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January 2017

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Current Affairs

January 2017

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kamlesh Sajjani

EDITOR

Dwijendra Srivastava

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Ritika Thadhani

CONTENT TEAM

Subodh Sinha

Dheerendra Sharma

Sushil Kimni

CREATIVE & DESIGN

Srinivas Taleti

HEAD - PUBLICATIONS

Anand Sutaria

ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE

IMS Learning Resources Pvt. Ltd.,

E Block, 6th Floor, NCL Bandra

Premises, Bandra-Kurla Complex,

Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400 051.

Tel: 022 6668 0005 / 6617 0000

WRITE TO THE EDITOR AT:

dwijendra.s@imsindia.com

Website: www.imsindia.com

Blog: www.imsindia.com/bank-exam/blog/

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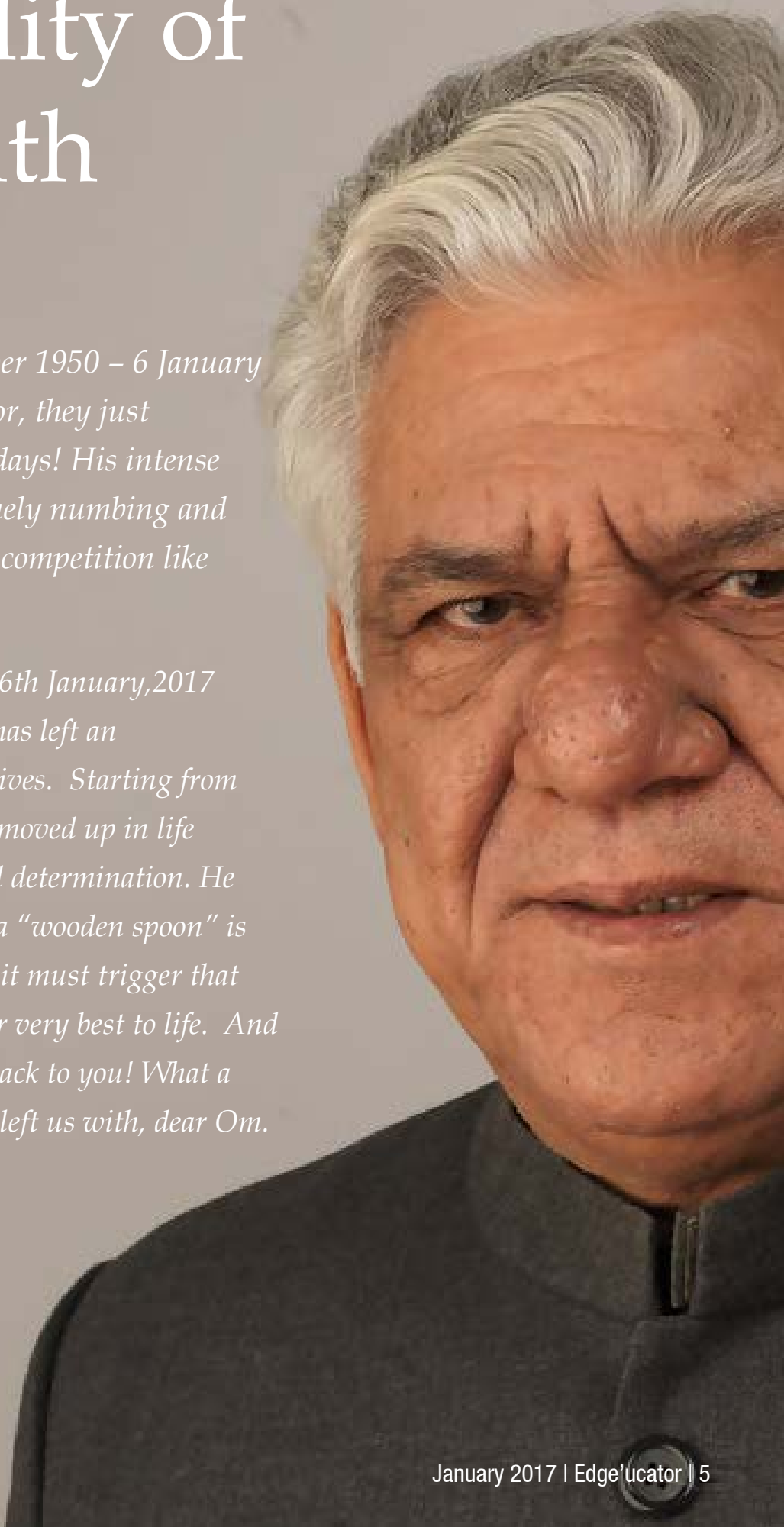
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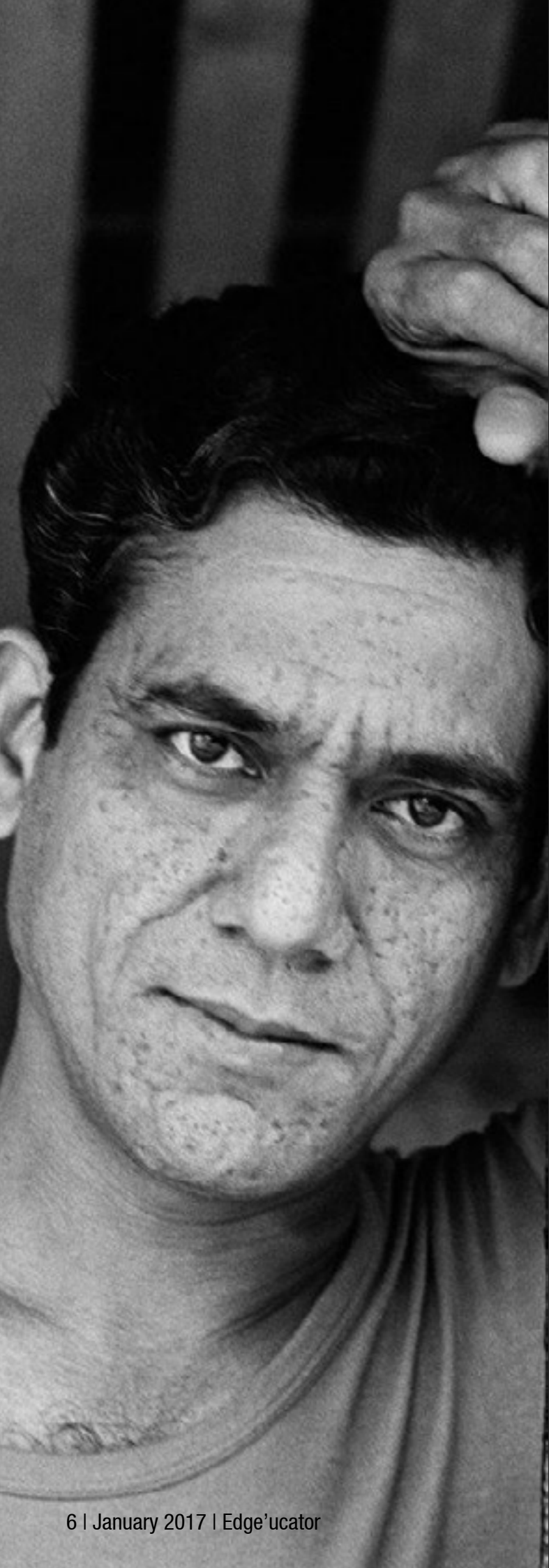
Personality of the Month

Om Puri

Om Puri (18 October 1950 – 6 January 2017) was an actor, they just don't make nowadays! His intense screen presence was extremely numbing and captivating, blowing away competition like ninepins.

Om Puri bid us good bye on 6th January, 2017 owing to a heart attack. He has left an unreplenishable void in our lives. Starting from humble beginnings, Om Puri moved up in life through sheer conviction and determination. He proved that being born with a "wooden spoon" is not a disqualification, rather it must trigger that giant within you to give your very best to life. And watch life give its very best back to you! What a magnificent legacy you have left us with, dear Om.





Citizens crowded around Gandhi, trying to compel him to break his fast. They laid down their arms and shoved a glass of lemon juice on his face, Drink! Drink! In vain. Suddenly, a sweating pock-faced rustic bursts into the scene and throws a roti at Gandhi. Eat! Gandhi is unmoved. This rustic breaks down and confesses the atrocities he committed during the riots in then Calcutta. That wide-eyed intense aggressive face will remain with us forever.

That is Om Puri for you. Extremely committed and passionate in his work. Every role he played remains an indelible memory in our mind. The most unlikely hero of Indian cinema. In a country that goes gaga over muscular physiques and svelte, gorgeous sidekicks, Om Puri stood out as a defiant icon. His legacy will live on for generations to come. His deep baritone voice roused the emotions of billions in India and abroad.

Om Puri had a penchant for enacting unconventional roles brilliantly. To name a few, as a victimized tribal in Aakrosh (1980) (a film in which he spoke only during flash-back sequences); Jimmy's manager in Disco Dancer (1982); a police inspector in Ardh Satya (1982), where he revolts against life-long social, cultural and political persecution and for which he got the National Film Award for Best Actor; the leader of a cell of Sikh militants in Maachis (1996); as a tough cop again in the commercial film Gupt in 1997; and as the courageous father of a martyred soldier in Dhoop (2003). In 1999, Puri acted in a Kannada movie A.K. 47 as a strict police officer. Commercial success was rare and Om Puri's selection of films was bold and thought provoking. His versatility was evident in the fact that he played intense, serious characters with as much ease as comic roles.

Noted directors like Shyam Benegal and Govind Nihalani were too happy to offer roles to Om Puri, knowing that he would do more than justice to their storyboard.

Major Films (Hindi):

Aakrosh (1980), Arohan (1982), Sadgati (1981), Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro (1983) and Chachi 420 (1997), Ghashiram Kotwal (1976), Bhavni Bhavai (1980), Sadgati (1981), Ardh Satya (1982), Mirch Masala (1986) and Dharavi (1992), Hera Pheri (2000), Chor Machaye Shor (2002), Malamaal Weekly (2006), Singh Is Kinng, Mere Baap Pehle Aap and Billu, Road to Sangam (2009), The Hangman (2010), Don 2 (2011).

Major Films (English):

Gandhi (1982), My Son the Fanatic (1997), East Is East (1999) and The Parole Officer (2001), City of Joy (1992), Wolf (1994) and The Ghost and the Darkness (1996), The Hundred-Foot Journey (2014)

Telefilms/Serials :

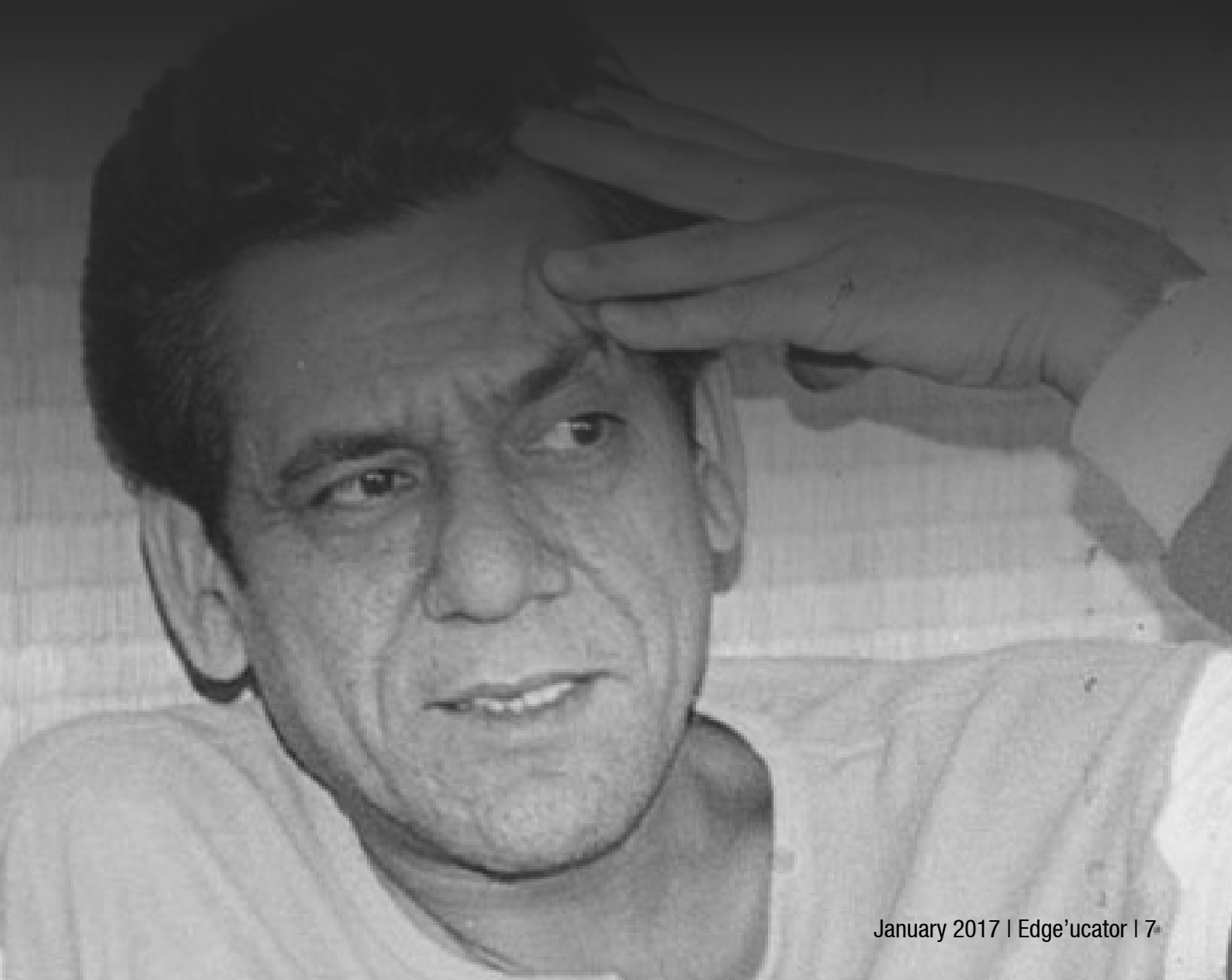
Tamas (1987), Aahat (2004-05), Bharat Ek Khoj, Yatra, Mr. Yogi, Kakaji Kahin, Sea Hawks, Antaral, and Savdhaan India's Season II.

Awards :

Padma Shri (1990)

Honorary Officer of the Order of the British Empire.

National Film Award for Best Actor (1982)



People in the News

David R Syiemlieh appointed new UPSC chairman - January 3, 2017



President Pranab Mukherjee has appointed Prof David R Syiemlieh as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) as per Article 316 of Constitution. He will take over from Alka Sirohi and shall remain the head of the organisation till his retirement on January 21, 2018 or till further orders. Prior to this appointment,

he was functioning as a UPSC member from June 25, 2012. Prof David R Syiemlieh is academician, author and historian. He is a former Vice Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi University, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh. He is author of several books and articles on the history of North East India. He is credited with discovering the date of death and other details of the last days of Tirot Sing, the Khasi chief of Nongkhlaw who resisted British colonial expansion.

UPSC is constitutional body that conducts the prestigious civil services examination to select IAS, IFS and IPS officers among others.

Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa takes charge as new Air Force chief - January 2, 2017



Air Chief Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa took charge as the 22nd Chief of the Air Staff (CoAS) of the Indian Air Force (IAF). He succeeded Arup Raha who retires from the service. He is the third person from Sikh community to head the IAF after Arjan Singh and Dilbag Singh. Prior to this appointment he was Vice-Chief of IAF.

He is an alumnus of Rashtriya Indian Military College (RIMC) and National Defence Academy (NDA). He was commissioned into the fighter stream of IAF in June 1978. Since then he has served in various squadrons, and in the Intelligence Directorate of Air Headquarters. Before being appointed as Vice Chief he was the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South Western Air Command. He is recipient of Presidential awards Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Yudh Seva Medal and Vayusena Medal for his distinguished services.

General Bipin Rawat takes over as next Chief of Army Staff - January 2, 2017



General Bipin Rawat took charge as the new 27th Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) of India. He succeeded General Dalbir Singh Suhag who retired from the service. He had superseded two seniormost Lt Generals, Praveen Bakshi and PM Hariz. His appointment goes against the long-held convention of appointing the senior-most eligible officer to the topmost post.

He is an infantry officer from the 5/11 Gorkha Rifles. Prior to this appointment, he was the Vice Chief of the Army. He has held key appointments in the Army headquarters and with the UN peacekeeping force. He hails from Uttarakhand and had received the 'sword of honour' when he passed out from the Indian Military Academy in 1978.

British-Indian Shankar Balasubramanian knighted for his work on DNA sequencing - January 2, 2017

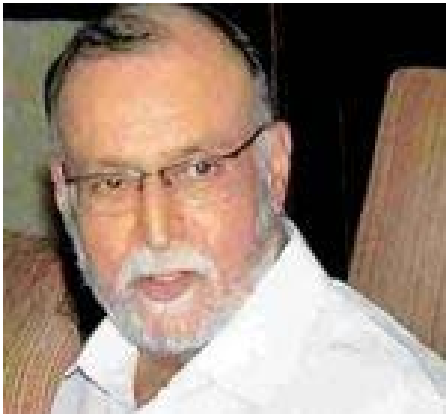


An Indian-origin British professor of chemistry and DNA expert at Cambridge University Shankar Balasubramanian received Knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II. He was recognised for his work as a co-inventor of Next Generation DNA sequencing (also known as Solexa sequencing), described as the most transformational advance in biology and medicine for decades.

Knighthood is one of the highest honours bestowed upon an individual in the UK and it doesn't carry any military obligations to the sovereign. Persons receiving it are entitled with title 'Sir' before their name. The knighthoods are conferred by the Queen or a member of the Royal Family acting on her behalf in Britain.



Anil Baijal appointed as Lt Governor of Delhi - December 29, 2016



President Pranab Mukherjee has appointed former bureaucrat Anil Baijal (70) as the 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. He will succeed Najeeb Jung who had resigned before completion of his term and is returning to teaching profession.

Anil Baijal is a retired IAS officer of 1969 batch of the Union Territory cadre. He had served as Union Home Secretary under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government besides holding key positions in other ministries. He retired in 2006 as the Secretary, Urban Development Ministry. He also had served as the vice chairman of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA). He was associated with the designing and roll-out of the then UPA Government's flagship programme the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). Currently, he was associated with the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF), a

New Delhi-based think tank. He was also on the executive council of VIF.

According to Article 239AA President administers UT of NCT Delhi through Lt Governor. The 69th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1991 (amended article 239AA) which provided special status to UT of Delhi also designated administrator of Delhi as Lt Governor. He is appointed by President and holds office till pleasure of President. Lt Governor of Delhi is also empowered to promulgate ordinances during the recess of assembly.

Anil Dhasmana appointed as new chief of Research and Analysis Wing - December 18, 2016



The Union Government has appointed senior IPS officer Anil Dhasmana as new chief of Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), India's external intelligence agency. He succeeds Rajinder Khanna who completes his two year tenure on 31 December 2016. He will have tenure of 2 years.

He is a 1981-batch IPS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre. Prior to this appointment he was Special Secretary in the agency. He has been with RAW for the last 23 years during which he has served on important desks including Pakistan. He had also served in key foreign capitals such as London and Frankfurt. His domain of expertise is considered to be Balochistan, counter-terrorism and Islamic affairs. He also has experience in handling Pakistan, Afghanistan, Europe and SAARC desks.

Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is the primary foreign intelligence agency of India. It was established in 1968 following the intelligence failures of the Sino-Indian and Indo-Pakistani wars. It is under the direct command of Prime Minister and reports on an administrative basis to the Cabinet Secretary of India, who reports to the Prime Minister. Its primary function is gathering foreign intelligence, engaging in counter-terrorism, advising Indian policymakers, promoting counter-proliferation and advancing India's foreign strategic interests. Headquarters: New Delhi.

Rajiv Jain appointed as new chief of Intelligence Bureau - December 18, 2016



The Union government has appointed senior IPS officer Rajiv Jain as the new chief of Intelligence Bureau (IB). He succeeds Dineshwar Sharma and shall have two years term.

He is IPS officer of the 1980-batch of Jharkhand-cadre. He had joined the IB in 1989 as assistant director. Since then he has worked in different capacities including the sensitive Kashmir desk. He had handled various assignments as chief of Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB), name given to IB units in state capitals. He had headed the Ahmedabad SIB (from 2005 to 2008) and later in Delhi SIB (from 2008 to 2012) which is considered politically sensitive. He was advisor to previous NDA government's interlocutor on Kashmir K C Pant when talks were held with separatist leaders. He is recipient of President's Police Medal.

IB is India's internal intelligence agency. It was recasted as the Central Intelligence Bureau in 1947 under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Awards & Honours

4 Indian American scientists selected for presidential awards - January 11, 2017



Outgoing US President Barack Obama has selected four Indian-American scientists among 102 researchers for the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE). They are Pankaj Lal from Montclair State University, Kaushik Chowdhury from Northeastern University,

Manish Arora from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Aradhna Tripathi from University of California, Los Angeles.

About Awardees

Pankaj Lal: He is an associate professor in the department of earth and environmental studies at Montclair. He has been working on environmental economics and economic geography, natural resource conservation and policy and climate change, human dimensions of ecosystem management.

Kaushik Chowdhury: He directs the Next Generation Networks and Systems (GENESYS) Lab. He is the winner of the “NSF CAREER” award (2015) and the Office of Naval Research Director of Research Early Career Award (2016).

Manish Arora: He is an environmental epidemiologist and exposure biologist. His research focuses on effects of prenatal and early childhood chemical exposures on life-long health trajectories. He is known for his work on biomarkers that utilise human deciduous and permanent teeth to reconstruct the timing of exposure to various harmful chemicals and essential nutrients.

Aradhna Tripathi: Her lab at UCLA uses chemistry of natural compounds as well as models as tools to understand how the Earth works. Her models focus to understand climate change, oceans, and the transfer of carbon between the biosphere, atmosphere and oceans.

74th Golden Globe Awards - January 9, 2017



The 74th Annual Golden Globe Awards ceremony was organized at Beverly Hills, California, United States (US).

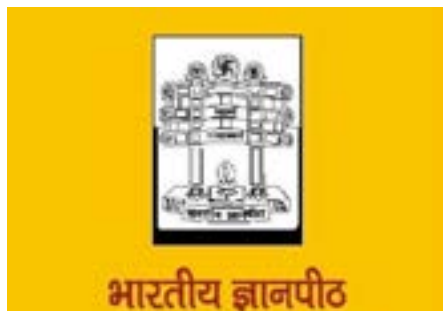
The Golden Globe Awards are the annual awards that honour the best in Motion Pictures and American Television for the previous year. This year, La La Land, a romantic musical comedy-drama film won in all the seven categories including the top award of best musical or comedy. Veteran actress Meryl Streep was bestowed with the Cecil B. DeMille Lifetime Achievement Award.

Winners of various awards are as follows:

- Best Motion Picture Drama: Moonlight.
- Best Motion Picture Musical/Comedy: La La Land.
- Best Director in Motion Picture-Drama: Damien Chazelle for La La Land.
- Best Actor in Motion Picture-Drama: Casey Affleck for Manchester by the Sea.
- Best Actress in Motion Picture-Drama: Isabelle Huppert for Elle.
- Best Actor in Motion Picture or Musical or Comedy: Ryan Gosling for La La Land.
- Best Actress in Motion Picture Musical or Comedy: Emma Stone for La La Land.
- Best Actor in a Supporting role in Motion Picture: Aaron Taylor-Johnson for Nocturnal Animals.
- Best Actress in a Supporting role in Motion Picture: Viola Davis for Fences.
- Best Original Score Motion Picture: Justin Hurwitz for the La La Land.

- Best Original Song: "City of Stars" (Justin Hurwitz, Pasek & Paul) for the La La Land.
- Best Animated Feature Film: Zootopia. Best Foreign Language Film: Elle (France).

Shraddha, Ghyansham Kumar Devansh chosen for 2016 Bharatiya Jananpith Navlekhan award - January 2, 2017



Two new Hindi writers Shraddha and Ghyansham Kumar Devansh have been chosen for Bharatiya Jnanpith Navlekhan Award for the year 2016. Shraddha was chosen for her short story 'Hawa Mein Phadphadati Chitthi' and Devansh for his poem 'Akash Mein Deh'. They were unanimously chosen by a selection panel chaired by eminent poet Vishnu Nagar.

Bharatiya Jananpith Navlekhan award is given to young authors in Hindi for their first creations. It was instituted in 2006 by Bharatiya Jnanpith trust. It consists of a statue of Goddess Saraswati, a citation and a cash prize each.



Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh chosen for 2016 Jnanpith Award - December 24, 2016



Eminent modern Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh was chosen for the prestigious Jnanpith Award for the year 2016. He is the 52nd recipient of Jnanpith Award. He is sixth Bengali litterateur to bag this prestigious literary award after Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay (1966), Bishnu Dey (1971), Ashapoorna Devi (1976), Subhash Mukhopadhyay (1991) and Mahasweta Devi (1966).

Some of his famous poems are 'Adim lata-gulmomay', 'Kabir abhipray', 'Murkha baro, samajik nay', 'Mukh dheke jay bigyapane', 'Babarar prarthana', 'Dinguli Raatguli' and 'Nihita Patalchaya'. His works have also been translated widely into several Indian languages including Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Assamese and Malayalam, as well as into some foreign languages. He also been awarded Sahitya Akademi Award, Saraswati Samman, Narsingh Das Puraskar and Rabindra Puraskar among others.

Jnanpith Award is India's highest literary honour. Its name has been taken from Sanskrit words Jnana and Pitha which means knowledge-seat. It was instituted in 1961 by Bharatiya Jnanpith trust founded by the Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain family that owns the Times of India newspaper group.

2016 Sahitya Akademi Award winners - December 22, 2016



साहित्य अकादेमी

The Sahitya Akademi has announced the names of 24 poets and authors who will be conferred the prestigious 2016 Sahitya Akademi Award. This award has recognised premier works in 24 Indian languages that includes 8 books of poetry, 7 books of short stories, 5 books of novels, 2 books of criticism and 1 book each of essays and play.

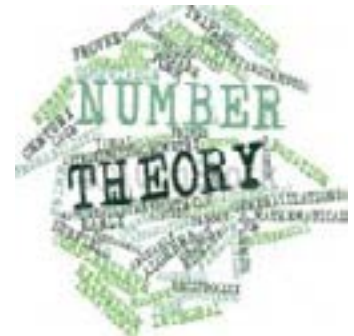
Winners are

- Play: Swarajbir (Punjabi).
- Essay: Nrisinghaprasad Bhaduri (Bengali).
- Criticism: Aziz Hajini (Kashmiri) and Nizam Siddiqui (Urdu).

- Short stories: Chahatrapal (Dogri), Shyan Darihare (Maithili), Moirangthem Rajen (Manipuri), Asaram Lomate (Marathi), Paramita Satpathy (Odia), Bulaki Sharma (Rajasthani) Vannadhasan (Tamil).
- Poetry: Jnan Pujari (Assamese), Anju (Bodo), Kamal Vora (Gujarati), Prabha Varma (Malayalam), Sitanath Acharya (Sanskrit), Gobinda Chandra Majhi (Santhali), Nand Javeri (Sindhi) and Papineni Sivasankar (Telugu).

Sahitya Akademi Award is conferred annually on writers of outstanding works in one of the twenty-four major Indian languages (22 Scheduled Languages+ English and Rajasthani). The award consists of a casket containing an engraved copper-plaque, a shawl and a cheque of 1 Lakh rupees.

Kaisa Matomaki, Maksym Radziwill win 2016 SASTRA Ramanujan award - December 22, 2016



Kaisa Matomaki and Maksym Radziwill have been jointly won the 2016 SASTRA-Ramanujan

award for mathematics for their 'revolutionary' collaborative work on short intervals in number theory. Their mathematical work dwells on properties of numbers in "short intervals." The two mathematicians worked with Fields medallist Terence Tao in making a breakthrough on the Chowla conjecture. They were presented with this prestigious award at inauguration of International Conference on Number Theory at SASTRA University at Kumbakonam. Kaisa Matomaki from Finland's University of Turku is first woman to receive this prize since it was instituted in 2005. Maksym Radziwill is Assistant professor at McGill University, Canada.

SASTRA Ramanujan Prize is an annual award bestowed on young mathematicians for his outstanding contributions to areas of mathematics influenced by the Srinivasa Ramanujan. It was established in 2005 by Shanmugha Arts, Science, Technology & Research Academy (SASTRA) University. It is named after great Indian Mathematician autodidact Srinivasa Ramanujan.

Criteria: The age limit for the prize is 32 because Ramanujan had achieved so much in his brief life of 32 years. The prize is given annually to recipient at Kumbakonam which is Ramanujan's hometown.

Devendra Fadnavis, AS Kiran Kumar and John Ralston Marr selected for SIES-National Eminence Award - December 17, 2016



Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis, ISRO chairman A S Kiran Kumar, UK-based scholar John Ralston Marr and Hari Katha exponent Kamala Murthy have been selected for SIES-Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswati National Eminence Award. They will be presented awards in different categories.

ISRO chairman A S Kiran Kumar will be presented award for Science & Technology category. Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis will be presented award for Public Leadership. Hari Katha exponent Kamala Murthy presented in with this award in Social Thinkers, Philosophers and Pravachana Karthas category. John Marr will be felicitated for his work in the International category. He is a scholar in Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. He has been teaching Carnatic music theory for 30 years in England.



Sports

Current Affairs

Cristiano Ronaldo named the world's best player for 2016 - January 10, 2017



Portuguese footballer Cristiano Ronaldo was named the world's best player for the year 2016 at the inaugural Best FIFA Football Awards

held in Zurich, Switzerland. To win this title he received 34.54% of total votes. He defeated Barcelona's Lionel Messi (26.42%), Atletico Madrid's Antoine Griezmann (7.53%) to win the coveted prize.

Other 2016 awardees are:

- Best FIFA Women's Player: Carli Lloyd (US).
- Best FIFA Men's Coach: Claudio Ranieri (Italy).
- Best FIFA Women's Coach: Silvia Neid (Germany).
- FIFA Puskas Award: Mohd Faiz Subri (Malaysia).
- FIFA Fair Play Award: Atletico Nacional
- FIFA Award for an Outstanding Career: Falcao (Brazil).
- FIFA Fan Award: Borussia Dortmund and Liverpool supporters.

Government constitutes Injeti Srinivas Committee to frame National Sports Code - January 6, 2017



The Union Sports Ministry has constituted committee to frame comprehensive National Sports Development Code across sports disciplines. It will be headed by Injeti Srinivas, Sports Secretary. The committee will study the existing sports governance frame work, issues relating to sports governance in the country, recent developments related to sports governance. It will also study court judgments and international best practices and make recommendations on bringing out a comprehensive code across sports disciplines.

Members of the Committee: Abhinav Bindra (Olympian), Anju Bobby George (Olympian), Praksh Padukone, (eminent sports person), Narinder Batra (President, FIH), Nandan Kamath (Lawyer), Bishweshwar Nandi (Coach) and Vijay Lokpally (Sports Journalist).

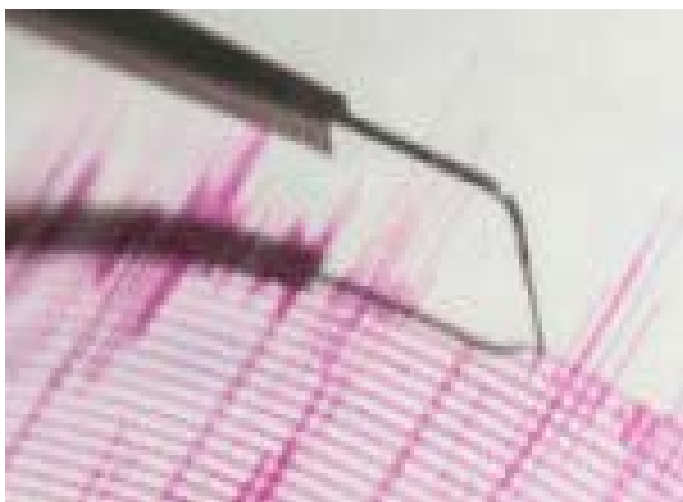
SC sacks BCCI President Anurag Thakur and Secretary Ajay Shirke - January 3, 2017

The Supreme Court has sacked Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) President Anurag Thakur and BCCI secretary Ajay Shirke after they failed to implement the reforms recommended by the Justice Lodha committee. The apex court held that Mr. Thakur and Mr. Shirke are unfit to continue at helm of BCCI for their obstructionist attitude and their incapacity to make affiliated State associations fall in line with Lodha committee.



International Current Affairs

New fault in Indian Ocean may trigger earthquakes in future: study
- January 11, 2017



According to scientists, a new plate boundary may be forming on the floor of the Indian Ocean in Wharton Basin as a result of the 2012 earthquake that shook the Andaman-Sumatra region. The discovery was based

on the study of seismic data recorded before, during and after the 2012 quakes and sea floor depth analysis by venturing into the ocean aboard a research vessel.

Scientists created a high-resolution imagery of the sea floor by using data which unveiled deformations that had occurred on the Indo-Australian Plate. It showed that the plate had broken along a 1,000 km fracture zone due to 2012 earthquakes, resulting in a new plate boundary and likely to be the site of future fault-slip earthquakes. The analysis showed a new fault system had developed in the area off the coast of Sumatra that was involved in the 2012 earthquakes. The new fault system can trigger more quakes in the future.

Pakistan test-fires first nuclear-capable submarine cruise missile Babur-3
- January 10, 2017



Pakistan successfully test-fired its first Submarine-Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) Babur-3 capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. This launch gives Pakistan a “credible” second-strike capability. The Babur-3 missile was fired from an underwater mobile platform from an undisclosed location in the Indian Ocean and hit its target with precise accuracy.

SLCM Babur-3 is a sea-based variant of Ground Launched Cruise Missile (GLCM) Babur-2. It

has been named after the first Mughal Emperor Zahir-ud-Din Babur. It has a range of 450km. It incorporates state-of-the-art technologies including underwater controlled propulsion and advanced guidance and navigation features, augmented by Global Navigation, Terrain and Scene Matching Systems. It features terrain hugging and sea skimming flight capabilities to evade hostile radars and air defences. It also has certain stealth technologies, in an emerging regional Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) environment. Babur-3 SLCM in land-attack mode, is capable of delivering various types of payloads including conventional as well as nuclear warheads.

January 10: World Hindi Day January - 10, 2017



The World Hindi Day is observed annually on 10 January. On this occasion, Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has conducted special events to spread the greatness of the language through its missions abroad. Besides, the Department

of Official Language (Rajbhasha) also organises several events to mark this day.

The World Hindi Day was first observed on 10 January 2006. It is in addition to present National Hindi Divas which is being observed annually on 14 September. It should be noted that World Hindi Day is the promotion of the language at the global stage. Whereas, National Hindi Divas is being observed across the country at national level. The National Hindi Divas is observed to mark adaptation of Hindi written in Devanagari script as the Official Language of the Union by the Constituent Assembly on 14 September 1949.

UN declares 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development - January 6, 2017



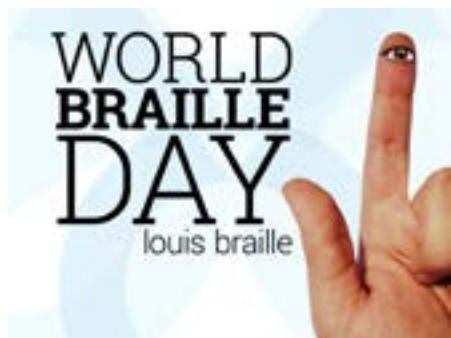
The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has declared the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The declaration recalls the potential of tourism sector to advance the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



The International Year aims to support a change in business practices, policies and consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable tourism sector that can contribute effectively to achieve targets of the SDGs. It will promote tourism sector's role in five key areas:

- (i) Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- (ii) Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction
- (iii) Cultural values, diversity and heritage
- (iv) Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change
- (v) Mutual understanding, peace and security.

January 4: World Braille Day - January 5, 2017



The World Braille Day is observed every year across the world on 4 January to mark the birth anniversary of Louis Braille, inventor of Braille script or Braille code. Observance of the day helps people to spread the importance of Braille language and also help people to produce

works in this language to allow visually impaired people to read the works. To commemorate this day several NGOs as well as other organizations come together to raise awareness about the apathy towards blind people and to help them be equal among rest of the people.

Braille script is a language based on the patterns of raised dots on paper that could be felt and one can read anything that is unable to see. For writing in Braille script, people use slates and stylus and the writing technique remains the same as writing in print on paper. Presently, almost every of language including Computer languages has Braille versions.

China launches 2 high resolution remote sensing satellites - December 29, 2016



China has successfully launched two high-resolution remote sensing satellites SuperView-1 01 and 02 to get commercial images. These satellites were launched on-board of Long March 2D rocket from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in Shanxi Province. They

will provide commercial images at 0.5-meter resolution.

China tests 5th-generation fighter jet FC-31 Gyrfalcon - December 27, 2016



China has successfully tested the latest version of its fifth-generation stealth fighter jet J-31 (now renamed the FC-31 Gyrfalcon). The newest version of twin-engine FC-31 took to the air for the first time recently. It is considered as China's answer to the US F-35, the world's most technically advanced fighter.

China by introducing this fighter jet is trying to end the West's monopoly on the world's most advanced warplanes especially 5th generation fighter jet. When completed, the FC-31 will become the China's second 5th-generation fighter after the J-20, which was put on its first public performance at the Zhuhai Air Show in November 2016.

New Ebola vaccine may be up to 100% effective: WHO - December 24, 2016



The World Health Organization (WHO) has expressed confidence that a prototype vaccine for Ebola may be 100% effective in protecting against the deadly virus. The vaccine was initially developed in Canada by public health authorities before being taken over by pharmaceutical giant Merck.

Ebola virus disease (EVD) is a severe, often fatal illness in humans. It was first identified in 1976 in the Democratic Republic of Congo in a village near the Ebola River, from which it takes its name. It is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission. Fruit bats are natural host of this virus. It spreads through contact with body fluids of infected persons such as blood, urine and saliva. Symptoms faced by people who have contracted the Ebola virus include high fever, bleeding and central nervous system damage. In 2014, Ebola virus had erupted periodically mainly across west and east Africa mainly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. It was the deadly outbreak of the virus in the history that had killed 11,000 people.

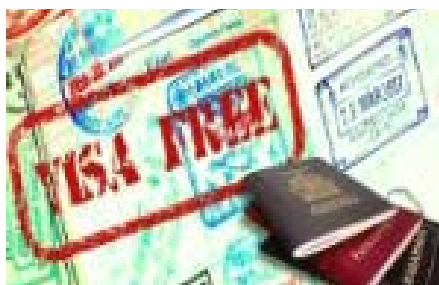
Japan successfully launches solid fuel rocket named Epsilon-2 - December 23, 2016



Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) has successfully launched a solid fuel rocket named Epsilon-2 from the Uchinoura Space Center in southern Japan. The 26-metre-long rocket released Exploration of energization and Radiation in Geospace (ERG) satellite for studying radiation belts around the earth soon after the lift-off.

Epsilon-2 rocket is part of a new generation of solid propellant rockets which can reduce launch costs up to one-third. The reduction in cost can allow it to put more communication and weather satellites in space. Thus, it can give JAXA a competitive edge in space launch industry which has robust growth potential and strong security implications.

Hong Kong revokes visa-free entry to Indians - December 22, 2016



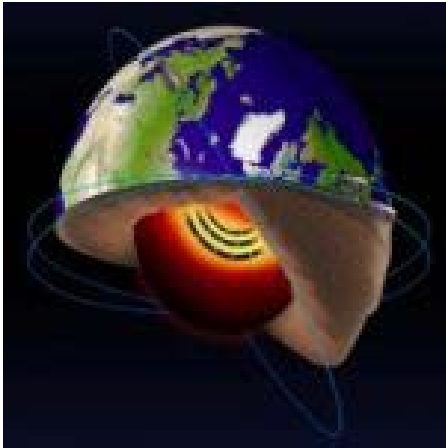
Hong Kong, a China-administered special territory has decided to withdraw visa-free facility for Indians from January 23, 2017.

This decision was taken on the ground to prevent illegal immigration as number of Indian asylum seekers was on the rise. Over half a million Indians visit Hong Kong for business, trade and holidays. Under the new rules, Indian travellers will have to complete a pre-arrival registration. Such pre-registration would not visa-hongkong be necessary for those transiting through the Hong Kong airport without leaving the airport transit area. Background Earlier, Hong Kong used to be part of a block of countries that gave Indians unconditional visa-free entry. Indians were permitted to enter Hong Kong with a valid passport for a period up to 14 days without a visa. However in recent times, it was found that Indian nationals were overstaying in Hong Kong by violating visa norms.

Visa-free travel for Indians is allowed in:

- Bhutan, Belize, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Grenada, Haiti, Indonesia, Jamaica, Macau, Mauritius, Micronesia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Senegal, Trinidad, Vanuatu
- Apart from 'visa-free status', India & Nepal have porous borders
- India has bilateral agreements with 71 nations on visa waiver for diplomats & ordinary passport holders

Molten Jet Stream discovered deep inside Earth's core - December 21, 2016



Scientists for the first time have discovered the so-called molten jet stream within the Earth's molten iron core using latest data obtained from three European satellites called Swarm. The three satellites were launched in 2013 with the goal of studying Earth's magnetic field. The latest satellite data that helps create an sharpest 'x-ray' view of the planet.

The molten jet stream is an accelerating band of molten iron circling the North Pole. It just like the jet stream in the atmosphere. It moves about 40 km per year, currently in a westward direction. This speed is three times faster than normal outer-core speeds and hundreds of thousands of times faster than rate at which Earth's tectonic plates move. It is located along a boundary between two different regions in the core. This movement is caused when liquid in core flows toward the boundary from both sides and

then is squeezed out sideways. Significance: The satellite data has helped clarify Earth's inner workings and magnetic field. It showed that changes in the magnetic field are actually being caused by the molten jet stream. The discovery can also add light in changing magnetic field of earth and may relate it with switch in direction of the jet stream.

NASA successfully launches 8 mini-satellites for hurricane forecasting - December 18, 2016

The NASA has successfully launched constellation of eight mini-satellites as part Cyclone Global Navigation Satellite System (CYGNSS) into space to improve hurricane forecasting. These satellites were air launched by aerospace company Orbital ATK onboard of Pegasus rocket fired from plane at height of 12km. NASA had opted for air launch rather than traditional rocket liftoff from the ground, to cut costs.

Each of the micro-satellite of CYGNSS weighs just 64 pounds (32kg) and has 5-foot wingspan. They will be placed into the orbit 500km above earth's surface. They have GPS navigation receivers to frequently measure the surface roughness of oceans. It will allow scientists to calculate wind speed and storm intensity. Unlike weather satellites already in orbit, these satellites can peer through rain swirling in a hurricane, all the way into the core or eye.





National Current Affairs

India ink MoU with Sri Lanka to construct 3,000 rain water harvesting systems - January 14, 2017



India has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sri Lanka to construct 3000 rain water harvesting systems in Rin Jaffna District at a cost

of 300 million Rupees (Sri Lankan). The rain water project envisages construction of 3000 rainwater harvesting systems for 3000 households in selected divisions of Jaffna District.

The project aims to assist resettlement efforts of people especially internally displaced families in Jaffna by providing modern rain water harvesting systems for clean drinking water supply facility to households. The scope of the project also includes training of the households on operation and maintenance (O&M) of the rain water harvesting systems. It will also generate employment opportunities in Sri Lanka.

Ken-Betwa River linking project receives environment, forest & tribal clearances - January 13, 2017



The ambitious Ken-Betwa river linking project has received formal environment, forest and tribal clearances. The project aims at addressing water needs of dry swathes in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The Union Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation is working out the funding pattern with NITI Aayog. The Ministry is pursuing NITI Ayog to change its funding pattern of Centre state share from 60:40 to 90:10 for the project as it is a special project.

It is India's first river interlinking project that will connect Ken river in Madhya Pradesh with the Betwa in Uttar Pradesh. The project was envisaged first in 1980 to transfer surplus river water to dry and arid areas of Bundelkhand region. It will help irrigate an area of 6.35 lakh hectares annually in Bundelkhand region. Of this, 3.69 lakh hectares will be covered in Madhya Pradesh's Tikamgarh, Chattarpur and Panna districts. The remaining 2.65 lakh hectares of area falls in Uttar Pradesh's Jhansi, Mahoba and Banda districts.

Bunkar Mitra Helpline for Handloom Weavers went live - January 5, 2017



The Union Ministry of Textiles' Bunkar Mitra Helpline for Handloom Weavers went live. It was launched by the Union Textiles Minister Smriti Zubin Irani on the occasion of Good Governance Day (on December 25, 2016).

The helpline aims to provide a single point of contact to handloom weavers across the country for

addressing their queries and seek guidance. This helpline can be accessed by dialing the toll free number 1800-208-9988.

Weavers can seek experts' advice from the field of textiles such as guidance for raw material supply, availing credit facility, quality control, access to marketing linkages and information about various schemes. Initially the helpline will be provided in 7 languages viz., English, Hindi and 5 other regional languages Tamil, Telugu, Kannada Bengali and Assamese.

Union Government launches IPR Enforcement Toolkit for Police - January 5, 2017



The Union Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Enforcement Toolkit for Police. This toolkit will be provided to all state police departments across the nation to assist them in dealing with the cases relating to Trademarks and Copyrights infringements.

The toolkit has been jointly developed by the Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

It will act as a ready reckoner for police officials across the country for dealing with crimes related Intellectual Property rights (IPR) infringement, specifically Trade Marks counterfeiting and Copyrights piracy. In addition it will provide details of offences under various laws, checklists for registering a complaint and conducting search and seizures case of IP crimes.

Google launches My Business and Digital Unlocked tool for small and medium businesses - January 5, 2017



Internet giant Google launched two new initiatives My Business and Digital Unlocked to train and help small and medium businesses (SMBs) in India capitalise on the digitisation wave faster. These initiatives were launched by Google CEO Sundar Pichai in

New Delhi in presence of Union IT and law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad in New Delhi.

Under My Business Websites, Google will provide free websites and web tools to small businesses in order to bolster their digital presence. This will help SMBs create a free, mobile optimised website.

Digital Unlocked is a training programme launched in association with industry body FICCI. It will provide Indian SMBs essential digital skills to enable them to get online and connect to customers in different parts of the country. The trainings will be certified by Google, Indian School of Business and FICCI.

Google also launched Primer, a free mobile application designed to teach digital marketing skills in a quick, easy and interactive way. It also works offline and is currently available in English and Hindi languages.

Election Commission announces dates for assembly elections in five states - January 4, 2017



The Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced the dates for the assembly elections

in five states- Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa. With the Election Commission announcement the Model code of conduct has come into effect. Counting of votes for all five states will take place on 11 March 2017.

Goa (40 Seats) and Punjab (117 Seats) will go to polls on 4 February 2017 while polling in Uttarakhand for 70 seats will be held on 15 February 2017.

Uttar Pradesh will go to polls in seven phases for 403 seats on 11th February, 15th February, 19th February, 23rd February, 27th February, 4th March and on 8th March 2017.

Manipur will go to polls for 60 seats in two phases on 4th and 8th March.

Government launches Swachh Bharat Survekshan 2017 in 500 cities - January 4, 2017



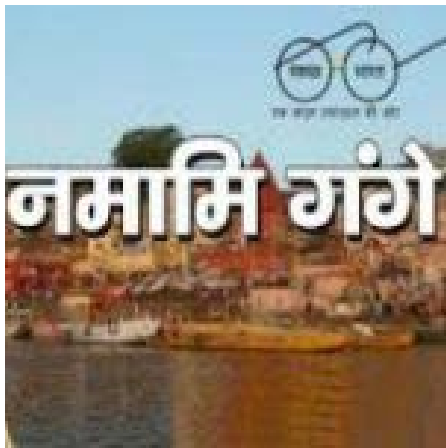
The Union Ministry of Urban Development launched Swachh Survekshan 2017 to rank 500 cities/towns across the country on cleanliness with a population

of 1 lakh and above. The survey will be conducted by Quality Council of India (QCI) under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in a bid to encourage competition to improve sanitation.

Swachh Survekshan 2017 will judge cities on the basis of data provided by Municipal bodies, data collected through direct observations and independent assessment and citizen feedbacks. Data provided by Municipal bodies will carry 900 marks, data collected through direct observations and independent assessment will carry 500 marks and citizen feedbacks will carry 600 marks.

Areas of evaluations: Waste collection, sweeping and transportation (40% marks), Open defecation free (ODF) and toilets (30%), Municipal Solid Waste-processing and disposal (20%) and Information, education and behavior change and Capacity building-Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) e-learning portal (5% each).

Government approves new projects under Namami Gange for Haridwar and Varanasi - January 4, 2017



The National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has approved new projects under Namami Gange programme in Haridwar (Uttarakhand) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh). In Haridwar, 68 MLD sewage treatment plants (STP) and 14 MLD STP in Sarai was with Central government funding and also under Hybrid Annuity based PPP mode. Besides, 50 MLD sewage treatment plant at Ramana in Varana under Hybrid Annuity-based PPP mode was also approved.

Namami Gange Programme programme was launched to achieve the target of cleaning Ganga River in an effective manner with the unceasing involvement of all stakeholders, especially five major Ganga basin States Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. It envisages Sewerage Treatment Infrastructure, River Surface Cleaning, River Front

Development, Public Awareness and Bio-Diversity, Afforestation. It will be implemented by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), and its state counterpart State Program Management Groups (SPMGs). It seeks to improve coordination mechanisms between various Ministries/Agencies of the Union and State governments.

Seeking votes on religious basis a corrupt act: SC - January 3, 2017



The Supreme Court in its latest verdict has held that election candidates cannot seek votes on the grounds of the religion, caste, creed, community or language of voters. The ruling was given by a 4-3 majority of the seven-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice TS Thakur. It held that if the candidate is found violating the order will result into call for his disqualification.

The ruling can potentially overturn the traditional rules of the game for electoral politics in India. Traditionally parties did not

hesitate to employ religion, caste and ethnicity to woo voters. With this SC verdict, greater clarity will emerge once the Election Commission of India, implement this decision and spells out the electoral rules.

ICBM Agni-IV successfully test-fired off Odisha coast - January 2, 2017



India successfully test-fired its home-grown long range intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) Agni-IV from the Abdul Kalam Wheeler Island off Odisha coast. The test was aimed at revalidating new technologies incorporated in Agni-IV system and checking the readiness of armed forces to launch the missile on its own.

Agni-IV is two-stage surface-to-surface nuclear capable intercontinental ballistic missile. It can carry a one-tonne nuclear warhead over a distance of 4,000 kilometres.

Government meets PMUY target of 1.5 crore LPG connections - December 30, 2016



The Union Ministry for Petroleum & Natural Gas has met the 1.5-crore target for LPG connections that were to be added under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in the 2016-17 financial year. This Target was achieved within a span of less than eight months since the launch of the scheme which is implemented across 35 States/UTs.

Since the launch of the PMUY, the LPG coverage across the country has increased to 70% as of December 1, 2016 from earlier 61% as of January 1, 2016. Top five States with highest number of LPG connections are: Uttar Pradesh (46 lakh), West Bengal (19 lakh), Bihar (19 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (17 lakh) and Rajasthan (14 lakh). These states constitute nearly 75% of the total connections released. 14 States/UTs with LPG coverage less than the national average are J&K, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh

and all North-East States. They have been identified as priority States for implementing PMUY. The households belonging to SC/ST constitute the large chunk of beneficiaries of this scheme with 35% of the connections being released to them.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) scheme provides free LPG connection with financial assistance of Rs. 1600/- per connection to an adult woman member of BPL family identified through Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data. It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in May 2016 from Balia, Uttar Pradesh. PMUY is the first welfare scheme being implemented by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. The tagline of scheme is *Swachh Indhan, Behtar Jeevan*. It seeks to empower women and protect their health by shifting them from traditional cooking based on unclean cooking fuels or fossil fuels to clean cooking gas. It is being implemented over three years' time frame i.e. in the FY 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 with budgetary allocation of allocated Rs. 8,000 crore announced in the Union Budget 2016.

Government proposes setting up Financial Data Management Centre - December 30, 2016



The Union Government has proposed setting up Financial Data Management Centre (FDMC) based on recommendation of a committee set up under the Department of Economic Affairs (DEC). The Committee was headed by Ajay Tyagi, Additional Secretary in Union Finance Ministry and has submitted its report and a draft bill titled The Financial Data Management Centre Bill, 2016.

In 2015, FSDC first had suggested the creation of such a body, after Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had objected to share company-specific data with FSDC. RBI had given reason that FSDC is not a statutory bod in nature, and sharing such data would be a breach of confidentiality. To resolve this issue, Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his 2016-17 Budget Speech announced setting up of statutory FDMC under the aegis of the FSDC to facilitate integrated data aggregation and analysis in the financial sector.

Government launches Swachh Swasth Sarvatra initiative - December 29, 2016



Union Government launched Swachh Swasth Sarvatra initiative to strengthen health centres in open defecation-free (ODF) blocks. The objective of this initiative is to strengthen community health centres in 708 ODF blocks across the country to enable them to achieve higher levels of cleanliness and hygiene.

The Swachh Swasth Sarvatra is a part of the Union Government's flagship Swachh Bharat Mission and is focused on the twin objectives of constructing toilets and enabling behavioural change. It is joint initiative of Ministry of Health and Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation to achieve better health outcomes through improved sanitation and increase awareness on healthy lifestyles. Its objective is to build on and leverage achievements of two complementary programmes – Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and Kayakalp. Under it, financial

assistance of 10 lakh rupees will be given to the community health centres so that they can be strengthened to meet the standards of sanitation, hygiene and infection control.

Along with this, Union Health Minister J P Nadda and Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar also jointly launched a booklet- Healthy Children Healthy India. The booklet contains tips on leading a healthy life for children.

Union Cabinet approves ordinance to make possession of old notes penal offence - December 29, 2016



The Union Cabinet approved promulgation of Specified Bank Notes Cessation of Liabilities Ordinance to penalise persons holding banned 500 and 1,000 rupee notes. It will come into force once it gets Presidential assent as per Article 123 of the Constitution. It will make possession of a large number of demonetised 1,000 and 500 rupee notes beyond threshold amount a penal offence.

The ordinance amends Reserve Bank of India Act to provide legislative support for scrapping the demonetised banknotes that are not returned. It removes the liability of the government and the central bank on the demonetised high-denomination notes to prevent future litigations. It provides a limited window for depositing the cancelled notes at select RBI branches until March 31, 2017. The possession demonetised notes will attract a monetary fine of 10,000 rupees or five times the cash held, whichever is higher. The penalty for holding old high value currency in excess of 10 notes may include financial fines and no jail term. However, the old demonetised notes will be allowed only for the purpose of research and numismatics.

NGT bans open waste burning across the country - December 23, 2016



The National Green Tribunal (NGT) imposed a complete ban on burning of waste in open places across the country and announced a fine of Rs. 25,000 on each incident of bulk waste burning. The green

panel's judgement was given on the petition seeking directions to local bodies in states and Centre for improving solid waste management methods.

NGT Judgement

Complete prohibition on open burning of waste on lands, including at landfill sites. For each such incident, violators will pay environmental compensation of Rs. 5,000 in case of simple burning and Rs. 25,000 in case of bulk waste burning

- States and UTs to enforce and implement Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 in a time-bound manner.
- Union Environment Ministry and all States must pass appropriate directions in relation to the ban on short-life Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) and chlorinated plastics within a period of six months.
- Establish and operationalise of plants for processing and disposal of the waste and selection and specifications of landfill sites
- Non-biodegradable waste and non-recyclable plastic should be segregated from the landfill sites. It must be used for construction of roads and embankments in all road projects all over country.



Banking & Finance Current Affairs

RBI Current Rates: (As on 16/01/2017)

Policy Repo Rate	:	6.25%
Reverse Repo Rate	:	5.75%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate	:	6.75%
Bank Rate	:	6.75%
CRR	:	4%
SLR	:	20.50%

RBI Reference Rate

INR / 1 USD	:	68.1558
INR / 1 Euro	:	72.4155
INR / 100 Jap. YEN	:	59.7900
INR / 1 Pound Sterling	:	81.9982

Base Rate	:	9.25% - 9.65%
MCLR (Overnight)	:	7.75% - 9.00%
Savings Deposit Rate	:	4.00%
Term Deposit Rate > 1 Year	:	6.50% - 7.00%

Money Market

Call Rates	:	4.75%-6.25% *
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* as on previous day

Government Securities Market

7.72% GS 2025	:	6.6704%
91 day T-bills	:	6.2735%*
182 day T-bills	:	6.2879%*
364 day T-bills	:	6.2532%*

* cut-off at the last auction

Capital Market

S&P BSE Sensex	:	27288.17 *
Nifty 50	:	8412.80 *

* as on 16/01/2017

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates India's first international exchange at GIFT city - January 11, 2017



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first international exchange India INX at the

International Financial Service Centre (IFSC) of GIFT (Gujarat International Financial Tech) City Gandhinagar, Gujarat. India INX is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE). It will enable Indian firms to compete on equal footing with offshore firms.

India INX will initially trade in equity derivatives, currency derivatives, commodity derivatives including index and Stocks. Subsequently, it will offer depository receipts and bonds once required infrastructure is ready. It will work for 22 hours in a day working from sunrise to sunset i.e. starting when Japan exchanges begin and close when US markets end. It will have 250 trading members including commodity and overseas brokers. India INX is one of the most advanced technology platforms with turnaround time of 4 seconds. It will facilitate international investors and NRIs to trade from anywhere in the world. It will provide benefits in terms of waiver of security transaction tax, commodity transaction tax, dividend distribution tax, long term capital gain tax and income tax.

16th meeting of FSDC held in New Delhi - January 6, 2017



The 16th meeting of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC) was held in New Delhi. It was chaired by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley. It was attended by heads of all financial sector regulators as its members. It reviewed the major issues and challenges facing the economy.

Indian Economy: India appears to be much better placed because of improvement in its macroeconomic fundamental despite fragile world economy. It reviewed the major issues and challenges facing the economy.

Banking: The status of NPAs of public sector banks and measures taken by the government and the RBI for tackling the stressed assets were reviewed. It also discussed about further action to be taken in this regard.

Financial inclusion/ financial literacy: Discussed about the various initiatives taken by the

government and regulators for promoting financial inclusion/ literacy. It also discussed further measures for promoting the same.

Technology: Discussed issues pertaining to Fintech, digital innovations and cyber security. It also discussed on further steps to be taken.

Demonetisation: It will help in eliminating the shadow economy and tax evasion. It will have a positive impact on GDP and fiscal consolidation in the long run.

RBI appoints Surekha Marandi as executive director - January 4, 2017



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Surekha Marandi as its Executive Director (ED). She was appointed in place of U S Paliwal who retired on December 31, 2016. In her new role, she will look after Consumer Education and Protection Department, Financial Inclusion and Development Department, and Secretary's Department of the RBI.

Prior to her promotion as Executive Director, she had served as Principal Chief General Manager and Chief Vigilance Officer in the Reserve Bank over a span of three decades. She has rich experience of three decades in regulatory and

supervisory, financial inclusion and development and human resource management areas in the RBI. She has also served on the Boards of United Bank (UB) and Bank of Baroda (BOB).

Note: RBI has 11 Executive Directors who are in charge of various departments.

RBI extends period of enhanced Prepaid Payment Instruments limit - December 31, 2016



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the period of enhanced Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPI) limit of Rs 20,000 as part of efforts to promote digital payments. The limit has been extended till the completion of review of the PPI guidelines. However, the balance in such PPIs cannot exceed Rs 20,000 at any point of time and the merchants can transfer funds from such PPIs to their own linked bank accounts up to Rs 50,000 per month, without any limit per transaction.

PPIs are methods that facilitate purchase of goods and services against the value stored on such prepaid instruments. These instruments can be issued as online wallets, mobile accounts, mobile wallets, smart cards,

magnetic stripe cards, internet accounts, paper vouchers and any such instruments used to access the prepaid amount. The value stored on such instruments represents the value paid for by the holder, by debit, by cash to a bank account or by credit card. At present, 47 non-bank entities and 45 banks are operating payment systems for PPI.

Viral V Acharya appointed as RBI Deputy Governor - December 28, 2016



The Union Government has appointed Viral V Acharya (42) as new Deputy Governor at the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). He will have regular three-year tenure. His appointment was cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi. He will fill the post that fell vacant after Urjit Patel after he was made RBI Governor to succeed Rajan with effect from September 2016. The existing three Deputy Governors of RBI are S S Mundra, R Gandhi and N S Vishwanathan.

Viral V Acharya is an alumnus of IIT, Mumbai, with a degree of B Tech in Computer Science and Engineering in 1995 and PhD in Finance from NYU-Stern in 2001. He was with London Business School (2001-08) and served as the Academic Director of Collier Institute of Private Equity (2007-09) and Senior Houblon-Normal Research Fellow at Bank of England (2008). He also has served as Director, NSE-NYU Stern Initiative on the Study of Indian Capital Markets. He was a member of SEBI's International Advisory Board. Prior this appointment, he was serving as the C V Starr Professor of Economics in the Department of Finance at the New York University Stern School of Business (NYU-Stern). He is known for his research in theoretical and empirical analysis of systemic risks of the financial sector, its regulation and genesis in government-induced distortions. His research areas also span across agency-theoretic foundations, credit and liquidity risks as well as their general equilibrium consequences. He also has co-authored in the past at least three papers with the former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan. He had once called himself 'poor man's Raghuram Rajan'.

ICICI Bank launches EazyPay app for Merchants - December 24, 2016




ICICI Bank, India's largest private sector bank has launched EazyPay mobile application for merchants that allows all-in-one acceptance payments platform. This app consolidates all digital wallets, QR code, Unified Payments Interface

(UPI), and credit & debit cards modes of payments. With this, ICICI Bank became first bank in the country to roll out all-in-one payments platform.

Eazypay app is sustainable payment mode compared to current peer-to-peer digital applications. It has 'open architecture' which makes it distinct from other digital payments that are actually closed-loop prepaid instruments. Using it customer can make payments through any bank account using UPI or internet banking or using credit or debit card details on smartphone on a link forwarded by the merchant. It has no issue of hitting the limit as the money flows directly into the bank account of merchant. It also has its in-built billing application for merchants. It also allows merchants to receive payments from ICICI Bank's own e-wallet 'Pockets'.





General Awareness Quiz Section

Quiz - 1

1. The US space agency NASA is set to launch a mission to which asteroid by 2023 to explore the history and composition of the early solar system?
A. 10 Hygiea B. 4 Vesta
C. 16 Psyche D. 1 Ceres
2. Which Indian cricketer has been inducted into the Legends Club 'Hall of Fame' on January 17, 2017?
A. Mohammad Azharuddin
B. Javagal Srinath
C. Kapil Dev
D. Ravi Shastri
3. Which Indian island has been declared as the first cashless island of India by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on January 13, 2017?
A. Hope Island, Andhra Pradesh
B. Majuli, Assam
C. Karang Island, Manipur
D. Sagar Island, West Bengal
4. Sitalpati, which has recently been inducted in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCOs) intangible cultural heritage is a traditional art work of which state?
A. Madhya Pradesh B. Assam
C. Haryana D. West Bengal
5. Which committee has recently recommended creation of 20 percent reservation for girl students in IITs to boost the number of female students in institution?
A. Andy Harris
B. Michael Conaway
C. Timothy Gonsalves
D. Kavin Rodger
6. Which bank has launched the facility of Customizable Savings Account to enable the customers to select account features as per convenience?
A. ICICI Bank B. HDFC Bank
C. Axis Bank D. Yes Bank
7. Who is the winner of the 2016 T.S. Eliot prize for his poetry collection "Jackself" ?
A. Vahni Capildeo B. Rachael Boast
C. Jacob Polley D. Ian Duhig
8. Which Telecom company has launched a mobile TV service "Ditto TV"?
A. Bharti Airtel
B. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)
C. Reliance Communication Limited
D. Vodafone
9. Who has won the best director award at the 62nd Filmfare Awards 2017?
A. Nitesh Tiwari B. Abhishek Chaubey
C. Karan Johar D. Shakun Batra

10. The 62nd Filmfare Critics Award for Best Film was won by which film?
 - A. Udta Punjab
 - B. M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story
 - C. Neerja
 - D. Pink
11. What is the name of the autobiography of famous Indian actor Rishi Kapoor?
 - A. Uncensored Rishi Kapoor: From Beginning to End
 - B. Rishi Kapoor: The Householder, the Star
 - C. Khullam Khulla: Rishi Kapoor Uncensored
 - D. Mera Naam Rishi Kapoor
12. Thai Pongal is a state festival of which state of India ?
 - A. Kerala
 - B. Tamil Nadu
 - C. Karnataka
 - D. Andhra Pradesh
13. Which Indian bank has signed a pact with the State General Reserve Fund of Oman (SGRF) to fund \$50 million in Oman's private equity fund, Oman India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF)?
 - A. Reserve Bank of India
 - B. Asian Development bank
 - C. ICICI Bank
 - D. State Bank of India
14. Gujarat defeated which state to win the Ranji Trophy 2017?
 - A. Chennai
 - B. Mumbai
 - C. Kolkata
 - D. Lucknow
15. What was the theme of the 2017 Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit?
 - A. Economic Development with Vibrant Gujarat
 - B. Discovering New Gujarat
 - C. Vibrant Gujarat: Connecting India to the World
 - D. Transforming Gujarat to Global Business Hub
16. Bhogali Bihu is a harvest festival celebrated in which state of India ?
 - A. Assam
 - B. Bihar
 - C. Chhattisgarh
 - D. West Bengal
17. Where is the Kataraj Hindu Temple situated?
 - A. Malaysia
 - B. Bangladesh
 - C. Pakistan
 - D. Nepal
18. Which country is set to ban the sale of cigarette to people born after 2015 in an effort to completely phase out tobacco from the country?
 - A. Russia
 - B. Turkey
 - C. Norway
 - D. Singapore
19. Who has been appointed as the new Chairman of Tata Sons?
 - A. Rajeev Suri
 - B. Rekha M. Menon
 - C. Avinash Vashistha
 - D. Natarajan Chandrasekaran
20. Which Indian boxer has become the first female boxer to enter into professional boxing?
 - A. Pinki Rani
 - B. Kavita Goyat
 - C. Mary Kom
 - D. Sarita Devi
21. In which state is the world's largest 11-day Gala Festival "Bargarh Dhanua Jatra" organized?
 - A. Odisha
 - B. Karnataka
 - C. Tamil Nadu
 - D. Andhra Pradesh
22. Who has won the World Blitz Chess Championship 2016?
 - A. Garry Kasparov
 - B. Viswanathan Anand
 - C. Magnus Carlsen
 - D. Sergey Karjakin
23. Who has been elected as the new president of Haiti?
 - A. Jovenel Moise
 - B. Jean-Bertrand
 - C. Jacques Rousseau
 - D. Robert Labrousse
24. Which country will help India in developing Chennai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi as smart cities?
 - A. United Kingdom
 - B. Japan
 - C. France
 - D. United States
25. Which country has decided to switch off its FM radio network and completely convert to digital signals?
 - A. Sweden
 - B. Finland
 - C. Norway
 - D. Germany

Quiz - 2

1. The sports and culture based 'Judima Festival' is celebrated in which Indian State?
A. Mizoram B. Assam
C. Arunachal Pradesh D. Manipur
2. Himachal Pradesh recently launched its first cyber crime police station in Shimla to deal with increasing incidents of crime in cyberspace. In which city was India's first cyber crime police station inaugurated ?
A. Mumbai B. Bangalore
C. New Delhi D. Hyderabad
3. A R Rahman has been nominated for the 89th Academy Awards under both Best Original Score and Best Original Song category. Name the movie for which he has been nominated ?
A. Rogue One: A Star Wars Story
B. Pele: Birth of a Legend
C. The Hateful Eight
D. A War
4. Which among the following tech-giants have collaborated with Ministry of Consumer Affairs to launch 'Digitally Safe Consumer' campaign for protecting the online interest of the consumers?
A. Microsoft B. Google India
C. Accenture D. Amazon India
5. Name the famous co-artist, in the team that sketched the national emblem 'Lion Capital of Ashoka', who died at the age of 89 in Indore on December 24?
A. Nicola Benedetti
B. Nandlal Bose
C. Dinanath Bhargava
D. Sapekshi Bhargava
6. The virtual reality firm of Facebook, Oculus, has acquired which eye tracking Software Company on December 29?
A. Eye Track B. Eye Tribe
C. Eye Trial D. Eye View
7. Name the 7 year old Indian boy who has won a gold medal at the Asian Youth Karate Championships, New Delhi ?
A. Aamir Mansoor B. Haafiz Mansoor
C. Hashim Mansoor D. Aadil Mansoor
8. Name the mobile app has been launched by Maharashtra to check violation of child rights on November 9, 2016?
A. CHILD B. CHIRAG
C. Beti Bachao D. Beta Beti
9. Who is the author of book titled 'Solar Bones' won the Goldsmithz Prize?
A. Marlon James B. Paul Beatty
C. Mike McCormack D. Svetlana Alexievich
10. The number of rural households were distributed with free LPG connections under which scheme has crossed the 1 crore?
A. PMJDY B. PMKVY
C. PMUY D. PMAY
11. A fishing cat named Prionailurus viverrinus was identified walking through the moderately dense mangrove surrounding the Gilalalandi harbour near which place?
A. Mudumalai forest, Tamilnadu
B. Bandipur, Karnataka
C. Golaghat, Assam
D. Machilipatnam, Andhra Pradesh
12. Which state has been adjudged the most farmer friendly state in the country by the NITI Aayog's index?
A. Karnataka B. Bihar
C. Andhra Pradesh D. Maharashtra
13. Who has become the first US author to win the Man Booker Prize with his man-bookerracial satire "The Sellout"?
A. Yann Martel B. Marlon James
C. Hilary Mantel D. Paul Beatty
14. Which bank has sanctioned Rs 19,702 crore loan to National Water Development Agency (NWDA) for 50 irrigation projects?
A. NABARD B. SIDBI
C. State Bank Of India D. Bank of India
15. Which Grandmaster and Commonwealth champion created history at the Hoogeveen International chess tournament by becoming the first player ever to win the title twice in a row in the FIDE Open that concluded at the Dutch hamlet?
A. Viswanathan Anand B. Vishnu Prasanna
C. SL Narayanan D. Abhijeet Gupta

16. Which bank has declared Silchar as its 5th zone in North East after Guwahati, Shillong?
 - A. Bank of India
 - B. Bank of Maharashtra
 - C. Bank of Baroda
 - D. State Bank of India
17. What is the new word which has included by the Oxford English Dictionary which expresses emotions like irritation, disappointment etc.,?
 - A. Uyyoh
 - B. Hmm
 - C. Hurray
 - D. Aiyoh
18. Which bank has announced the deployment of Software Robotics for Business Processes across various functions of the bank?
 - A. ICICI
 - B. HDFC
 - C. IDFC
 - D. SBI
19. Which country has built world's longest bullet train network length of 2000 kms?
 - A. Japan
 - B. Singapore
 - C. Pakistan
 - D. China
20. Which impaired shooter from Pune won bronze in the 10m air rifle category at the 1st World Deaf Shooting Championships held in Kazan, Russia?
 - A. Prijeesha Deshmukh
 - B. Anil Deshmukh
 - C. Priyesha Deshmukh
 - D. Pritham Deshmukh
21. Which legendary singer has been conferred 'Banga Bibhushan' award by the West Bengal Government?
 - A. S. Janaki
 - B. S.P. Balasubramaniam
 - C. Asha Bhonsle
 - D. Lata Mangeshkar
22. India's first Bio-CNG plant will use agricultural residue to generate CNG to be commissioned in which city?
 - A. Bengaluru
 - B. Noida
 - C. Anand
 - D. Pune
23. Which country holds the first rank in the category of happiest place in the world as per latest Bloomberg Misery Index?
 - A. Thailand
 - B. Singapore
 - C. Japan
 - D. Switzerland
24. Which Bank has tied up with the E-Commerce Market Place Flipkart by expanding the Bank's in-app shop to book air tickets, hotels and bus tickets?
 - A. Kotak Mahindra Bank
 - B. HDFC
 - C. ICICI
 - D. South Indian Bank
25. Under the "Make In India Programme", the 100 MW project was commissioned using domestically manufactured cells and modules in which state?
 - A. Telangana
 - B. Kerala
 - C. Karnataka
 - D. Andhra Pradesh

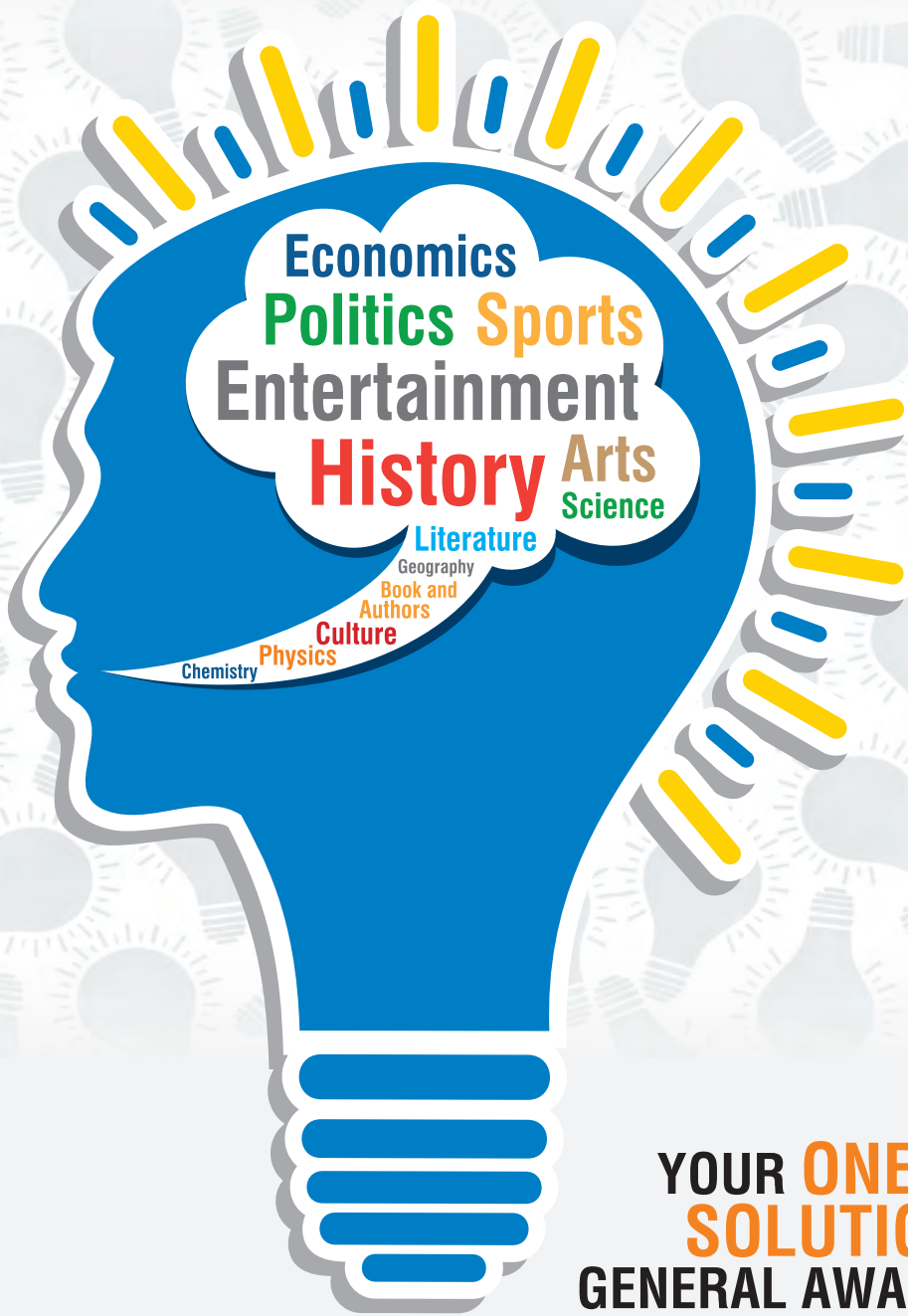
Answer Keys

Quiz - 1

1-C	2-C	3-C	4-D	5-C	6-D	7-C	8-B	9-A	10-C
11-C	12-B	13-D	14-B	15-C	16-A	17-C	18-A	19-D	20-D
21-A	22-D	23-A	24-B	25-C					

Quiz - 2

1-B	2-B	3-B	4-B	5-C	6-B	7-C	8-B	9-C	10-C
11-D	12-D	13-D	14-A	15-D	16-D	17-D	18-A	19-D	20-C
21-D	22-D	23-A	24-A	25-D					



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