international awards, including the Padma Shri.

Lillian Ross, a Pioneer of Literary Journalism, died at 99. She was a staff writer at The New Yorker from 1945 until she retired.

Five-time world champion and Olympic bronze-medalist **M C Mary Kom** became the first Indian to be picked as the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) representative for the IOC Athletes' Forum scheduled in November.

BJP MP from Alwar **Mahant Chand Nath**, who was battling an "aggressive thyroid cancer", passed away at 61.

Makhan Lal Fotedar, a veteran Congress leader who was a close confidante of former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, died at the age of 85. Fotedar was a member of the powerful Congress Working Committee (CW), the highest decision-making body of the party, for a long time. He was a two-time Rajya Sabha member and a former union minister.

Peruvian President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski appointed a former economy minister as his new prime minister, two days after a no-confidence vote by the opposition-led congress forced the entire Cabinet to resign. **Mercedes Araoz**, who is also a lawmaker and one of Peru's two vice presidents, is the new prime minister in a reconstituted Cabinet.

Rajiv Mehrishi, a 1978 batch IAS officer, took charge as the new Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India.

Senior IPS officer **Rajni Kant Mishra** took charge as Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), succeeding Archana Ramasundaram.

Royana Singh, an assistant professor at the Institute of Medical Science, was appointed Chief Proctor of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), thus becoming the first woman in varsity's history to hold the post.

Yesteryear Bollywood actor **Shakila**, known for her work in films like 'Aar Paar' and 'CID', died at 82.

Shashi Shanker was appointed Chairman and Managing Director of India's biggest oil and gas producer, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).

Sterling K Brown created history by becoming the first African American to win the best actor drama Emmy awards in 19 years for his performance as Randall Pearson on NBC's breakout hit "This Is Us". The last African American actor to win the award was Andre Braugher in 1998 for his role in "Homicide: Life on the Street".

Veteran Actor & Padma Shri Awardee **Tom Alter**, died at the age of 67. He worked with renowned directors such as V Shantaram, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Subhash Ghai and Manmohan Desai. He was also famously known for playing the gangster Keshav Kalsi in the hit soap opera 'Junoon', which ran for a record five years during the 1990s. He also in several foreign films, notably Richard Attenborough's Gandhi and One Night with the King.

Senior IPS officer **Y C Modi**, who was part of the Supreme Court-appointed Special Investigation Team that probed the 2002 Gujarat riot cases, was named chief of the National Investigation Agency. The federal probe agency is tasked with probing terrorism and terror-financing related cases.

SPORTS

The **Indian** women's hockey team, led by Rani, continued with their imperious form as they defeated Belarus to register their fourth consecutive victory in the five-match Test series in Bhopal.

Britain's double Olympic gold medallist **Joanna Rowsell Shand** announced her retirement from international cycling. The 28-year-old track cyclist won gold in the team pursuit at London 2012 and Rio 2016.

Malaysia's **Lee Chong Wei** won the 2017 All England Championship Title of Badminton in the men's singles event when he defeated China's Shi Yuqi in the final match.

Pablo Cuevas of Uruguay won his third straight Brazil Open Tennis title with a victory against Albert Ramos-Vinolas of Spain.

The Indian duo of **Ravichandran Ashwin** and Ravindra Jadeja became the first set of spinners to be jointly ranked number one in the ICC Test rankings for bowlers. The last time two bowlers shared the top spot was in April 2008 when Dale Steyn and Muttiah Muralitharan were at the top. In the lot for batsmen, India captain Virat Kohli conceded the second rank to England's Joe Root. Root is now one point ahead of Kohli at 848 points.

In a career spanning 10 years, **Rowsell Shand** was a five-time world and four-time European champion.

Punjab won the 71st **Santosh Trophy** football tournament by defeating Railways in the final match.

SSP Chawrasia became only the second Indian golfer to successfully defend the Indian Open, clinching a seven-stroke win. He became the third player to win back-to-back Indian Open titles. Jyoti Randhawa (2006, 2007) and Japan's Kenji Hosoishi (1967, 1968) were the other two golfers. Interestingly, this was also the third consecutive win for India at the Indian Open with Anirban Lahiri winning it in 2015 and Chawrasia bagging the title last year.

In a surprise development, **Shashank Manohar** resigned as ICC chairman after merely eight months in office citing personal reasons. Manohar had last year resigned from the BCCI citing his inability to carry out Lodha Committee reforms in toto. His detractors in BCCI at that time had said he left a sinking ship for the safer confines of the ICC. He became the first independent chairman of ICC but had several run ins with BCCI on revenue sharing pattern.

The International Hockey Federation and Government of Odisha announced that the Men's Hockey World League Final 2017 and Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 will be held in the Kalinga Stadium at **Bhubaneswar**.

Turkish female distance runners **Elvan Abeylegesse** and Gamze Bulut were stripped of silver medals from the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games after being handed bans for doping.

Bringing more sporting glory to the nation, **India** bagged a total of 73 medals at the Special Olympics Winter Games, which began on 19 March in Austria. Competing against 2700 athletes from 107 countries, the Indian athletes won 37 gold, 10 silver and 26 bronze medals.

Off-spinner **R. Ashwin** was awarded the Garfield Sobers Trophy for the ICC Cricketer of the Year 2016 and the Test Cricketer of the Year trophy.

Roger Federer beat Stan Wawrinka in the Indian Wells Masters final. The 35-year-old won the tournament for a remarkable fifth time.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) appointed cricketing legend **Sachin Tendulkar** as the UNICEF Cricket For Good ambassador for the Women's World Cup 2017, which will be hosted in the United Kingdom from 23 June-23 July.

Ferrari driver **Sebastian Vettel** of Germany won the season-opening Australian Formula One Grand Prix in Melbourne, edging out Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes.

Tamil Nadu won the 2017 Vijay Hazare Trophy of cricket for record fifth time after defeating West Bengal in the final match.

West Bengal won the 2017 Santosh Trophy of football by defeating Goa in the final match. It was 71st edition of Santosh Trophy and overall record 32nd win of West Bengal.

India and **Australia** launched India-Australia Sports Partnership (IASP) with a vision of increasing cooperation in sports.

India was ranked third for the third year in a row in a doping violation report published by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for 2015 with 117 athletes from the country being punished after testing positive for banned substances. India followed Russian Federation (176) and Italy (129) at third spot in the doping violation chart released by the WADA, the same position as in the reports of 2013 and 2014.

The **International Cricket Council** (ICC) named eight stellar players of international cricket as the Champion Ambassadors for the Champions Trophy that will be held in the UK from June 1-18. Shahid Afridi of Pakistan, Bangladesh's Habibul Bashar, Ian Bell of England, Shane Bond of New Zealand, Australia's Mike Hussey, India's Harbhajan Singh, Kumar Sangakkara of Sri Lanka and Graeme Smith of South Africa were honoured as ambassadors.

Lewis Hamilton beat Sebastian Vettel in the Chinese Grand Prix to take his first win of the 2017 F1 season.

Rio Olympic silver medallist Shuttler **P V Sindhu** reached her career best world rankings, grabbing the number two position in the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings. The rankings are led by Tai Tzu Ying of China.

Roger Federer defeated Rafael Nadal to win the 2017 Miami Open.

Indian captain **Virat Kohli** was named Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World for 2016. Kohli amassed 1215 Test runs at a stupendous average of 75.93 last year. Ten ODI appearances fetched him 739 runs at 92.37, while he scored 641 T20 International runs at 106.83. Only six batsmen have ever scored more international runs in a calendar year than Kohli but none of them have come close to the Indian captain's average.

Haryana emerged champion beating Kerala at the National Youth Athletics Meet with 166.5 points.

Kerala conducted the country's first-ever transgender one-day athletic meet in Thiruvananthapuram, with 132 participants.

Indian shot putter **Manpreet Kaur** clinched a gold in the first leg of the Asian Grand Prix Athletics Meet with a national record and world season-leading effort. With this performance, Manpreet also qualified for the IAAF World Championships to be held in August in London.

Rio Olympics silver medallist **PV Sindhu** climbed up two places to be at No. 3 in the latest BWF ranking released, on the basis of making the quarterfinals of the recently-concluded Singapore Open Super Series.

Rafael Nadal won the Monte Carlo Masters for a record 10th time after defeating Albert Ramos-Vinolas, thus becoming the first man in the Open era to win the same event 10 times.

Video gaming will be featured as a full sport at the 2022 Asian Games, with competitors in electronic sports set to receive medals for their digital prowess.

Arjun Maini, driving for Jenzer Motorsports, created history by becoming the first Indian driver to win a GP3 race. The 19-year old scored his first win in two years while finishing six seconds ahead of Frenchman Dorian Boccia and teammate Alessio Lorandi of Italy.

Harpreet Singh fetched the first medal for India on the opening day of the Asian Wrestling Championships when he bagged a bronze in the Greco-Roman 80 kilogram category.

In the recently updated ICC T20 International team rankings, **India** was placed at the 4th position behind second placed England and third placed Pakistan. New-Zealand topped the list.

The **Indian national football team** scaled further heights to break into the top 100 of FIFA rankings. The rankings saw India perched at 100, one place above their April ranking of 101st. The Blue tigers are placed at 100 alongside Nicaragua, Lithuania and Estonia. The last time India had been in the top 100 was in 1996, with the 94th spot in February 1996 being the country's best ever FIFA ranking.

Jhulan Goswami became the highest wicket-taker in one-day internationals (181 wickets in 153 matches) breaking the world record held by Australia fast bowler Cathryn Fitzpatrick.

The top-seeded Indo-American pair of **Leander Paes** and Scott Lipsky defeated Argentine third seeds Leonardo Mayer and Maximo Gonzalez to win the Tallahassee Challenger title of the men's double.

Lewis Hamilton won the Spanish Grand Prix - a Formula One motor race which is one of the oldest of its kind in the world.

Rafael Nadal beat Dominic Thiem to win his fifth Madrid Open title.

Three Indian women wrestlers, **Sakshi Malik**, Divya Kakran and Vinesh Phogat, settled for a silver medal each in their respective weight categories at the Asian Wrestling Championship in New Delhi. All the three Indians lost to their respective Japanese opponents, who proved to be too strong for them.

Bengaluru FC were crowned champions of the 38th edition of the Federation Cup after they defeated Mohun Bagan in the final match of this football tournament.

India's **C.A Bhavani Devi** won the gold medal in the sabre event of the Turnoi Satellite Fencing Championship held at Reykjavik in Iceland, thus becoming the first Indian to win a gold medal in an international fencing event.

A seven-member High-Level Committee on Scouts and Guides under the chairmanship of **Harsh Malhotra** has suggested the constitution of an Enquiry Committee to look into the complaints and submit its report. The Committee also suggested that it is mandatory to revamp the Bharat Scout & Guides and Hindustan Scouts and

Guides. This committee was constituted in October 2016 to conduct physical inspection of the infrastructure and assets of the two recognized Scouts and Guides Organizations.

India added six more gold on the concluding day to win all 10 gold medals on offer in the South Asian Junior Table Tennis Championships held in Sri Lanka.

India's compound men's archery team consisting of Abhishek Verma, Chinna Raju Srither and Amanjeet Singh defeated Colombia in a closely-fought final of the World Cup Stage 1 Championship in Shanghai.

India women's cricket team openers Deepti Sharma and Poonam Raut became the first-ever pair to share a 300-run stand in an One-Day International. The duo shared a 320-run stand against Ireland women.

Indian cricket team retained its top position in the latest ICC Test rankings followed by South Africa (second) and Australia (third).

India off-spinner **Ravichandran Ashwin** won the coveted International Cricketer of the Year award at the CEAT Cricket Rating (CCR) International awards 2017.

Mithali Raj, Team India's ace female cricketer grabbed the second position in the top 10 ODI rankings for female players, and Captain **Virat Kohli** became the only Indian to feature in the top 10 of the ICC one-day male cricketer rankings. The top three batsmen featured in the ICC ODI Rankings are South Africa's De Villiers (first rank), Australia's David Warner (second rank) and Kohli (third rank).

Indian Shuttler **B Sai Praneeth** won the Thailand Grand Prix Gold title by defeating Indonesia's Jonatan Christie in the final match.

The **International Olympic Committee** approved a number of new events for the 2020 Tokyo Games. The Tokyo Olympics would include 321 events - an increase from 306 events held at Rio 2016. The new additions include a mixed 4x400m relay along with 14 other events such as 3-on-3 basketball, the mixed relay, mixed swimming, mixed team archery, etc.

Unseeded **Jelena Ostapenko** of Latvia won the the 2017 French Open Women's Singles title - her first ever Grand Slam title.

Indian shooters **Jitu Rai** and Heena Sidhu secured the gold medal in mixed team 10m air pistol event of the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup held at Azerbaijan.

Lewis Hamilton won the Canadian Grand Prix - his third victory this season and the 56th of his career.

Manika Batra and Mouma Das made history by becoming the first Indian pair to reach the quarterfinals of the World Table Tennis Championships.

Spain's **Rafael Nadal** defeated Swiss third-seeded Stan Wawrinka to win his record 10th French Open title.

Rohan Bopanna lifted his maiden Grand Slam title by winning the French Open mixed doubles trophy with Canadian partner Gabriela Dabrowski, becoming only the fourth Indian ever to clinch a major.

Indian Skipper **Virat Kohli** reclaimed the top position in the recently released ICC ODI batting rankings, surpassing South Africa's AB de Villiers and Australia's David Warner.

Anil Kumble stepped down as head coach of India. In a tenure that lasted over a year, Kumble led India to a Test series win in West Indies before overseeing the team's hot run in a long home Test season. India whitewashed New Zealand and then went on to beat England, Bangladesh and Australia. They also recorded victories in the accompanying ODI and T20I series. Most recently, India reached the final of the ICC Champions Trophy 2017.

The **Board of Control for Cricket in India** (BCCI) announced the formation of a special seven-member committee to identify the 'few critical points' for the general body of the cricket board to consider before they are submitted to the Supreme Court. This committee will be responsible for identifying those points that are difficult to be implemented, in regards to the Justice RM Lodha Committee reforms. The seven-member committee has Rajeev Shukla, former India captain and member of the three members BCCI Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), Sourav Ganguly, Naba Bhattacharjee, TC Mathew, Jay Shah, Amitabh Choudhary and Anirudh Chaudhary.

Former India hockey captain **Dhanraj Pillay** will be conferred East Bengal football club's highest honour -- Bharat Gaurav -- at its foundation day ceremony on August 1.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) appointed Chairman of Associates **Imran Khawaja** as its deputy chairman. Khawaja is a veteran administrator from Singapore.

India's **Kidambi Srikanth** won the Indonesia Open Super Series badminton title at Jakarta by defeating Japan's Kazumasa Sakai in the final match.

Indian shuttler **Kidambi Srikanth** notched up his second successive Super Series title with a straight-game triumph over reigning Olympic champion Chen Long in the Australian Open summit clash in Sydney.

Saudi Arabia's king appointed his son **Mohammed bin Salman** as crown prince and heir to the throne replacing his nephew, Mohammed bin Nayef.

India were outplayed in every department of the game as **Pakistan** won the ICC Champions Trophy 2017. Pakistan became the fourth team after West Indies, Sri Lanka and India to win the World Cup, World T20 and Champions Trophy.

Srinivas Gokulnath and Amit Samarth created history by becoming the first Indians to complete the 4,900-km Race Across America (RAAM) in the solo 18-59 age category.

Indian shooters **Yashaswini Singh Deswal** and Anish Bhanwala won gold in the Women's 10m Air Pistol and Men's 25m Standard Pistol competition respectively in the Junior World Rifle/Pistol Championship in Germany.

Germany won its maiden FIFA Confederation Cup Football title by defeating Chile in the final match.

India's **Harinder Pal Sandhu** defeated Rhys Dowling of Australia to win South Australian Open squash title.

India moved four places up to the 96th position in the FIFA World ranking released recently. This is the country's second best ranking — its previous best was the 94th position in February 1996.

Manpreet Kaur (shot-put) and Govindan Laxman (discus throw) lifted gold medals on the opening day of Asian Athletics Championships held.

Indian captain **Mithali Raj** became the highest run-scorer in Women's One-Day Internationals (ODIs) during her side's match against Australia in the ICC Women's World Cup 2017. The right-hander reached the milestone with single and then few balls later she notched her 6000th ODI run with a six, thus becoming the first batter in Women's cricket to reach the landmark.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) named former Indian all-rounder and captain **Ravi Shastri** as the new chief coach of the Indian cricket team till ICC World Cup 2019, succeeding Anil Kumble who had resigned from the post after the ICC Champions Trophy 2017.

India's **Sundar Singh Gurjar** won gold medal in the men's javelin throw event at World Para Athletics Championships held in London.

India's **Ajay Singh** won bronze medal in the 2017 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships held at Kathmandu, Nepal.

England's women's cricket team won 2017 ICC World Cup title by defeating India in the final match.

Garbiñe Muguruza of Spain defeated Venus Williams of United States to win her first Wimbledon title in the women's single category.

Ace Indian Shuttler **H S Prannoy** won the 2017 Yonex US Open Grand Prix Gold badminton tournament title.

India's **Harinder Pal Sandhu** won the Victorian Open squash tournament held in Australia.

India's **Karamjyoti Dalal** won bronze medal at the World Para Athletics Championships 2017 in the discus-throw.

Roger Federer of Switzerland won 2017 Wimbledon title in the men's single category when he defeated Marin Cilic of Croatia in the final match. It was Federer's record eighth Wimbledon title and overall 19th Grand Slam.

Former India hockey captain **Dhanraj Pillay** was honoured by East Bengal football club on its foundation day with its highest award, Bharat Gaurav.

Ravindra Jadeja, addressed by his captain Virat Kohli as a 'sword-fighter' edged out Bangladesh's Shakib Al Hasan to claim the top rank among all-rounders apart from maintaining pole position in the bowlers' chart in the latest ICC Test cricket rankings.

The International Olympic Committee announced Paris and Los Angeles as hosts of **Summer Olympics** 2024 and 2028 respectively.

Eight-time Olympic gold medallist **Usain Bolt** of Jamaica announced his retirement from athletics.

Ahmed Khan, legendary footballer and Olympian, passed away at the age of 90.

The National Sports Day (NSD) was celebrated on 29th August to mark the birthday of legendary hockey player **Dhyan Chand**.

Indian football team won the 2017 South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) under-15 football Championship by defeating Nepal in the finals.

Young Indian shuttler **Lakshya Sen** clinched the 2017 Bulgaria Open International Series title.

Lewis Hamilton, a British racing driver who races in Formula One for the Mercedes AMG Petronas team, won the 2017 Belgian Grand Prix.

The **National Sports Museum** will be established in New Delhi that will showcase India's achievements in sports and also focus on the traditional sports within the country.

Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu officially launched the Union Sports Ministry's **National Sports Talent Search Portal** in New Delhi. The portal will enable any person from across country to upload his/her information and as per that the Ministry will tap their talent and train them further in their respective disciplines.

Japanese shuttler **Nozomi Okuhara** won the 2017 women's singles World Badminton championships (WBC) by defeating P V Sindhu in the finals.

Saina Nehwal won bronze in the 2017 women's singles World Badminton championships (WBC).

Sanjivani Jadhav, a marathon runner from Nashik, clinched silver medal in the women's 10,000-metre at the 29th World University Games in Taipei, Taiwan.

Stephen Wooldridge, Australia's former Olympic and world cycle champion, passed away in Australia at 39.

Bulgarian weightlifter **Velichko Cholakov**, an Olympic and world medalist, passed away at 35.

Amritpal Singh, the captain of the Indian basketball team, created history by becoming the first Indian-born player to be picked up by an Australian National Basketball League (NBL) team.

Divya Deshmukh won gold in the girls' Under-12 category at the World Cadets Chess Championship in Brazil.

Harendra Singh, hockey coach and Dronacharya Awardee, was appointed as High Performance Specialist Coach for Indian Senior Women Hockey Team (ISWHT).

India will host the 2019 edition of the Commonwealth (Youth, Junior and Senior) Weightlifting Championships.

Konsam Ormila Devi from India bagged a gold medal in 44kg weight category at the Commonwealth Youth (boys & girls) weightlifting championships in Australia.

Lewis Hamilton, a British racing driver who races in Formula One for the Mercedes AMG Petronas team, won the 2017 Italian Formula One Grand Prix tournament.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the former India captain, became the first wicketkeeper in world cricket to effect 100 stumpings in One Day Internationals (ODI). He surpassed former Sri Lankan wicket-keeper Kumar Sangakkara. Dhoni achieved the feat in his 301st ODI in Colombo against Sri Lanka.

Prakash Padukone, the noted Indian Badminton legend, will be conferred with the first Lifetime Achievement Award instituted by the Badminton Association of India (BAI) for his rich contribution to the sport. He was bestowed with the Arjuna award in 1972 and the Padma Shri in 1982.

Rafael Nadal of Spain won the 2017 men's singles US Open tennis tournament after defeating first time Grand Slam finalist Kevin Anderson. It is Nadal's 16th Grand Slam title and 3rd US Open title of the career.

The Indian pair of **Rohan Kapoor** and Kuhoo Garg bagged the mixed doubles title at the Hellas Open International badminton series.

Saikhom Mirabai Chanu and K Sanjita Chanu qualified for 2018 Commonwealth Games after winning a gold each in their respective weight categories (48kg & 53kg) at the Commonwealth Senior (men & women) weightlifting championships in Australia.

Satish Kumar, the decorated West Bengal wrestler, was awarded Rs 25 lakh as compensation by the Delhi court for being wrongly restrained from taking part in the 14th Asian Games-2002 at Busan in South Korea under the mistaken impression that he had taken performance-enhancing drugs.

Indian weightlifters **Sivalingam Sathish Kumar** and Ragala Venkat Rahul qualified for 2018 Commonwealth Games after winning a gold medal each in their respective weight divisions at the 2017 Commonwealth Senior (men & women) Weightlifting Championships in Australia.

Waltherus Norbertus Maria Marijne was named as the new chief coach of the Indian Senior Men Hockey Team.

Indian wrestler **Bajrang** won gold in the men's freestyle 65kg in Turkmenistan.

Lewis Hamilton (British) won the 2017 Formula One Singapore Grand Prix tournament.

The 57th **National Open Athletics Championships 2017** started at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Chennai, Tamil Nadu on September 25, 2017.

India's Olympic and World silver medallist shuttler **P.V. Sindhu** defeated Nozomi Okuhara of Japan in a thrilling summit clash to clinch the women's singles title at the Korea Open Super Series.

Purnima Hembram from Odisha, an Indian sprinter and heptathlete, won gold in women's pentathlon at the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in Turkmenistan.

India signed off with a rich haul of one gold, four silver, and three bronze medals at the Ahmet Comert Boxing Championships for youth women boxers in Istanbul, Turkey. **Soniya** (48kg) gave India the lone gold medal by defeating Kazakhstan's Zhazira Urakabeva in her summit clash. The rest of the four Indian finalists settled for silver medals after going down in their respective bouts.

Sumit Nagal won gold medal in the men's singles tennis event of Asian Indoor and Martial Arts in Turkmenistan.

Indian shuttler **Vaishnavi Reddy** clinched the women's singles Under-19 title at the Belgian Junior Open badminton tournament.

MISCELLANEOUS

World

- Employers may bar staff from wearing visible religious symbols, the European Union's top court ruled in its first decision on the issue of women wearing Islamic headscarves at work.
- Britain's House of Lords gave its final approval for a bill empowering Prime Minister Theresa May to trigger Brexit negotiations. The bill now just needs royal assent from Queen Elizabeth II to become law. In June last year, British citizens narrowly voted in favor of the UK leaving the 28-nation bloc.
- Japan announced to dispatch its largest warship on a three-month tour through the South China Sea beginning in May, in its biggest show of naval force in the region since World War Two.
- South Korean President Park Geun-hye was removed from office, as the country's Constitutional Court unanimously upheld a parliamentary vote to impeach her for her role in a corruption and influence-peddling scandal.
- The mega cultural festival 'India by the Nile' got off to a colourful start in Egypt showcasing joint handicraft exhibition of the two countries.
- The finance ministers and central bank chiefs from the Group of 20 economies (G20) met in Baden-Baden in Germany from 17-18 March 2017. The meeting focused on strengthening economic resilience in finance and digitalisation and promoting investment in Africa.
- The United States dropped the "mother of all bombs" — the most powerful conventional bomb in the American arsenal — on an Islamic State cave complex in Afghanistan.
- Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has declared a three-month state of emergency after suicide bombers targeted two Coptic churches, killing at least 44 people and injuring dozens more in the run-up to Easter.
- Japan officially recognized bitcoin and digital currencies as legal money along the lines of other fiat currencies with effect from April 1, 2017.
- US President Donald Trump unveiled one of the biggest tax cuts in American history, through drastically reducing tax rates both in the business and individual categories, fulfilling one of its major election promises. For individuals, the Trump administration proposed to reduce the existing seven tax brackets to three tax brackets of 10 per cent, 25 per cent and 35 per cent; doubling the standard deduction and provide tax relief for families with child and dependent care expenses. The income tax rates were slashed from 39.6% to 35%. The new plan also proposed for a 15% corporate tax rate which is a sharp drop from the existing 35%.
- Cuba and Morocco signed an agreement to re-establish diplomatic ties after a time period of 37 years.
- Five prominent Madhesi parties in Nepal united to form a new united party named the Rastriya Janata Party, which will be the fifth largest party in Nepal's Parliament.
- Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull made drastic changes to Citizenship laws unveiling tighter requirements for new applicants, following the recent scrapping of the 457 visa program for foreign workers, which was used majorly by the Indians.
- India contributed USD 2,50,000 to the UN Election Assistance Division to help other countries to hold elections and develop their electoral systems.
- The International Road federation (IRF) announced India to be the host of the 18th World Road Meeting (WRM 2017) to be held in November 2017. The theme of this year's WRM is 'Safe Roads and Smart Mobility: The Engines of Economic Growth'.

- Dubai has become the first city to get its own Microsoft-designed font. The typeface comes in both Latin and Arabic script, and will be available in 23 languages. Government bodies have been told to use it in official correspondence.
- A global cyberattack, Ransomware, crippled nearly hundred countries, including India, by stealing a hacking tool called 'Eternal Blue' from the National Security Agency (NSA), America's powerful military intelligence unit.
- International Court of Justice stayed the death sentence given to Kulbhushan Jadhav by Pakistan military court on charges of 'spying'. The Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ) stayed his execution following India's submission that Jadhav was kidnapped from Iran where he was involved in business after retiring from the Navy.
- India was unanimously elected as the President of the UN-Habitat - an organ of the United Nations' Organisation (UNO) that promotes socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements across the world.
- Turkey, Russia and Iran, the main sponsors of the Syria peace talks in Kazakhstan, signed a deal to create "safe zones" inside the war-torn country, in one of the most concrete steps yet to ending the conflict.
- United States for the first time successfully tested its defence system against an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).
- World No-Tobacco Day (WNTD) was observed across the world on 31 May.
- Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' resigned from his post.
- Hassan Rouhani was re-elected as the President of Iran.
- Indians working across the globe sent home USD 62.7 billion last year, making India the top remittance-receiving country surpassing China, according to a UN report.
- In an effort to curb antibiotic resistance, the World Health Organization (WHO) divided drugs into three categories — access, watch and reserve — specifying which are to be used for common ailments and which are to be kept for complicated diseases. Commonly used antibiotics will be under the 'access' category; the second line of antibiotics, slightly more potent, have been categorised under "watch" and potent drugs to be used only as a "last resort" fall under the 'reserve' category. This is the biggest revision of the antibiotics section in the 40-year history of the essential medicines list (EML).
- The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping established a one million dollar fund for boosting media cooperation in the five-nation grouping.
- As per the Global Peace Index released by the Australia based Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), Iceland remains the most peaceful country in the world, a position it has held since 2008. It is joined at the top of the index by New Zealand, Portugal, Austria, and Denmark, all of which were ranked highly in the 2016 GPI. Bhutan, which ranked 13, has been named as the most peaceful country in South Asia, followed by Sri Lanka 80th, Bangladesh 84th, India 137th, Pakistan 152nd and Afghanistan 162nd.
- President Trump announced that the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate accord as the accord was hurting his country and economy very badly, weakening efforts to combat global warming. The Paris agreement was intended to bind the world community into battling rising temperatures in concert, and the departure of the Earth's second-largest polluter is a major blow.
- The world's first hybrid "aeroboat" capable of travelling on land, water, snow and sand, built by an Indo-Russian joint venture, was unveiled in Moscow. It has been designed by IIAAT Holding, a joint venture between the International Institute for Advanced Aerospace Technologies and Indian firm Millennium Aerodynamics.

- The German parliament voted to legalize same-sex marriage, joining many other western European nations and the United States in implementing equal rights. There are several central and eastern European countries – including Austria, the Czech Republic and Italy – where only civil partnerships are open to gay couples, rather than marriage. Germany currently recognizes civil partnerships for same-sex couples, which guarantees most of the benefits as married heterosexual couples.
- China launched its most powerful naval destroyer, the Type 055, at the Shanghai port. The naval destroyer is one among the largest warships in the world.
- This year, India and Russia are celebrating 70 years of establishment of diplomatic relations between them. Joint cooperation in science and technology was one of the important pillars of the bilateral relationship between both the countries. Also, India's Department of Science & Technology, New Delhi and Russian Foundation for Basic Research, Moscow are celebrating their 10th year of their partnership.
- June 21st was celebrated as International Yoga Day. It is the third annual celebration of this day since the year 2015.
- China unveiled world's first train that runs on a virtual track making use of sensor technology instead of metal rails.
- The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought was observed on June 17 to promote public awareness to combat desertification.
- The World Youth Skills Day was observed globally on 15 July to raise awareness about the importance of investing in youth skills development.
- Okinoshima Island, Japan's men-only island was declared as a UNESCO world heritage site.
- The 12th G-20 summit concluded in Hamburg (Germany) with adaptation of Hamburg Action Plan, which sets out the group's strategy for achieving strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth.
- A global treaty banning nuclear weapons was adopted at the United Nations despite opposition from the United States, Britain, France and other nuclear powers that boycotted negotiations. The treaty was adopted by a vote of 122 in favour with one country — NATO member The Netherlands voting against — while Singapore abstained. None of the nine countries that possess nuclear weapons — the United States, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel — took part in the negotiations or the vote.
- India was ranked 23rd out of 165 nations in the second Global Cyber security Index (GCI) released by the UN telecommunications agency International Telecommunication Union. The index measures the commitment of nations across the world to cyber security and was topped by Singapore.
- The United States announced to present a draft resolution in the U.N. Security Council aimed at imposing new sanctions on North Korea after the latter successfully launched its first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).
- The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the end of the most recent outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

- The World Hepatitis Day was observed on July 28 around the world by World Health Organisation (WHO) to spread awareness about the viral hepatitis; with the theme – “Eliminate Hepatitis”.
- Tax authorities of the BRICS- Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have signed BRICS Taxation Cooperation Memorandum to establish a mechanism for taxation cooperation.
- India witnessed the third highest number of terrorist attacks in 2016, more than Pakistan that slipped to fourth position, according to the latest data compiled by the US State Department. Iraq and Afghanistan were ranked first and second position respectively, followed by India and Pakistan in that order.
- The United Nations (UN) World Day against Trafficking in Persons was observed on July 30 to raise awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promote and protect their rights.
- Sri Lanka has signed a US \$1.1 billion deal to sell a 70% stake of the strategic Hambantota deep-sea port to China.
- United States imposed new economic sanctions against Iran over its ballistic missile programme and for contributing to regional tensions.
- The International Youth Day was celebrated on August 12 with the theme ‘Youth Building Peace’.
- The International Bio-diesel Day was celebrated on August 10 to create awareness about non fossil-fuels (Green Fuels).
- Qatar’s Cabinet approved a draft law making permanent residency available to some non-citizens, becoming the first Gulf Arab State to do so.
- India and China are home to 39 per cent of the 830 million young people worldwide who use the Internet, according to a UN report.
- The UN World Health Organisation (WHO) announced that it had not recorded any case of polio disease in Somalia in the last three years, declaring the country polio free.
- Israel launched the country’s first environmental research satellite in a joint venture between the Israel Space Agency (ISA) and its French counterpart.
- Spanning an awesome 1621 feet and rising as high as 279 feet, the newly opened Charles Kuonen Suspension Bridge in Switzerland has broken the record for the world's longest pedestrian suspension bridge.
- The International Day against Nuclear Tests (IDANT) was observed on August 29 to raise public awareness about the effects of global nuclear weapon tests.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) launched the world’s first IAEA Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) bank at the Ulba Metallurgical Plant (UMP) in Oskemen, Kazakhstan. The \$150 million facility will help ensure a steady supply of low enriched uranium for countries’ nuclear power programmes.
- Nepal launched the world’s first climate-smart snow-leopard management plan to safeguard this endangered species of snow leopard and its habitat.
- According to a 2017 report by the United Nations World Tourism (UNWTO), the island of Tuvalu was the least visited country in 2016.
- The International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition was observed by UNESCO on August 23.

- The 2017 International Military Music Festival "Spasskaya Tower" started in Moscow, Russia on August 24 and will continue till September 3, 2017.
- The World Mosquito Day (WMD) was observed on August 20 is to raise awareness about the threat of malaria and other diseases transmitted by mosquitoes.
- The World Humanitarian Day (WHD) was observed on August 19 to pay tribute to aid workers who risk their lives in humanitarian service.
- Melbourne was declared the world's most liveable city for the 7th consecutive year by The Economist's annual global liveability survey.
- The 9th edition of BRICS summit-2017 started at Xiamen in China on September 3, 2017 with theme "BRICS: Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future".
- Nepal signed a \$635 million United Nations (UN) assistance package for 2018-2022 to lay out the country's development strategy for the next five years.
- The Eastern Economic Forum (EEF) started at Russky Island, which is part of Russia's city of Vladivostok. The EEF is considered as the biggest international communication platform for cooperation between businesses leaders and senior government representatives from Russia, the Pacific Region and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).
- The 13th edition of the joint military training exercise "Yudh Abhyas – 2017" started in Washington, USA. The exercise is one of the largest joint running military training and defence corporation endeavors between India and USA.
- The International Literacy Day (ILD) was observed on September 8 to emphasize the importance of literacy to individuals, society and communities. The 2017 theme was 'Literacy in a Digital World'.
- The Across Barriers-International Business Women's Summit (ABIBWS) was organized by the South Asian Women Development Forum (SAWDF) at Kathmandu in Nepal.
- The 2018 World University Rankings (WUR), released by Times Higher Education, ranked Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore as the top university in India, followed by IIT-Bombay, IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kanpur and IIT-Kharagpur. Globally, the University of Oxford has retained its first place in the rankings, followed by University of Cambridge, California Institute of Technology and Stanford University.
- The World Suicide Prevention Day was observed on September 10 with the theme "Take a minute, change a life".
- The joint bilateral air force exercise "Shaheen VI" started between air forces of China and Pakistan in China on September 7 till September 27, 2017.
- London retained its position as the world's top financial centre in the 2017 Global Financial Centres Index (GFCI). The index is compiled and published by Z/Yen Group. New York was ranked second followed by Hongkong, Singapore, Tokyo, Shanghai, etc. Meanwhile, Mumbai was the only city of India that was listed in the index and ranked 60th.
- The International Day of Democracy was observed on September 15 to provide an opportunity to review the state of democracy in the world. The 2017 theme was "Democracy and Conflict prevention".
- The Union Environment Ministry launched an environment awareness initiative on September 5 on the occasion of Teachers' Day. Under the initiative, an online environmental quiz competition named

"Prakriti Khoj" will be conducted at the national level.

- A 2-day event 'North East Calling' was organized by the Union government under its Destination North East series in New Delhi.
- India's first Hyperloop project will come up in Andhra Pradesh, which will connect the city centres of Vijayawada and Amaravati.
- The traditional Bonderam festival started in Divar Island of Goa on September 9, 2017.
- India started 'Operation Insaniyat' to provide assistance to Bangladesh in response to the humanitarian crisis being faced on account of the large influx of Rohingya refugees into that country from Myanmar.
- The 12th edition of the India-Japan annual summit-2017 was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- The National Hindi Day (NHD) was celebrated on September 14 across India.
- President Ram Nath Kovind launched a nationwide campaign 'Swacchata Hi Sewa' from Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh on September 15, 2017.
- The Karnataka government approved 'Electric Vehicle and Energy Storage Policy 2017' to help the state become a hub for production of alternative fuel vehicles, reduce dependency on fossil fuels, bring down pollution levels and push the 'Make In Karnataka' initiative.
- The Telangana government launched a comprehensive land survey for rectification of land records in the state.
- The International Day for the preservation of the Ozone Layer was observed on September 16 to mark the commemoration of the date of signing of the Montreal Protocol in 1987 on substances that deplete the Ozone layer.
- 'Iron Union 5'- the joint military exercise between the ground forces of the UAE and the United States concluded after two weeks.
- The WHO released its first tranche of emergency funding of \$175,000 to provide lifesaving healthcare to the "vulnerable population" in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar. Though the World Health Organisation (WHO) did not specifically mention the Rohingya refugees, over 410,000 of them have arrived in Cox's Bazar since August 25 after escaping Myanmar's military crackdown.
- The World Maritime Day was observed on September 29 with the theme 'Connecting Ships, Ports and People'.
- The World Rabies Day was observed on September 28 with the theme 'Rabies: Zero by 30'.
- The World Tourism Day was observed on September 27 with the theme "Sustainable tourism – a tool for development".
- The 7th ASEM Economic Ministers' Meeting (ASEM EMM7) was held in Seoul, South Korea on September 21-22, 2017, with the theme 'Innovative Partnership for Inclusive Prosperity'. The meeting was conducted under the Chairmanship of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy of the Republic of Korea and 51 member countries signed a joint statement on supporting the multilateral trade system.
- The two-week long joint military exercise "DRUZBA 2017" started between Special Forces of Pakistan and Russian Army in Russia on September 25, 2017.
- The joint military training exercise "Panda-Kangaroo 2017" was held between Chinese and Australian ground forces in China.
- The United Nations' International Day of Peace was observed on September 21 with the theme "Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All".

India

- The QS World University Rankings 2018 were released and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bombay, IIT-Delhi and Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru, made it to the top 200 global universities. IISc Bangalore was ranked at 152, IIT Delhi at 185 and IIT Bombay at 179. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was ranked as the world's best university, Stanford University and Harvard University obtained the second and third rank respectively.
- The Odisha government is all set to commission the ambitious Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) that would warn the population residing along its 480km long coastline by pressing one single button from a control room in the State capital in the event of the occurrence of natural disasters like a cyclone or tsunami. Odisha is the first state in India that has developed an automatic public address system that can be activated along its entire coastline.
- The Telangana Government launched a digital wallet, named T-Wallet, which doesn't charge transaction fee from consumers. The service has been launched as "anytime anywhere digital payment option for everyone". This is first such initiative by any state government in the country.
- The state government of Odisha approved 53 urban projects with a total investment of Rs 538 crore under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). The scheme, launched in nine urban places in the state since 2015-16 fiscal, has aimed at strengthening drinking water distribution network, development of sewerage system, storm water management, up-gradation of city transport system and development of amusement parks.
- Under the Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin (SBM-G), rural Uttarakhand and rural Haryana declared themselves as the 4th and 5th Open Defecation Free (ODF) States of India. The two joined the league of Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, which were the first three states to be declared ODF. Nationally, the sanitation coverage has increased from 42% to over 64% in just two and a half years since the launch of SBM.
- Indian Railways launched India's first solar powered diesel multiple unit (DEMU) broad gauge train – a 1600 Horse Power (HP) train with all solar powered coaches. The train will run from Sarai Rohilla in Delhi to Farukh Nagar in Haryana.
- The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) announced to establish India's first Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) at Patent Information Centre, Punjab.
- The Union Government merged the Ministries of Urban Development and Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation to form the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, thus reducing the number of ministries to 51.
- The 18th anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas was celebrated across India to commemorate the success of Operation Vijay during the 1999 India-Pakistan Kargil War.
- The President of India Pranab Mukharjee inaugurated the bicentenary celebration of the heroic Paika Rebellion of Odisha, a valiant uprising of Paikas against the British rule. It is believed that the Paika Rebellion of 1817 was India's first organized armed rebellion against British Raj.
- The Telangana government put a cap on the weight of bags carried by schoolchildren in a bid to prevent adverse physical effect and anxiety disorders in students. The government issued an order prescribing the weight limit of school bags for students from primary to Class X. According to the order meant for the school managements, the maximum weight of a school bag with textbooks and notebooks should not exceed 1.5 kg for Class 1 and II and 2 to 3 kg for Classes III to V. For Classes VI and VII, the weight should not exceed 4 kg and for Classes VIII and IX, it should not be more than 4.50 kg. In the case of Class X, it should not be more than 5 kg.
- The Uttar Pradesh Government launched Namami Gange Jagriti Yatra, an awareness drive along banks of Ganga River to maintain cleanliness.

- Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra CM, launched 'Namo Yuva Rozgar Kendra', (farmers' market on wheels). The mobile farmers' market will be selling fresh vegetables at competitive prices.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched its navigation satellite IRNSS-1H into the orbit by the rocket PSLV C39 from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikotta, Andhra Pradesh.
- The researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have successfully created an implantable bioartificial pancreas model grown within a 3D silk scaffold.
- The 10th India-European Union Counter Terrorism Dialogue was held at New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Mahaveer Singhvi, Joint Secretary for Counter Terrorism at the Ministry of External Affairs of India, while the European Union side was led by Pawel Herczynski, Director for Security Policy of European External Action Service (EEAS). The 11th India-European Union Counter Terrorism Dialogue will take place in Brussels in 2018 on a mutually convenient date.
- The Union Cabinet announced that India and Canada have mutually agreed to jointly issue a set of two Commemorative Postage Stamps on the theme Diwali.
- The Nungthaang Tampak village in Manipur has become North-East (NE)'s first 100% computer literacy village.
- The Indian Institutes of Technology, Bombay and Indore, jointly developed a biosensor that makes it possible to detect kidney disorders in less than 8 minutes.
- In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court of India declared right to privacy a fundamental right under the constitution.
- The first edition of Miss Transqueen India, a beauty pageant for transgenders, was held in Gurugram, Haryana.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Union Ministry of Health inked a pact with the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) to collaborate on vaccine research and development.
- The 8th World Renewable Energy Technology Congress & Expo-2017 started in New Delhi from August 21, 2017.
- Dr Vishwanath Karad MIT World Peace University (MITWPU), the first of its kind in India, was inaugurated by chief minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis in Pune.
- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched two mobile Apps namely MyFASTag and FASTag Partner in New Delhi to ensure smooth functioning of the Electronic Toll Collection system.
- The Karnataka government decided to provide free education for girls across the state from Class 1 up to graduation in all public and aided private schools and colleges, excluding professional institutions.
- Ahmedabad, the commercial capital of Gujarat, was formally accorded the status of India's first World Heritage City by UNESCO.
- India's first Centre for Animal Law has been established at the NALSAR University of Law in Hyderabad.
- The National Engineers Day (NED) was celebrated on September 15 in India as a tribute to the greatest Indian Engineer Bharat Ratna Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya, who was born on this day in 1861 in a village in Karnataka.
- The Cashew Export Promotion Council of India (CEPCI) presented the 5th edition of its international conference cum exhibition "Kaju India 2017- The Global Cashew Summit" at Hotel Grand Hyatt, Goa from 17- 19th September 2017.

- The first ever National Conference on "Mission Mode to address Under-Nutrition" was held in New Delhi. The conference was inaugurated by the Minister of Women & Child Development, Maneka Sanjay Gandhi in the presence of Minister of State for Women & Child Development, Dr. Virendra Kumar.
- Non-resident Indians (NRIs) who harass their wives or desert them could face impoundment or cancellation of their passport if the Centre accepts the recommendations of a high-level panel. To help abandoned women get justice, a nine-member panel headed by retired judge Arvind Kumar Goel (who is also the former chairman of Punjab's state commission for NRIs), recommended a special provision to impound or cancel the passport of offending NRIs based on the wife's complaint.
- The First 'BIMSTEC ('Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation') Disaster Management Exercise- 2017' (BIMSTEC DMEx-2017) will be conducted by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) as the lead agency from October 10-13, 2017 in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR). This Exercise will be a platform for sharing Best Practices on all aspects of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), strengthening regional response and coordination for Disaster Management among the BIMSTEC member countries, namely Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand.
- NITI Aayog, in partnership with the US administration, hosted the eighth annual Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Hyderabad on November 28-30. The theme for this year's summit -- Women First, Prosperity for All -- celebrated entrepreneurship in all its strength, diversity and entirety.
- Gujarat will be the second state after Goa to use the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system for the Assembly elections, as per an announcement by the State Chief Electoral Officer.
- The Maharashtra government signed an MoU with South Korea for increased co-operation in infrastructure projects like development of smart cities, roads, airports and metros.
- Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N Chandrababu Naidu, declared 2017-18 as e-Pragati year. All the 32 departments of Andhra Pradesh government will start using the latest technology from October for administration, e-governance, bringing in transparency, and make everything visible online.
- Manoj Sinha, the Union Minister of Communication, launched the first-ever India Mobile
- Congress (IMC) 2017 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
- Bathukamma, one of the major festival of Telangana and some parts of Andhra Pradesh started on September 20.
- The 6th edition of International Textile and Apparel Fair "VASTRA-2017" was held in Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- Himachal Pradesh became the first hill state in the country to ply electric buses. The electric bus service launched in Himachal Pradesh is poised to boost tourism in the state without disturbing the ecological balance in the state.
- Andhra Pradesh government launched People First, a mobile application that will "empower citizens with real-time governance".
- Tripura became the India's first state to set up family welfare district committees to examine the complaints of women against their husbands, in-laws and relatives of the husband and to find an amicable solution through negotiation.