

CURRENT AFFAIRS



MARCH 2016

tutorialspoint

SIMPLY EASY LEARNING

www.tutorialspoint.com



<https://www.facebook.com/tutorialspointindia>



<https://twitter.com/tutorialspoint>

Current Affairs March 2016

This is a guide to provide you a precise summary and big collection of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) covering national and international current affairs for the month of **March 2016**. This guide helps you in preparation for Indian competitive examinations like Bank PO, Banking, Railway, IAS, PCS, UPSC, CAT, GATE, CDS, NDA, MCA, MBA, Engineering, IBPS, Clerical Grade, Officer Grade etc.

Audience

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

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

Copyright and Disclaimer

© Copyright 2016 by Tutorials Point (I) Pvt. Ltd.

All the content and graphics published in this e-book are the property of Tutorials Point (I) Pvt. Ltd. The user of this e-book is prohibited to reuse, retain, copy, distribute or republish any contents or a part of contents of this e-book in any manner without written consent of the publisher.

We strive to update the contents of our website and tutorials as timely and as precisely as possible, however, the contents may contain inaccuracies or errors. Tutorials Point (I) Pvt. Ltd. provides no guarantee regarding the accuracy, timeliness or completeness of our website or its contents including this tutorial. If you discover any errors on our website or in this tutorial, please notify us at contact@tutorialspoint.com

Table of Contents

Current Affairs March 2016.....	i
Audience.....	i
Copyright and Disclaimer	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
APPOINTMENTS	1
AWARDS	11
DEATHS.....	22
DEFENCE.....	28
ECONOMIC	32
ENVIRONMENT	42
BANKING.....	43
IMPORTANT DAYS.....	51
INTERNATIONAL.....	54
MISCELLANEOUS.....	66
NATIONAL.....	73
PERSONS IN NEWS.....	97
PLACES IN NEWS.....	99
REGIONAL.....	102
REPORTS	110
RESIGNATIONS & RETIREMENTS	116

SPORTS	117
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY.....	124
VARIOUS COMMITTEES.....	128

APPOINTMENTS

News 1: Justice H.L. Dattu joins NHRC as Chairperson

Justice H.L. Dattu, former Chief Justice of India, joined as the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission of India. He is the seventh Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission.

His appointment was announced under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, by the President on the recommendation of the high-powered committee headed by the Prime Minister for the tenure of 5 years.



He took over the position from Justice C. Joseph, who has been the acting Chairperson since the end of the five-year term of former Chairperson K. G. Balakrishnan.

News 2: Hashim Thaci is the new President of Kosovo

The Members of Parliament of Kosovo elected Foreign Minister Hashim Thaci as the new president. The opposition members of the parliament boycotted the event because they accuse Thaci of being responsible for two deals with Serbia and Montenegro that they reject. Thaci succeeded Atifete Jahjaga.

He was a guerrilla leader during a conflict that led to Kosovo which unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008.



News 3: Rozle Prezelj elected Chairman of IAAF Athletes' Commission

At the IAAF Athletes' Commission meeting in Monaco, Rozle Prezelj was elected as the new Chairman. Prezelj represented Slovenia in High Jump at three Olympics and four IAAF World Championships.

He takes over as Chairman of the commission from Frank Fredericks with immediate effect.

Britain's marathon world record-holder Paula Radcliffe was nominated Vice Chairwoman of the commission.



News 4: Sanjiv Kapoor joins Vistara as Chief Strategy and Commercial Officer

Sanjiv Kapoor has joined Vistara Airlines as the Chief Strategy and Commercial Officer. Kapoor will take over from Giam Ming Toh, who is returning to Singapore Airlines on completion of his deputation with Vistara.

Kapoor is responsible for in-flight services and ground operations of the carrier. He has over 19 years of experience in the airline industry in various leadership and consulting roles.



News 5: Multi Commodity Exchange appoints Mrugank Paranjape as MD & CEO

MCX, the country's largest commodity exchange, appointed Mrugank Paranjape as MD & CEO for a period of 3 years. He will succeed Manoj Vaish, nearly two years after Mr Vaish resigned. Currently, he is India Head, Deutsche Bank.

The current Joint Managing Director of MCX, Parveen Kumar Singhal, has been redesignated as the President and full-time Director with effect from April 1, 2016.



News 6: Sunil Sabharwal reappointed as Alternate Executive Director at IMF

Independent investor Sunil Sabharwal has been reappointed as Alternate Executive Director at the IMF. He was first nominated by the US President Barack Obama in April 2014 and now re-nominated in March 2015. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Sabharwal was board chairman of Ogone, a European e-commerce payment services firm, from 2011-13.



With 16.81% of the voting shares of US in the IMF, it becomes one of the most powerful positions in IMF.

News 7: TCS CEO N. Chandrasekaran appointed to Board of RBI

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved appointment of Natarajan Chandrasekaran, CEO and MD of TCS; Sudhir Mankad, former Chief Secretary of Gujarat; and Bharat Narotam Doshi, non-executive chairman of Mahindra & Mahindra as part-time non-official directors to the board of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a period of 4 years.



News 8: Sun Pharma signs MS Dhoni as Revital H Brand Ambassador

Sun Pharma's Global Consumer Healthcare business announced Indian cricket team captain M. S. Dhoni as the new brand ambassador of Revital H. Dhoni said: "I strongly believe that the new brand positioning of Revital H will strongly resonate with the active generation of today's India and become a part of their everyday life."

The Company also has plans to telecast a new ad campaign featuring Dhoni, which will go live throughout the ICC T20 World Cup.



News 9: Canberra University appoints Indian Scholar H. Deep Saini as Vice Chancellor

Indian scholar and plant physiologist H. Deep Saini was appointed as the Vice Chancellor of University of Canberra. Saini is currently the Vice-President of the University of Toronto and Principal of the University of Toronto Mississauga campus in Canada. He will succeed Vice Chancellor Stephen Parker in September 2016.

Saini completed his undergraduate and master's degrees at the Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana, and doctorate in plant physiology from the University of Adelaide.



News 10: Sudhakar Rao to succeed as the New Chairman and Public Interest Director of BSE

Ater S Ramadorai retired as Chairman of BSE. Sudhakar Rao will succeed him as the new Chairman of BSE and new Public Interest Director subject to SEBI approval.

Rao, a retired IAS Officer of the 1973 batch, has previously held several positions in state and central government level. Mr. Rao is an Independent Director on the boards of several companies (including L&T IDPL, USL, HCG and IFFCO-TOKIO). He completed his three year term as an Independent Director on the Board of Indian Oil Corporation Limited in 2014.



News 11: Ex SC Judge Balbir Singh Chauhan Appointed as Chairman of 21st Law Commission of India

Former Supreme Court Judge, Justice Balbir Singh Chauhan, has been appointed as the Chairman of 21st Law Commission of India (LCI).

The Union Government also appointed former judge of the Gujarat high court, Justice Ravi R Tripathi, as member of 21st Law Commission of India. Currently he is Chairman of the Cauvery River Water Disputes Tribunal.



Justice B.S Chauhan

News 12: Tapan Chand Elected as AAI Chief

Tapan Chand has been elected as chief of Aluminum Association of India. Prior to his appointment, he was Chairman and Managing Director of National Aluminum Company.

Aluminum Association of India represents the entire spectrum of Indian Aluminum Industries. As president of the trade body, he is to approach the Union Ministry of Mines, for the revival of Aluminum Development and Promotion Council and Development Committee on Aluminium Utilization.



News 13: Egyptian Diplomat Ahmed Abul Gheit Named as Secretary General of Arab League

The Arab League has unanimously voted veteran Egyptian diplomat Ahmed Abul Gheit (73) as its Secretary General at its ministerial meeting held in Cairo, Egypt. He will succeed Nabil El-Araby whose term ends in July 2016.

Abul Gheit is a former ambassador of Egypt to the United Nations and also served as Egypt's foreign minister from 2004 to 2011 during the final seven years of Hosni Mubarak's rule.



News 14: Lt Gen N P S Hira appointed Deputy Chief of Indian Army

Lieutenant General (Lt Gen) N P S Hira has been appointed as Deputy Chief of Army Staff. Currently he is posted as Chief of Staff of Northern command at Udhampur, Jammu and Kashmir. He has earned an Ashok Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Shaurya Chakra and many more gallantry awards.

The General had commanded the 10 Infantry Division in Jammu and Kashmir on the Line of Control with distinction for which he was awarded the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.



News 15: NBFC Altico Capital appointed Naina Lal Kidwai as independent non-executive director to its board

Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) Altico Capital India nominated former HSBC India chairperson Naina Lal Kidwai as an independent non-executive director.

Altico Capital is a foreign owned and controlled NBFCs with a net worth Rs 2,000 crore and is well capitalized to capture loan growth opportunities being presented due to the capital constraints in the banking system.



News 16: UNFPA Appoints Actor, Activist, Ashley Judd, as Goodwill Ambassador

Acclaimed humanitarian, actor and writer, Ashley Judd, was appointed UNFPA's newest Goodwill Ambassador on 15th March 2016. As a UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador, she will support the efforts of UNFPA to end discrimination against women in all forms and promote their well-being.

Ashley and UNFPA will be joining forces to raise awareness to empower women to choose when and how often to become pregnant.



News 17: Fazle Kabir appointed as the new Governor of Bangladesh Bank

Immediately after the resignation of Atiur Rahman, former finance secretary Fazle Kabir was appointed the 11th Governor of the Bangladesh Bank, the central Bank of Bangladesh.

Atiur Rahman had resigned after taking moral responsibility over electronic theft of 101 million US dollars from the central bank's account with the New York Federal Reserve Bank.



News 18: AirAsia India appointed Amar Abrol as CEO

AirAsia India has appointed Amar Abrol as its Chief Executive Officer with effect from 1 April 2016. He will succeed Mittu Chandilya. Before joining AirAsia India, Mr Abrol was CEO of Tune Money. He spent 19 years with American Express.

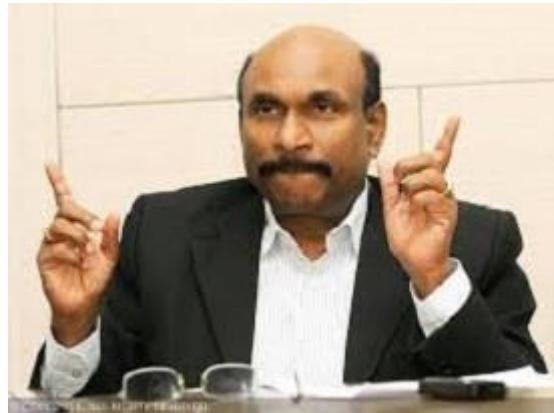
In other announcements, AirAsia India also announced the appointments of Ankur Khanna as the Chief Financial Officer and Kiran Jain as the Head of Commercial.



News 19: Honeywell Automation appoints Suresh Senapaty as the new Chairman

Honeywell Automation India Ltd (HAIL) appointed former Wipro CFO Suresh Senapaty as its Chairman. He has been appointed as an Additional Director (Non-Executive, Independent) and as Chairman of its Board of Directors. He succeeds Surendra L. Rao.

Mr. Senapaty has experience of over three decades in finance, governance, and strategy. Suresh Senapaty will be responsible for contributing to HAIL's overall strategy and to provide counsel on corporate governance, business, and financial matters.



News 20: S Sridhar appointed as new MD of Pfizer for 5 years

Pharmaceutical giant, Pfizer, appointed Mr. S Sridhar as its new Managing Director (MD) with immediate effect for a period of five years. S. Sridhar has been working with Pfizer from past 10 years.

Prior to joining Pfizer, he worked with Diageo India Pvt. Ltd as the Finance Director. Sridhar's appointment will be subject to the approval of shareholders at the ensuing Annual General Meeting of the company.



News 21: Sudhir Raheja given additional charge of AAI chairman

Sudhir Raheja has been given additional charge of the Airport Authority of India (AAI), Chairman. He has been appointed after the tenure of Mr. R K Srivastava tenure was curtailed by the government.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is responsible for creating, upgrading, maintaining and managing civil aviation infrastructure in India.



News 22: Indian Professor appointed as 56th President of International Studies Association

Indian Professor TV Paul, Professor of International Relations at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, was appointed as the 56th President of International Studies Association (ISA), at its annual convention at Atlanta, Georgia.

Kerala born, Mr. Paul called on international relations scholars to explicitly deal with grand strategies of peaceful change more effectively.



News 23: Pentagon nominates General Lori Robinson as first US female Combatant Chief

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced that Air Force Gen. Lori Robinson has been nominated to be the head of U.S. Northern Command, making her the nation's first female combatant commander. President Barack Obama has approved the choice, and now her nomination depends on Senate approval.



She is currently commander for the Pacific Air Forces and enrolled in the Air Force in 1982.

News 24: Lionel Messi appointed as Huawei Global Ambassador

Soccer superstar Lionel Messi was appointed as Huawei global brand ambassador for its consumer business group that deals in mobile devices. The deal is especially attractive for Huawei, which is looking to expand its reach in Europe, Asia and Latin America.

Huawei shipped 108 million smartphones in 2015 and became the third-largest player after Apple and Samsung. It has associated itself with cricket as a sponsor of IPL team RCB.



News 25: Justice H L Dattu appointed as member of International Coordinating Committee Bureau

Former Chief Justice of India, HL Dattu, was appointed a member of the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions (ICC) Bureau in Geneva. Justice Dattu is the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission.

NHRC, India will now be representing Asia-Pacific Region along with Mongolia, Qatar and Australia.



News 26: Justice Permod Kohli appointed as Chairman of Central Administrative Tribunal

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the appointment of Justice Permod Kohli, retired Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court as Chairman in the Central Administrative Tribunal for a period of 05 years with effect from the date of assumption of charge of the post, or till attaining the age of 68 years, whichever is earlier.



The Central Administrative Tribunal exercises original jurisdiction in relation to recruitment and all services matters of public servants covered by it

News 27: Paytm hires Bhushan Patil, Alibaba's former executive, as President

Paytm appointed ex-head of Alibaba Group Holding's wholesale business, Bhushan Patil as the company's new President after serving 5.5 years at the Chinese company, where he was handling operations of Alibaba.com. He will now focus on building Paytm's cross border commerce.

On the announcement, Bhushan Patil said, "It is indeed an honour to be a part of the Paytm vision and strategy both towards national cashless economy and the plan to take Paytm overseas."



News 28: Indian-origin professor Surya Deva appointed as UN Adviser on Human Rights and Businesses

The Geneva-based UN Human Rights Council appointed Indian-origin law professor Surya Deva as an adviser on human rights and multinationals and businesses.

He will be a part of the four-member Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations. Surya Deva is an Associate Professor at the School of Law of City University of Hong Kong.



News 29: Rakesh Mohan appointed as Independent Director of Nestle India

Dr. Rakesh Mohan, former RBI Deputy Governor, has been appointed as an Independent Non-Executive Director of Nestle India Ltd with effect from May 01, 2016 up to June 30, 2020.

He was executive director at the International Monetary Fund. He was also Deputy Governor of RBI and Secretary in Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.



AWARDS

News 1: Randeep Hooda Felicitated With Achievement Award

Bollywood actor Randeep Hooda was honoured by members of a non-profit organization South Asian Public Affairs Council (SAPAC) in Australia with an achievement award for making his mark in the film industry. The actor launched a non-profit organization 'Nobody Dies Hungry' founded by an Australian Indian Alok Kumar.

The award was presented to Mr. Hooda by the Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism Danielle Green. He also accepted to become an ambassador of 'Bully Zero Australia'.



News 2: Three British scientists win 2016 Brain Prize

Tim Bliss, Graham Collingridge and Richard Morris, three British scientists, will share the Grete Lundbeck European Brain Research Prize (also known as Brain Prize) for their work on memory.

The prize worth one million euros is awarded each year for an "outstanding contribution to European neuroscience".



News 3: Dr. Bhagwati Lal Vyas chosen for Bihari Puraskar 2015

Dr. Bhagwati Lal Vyas has been nominated for the 2015 Bihari Puraskar. He will be awarded for his anthology of Rajasthani poems 'Katha Sun Aawe Hai Sabad'. The award carries a cash prize of 1 lakh Rupees, a citation and a plaque. Dr Vyas, also a Sahitya Akademi recipient, has highlighted the increasing tendencies of commercialization and degradation of human values through his poetry.

The award was instituted by K K Birla Foundation in 1991. It is given annually for an outstanding literary work in Hindi or Rajasthani published during last 10 years by a Rajasthani writer.



News 4: Manoj Kumar to be conferred Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2015

Veteran Film Actor and Director Shri Manoj Kumar is to be conferred the 47th Dadasaheb Phalke Award for the year 2015. Award is conferred by the Government of India for outstanding contribution to the growth and development of Indian Cinema. The Award consists of a Swarn Kamal (Golden Lotus), a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakhs and a shawl.



Last year, the Dadasaheb Phalke award was given to Shashi Kapoor.

News 5: Ratan Thiyam nominated for 11th META Lifetime Achievement Award

Veteran playwright and director and the current chairman of the National School of Drama, Ratan Thiyam will be awarded with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award for 2016 at the 11th edition of Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards (META).

The award will be given to him for creating a new language in theatre and for his various roles as writer, director, designer, composer and choreographer.



News 6: Srinivasan K. Swamy receives Distinguished Service Award

Srinivasan K Swamy, Chairman and Managing Director, R K Swamy BBDO was awarded the Distinguished Service Award given by Advertising Club Madras for his outstanding contribution to the advertising industry.

The award was presented by N. Murali, Co-Chairman, Kasturi and Sons Limited (The Hindu Group).



News 7: Amrita Patel awarded with Mahindra Lifetime Achievement Award

Former Chairman of National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), Dr. Amrita Patel has been honoured with the Mahindra Samriddhi India Agri Lifetime Achievement Aear-Krishi Shiromani Samman in New Delhi.

Dr. Patel had played a pivotal role in the implementation of Operation Flood to promote, finance and deliver a variety of supporting services to a national cooperative dairy structure. It helped transform the lives of millions of marginalized and small farmers and milk producers.



News 8: Padma Sachdev given Krutitava Smagra Samman

Eminent Dogri poetess and writer Padma Sachdev was awarded Krutitava Smagra Samman for 2015 by the Bharatiya Bhasha Parishad in Kolkata, West Bengal for her outstanding contribution in literature and great service to Dogri Language. The award carries an amount of Rs. 1 lakh, a shawl, and citation.

Padma Sachdev has won the Sahitya Akademi Award at the young age of thirty for her first collection of Dogri poetry titled Mere Kavita. She is also a Padma Shri recipient.



News 9: Poll Based Investor Communication Award to NTPC

NTPC Ltd has been conferred the Research Investor Communication Award amongst the "Large Corporates" category for following transparent and fair communication practices by Research Bytes in an independent poll having participation of over 3000 Fund Managers/Analysts/Non Institutional Investors.

The award recognizes NTPC's effort in building a strong ecosystem based on consistent and regular communication with investors across the globe in a fair and transparent manner.



News 10: 'Nari Shakti Puraskar-2015' conferred by the President

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee conferred the 'Nari Shakti Puraskar-2015' on the occasion of International Women's Day. The awards are given every year by the Ministry of Women & Child Development to institutions and individuals who have made exceptional contribution towards empowerment of women.

Nari Shakti Puraskar carries a cash award of Rs. 2 Lakh and a certificate for institutions and Rs.1 Lakh and a certificate for individuals. This year, 7 awards have been given in the Institutional Category and 15 in the Individual Category.



News 11: Tezpur University and JNU won the annual Visitor's Awards for Central Universities

Tezpur University won the annual Visitor's Award for the Best University whereas Rakesh Bhatnagar and the Molecular Parasitology Group of JNU won the Visitor's Awards in category of Research and Innovation. The Visitor's Award for Research was presented to the Molecular Parasitology Group of Jawaharlal Nehru University for its pioneer work in the area of molecular parasitology, especially anti-malaria, leishmaniasis and amoebiasis



Awards were presented by President Mr. Pranab Mukherjee to the awardees at a function held at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 14 March 2016. Tezpur University received a Citation and Trophy while winners of Visitor's Award for Innovation and Research will receive a citation and cash award of one lakh rupees.

News 12: CEO of Jagran Group, Sanjay Gupta, presented IAA Editor of the Year

Union Minister of State (Home Affairs) Kiren Rijiju presented the IAA Editor of the Year award at the 4th Indian Advertising Association (IAA) Awards in Mumbai to CEO of Jagran Group and editor of Dainik Jagran, Sanjay Gupta.



The recipients of awards in other various categories are:

- Varun Dhawan, Actor: Brand Endorser of the Year
- Rajat Sharma of India TV: TV Anchor of the Year
- Raj Nayak of Colors: Media Person of the Year
- Kumar Mangalam Birla: CEO of the year
- Bharat Patel of Procter and Gamble: Inducted in the IAA Hall of Fame for his contribution in building the Vicks brand in India and popularizing it as a household name.

News 13: Palestinian Hanan Al Hroub wins 2016 Global Teacher Prize

A Palestinian primary school teacher, Hanan Al Hroub, won one-million-dollar Global Teacher Prize for educating her students about non-violence, beating nine other finalists from around the world, including an Indian, Robin Chaurasiya. She grew up in a Palestinian refugee camp and now is a teacher of refugees herself. Hroub runs the Samiha Khalil High School in Al-Bireh, Palestine.

The Global Teacher Prize is a 1 million US dollar award set up by Kerala-born entrepreneur and educational philanthropist Sunny Varkey, to recognize one exceptional teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession.



News 14: Kerala Tourism campaign wins Golden City Gate Award

Kerala Tourism's new campaign on responsible tourism has bagged the silver prize of this year's Das Golden Stadttor or 'Golden City Gate Award' at the world's leading travel trade show, at the Internationale Tourismus-Borse Berlin (ITB Berlin) 2016. Titled 'New Worlds', the multimedia campaign which contains three short films was directed by reputed Malayalam filmmaker Anwar Rasheed.



Kerala Tourism had earlier won the Ulysses Prize of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for its contribution as a global leader to sustainable tourism.

News 15: Chameli Devi Jain Award 2015-16 announced

The Media Foundation's Chameli Devi Jain award for 2015-16 has been jointly awarded to Priyanka Kakodkar and Raksha Kumar for work that combines social concern and compassion with ground-breaking reportage and sharp analytical skills.



The annual Chameli Devi Award of the Media Foundation is the premier award for women media persons in India.

News 16: India-Based Software Engineer Wins First Prize in United Nations #LinksSDGs Data Visualization Challenge

The United Nations announced that Abdulqadir Rashik won the Unite Ideas #LinksSDGs Data Visualization Challenge. Mr. Rashik, a software engineer, entrepreneur and founder of India-based Miavy Systems, was awarded the Challenge's top prize for his submission "Links to Sustainable Cities", an interactive visualization that identifies and maps the links between Sustainable Development Goal 11, Sustainable Cities and Communities, and the other 16 Goals.



The project was a collaboration between the Division for Sustainable Development and the Office of Information and Communications Technology.

News 17: Oxford Professor Sir Andrew Wiles wins 2016 Abel Prize

British mathematician Sir Andrew Wiles on 15th March 2016 has been announced as this year's recipient of the Abel prize, widely regarded as the Nobel for mathematics. The award is given by the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters in Oslo. The award carries a prize money of 600,000 Pound.

He won the award for solving a centuries-old hypothesis, Fermat's Last Theorem.



News 18: The Assassin swept away the 10th Asian Film Awards ceremony

The 10th Asian film awards were declared in Macau, China. 'The Assassin' bagged prizes for, best actress and best director. It received eight out of 15 trophies announced in the ceremony.

Major winners of the 10th Asian Film Awards:

- Best Film: The Assassin
- Best Director: Hou Hsiao-Hsien for The Assassin
- Best Actor: Lee Byung-hun for The Inside Men
- Best Actress: Shu Qi for The Assassin
- Lifetime Achievement Award: Yuen Wo-ping and Kirin Kiki

News 19: Skoch Awards conferred on KTR Rao and Venkaiah Naidu

The Skoch Challenger of the year Award was awarded to IT Minister of Telangana KT Rama Rao for his initiative in establishing the path breaking tech incubator T-Hub.

The Skoch Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on Urban Development Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu for his contributions to inclusive growth and towards poverty alleviation in India. on 18 March 2016 conferred with.



The awards were conferred at 43rdSKOCH summit held in New Delhi. Skoch Challenger Awards is the highest independently instituted civilian honors and conferred for the efforts in the area of digital, financial and social inclusion.

News 20: Tikka Shatrujit Singh honoured with top French award

French ambassador to India Francois Richier bestowed the prestigious Knight of the Legion of Honour to Tikka Shatrujit Singh, the royal scion of Kapurthala's Ahluwalia dynasty for his "extraordinary work in the exchanging the French lifestyle and Indian culture with each other."

Singh, known as the "guru of luxury," is the Advisor to the Chairman of multinational group Moët Hennessy-Louis Vuitton (LVMH). The Legion d'Honneur, created in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, is the highest civilian award given by the French Republic for outstanding service to France, regardless of the nationality of the recipients.



News 21: Indian Origin Geetakshi Arora wins first Noor Inayat Khan Prize

An Indian Origin student, Geetakshi Arora of SOAS South Asia Institute, was awarded the first Noor Inayat Khan Prize for her excellent thesis on "Goddess Myths in Graphic Novels: Reimagining Indian Feminity". Geetakshi was presented the award in Delhi by Michael Hu, head of SOAS South Asia Institute.

The award was founded by Noor Inayat Khan Memorial Trust in the memory of Noor Inayat Khan, famous World War II heroine, to promote the message of peace, non-violence and religious and racial harmony. The award consists of 1,000 pounds and certificate.



News 22: 5th National Photography Awards presented

The Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting Arun Jaitley gave away 5th National Photography Awards in New Delhi.

Recipients of major awards:

- Bhawan Singh - Life Time Achievement Award
- Javed Ahmed Dar - Professional Photographer Award
- Himanshu Thakur - Amateur Photographer



Amateur category award was given for works on the theme – 'Save Mother Earth', while the theme for professional photographers was 'Festivals of India'.

News 23: The 63rd National Film Awards announced

The Directorate of Film Festivals of India presented the 63rd National Film Awards to honor the best films of 2015 in the Indian cinema. The award ceremony will be held on 3 May 2016.



Major winners:

Best Feature Film	Baahubali: The Beginning
Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film Of A Director	Neeraj Ghaywan for Masaan
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Bajrangi Bhaijaan
Best Children's Film	Duronto
Best Direction	Sanjay Leela Bhansali for Bajirao Mastani
Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration	Nanak Shah Fakir
Best Film on Environment / Conservation / Preservation	Valiya Chirakulla Pakshikal
Best Film on Social Issue	Niranayakam
Best Actor	Amitabh Bachchan for Piku
Best Actress	Kangana Ranaut for Tanu Weds Manu Returns

News 24: The President conferred Padma awards 2016 on 56 awardees

President Pranab Mukherjee conferred five Padma Vibhushan, eight Padma Bhushan and 43 Padma Shri Awards 2016 on 56 distinguished personalities at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.



List of Recipients:

Padma Vibhushan:

1. Founder of Reliance Industries late Dhirubhai Hirachand Ambani (posthumous)
2. Former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Jagmohan
3. Art of Living founder Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
4. Indian-American economist Avinash Kamalakar Dixit
5. Renowned dancer Yamini Krishnamurti

Padma Bhushan:

1. Actor Anupam Pushkarnath Kher
2. Badminton star Saina Nehwal
3. Former CAG Vinod Rai
4. Pallonji Shapoorji Mistry
5. Hafeez Sorab Contractor
6. Barjinder Singh Hamdard
7. Alla Venkata Rama Rao
8. Duvvur Nageshwar Reddy

Padma Shri:

Some the prominent personalities among the 43 awardees included Actor Ajay Devgn, Filmmaker Madhur R Bhandarkar, Scientist Dr Mylswamy Annadurai, Athlete Deepika Kumari, Celebrated chef Mohammed Imtiaz Qureshi, etc.

News 25: Playback singer P. Susheela entered Guinness World Records

Legendary versatile playback singer P. Susheela Mohan entered the Guinness Book of Records for recording highest number of songs in several languages. She recorded 17695 songs in 12 Indian languages.

She has sung songs in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi and other Indian languages. Asia Book of Records has also officially recognized her for singing most number of songs in Indian languages.



DEATHS

News 1: Former New Zealand cricket captain Martin Crowe passed away

Former New Zealand Cricket captain Martin Crowe passed away at the age of 53 after a prolonged battle with cancer. The cricket great had been suffering from lymphoma since September 2014.

Crowe is one of New Zealand's best ever batsman, having scored 17 centuries and 5,444 runs in 77 Tests at an average of 45.36. He was also the captain of the national team from 1990-1993.



News 2: Senior most leader of the left front Ashok Ghosh passed away

Senior-most leader of the Left Front in West Bengal and veteran All India Forward Bloc (AIFB) leader Ashok Ghosh died at the age of 94. He had been on ventilator support for over a month.

He was one of the main persons behind the first and three successive anti-Congress governments between 1967 and 1970. Mr. Ghosh was drawn towards politics and freedom struggle after being influenced by the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. It was in 1952 that Mr. Ghosh for the first time was elected as the state Secretary of the Forward Bloc.



News 3: Former Lok Sabha Speaker PA Sangma dead

Former Lok Sabha Speaker, Purno Agitok Sangma, passed away after prolonged illness attack at the age of 68. He has been elected to the Lok Sabha eight times since 1977 and was the Speaker of the 11th Lok Sabha.

He also participated in the Presidential elections of 2012 but to a losing cause. A top Congress leader for many years, Sangma was among the founding members of the NCP.



News 4: Former Congress Minister R. Venkat Reddy passed away

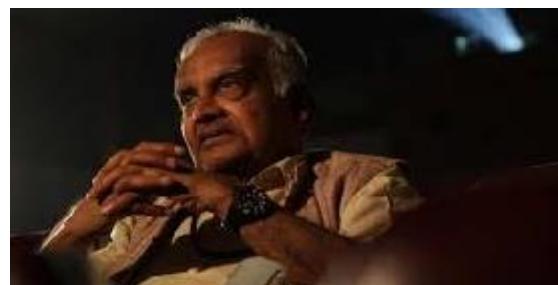
Former Congress Minister Ramreddy Venkat Reddy passed away after prolonged illness at the age of 72. He was a five-time MLA from Khammam district. He was also the Chairman of Public Accounts Committee of Telangana Assembly. Known as a soft-spoken politician, Venkat Reddy had served as Horticulture Minister in Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy and Kiran Kumar Reddy Governments.



News 5: P.K.Nair, the Legendary Film Archivist, dead

India's pioneer film archivist, P.K. Nair (Paramesh Krishnan Nair) passed away at a hospital in Pune due to cardiac arrest at the age of 86. Mr Nair was the founder director of the National Film Archive of India (NFAI), Pune.

His life and work has been immortalized in the documentary Celluloid Man, made by Shivendra Singh Dungarpur.



News 6: Internet pioneer and Email Inventor, Ray Tomlinson, passed away

Inventor of email and selector of @ symbol for email addresses, Ray Tomlinson, passed away at the age of 74 due to heart attack.

The US computer programmer became a cult figure for his invention of a program for ARPANET, the Internet's predecessor, in 1971. It was designed to send electronic messages that could be sent from one network to another.



News 7: Popular Malayalam Singer and Actor Kalabhavan Mani died

Popular Malayalam actor and singer Kalabhavan Mani passed away in Kochi at the age of 45. He had been hospitalized for liver ailment.

He had acted in over 200 films in Malayalam and other South Indian languages and won the national special jury award in 2000 for his performance in Malayalam film Vasanthiyum Lakshmiyum Pinne Njaanum.



The actor's sudden death came as a shock for the Malayalam fraternity and his hundreds of fans. Many, including senior actors and technicians, rushed to the hospital to pay their homage.

News 8: Former US First Lady and Actress Nancy Reagan died

Former US First Lady and actress, Nancy Davis Reagan, passed away at the age of 94. She was the wife of the 40th President of the United States, Ronald Reagan.

President Barack Obama and first lady Michelle Obama said Nancy Reagan redefined the role of first lady. Reagan became one of the most influential first ladies in U.S. history during her Republican husband's presidency from 1981 to 1989.



News 9: George Henry Martin "The Beatles Producer" died

George Henry Martin, the legendary music producer, died at the age of 90. Also popular as "The Beatles Producer" and "Fifth Beatle", he had signed the Beatles after every other British record company had turned them down. George produced more than 700 records.

He won 6 Grammy Awards in various categories. He was also honoured as a Knight Bachelor in 1996. He was named by the Guinness World Records as the most successful producer ever with more than 50 Numbers.



News 10: Brazilian Musician Nana Vasconcelos died

Eight-time Grammy Award winning Brazilian percussionist known for his wide instrumental range and major role in free spirited jazz and world music of the 1970s and 1980s, Nana Vasconcelos passed away due to lung cancer at the age of 71.

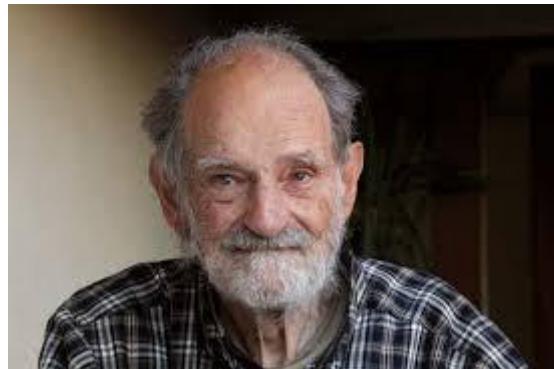
He started learning music from his father who was also a musician. He was a master of the single-string percussion instrument known in Portuguese as the berimbau.



News 11: Nobel laureate for Economics, Lloyd Stowell Shapley passed away

Nobel laureate Lloyd Stowell Shapley died at the age of 92 in Arizona. He shared the 2012 Nobel Prize in economic sciences for developing the theoretical underpinnings of methods for matching people with limited resources, including organ donors with patients, students with schools and doctors with hospitals.

He had left his mathematics studies at Harvard and had joined the US Army Air Corps during World War II. After the war, he earned degrees from Harvard and Princeton University.



News 12: Booker prize-winning novelist Anita Brookner died

The Booker Prize-winning British novelist and art historian Anita Brookner died at the age of 87.

The novelist, who won the Booker award in 1984 for her novel "Hotel du Lac", died peacefully in her sleep. She was the first woman to hold the Slade Professorship of Fine Art. She was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, one step below a knighthood, in 1990.



News 13: Shehnai proponent Ustad Ali Ahmad Hussain Khan passed away

Eminent Shehnai exponent Ustad Ali Ahmad Hussain Khan, the man who gave Doordarshan's signature tune, passed away in Kolkata at the age of 77.

Khan had performed globally and was felicitated with the Bangabhusan award by the West Bengal government in 2012. In 2010, he was felicitated with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to Hindustani instrumental music.



News 14: American singer Frank Sinatra Jr passed away

American singer Frank Sinatra Junior, who carried on his father's legacy with his own career in music, passed away due to heart attack at Daytona Beach in Florida at the age of 72.

He did some acting appearing in several shows and also had a guest appearance in an episode of Son of the Beach. He was the younger brother of singer and actress Nancy Sinatra and older brother of television producer Tina Sinatra.



News 15: TV Magician, Paul Daniels passed away

English magician and television performer Paul Daniels passed away at the age of 77 after being diagnosed with a brain tumor. His actual name is Newton Edward Daniels and was known by his stage name Paul Daniels.

Daniels was known for being outspoken on matters including politics and current affairs as well as magic, entertainment, and fellow celebrities. Daniels is famous for his television series The Paul Daniels Magic Show.



News 16: Kadhaprasangam Maestro and Actor VD Rajappan Died

Malayalam film actor and Kerala's popular "Kadhaprasangam" (Story-telling) maestro, VD Rajappan died at the age of 70 at Kottayam, Kerala.

The actor was mainly known for his comic roles and acted in more than 50 Malayalam movies. He was known for his unique brand of stand-up comedy in the late 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. He started his career in the 1980s mainly portraying comedian roles and has acted in more than 50 films in Malayalam. He is considered as the godfather of parody songs in Malayalam.



News 17: Comic Garry Shandling passed away

Hollywood comedian Garry Shandling died in Santa Monica at the age of 66. He is known for the shows, It's Garry Shandling's Show and The Larry Sanders Show.

He also acted in films like Iron Man 2, Captain America: The Winter Soldier, Dr Dolittle, Zoolander and Over the Hedge. The influential comedian was known for his neurotic observational humor, particularly about romantic relationships.



News 18: Jim Harrison Passed Away at the age of 78

Poet, Novelist and Essayist, Jim Harrison, passed away due to heart failure at his home in Patagonia, Arizona at the age of 78 years.

He authored almost 40 books, including novels, collections of poems and eloquent essays about his passion for food. His most recent book of fiction, "The Ancient Minstrel," was published this month. A book of poetry, "Dead Man's Float," was published this year.



News 1: The 7th Indo-Seychelles Joint Training 'Ex Lamitye' concludes

The Seventh Joint Military Training Exercise between the Indian Army and the Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF) – LAMITYE 2016, concluded at Seychelles Defence Academy (SDA), Victoria, Seychelles.

The exercise was conducted from 15 February to 28 February 2016. The SPDF was represented by 20 personnel from Tazar (Special Forces Unit) and 32 from Seychelles Infantry. The Indian contingent comprised of an Infantry platoon and representatives from the Special Forces. The concluding phase of the Exercise, incorporated a tactical exercise.



Image Source: CogDigital

News 2: "Exercise Force 18" of military of ASEAN Plus Countries Starts in Pune

A 7-day long multinational Field Training Exercise of around 300 military personnel participants from ASEAN plus countries started at Aundh Military Station in Pune on 2nd March, 2016. It will conclude on 8th March. "Exercise Force 18" is the largest ground forces operation ever conducted on Indian soil and the theme of the exercise is 'Humanitarian Mine Action' (HMA) and 'Peacekeeping Operations' (PKO).

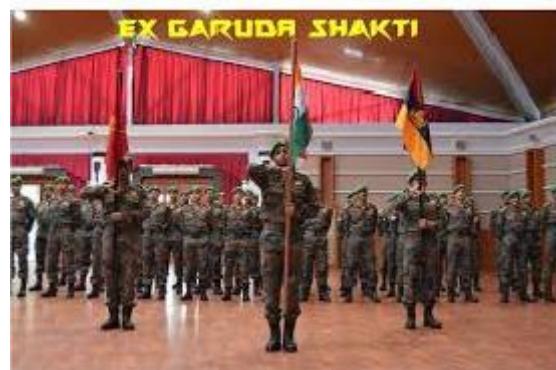


Participating ASEAN countries along with ASEAN Plus nations are India, Japan, China, South Korea, New Zealand, Australia, Russia and US. The ten ASEAN countries from South East Asia are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

News 3: Indo-Indonesia Joint Training Exercise Garuda Shakti IV

The fourth edition of the India-Indonesia Joint Training Exercise Garuda Shakti IV will be conducted for 13 days from 10 to 23 March 16 at Magelang, Indonesia in which an Indian Army platoon strength contingent will carry out cross training with a platoon from the Airborne battalion of the Indonesian Army.

The exercise will be on a joint counter insurgency operation with the setting of both rural and urban scenarios.



News 4: Defence Ministry gives nod to 7 stealth frigates worth Rs 13,000 crore

The defence ministry accorded approval for Rs 13,000 crore weapons and sensors package for the seven new stealth frigates for the Navy being constructed by defence shipyards.

It has also provided approval for the Rs 7,200 crore project to indigenously manufacture 244 air defence guns for the Indian Air Force.

The Rs 13,000 crore package for stealth frigates will be undertaken on a "single vendor and repeat order basis" The package will include BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, Ajanta electronic warfare systems and Humsa-NG radars



News 5: Nuclear capable Agni-I ballistic missile test fired successfully

India successfully test-fired indigenously built nuclear-capable intermediate range Agni-I ballistic missile. The surface-to-surface, single-stage missile, powered by solid propellants was launched from launch pad-4 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Abdul Kalam Island (Wheeler Island) on the Odisha coast. It covered 700 km distance within 9 minutes and 36 seconds.



Agni-I missile is equipped with sophisticated navigation system which ensures it reaches the target with a high degree of accuracy and precision.

News 6: Indian Navy deploys P8I maritime surveillance aircraft to Seychelles

The Indian Navy has deployed a P8I maritime exploration aircraft to Seychelles. This is the first time that the aircraft has been deployed in Seychelles. It has been deployed for surveillance in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Seychelles according to the MoU signed between India and Seychelles.

The will help in curbing illegal activities and piracy as well as contribute towards security and stability in the Indian Ocean Region.



News 7: Indian Coast Guard vessel Arvivesh commissioned

ICGS Arvivesh of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) was commissioned in Visakhapatnam. The Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) will primarily focus on surveillance at the sea, coastal patrol, anti-smuggling operations, anti-piracy apart from the routine search and rescue operations.

The 300-tonne and 50-m long vessel is propelled by triple Rolls Royce Kamewa water jets. It can achieve a maximum speed of 33 knots. Arvivesh is the 16th vessel among the 20 vessels in this category being constructed by Cochin Shipyard Limited.



News 8: DRDO Develops Thermal Imaging Radar that can look through a wall

DRDO Electronics & Radar Development Establishment (LRDE) has developed a radar that can look through a wall. The Through Barrier Imaging Radar has been named 'Divyachakshu' (divine eye) and is going through development trials now.



It can look through walls of 20-30 cm thickness made of any material, by using thermal imaging up to a distance of 20 meters.

News 9: Ashok Leyland ties up with US Firm to Develop Defence Systems

Ashok Leyland Defence Systems Ltd (ALDS) has tied up with US-based defence contractor Lockheed Martin Corp. to develop light specialist vehicle and light armored multi-purpose defence vehicles for the Indian Army.



Ashok Leyland would serve as the prime contractor whereas Lockheed Martin's High Mobility Vehicle or Common Vehicle Next Generation (CVNG) will provide the base platform for this development effort.

News 10: Tata Motors to supply another 619 HMV trucks to the Indian Army

Tata Motors have signed a follow-on contract with the Indian Army. Tata Motors will supply 619 units of its 6X6 high-mobility vehicle (HMV) multi-axle truck to the army as per the agreement.

The Indian Army had earlier given an order of 1239 units of the 6X6 HMV. The truck has an in-built crane for loading and unloading of ammunition pallets, spares and other operational equipment.



News 11: Defence Expo 2016 kicks off in Goa

The 9th edition of the four day Defence Expo 2016 started in Goa. The Expo is being held outside New Delhi for the first time. The 2016 theme is "Rise of Futurism".

Defence Expo 2016 is the country's biggest land, naval and homeland security exhibition. The Expo will see participation of 1,053 companies from 47 countries.



India is among a select few countries with indigenous capabilities in the defence field such as multi-level strategic deterrence, ballistic missile defence, nuclear powered submarines, main battle tank, stealth destroyers, and aircraft carriers.

ECONOMIC

News 1: Zee Media set to acquire 80% stake in India Today firms

The board of directors of Zee Media Corporation has approved in principal approval to acquire up to 80 per cent stake in India Today group's loss-making e-commerce and TV shopping entities — Today Merchandise and Today Retail Network Pvt Ltd — for Rs 166 crore in staggered payments over the next four years.

Zee Media would acquire 49 per cent stake by investing Rs 39.78 crore by June by subscribing equity shares of both companies and had managerial and operational control over the target company. It will further increase its stake by investing up to Rs 126 Cr over four years.



News 2: International Finance Corporation Launches Masala Bonds in Japan

International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group, launched its first 3-year Uridashi Masala Bond, mobilizing 300 million rupees (or \$4.3 million) directly from Japanese household investors to promote private sector development in India.

Masala bonds are rupee-denominated instruments sold only to offshore investors, while Uridashi bonds are sold to Japanese household investors. J.P Morgan is the sole arranger of the bonds. Daisen Hinomaru Securities Co. Ltd is the distributor of the bonds.



The bonds will be settled in yen and each bond is denominated at Rs 1,00,000, the IFC said, adding that the bonds will be issued on March 30, 2016 and mature on March 29, 2019 with an annual payout of 5.36 per cent.

News 3: Flipkart launches own Advertising Platform

Flipkart launched its own advertisement platform in the name of Brand Story Ads, with over 50 leading brands on board. Big names like Gillette, Datsun, Sony, Yes Bank, Bajaj, Godrej, IFB, Motorola, etc., are available on the platform.

Brand Story Ads, will appear on all properties of Flipkart. Since it has access to data of customer's preference on its platform, it will use brands to reach their target customers.



News 4: Amazon Is India's Most Trusted Online Shopping Brand

According to a recent survey, Amazon is India's most trusted online shopping brand. Snapdeal and Flipkart stood second and third respectively followed by Ebay, Myntra, Yepme, Jabong, Naaptol, Shopclues and Askmebazaar in the top ten.

The survey was conducted among 2,500 respondents, aged 21-50, across 16 cities. The findings of the survey have been compiled in the Brand Trust Report, India Study 2016.



News 5: Union Government rolled back tax proposal on Employee Provident Fund

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley rolled back the budget proposal to tax 60% of the Employee Provident Fund (EPF) corpus at the time of withdrawal. He proposed to exempt these from income tax if the amount was invested in pension annuity scheme.

The 40 per cent exemption given to subscribers of the National Pension Scheme (NPS) at the time of withdrawal would remain as it is.



News 6: Indian Railways enters into Agreement with Bajaj Power under PPP

The Bajaj power generation company (BPGC) has signed an agreement with Indian Railways for electrification of railway stretch between Lalitpur and Udaypura. The project will be carried on a Public Private Partnership model. The estimated cost of the project is 47.23 crores.

The electrification work would be completed in a year's time. The electrified rail section is expected to facilitate uninterrupted coal supply to the power plant of BPGC in Lalitpur and also help running of fast passenger trains in the area.



News 7: Rs. 1.15 lakh Cr disbursed under PM Mudra Yojana

08/03/2016. Banks have so far disbursed over Rs 1.15 lakh crore under Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY). Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) focuses on 5.75 crore self-employed who use funds in total Rs 11 lakh crore and provide jobs to 12 crore people.

The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April last year and 3 products available under the PMMY are Shishu, Kishor and Tarun, to signify the stage of growth and funding needs of the beneficiary micro unit or entrepreneur.



News 8: Japanese investment bank, SoftBank, Splits into Two Subsidiaries

Japanese investment bank SoftBank Group Corporation has announced that it would separate its profitable domestic mobile business from its global business, which includes a majority stake in US mobile operator Sprint Corp. Both the subsidiaries will be 100-percent owned by SoftBank.



SoftBank's President Nikesh Arora will now head the overseas management company, whereas Japanese telecom business and shares in domestic Internet firms such as Yahoo Japan will be managed by a separate company led by Ken Miyauchi.

News 9: Paytm ties up with US based FIS Global for first Payment Bank

Paytm has tied up with US-based FIS Global, for technology in order to launch its payment bank. The deal size is close to Rs 150 crore over a period of five years. The Florida based US Firm will help Paytm with core banking system. FIS Global is a Fortune 500 Company.

Paytm plans to invest Rs 1,200 crore in the payments bank during the first 3 years. It would set up 20 branches, 200 smaller branches, and recruit at least 1,000 agents.



News 10: Reliance JioNet to Offer free Wi-Fi at 6 T20 World Cup stadiums

Reliance JioNet will install Wi-Fi network at six stadiums that will be complimentary for audience and provide unlimited access at six cricket stadiums during the upcoming T20 World Cup matches.

The company's Wi-Fi network Jio Net will be available in Eden Garden at Kolkata, Wankhede Stadium (Mumbai), IS Bindra Stadium (Mohali), HPCA stadium (Dharamshala), Chinnaswamy Stadium (Bengaluru) and Feroz Shah Kotla (Delhi). The network is supported by 100 Gbps backhaul to ensure 15 Mbps speed for about 40,000 spectators during the matches.



News 11: Freecharge partners with movie theatre chain Cinepolis

Digital payments platform FreeCharge has partnered with Mexico-based chain of movie theatres, Cinepolis. The partnership aims to provide the customers an easy to use and secure way of making payments and started from the 2nd week of March.

Customers will be able to pay using their registered mobile numbers with FreeCharge. The transactions will get completed in a secure manner within 10 seconds using the dynamic "On-The-Go-Pin".



News 12: Government to Divest 5% Stake in Container Corporation of India

The government will sell 5% stake (9.74 million shares) in logistics firm Container Corporation of India (Concor) at a floor price of Rs 1,195 per share through the offer for sale (OFS) route. It will fetch the government around Rs 1,165 Cr.

It is a Navratna Public sector undertaking under the administrative control of Indian Ministry of Railways. The government currently holds 61.79% stake. So far this fiscal, the government has risen around Rs 18,277 crore by divesting stake in six public sector undertakings far short of its revised target of Rs. 41,000 crores for the current fiscal.



News 13: Uber Opens Asia's 1st Engineering Hub in India

The ride sharing service provider 'Uber' has opened its first Asian engineering center in Bangalore to solve the localized challenges of Uber users in the country and improving Uber's customer-facing technologies worldwide.

It provides multi-channel support via email, phone and social media to ensure seamless experience before, during and after a ride. UBER is going to invest over \$1 billion in India to build its network of cabs and has pumped in \$50 million to open an operations-support center in Hyderabad last month.



News 14: Deloitte selected as consultant for payments bank by India Post

India Post has signed an agreement with Deloitte and selected it to advise it on setting up a payment bank. The Public Investment Board (PIB) has already approved the 800-crore rupees proposal of India Post. The proposal will be sent to the Union Cabinet within 15 days for final approval.

India Post payments bank will primarily target unbanked and under-banked customers in rural, semi-rural and remote areas, with a focus on providing simple deposit products and money remittance services. The pilot for the payments bank is set to start from January 2017 and the full-fledged operations will start by March 2017.



News 15: Government imposed anti-dumping duty on plastic-processing imports

With an aim to protect the domestic industry, the government declared to impose anti-dumping duty of up to 44.7% on import of plastic-processing machines from following countries for five years:

- Chinese Taipei: 27.98%
- Malaysia: 44.74%
- Philippines: 30.85%
- Vietnam : 23.15%



The duty will be levied on imports of all kinds of plastic-processing or injection-molding machines, also known as injection presses.

News 16: Anti-Diabetic Drug 'Ayush-82' to be commercialized

The National Research Development Corporation(NRDC) of the Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, Ministry of Science & Technology signed a License Agreement with Kudos Laboratories India for commercialization of Ayush-82, an Ayurvedic formulation for prevention and management of Diabetes.

It has been developed by Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), New Delhi, an apex organization for research in Ayurveda under the Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy). Now Kudos Laboratories India could commercialize this product under their trade name with due acknowledgement to CCRAS, Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India.



News 17: Bharti Airtel buys Videocon Spectrum for Rs 4,428 cr.

Bharti Airtel has acquired Videocon Telecom for Rs 4,428 crore. Videocon had paid Rs 1,330 Cr in November 2012 for this. With this, Bharti Airtel will get the rights till 2032 to use 2X5 MHz of spectrum in the 1800 band allocated to Videocon by the government on April 5, 2013.

With this deal, Bharti's 4G coverage is likely to go up to 19 of 22 circles, compared to 22 with Reliance Jio. Vodafone and Idea have 4G spectrum in 5 and 12 circles, respectively



News 18: US Federal Reserve keeps Interest Rates unchanged

Federal Open Market Committee of US Federal Reserve announced the decision to maintain the target range for the federal funds rate at 0.25 to 0.5 percent. The potential hike was postponed after fears of a slowdown in China and collapsing oil prices have rattled investors worldwide.

The Committee decided to maintain its existing policy of reinvesting principal payments from its holdings of agency debt and agency mortgage-backed securities and of rolling over maturing Treasury securities at auction. The US central bank last raised rates in December 2015.



News 19: Hitachi-Omron invest Rs 100 Cr to setup ATM making firm in India

Hitachi-Omron Terminal Solutions Corp (Japan's Hitachi Group) has established an ATM manufacturing firm in India (Hitachi Terminal Solutions India Pvt. Ltd, based in Bengaluru) with a capital of Rs 100 crore and is set a target to produce 1,500 units of ATMs per month at the end of calendar year 2016. The new entity is expected to commence production in June 2016.

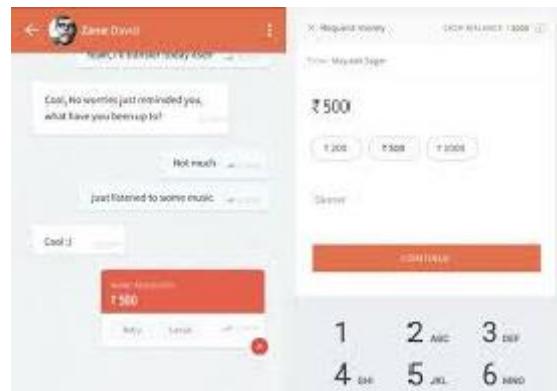


Hitachi has deployed over 5,000 units of ATM in India by 2015 and at present, there are about two lakh ATMs and CDs (Cash Dispensing ATMs) operating in the country.

News 20: FreeCharge allows payments via chat in 5 seconds

FreeCharge has introduced a spectacular new payment solution which authorizes payments through chats. A first-of-its-kind technology in India, 'Chat and Pay' will allow social payments from Person-to-Person(P2P) and between Customers and Merchants through a secure network.

The chat-based payments interface will let merchants accept payments using the FreeCharge app in under a minute of registration, merchants will also be able to upgrade their payment limit of Rs. 1,00,000 with necessary KYC verification.



News 21: Tata Steel expects Rs 20,000 Cr investment in Gopalpur SEZ

Tata Steel is expecting investments up to Rs 20,000 crore in heavy industries over the next five years at its Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project at Gopalpur in Odisha. The investment will be in defence, metal downstream and electronics as well as chemicals and pharmaceuticals.

Tata Steel is the anchor tenant for the multi-product 2,970-acre SEZ at Gopalpur in Odisha.

UK-based Midget Corporations is setting up an assembly plant in the SEZ for "unmanned aerial vehicle targets".



News 22: DIPP notifies 49% FDI under automatic route in Insurance and Pension sector

The Union Commerce and Industry Ministry has raised the limit of foreign direct investment in Insurance and Pension sector to 49 per cent under automatic route which includes foreign investment in the forms of FPI, FII, QFI, FVCI, NRI and DR. Earlier, only up to 26% FDI was permitted through the automatic approval route. But Foreign Investment Promotion Board nod would be needed for investment beyond 26 per cent and up to the cap of 49 per cent.



There are 52 insurance companies operating in India, of which 24 are life insurance business and 28 in general insurance. During April-December 2015, FDI into the country grew by 40% to \$29.44 billion.

News 23: RuPay to launch credit cards in September

The domestic card payment service provider, RuPay, will be venturing into the credit card arena from September. RuPay holds 38% market share in the debit card segment.



The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) plans to issue 100,000 such cards in the first year of its launch in two variants—Regular and Platinum. Gradually then extend its portfolio to offer co-branded cards.

News 24: USAID and ADB agreed to invest \$848 million in solar parks in India

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed an agreement to invest 848 million US dollars to develop solar parks in India.



The government has set a target of 175 Gigawatts of installed renewable energy capacity by 2022. Of this 100 GW is to come from solar power. The government also plans to set up 25 solar parks with a total capacity of 20,000 MW by 2020.

News 25: Yokohama Rubber to acquire Alliance Tire Group for \$1.2 billion

The Yokohama Rubber Company is set to acquire the Alliance Tire Group (ATG) for \$1.2 billion. Yokohama will acquire 90% stake held by US private equity giant KKR and 10% held by Mahansaria family.

The acquisition will be finalized on 1 July 2016, after completion of all necessary closing procedures, including regulatory approvals.



News 26: CBDT signed 11 unilateral Advance Pricing Agreements

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) signed 11 unilateral Advance Pricing Agreements (APAs). These APAs were signed with Indian subsidiaries of foreign companies operating in various segments of the economy like investment advisory services, engineering design services, marine products, contract R&D, software development services, IT enabled services, cargo handling support services, etc.

While seven of these APAs have rollback provisions contained in them, the other four are Agreements for future five years. APAs with rollback provisions can cover a maximum period of 9 years in total. With this round of signing, CBDT has so far entered into 31 APAs (30 unilateral and one bilateral).



News 27: Government approved 100% FDI in B2B E-commerce

The government allowed 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI) through the automatic route in the marketplace model of e-commerce retailing.

At present, global e-tailer giants like Amazon and Ebay are operating online marketplaces in India while homegrown players like Flipkart and Snapdeal have foreign investments even as there were no clear FDI guidelines on various online retail models.



The DIPP also notified new rules which now prohibit marketplaces from offering discounts and capping total sales originating from a group company or one vendor at 25%.

News 28: RBI signed \$700 Currency Swap Agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) signed a Special Currency Swap Agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka.

As per the agreement, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka can draw up to \$700 million for a maximum period of three months. This special arrangement is in addition to the existing Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for the SAARC Member Countries.



News 29: SEBI hiked FPI investment limit for government debt

SEBI has increased the FPI investment limit in central government securities to Rs 1,40,000 crore from 135400 crores from April 4. It will be further increased to Rs 1,44,000 crore from July 5. This will boost inflows of foreign funds into Indian capital markets.

The limit for investment by FPIs in state development loans will be enhanced to Rs 10,500 crore and Rs 14,000 crore on April 4 and on July 5, respectively from the existing limit is Rs 7,000 crore. Similarly, the limit for long term FPIs (Sovereign Wealth Funds, Multilateral Agencies, Endowment Funds, Insurance Funds, Pension Funds and Foreign Central Banks) in central government securities will be enhanced to Rs 50,000 crore and Rs 56,000 crore on April 4 and July 5, respectively from the existing limit of Rs 44,100.



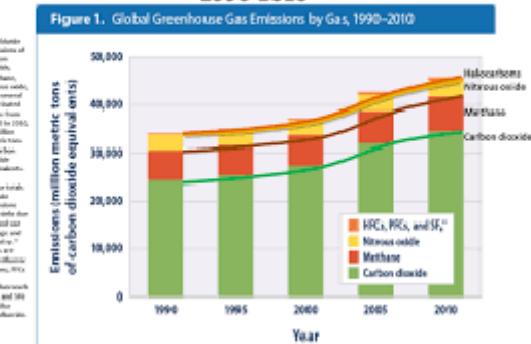
ENVIRONMENT

News 1: Year 2014 recorded highest anthropogenic carbon release in the past 66 million years

Carbon release rates from anthropogenic sources reached a record high of ~ 10 Pg Cyr $^{-1}$ in 2014 which is the highest in the past 66 million years. It was revealed in an article in the *Nature Geoscience* journal.

Such a 'no-analogue' state represents a fundamental challenge in constraining future climate projections. As per the research, current carbon emissions, mainly from burning fossil fuels, are about 10 billion tonnes a year, against 1.1 billion a year spread over 4000 years at the onset of the fast warming 56 million years ago.

US EPA Global GHG emissions 2014
1990-2010¹



News 2: New Environment Standards for Gensets Notified

The Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change has notified new environment standards for Gensets running on Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) / Natural Gas (NG), Diesel with LPG / NG and Petrol with LPG / NG operated in various cities / towns in the country.

The primary aim of the new standards for Gensets is to control air and noise pollution emanating from the operation of Gensets. These standards were recommended by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) after consultations with industries and other stakeholders.



News 3: India's Agasthyamala among 20 World Heritage Sites added by UNESCO

The Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve was among 20 new sites added by UNESCO in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves bringing the total number of biosphere reserves to 669 sites in 120 countries, including 16 transboundary sites. With the addition of ABR, 10 of the 18 biosphere reserves of India have made it to the list.



Agasthyamala Biosphere Reserve is located in the Western Ghats and is home to 2254 species of higher plants including about 400 that are endemic.

BANKING

News 1: SIDBI to Raise Rs 10,000 Cr. For Stand Up India Fund from RBI

SIDBI Chairman & MD Kshatrapati Shivaji said that the bank will be raising the proposed Rs 10,000-crore corpus for 'Stand Up India Fund' from RBI through the priority sector lending shortfalls. The funds will be disbursed to Dalit and women entrepreneurs.

Sidbi has set up a Rs 1,000 crore 'Make in India Fund' to refinance bank loans to the manufacturing sector. It has also committed Rs 300 crore of the Rs 10,000 crore 'Smile Fund' for small businesses announced earlier this year as part of the Start-Up India initiative



News 2: RBI unravels Rs. 40000 crore additional capital for banks

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised norms on capital recognition, making available an additional Rs. 40,000 crores to Indian banks.

The new revisions include recognition of revaluation reserves arising from change in the carrying amount of a bank's property consequent upon its revaluation as common equity tier-I capital instead of the earlier tier 2 capital. These would continue to be calculated at a discount of 55%. It will help open up Rs 35,000 crore capital for public sector banks and Rs 5,000 crore for private sector banks.



RBI said banks can recognize foreign currency reserves arising due to translation of financial statements of foreign operations to the reporting currency as common equity Tier-I (CET1) capital. Deferred tax assets arising due to timing differences may also be recognized as CET1 capital up to 10% of a bank's CET1 capital.

News 3: MoU between Indian Army and IndusInd Bank

An MoU was signed between the Indian Army and IndusInd Bank on the Defence Salary Package. The revised MoU is tailor made to suit the requirements of serving soldiers.

The basic features of the MoU includes free / concessional services including free drafts, free cheque books, free RTGS / NEFT and free ATM cards. Some features which have been improved from the previous MoU are that the Personal Accident Insurance cover has been freshly included this year for an amount of Rs 2 lacs (for JCO/OR) to Rs 5 lacs (for Officers) respectively and time period for issue of NOC has now been stipulated as 72 hrs (3 days) from the date of application.



News 4: Second edition of Gyan Sangam held in Gurgaon

The second edition of the Gyan Sangam, a retreat for banks and financial institutions, was held on March 4 and 5 in Gurgaon. The government has said that it has started the third phase of reforms in state-run banks, which will look into all aspects, including consolidation.

The agendas of discussion were: Restructuring and mergers and acquisitions of banks, NPA management and recovery, Technology, digital and financial inclusion, Credit growth, and Risk management.



News 5: 27 Government Banks May Be Merged into Just 6

The Government is planning to merge 27 public sector banks into just six. The view was shared in the recently concluded Gyan Sangam.

An expert committee would be setup to look into the issue and the committee will also work closely with the Banks Board Bureau (BBB) to identify the right matches for consolidation. The finance ministry is already looking into options to merge the newly-launched Bharatiya Mahila Bank with the other PSBs.



News 6: SBI among four foreign banks granted operating licenses by Myanmar

Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam, State Bank of India, Taiwan's Sun Commercial Bank and South Korea's Shinhan Bank were granted preliminary licenses by the Myanmar's Foreign Bank Licensing Committee. The total number of foreign banks allowed to conduct business in Myanmar is now 13.



The preliminary approval is valid for 12 months and will be converted a full-fledged license upon fulfilling statutory obligations.

News 7: Tata Housing partners with SBI for housing loans

Tata Housing has partnered with State Bank of India for housing loans to women on the occasion of the International Women's Day. Women customers need to pay only 20 per cent of the agreement value while the balance can be paid on taking possession of the property.

On the other hand, SBI will be offering home loans to its women customers at a special interest rate of 9.5 per cent per annum under the SBI Her Ghar scheme and it has also waived the processing fees on the home loan under the scheme.



News 8: YES BANK Launches All-Women 'YES Grace' Branches

YES BANK launched first three All-Women branches in Kalkaji, New Delhi; Vile Parle (E), Mumbai and Cunningham Road, Bangalore on the occasion of International Women's Day. Named YES Grace, the branches will be operated exclusively by women employees, including the support staff.

The YES Grace branch will offer customized banking solutions to the evolving financial needs of women. The bank aims to scale the initiative by opening similar All-Women branches in other major cities.



News 9: ICICI Bank launched a credit-linked subsidy scheme for home loans

ICICI Bank launched a credit-linked subsidy scheme for home loans under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. An individual including women borrowers from the economically weaker section and the low-income group customer will get a subsidy at 6.5 per cent per annum on a maximum amount of Rs 6 lakh or the loan amount, whichever is lower, for a maximum tenure of 15 years to acquire and construct the first brick-and-mortar house of the family by paying significantly lower equated monthly installments (EMIs).



ICICI Bank signed a MoU with National Housing Bank (NHB) to support Government's vision to provide housing for all by 2022.

News 10: HDFC Bank Ties Up with 5 Start Ups

HDFC Bank has tied up with 5 start-ups to strengthen their web, mobile and payment offerings. The bank had previously tied up with Chillr, which had raised \$6 million from Sequoia Capital.

The "Five startups" are Sense forth Technologies into AI customer response, Tagnpin -a marketing and customer engagement company, Safe 2 Pay-a point of sale-free payment system, Bugclipper-an in-app feedback tool and Taptis Technology- a bio metric payment company.



News 11: YES Bank inked MoU with India Brazil Chamber for strategic cooperation

In view of the next BRICS summit to be held in New Delhi this year, YES Bank has signed a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with India Brazil Chamber of Commerce (IBCC) to enable significant cooperation in knowledge partnerships, project consultancy, B2B opportunities, skill and technology initiatives.

The core sectors covered in the MoU will be Sports, Media and Entertainment with special focus on IT, Infrastructure, Broadcast and Innovative solutions driven business opportunities. Moreover, IBCC will also recommend YES BANK as the Preferred Bank to Brazilian companies looking to do business in India.



News 12: ICICI Bank launched “iTap”, a contactless NFC-based mobile payment solution Touch & Pay

ICICI Bank has launched a truly contactless payment system iTap, a new NFC-based (Near Field Communication (NFC) technology) mobile payment system enabling contactless transactions via its Pockets app where the user just has to wave his/her NFC-enabled mobile phone running Android 4.4 and above for making the payment at any merchant terminal supporting NFC.



ICICI Bank will be using the Host Card Emulation (HCE) technology to create 'virtual' cards for 'physical' credit or debit cards. While the virtual card bears a different card number, the credit limit and expiry date remains same as the original physical card. The virtual card resides in the Bank's secure cloud server.

News 13: RBI to Pay Rs 57,000 Cr. In Dividends to Government

The Reserve Bank of India is likely to pay the government Rs 57,000 crore in dividends in 2016-17. It is slightly less than the amount it paid in the current fiscal but much higher than that in earlier years. Last year, the government had received Rs. 73,905 crores as dividends from various state owned banks and the RBI. This fiscal year it has estimated to receive Rs. 69,897 crores.



Under Section 47 of the RBI Act, 1934 the central bank is mandated to pay balance profits to the government.

News 14: SBI claims top slot in mobile banking

SBI has reached the top position in the trendiest mobile banking space. According to data released by RBI, SBI now has 35% market share in mobile banking as its tax payment and fund transfer features drew in more customers. In December 2015, the market share of ICICI Bank was at 17.7% and for HDFC Bank it was 21.5%.



The public sector lender launched two new applications for corporate clients State Bank Anywhere Saral and State Bank Anywhere. SBI Anywhere Saral is for small to medium sized companies, while SBI Anywhere is designed for large corporates.

News 15: 5600 Willful Defaulters Owe Banks Rs. 60,000 Crores

According to a data released by credit information bureau CIBIL, more than 5,600 borrowers owe banks close to Rs 60,000 crore and have been declared willful defaulters by lenders as on December 31. These instances of willful default are those where banks have filed suits.

SBI is owed Rs 12,091 crore, followed by PNB which is owed Rs 9,445 crore by 698 borrowers. Kotak Mahindra Bank with Rs 5,442 crore of loans stuck with wilful defaulters is the highest amount among private sector banks. Wilful defaults for private sector banks stood at Rs 10,250 crore and at Rs 463 crore for foreign banks.



News 16: The Govt. of India cuts interest rates on PPF, Kisan Vikas Patra and on other small saving schemes

The government slashed interest rates on small-savings schemes, including the Public Provident Fund and Kisan Vikas Patra. The new rates will come into effect on April 1 and will be valid till June 30. The decision is aimed at aligning these administered interest rates closer to the market rates. The rates would be revised every quarter henceforth.



Instrument Type	New Interest	Previous Interest Rate
Public Provident Fund	8.1%	8.7%
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.8%	8.7%
Post office Savings	4%	4%
5-Year National Savings Certificate	8.1%	8.5%
5-Year Monthly Income Account	7.8%	8.4%
Sukanya Samriddhi Account	8.6%	9.2%
5- Year Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8.6%	9.3%

News 17: IOB becomes the 1st Bank to sell Indian Gold Coins

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has become the first bank to start the sale of Indian Gold Coin (IGC) in the domestic market. The bank has tied up with Metals and Minerals Trading Corporation of India (MMTC) for the sale of IGC of 24 carat purity. The IGC has the national emblem "the Ashok Chakra" engraved on one side and the face of Mahatma Gandhi on the other side. The current denominations available in the coins are 5, 10 and 20 gm.



Indian Overseas Bank : First Bank to Sell Indian Gold Coin

The Indian Gold Coin is the first ever national gold offering by the Center and launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 5, 2015. This gold coin is minted by the Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd and hallmarked by the Bureau of Indian Standards.

News 18: Core banking facility available at 25K post offices by April

25,000 post offices will offer core banking solutions (CBS) to its customers by April, against 20,494 CBS-enabled branches. This will enable customers' access their savings account from any of these 25,000 branches. India Post has a network of 1.55 lakh post offices, close to 90% in rural areas, and over 33 crore savings bank customers.



In September 2015, the postal department received an in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India to set up a payments bank within 18 months. Even the SBI has 16,333 branches.

News 19: Bajaj Finance eyes life care financing segment

Bajaj Finance is entering the Rs 20,000-crore life care segment introducing Finance options at 0% for treatments such as cosmetic, dental and hair transplant, and hair restoration.

The company has tied up with service providers, including VLCC, Kaya Skin Clinic, MyDentist and Enhance Clinic. It plans to be present in 1,500 sales points across the country by the end of the year. The Pune-based company, expects to net around Rs 1,000 crore in sales over the next five years from this business.



News 20: Federal Bank to support Startups through Incubation Centers

Federal Bank has announced to open incubation centers, named as Launchpad, to support startups in Bangalore and Ernakulam which will offer advice on capital, regulatory support and even disburse funds.

The bank plans to fund or lend promising startups through a dedicated start-up fund worth Rs 25 Cr. These would be equipped with fast internet connections, support staff from the financial world and advisory mechanisms.



News 21: Govt plans to infuse Rs. 5,050 crore in public sector banks

The parliament has approved the infusion of additional capital of Rs 5,050 crore in some public sector banks, most likely to Central Bank of India, Indian Bank, UCO Bank, Oriental Bank of Commerce, Vijaya Bank and United Bank of India.

It will be part of the Rs 25,000 crore capital infusion plan earmarked for the current fiscal. PSU banks will get Rs. 25,000 crore this fiscal and also in the next fiscal. Besides, Rs. 10,000 crore each would be infused in 2017-18 and 2018-19.



IMPORTANT DAYS

News 1: International Women's Day celebrated

International Women's Day (IWD) was celebrated across the globe on 8 March. The theme for this year's Women's Day is "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality". The campaign theme for the day is #PledgeForParity.

It is also known as the United Nations (UN) Day for Women's Rights and International Peace.



News 2: World Kidney Day observed worldwide

World Kidney Day (WKD) was observed worldwide on 10 March 2016. The theme was "Kidney Disease & Children - Act Early to Prevent It!" The theme was chosen to explain the important causes of kidney disease in children and ways to prevent it.

World Kidney Day (WKD) is observed every year on the second Thursday in March. This day is a mutual initiative of International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF). The aim of the day is to raise awareness about the role played by kidneys in maintaining overall health and to reduce the frequency and impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide.



News 3: UN International Day of Happiness 2016 celebrated on 20th March

The UN International Day of Happiness was celebrated on 20 March 2016. The United Nations appointed Red, the leader of the "Angry Birds" mobile game characters, as an envoy to inspire climate action toward a sustainable and happier future for all.

Since 2013, the UN has annually observed the Day on 20 March as a way to recognize the importance of happiness in the lives of people worldwide. This year's focus is on the relationship between having a healthy planet and happiness.



News 4: World Sparrow Day 2016 observed across the world

The World Sparrow Day was observed around the globe on 20 March 2016. The theme was Rise for the SPARROW-Experience the power of one. The theme has been inspired by the hope that more and more people will celebrate the relationship between People and Sparrows.

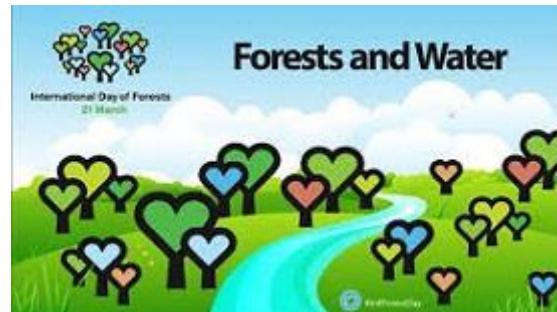
It is an international initiative by the Nature Forever Society of India in collaboration with the Eco-Sys Action Foundation (France) and numerous other national and international organizations across the world.



News 5: International Day of Forests observed with theme Forest and Water

The International Day of Forests is observed on March 21, every year to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests.

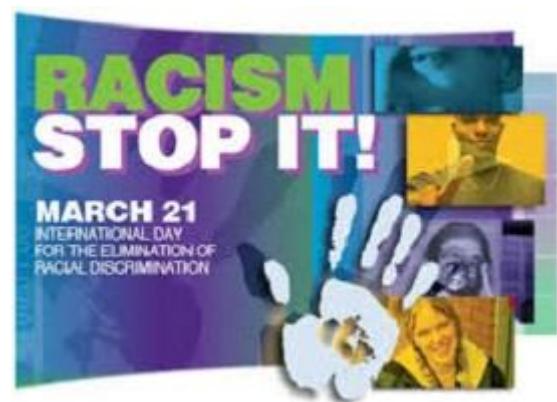
Theme for 2016: The theme of the 2016 International Day of Forests is "forests and water". To mark the Day, a joint celebration of the International Day of Forests and World Water Day will be held on 21 March 2016. The event entitled "Forests and Water | Sustain Life and Livelihoods" will raise awareness of the interconnections between forests and water and their contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



News 6: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2016 observed

The United Nations' (UN) International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was observed on March 21. The theme for this year was Challenges and Achievements of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action.

It creates awareness among people of racial discrimination's negative consequences. It also encourages people to remember their obligation and determination to combat racial discrimination.



News 7: Earth Hour 2016 observed all around the globe

The 10th edition of the Earth Hour was observed in a record 178 countries on 19 March 2016 by switching off lights in solidarity with global efforts to change climate change from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm local time.

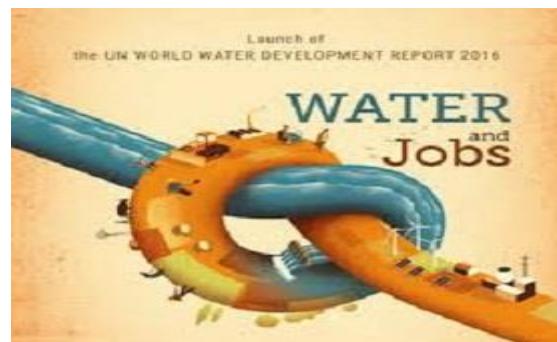
The specific theme for India was to encourage usage of solar energy by individuals and organizations.



News 8: World Water Day 2016 celebrated with the theme Water and Jobs

World Water Day is celebrated on March 22 every year. The day highlights the importance of freshwater and promotes sustainable management of freshwater resources.

The theme of 2016 World Water Day is "Better water, better jobs". It aims to highlight how water can create paid and decent work while contributing to a greener economy and sustainable development.



News 9: World Meteorological Day 2016 observed

The World Meteorological Day (WMD) 2016 is observed every year on 23 March. The theme for the WMD 2016 was Hotter, Drier, Wetter. Face the Future.

The Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Mr Petteri Taalas pointed out that, without urgent action to cut emissions, the trend of increasing temperatures and the frequency and intensity of extreme events will accelerate.



News 10: World Tuberculosis Day 2016 observed

World Tuberculosis Day (WTD), an annual event, which aims to raise public awareness of tuberculosis and the efforts made to prevent and treat this disease, was observed on 24th March all around the globe. The theme was Unite to End TB.

It is one of eight official global public health campaigns marked by the World Health Organization (WHO).



INTERNATIONAL

News 1: Japan lays down new plan to achieve 80% emission cut by 2050

The Japanese government will stipulate a long-term goal of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 from the current levels. This move follows a new international climate agreement reached in Paris in December 2015.

The plan is likely to be approved by the cabinet before Japan hosts the Group of Seven (G7) summit in May. Under this plan, the Japanese Government will seek to introduce more renewable sources, while also aiming to have all households shift to more energy efficient LED Lights by 2030.



News 2: South Korea passes Anti-Terror Bill

The controversial anti-terror law of South Korea South was passed by the parliament. 159 parliament members voted for the bill, while 1 voted against it. Opposition lawmakers made non-stop speeches to delay the vote on the country's first anti-terror bill from February 23.

This bill allows the spy agency to collect a wide range of personal data including phone records of those suspected of posing a security threat and also allows the National Intelligence Service (NIS) to have Internet posts deleted if it deems they pose a threat to public security.



News 3: Emergency declared in Peru after oil spill hits rivers

An emergency was declared three weeks after a major oil pipeline burst in Peru. The pipeline burst spilled more than a whopping 3000 barrels of crude oil into the Chiriaco and Morona rivers.

The government has instructed the indigenous communities not to eat fish from the polluted waters as it can be hazardous. This has been the third oil spill in less than a month in this region.



News 4: World's Costliest Train Station Opened at 9/11 Site in New York

The most expensive train station in the world was opened at the World Trade Center site in New York. There was no official announcement to mark the 3pm opening to the rail commuters. Initially budgeted at \$2 billion, it has spiraled to \$3.85 billion.

This center connects the PATH commuter rail to New Jersey with New York subway lines, provides indoor pedestrian access to the Trade Center towers and will also house an enormous shopping and restaurant plaza. This building is designed by Spanish-Swiss architect Santiago Calatrava and is called Oculus.



is designed by Spanish-Swiss architect Santiago Calatrava and is called Oculus.

News 5: South Korea and US starts their largest ever military exercise

South Korean and U.S. troops began their 8-week long large scale military exercises off the coast of the Korean peninsula involving about 17,000 American troops and more than 300,000 South Koreans.

North Korea has warned South Korea and US of nuclear strikes if the two allies go further with the drills. The annual exercises have traditionally led to a ratcheting up of tensions with Seoul's northern neighbor.



The last several months have been particularly contentious, after North Korea claimed to have tested its first hydrogen bomb and fired a satellite into orbit.

News 6: Iran Successfully Test-Fired Several Ballistic Missiles During Their Military Drill

Iran's Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) has launched several ballistic missiles as part of a military exercise. The missiles had a range of 300 kms to 2000 kms. These tests were conducted to showcase the country's preventive power and its skill to challenge any threat against the state and the sovereignty of the country.



These missiles launched from silos in several locations across the country also demonstrated Iran's deterrence power and its readiness to confront threats. Iran claims to already have surface-to-surface missiles with a range of 2000 kms, which are capable of striking Israel and US military bases in the Middle East.

News 7: Arab League brands Lebanese movement “Hezbollah” a terrorist group

The Arab League has declared the Lebanese Shia political organization “Hezbollah”, a terrorist group after the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had also declared Hezbollah a terrorist group.

The Arab League, dominated by Sunni Muslim countries, said the decision had been near unanimous. Hezbollah is a key political and military force in Lebanon, and is involved in the conflict in Syria. Its support for President Bashar al-Assad has long pitted it against Gulf states backing rebels.



News 8: The 13th meeting of Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development conducted in Dubai

The 13th meeting of Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development was held in Dubai. The meeting reached consensus on the need for a new set of connectivity targets to help governments more effectively harness broadband networks and services to drive progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. About 57% of the world's population are still offline and unable to take advantage of the enormous economic and social benefits the Internet can offer.



Established in 2010, as a top-level advocacy body promoting broadband as an accelerator of global development, the Broadband Commission is chaired by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Mexico's Carlos Slim Helú.

News 9: The 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves inaugurated at Lima, Peru.

The 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves was inaugurated on 14 March 2016 at Lima in Peru. This event was held from 14 March to 17 March 2016. The Congress will address issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, such as education for sustainable development, the economic viability of nature conservation systems, biodiversity, and the protection and sustainable use of natural resources, among others.



News 10: The 59th Commission on Narcotic Drugs took place from 14-22 March 2016 in Vienna

The 59th Session of Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was inaugurated on the 14th March 2016 in Vienna, Austria. This commission meets every year to discuss the global state of drug control and to adopt resolutions to guide the way forward. Around 1500 delegates representing Member States, inter-governmental organizations, and civil society will be participating in the session.

During this session, the Commission will discuss 10 draft resolutions and hold 74 side events and over 25 exhibitions. Among other things, the session's work includes preparations for the UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem, which is to be held in April 2016.



News 11: Mother Teresa to be granted Sainthood on September 4

Pope Francis announced that Mother Teresa will be granted sainthood of the Roman Catholic Church on the 4th September 2016.

The Nobel Laureate founded the Missionaries of Charity and spent close to 45 years serving the poor, the sick, the orphaned, and the dying on the streets of Kolkata. She died at the age of 87 in Kolkata in year 1997. She was known as the saint of the gutters.



News 12: Mauritania becomes second African country to ratify 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention

Mauritania has ratified the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, reinforcing thereby the global movement against forced labor in all its forms, including human trafficking.

Mauritania follows Niger, Norway and the United Kingdom. The protocol requires States to take effective measures for prevention of forced labor, protection of victims and ensuring their access to justice and compensation. The ILO estimates that 21 million people are victims of forced labor worldwide, generating approximately US\$ 150 billion in illicit profits annually.



News 13: Malawi tests first unmanned aerial vehicle flights for HIV early infant diagnosis

The Government of Malawi and UNICEF have started testing the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs or drones) to explore cost effective ways of reducing waiting times for HIV testing of infants.

The test, which is using simulated samples, will have the potential to cut waiting times dramatically, and if successful, will be integrated into the health system alongside others mechanisms such as road transport and SMS.



The first successful test flight completed the 10 km route unhindered travelling from a community health centre to the Kamuzu Central Hospital laboratory.

News 14: My Biosphere, My Future campaign: Launched by UNESCO in Lima

My Biosphere, My Future campaign was launched by UNESCO at the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves in Lima, Peru for sustainable development through different projects.



The biodiversity hotspot, Oxapampa – Ashaninka – Yanesha biosphere reserve in the Amazon is being disturbed by the human activities like deforestation and overfishing of endangering local species of tropical fish.

This campaign will help to address the problems of the biosphere in the Amazon belt and improve the income and quality of life through various projects.

News 15: Myanmar Parliament elected Htin Kyaw as the first civilian President in 53 years

Myanmar's parliament, the Hluttaw, has chosen Htin Kyaw as the country's new president. This brought end to a decade close of military rule. Kyaw will replace Thein Sein who will step down at the end of March 2016.



He was elected with 360 of the total 652 votes casted. The two other candidates put forward, Khin Aung Myint and Henry Van Thio, by the army and the upper house, will act as first and second vice president, respectively.

News 16: TCS named official technology partner for Virgin Money London Marathon

The IT Major Tata Consultancy Services through a press release has announced it has been named as the official technology partner of Virgin Money London Marathon for three years – 2016, 2017 and 2018.

The partnership with Virgin Money London Marathon would help them to enhance the digital experience delivered to marathon participants by giving them wealth of data and insight to help and guide their preparation and also to boost their performance.

The Virgin Money London Marathon is an annual long-distance running event held in London, United Kingdom. The event holds the Guinness world record as the largest annual fund raising event in the world.



News 17: Russia's own Rating Firm – ACRA aims at breaking monopoly

Russia's own new national credit-ratings firm Analytical Credit Rating Agency (ACRA), seen as a domestic competitor to global ratings agencies, plans to issue its first ratings this year.

The "Big Three" global credit rating agencies, all based in the US – Standard and Poor's, Moody's, and Fitch Ratings announced to officially stop issuing local credit ratings for Russian companies. The CEO of ACRA is Ekaterina Trofimova.



News 18: Obama starts for a historic Cuba visit

The US President Barack Obama boarded on a historic trip to Cuba. The three-day trip – the first by a US president in 88 years – was unthinkable until Obama and the Cuban President Raul Castro agreed in December 2014 to re-establish diplomatic ties.

The president Obama has gone along with his wife Michelle and their two daughters Sasha and Malia. As the Air Force One touched down in Havana, the US president cheerfully began the landmark trip by tweeting in local slang: "Que bola Cuba?" - or "What's up Cuba?"



News 19: Prince Harry Begins a 5-day Trip to Nepal

Britain's Prince Harry began a 5-day official trip to Nepal on the 19th March. He reached Kathmandu to mark the 200th anniversary of their bilateral ties. Prince Harry is leading a 30-member delegation. He met the Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli and discussed Nepal-Britain bilateral co-operation.

Prince Harry is the first British royal to visit Nepal since the monarchy was abolished in 2008 following street protests. During his trip, Harry will tour areas hit by last year's devastating earthquake and visit a camp for displaced quake survivors.



News 20: Nepal joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as Dialogue Partner

Nepal joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) as their Dialogue Partner after a memorandum was signed during the Nepalese Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to China.

Azerbaijan also officially became a SCO dialogue partner on 21 March 2016. The SCO currently has six member states - China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, with Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan as observers, and Belarus, Turkey and Sri Lanka as dialogue partners.



News 21: Ali Mohamed Shein wins Presidential Elections of Zanzibar

The Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) has declared the incumbent President Ali Mohamed Shein of Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) as winner of the presidential elections. He won with 91.4% of the votes. Fifteen European and US diplomats, however, issued a joint statement regretting the weekend vote, which was boycotted by the opposition.

Zanzibar is a semi-autonomous region of Tanzania and has its own president and parliament.



News 22: Brussels: Islamic State attacks airport and stations; 31 killed

Brussels, the capital city of Belgium, came under terrorist attacks when a series of explosions took place at the Zaventem Airport and Maalbeek metro station killing at least 31 people and injuring more than 200. The Islamic State has taken the responsibility of the attacks.

Three days of national mourning have been declared in Belgium. Investigators believe they were carried out by the same cell behind November's gun and bomb attacks in Paris.



News 23: OECD released Standardized e-format for Exchange of BEPS Country-by-Country reports

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released its standardized electronic format for the exchange of Country-by-Country (CbC) reports between jurisdictions, CbC XML Schema – along with the related user guide.



The move is part of larger efforts, agreed upon by G-20 countries to clamp down on activities that lead to Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS). The first exchanges of CbC reports will start in 2018, with information on the year 2016.

News 24: The 9th International Abilympics started in France

The 9th International Abilympics started on 23rd March 2016 at Bordeaux in France. The name Abilympics comes from the idea of organizing a competition to promote the skills of persons with disabilities. It combines Abilities with the idea of the Olympics.

The International Abilympics Federation (IAF) aims at promoting the skills competition for persons with disabilities in its international dimension. The International Abilympics are held every four years. The other countries which hosted the Abilympics are Australia in 1995, Czech Republic in 2000, India in 2003, Japan in 2007 and Korea in 2011.



News 25: US Congress introduces legislation to help India join APEC

The Chairman of the House Sub-committee on Asia and the Pacific, Matt Salmon along with few other influential lawmakers introduced a Bill in the Congress asking the US administration to help India join the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) saying an economically prosperous India benefits the US' strategic goals in Asia.

The Singapore headquartered APEC is a forum for 21 economies to promote free trade throughout the Asia-Pacific region.



News 26: US House introduces resolution to bring India on par with NATO allies

A Congressional resolution was introduced in the United States House aiming to bring India on par with America's NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) allies.

This was introduced by the Congressman George Holding, who is the Co-Chairman of the House India Caucus, the US-India Defense Technology and Partnership Act (HR 4825), the resolution also seeks to elevate India's status in export of defence articles from the US.



News 27: Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic sentenced to 40-year imprisonment on account of Genocide

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) found former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic guilty of the 1995 Srebrenica genocide and nine other war crimes. The court, hence, sentenced him to a 40-year imprisonment.

As per the ruling, Karadzic was found guilty of 10 out of 11 charges related to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crime charges. However, he was acquitted of a second count of genocide in other Bosnian towns.



News 28: Iran signed contract with France's Oil Giant, Total

Iran has inked a confidential oil agreement with French oil giant, Total, to develop the South Azadegan oil field shared by Iran and Iraq, which also holds an in-situ oil reserve of about 33.2 billion barrels.

Iran and the oil giant, have agreed to keep the articles of the accord confidential, and the French firm is now "studying its participation in the development of the oil field," Zangeneh was quoted as saying by Press TV.



News 29: Pakistan and Iran agree to boost economic ties

Iran and Pakistan have mutually agreed to improve economic ties. The two countries also agreed to open two more border crossings to increase trade.

The agreement was reached when the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani met the Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif during his two-day official visit to Pakistan. The two leaders also discussed about cooperation in the fields of energy, anti-terrorism fights, sea-trade and other such critical areas.



News 30: World Bank approved \$100 million loan to Jordan for creating jobs for Jordanians, Syrian refugees

The World Bank President Jim Yong Kim announced to provide 100 million US dollars' loan, at rates usually reserved for the poorest countries, to Jordan for creating one lakh jobs for Jordanians and Syrian refugees.

The World Bank extended the highly unusual financing offer because of the extraordinarily difficult situation faced by both the refugees and their Jordanian hosts. The announcement was made during a joint visit by Kim and United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.



News 31: Singapore Test Fires Barak Missile

Singapore successfully test-fired its Barak Missile. The missile was test-fired from its Victory-class missile corvette RSS Vigour during a fleet exercise conducted in the South China Sea.

Singapore's Minister for Defence Dr. Ng Eng Hen was briefed by Colonel Edwin Leong, Commanding Officer of the RSN's Missile Corvette Squadron, on the conduct of the exercise and the capabilities of the missile corvette, the defense ministry said in a press statement today.



News 32: Syrian Army recaptured Palmyra city from the Islamic State

Palmyra was in the news on 26th March 2016 as the Syrian Army recaptured the historic city from Islamic State (IS) terror group Russian Aerospace Forces.

The loss of is a big setback for the Islamic State. The Islamic State militants retreating from Palmyra laid thousands of mines which the Syrian army is now clearing before civilians can return. The Islamic State still has complete control over Raqqa and runs most of Deir al-Zor province in eastern Syria, which borders Iraq.



News 33: First Cyber Security Organization launched by China

China launched its first cyber security public organization, Cyber Security Association of China. It is aimed at safeguarding national cyber security and guiding Internet companies to perform their duties. China had launched its first special fund for cyber security with an initial capital of 300 million yuan (\$46 million) in order to become a strong internet power.



This organization will focus on promoting self-discipline in the industry, accelerating the establishment of industry standards and cybersecurity studies and participating in international cooperation.

News 34: UNICEF launches “Unfair Tales” of refugee and migrant children

The United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) launched a series of animated films called 'Unfair Tales'. These animated films are the true stories of the plight of children from the conflict areas, which explain the horror behind why they had to flee. The three animated films are: i) "Ivine and the Pillow" ii) "Malak and the Boat" and iii) Mustafa. These tales are a part of the #actofhumanity initiative.



News 35: US museum returned ancient Rama statue to Cambodia

The Denver Museum of Art of United States returned a 10th century sandstone statue of God Rama stolen from Cambodia. The statue called the "Torso of Rama" does not have head, arms and feet.

The museum said it itself realized that the Khmer-era statue was looted from the Koh Ker temple near the famous Angkor Wat complex in the 70s decade after the recent discussions with Cambodia.



News 36: First company listing done in Myanmar

Myanmar's Yangon Stock Exchange opened for its first day of business, with the trading of a single company, First Myanmar Investment Co. The shares of First Myanmar rose by 19%. The move comes as the country's development accelerates with a democratic government being formed after an election victory in November, part of a political and economic transformation that's bringing an end to more than five decades of isolation.



First Myanmar, Myanmar Citizens Bank and Myanmar Thilawa SEZ are among the initial batch of six companies approved for listing.

MISCELLANEOUS

- BK Prasad was appointed as the head of a high level committee to look into issue of missing files related to Ishrat Jahan case.
- An international team of scientists discovered 250-million-year-old new fossil of reptile, from Rio Grande do Sul, southernmost Brazil named - Teyujagua (fierce lizard).
- American mathematician and Nobel Prize-winning economist, Lloyd Stowell Shapley, died on 12 March 2012. He won the Prize in 2012 for his contribution for the field of Game theory.
- The Indian Foreign Service officer of the 1998 batch who on 12 March 2016 was appointed as the High Commissioner of India to Fiji is Vishvas Vidu Sapkal.
- A new species of thumbnail size frog, named Microhyla laterite, was discovered in Coastal town of Manipal, Udupi District, Karnataka.
- UNESCO signed an agreement with CJ Better Life to start a pre-school animation series for the education of girls globally called Rainbow Ruby.
- R. Ravindra, a 1999 batch IFS officer, was appointed as the Ambassador of India to Cote d'Ivoire.
- The Wholesale Price Index for February 2016 was pegged at (-) 0.91%.
- Andhra Pradesh became the first state to presented the first e-Budget of India on 10 March 2016.
- On 15 March 2016, the Supreme Court asked the Centre and states to frame rules, regulations and guidelines related to adoption under The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.
- On 15 March 2016, food processing industries minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal inaugurated international food and hospitality fair AAHAR 2016 in New Delhi.
- As recommended by the Thirteenth Finance Commission, the Union Government on 15 March 2016 released 609 crore rupees for upgrading prisons in eight States.
- Australia re-opened its trade office in Iran in March 2016.
- Venezuela declared a two-month extension on emergency powers meant to help shore up the country's crippled economy.
- As per the ILO study, 90 percent of world's domestic workers are excluded from social protection.
- Mauritania became the second African nation to commit to end modern slavery.
- The 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was inaugurated on 14 March 2016 in New York.

- The theme of the 60th session of the Commission on the Status of Women is Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development.
- The State Cabinet of Odisha on 14 March 2016 approved a proposal to constitute a State Food Commission (SFC) as per the National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013.
- Delhi won the 20th edition of the Lloyd Business Today Pro-Am of Champions golf tournament.
- Country's largest private sector lender ICICI Bank has tied up with marquee sports car maker Ferrari to launch a co-branded credit card.
- Every year World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is being observed on 15th March for celebration and solidarity within the international consumer movement.
- The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) suspended Maria Sharapova as a goodwill ambassador.
- Lok Sabha passed Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2016 that seeks to amend Constitution Scheduled Castes Order 1950.
- London's transport authority launched the world's first fully electric double decker bus.
- Punjab's Finance Minister, Parminder Singh Dhindsa presented the 2016-17 budget for estimates of 86 thousand 387 crore rupees.
- The pilots of Royal Brunei Airlines made history by becoming the company's first all-female flight crew when they flew the Boeing 787 Dreamliner from Brunei to Jeddah.
- The Reserve Bank Governor of Bangladesh, Atiur Rahman, resigned following an 80-million-dollar cyber theft from the Bank's Reserve Fund Account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.
- An army plane with 22 people and Ecuadorian soldiers on board crashed in Ecuador's Amazon region.
- Thai capital Bangkok will impose a curfew during Thailand's annual water festival next month to show solidarity with Farmers hit by drought.
- Maharashtra Assembly passed a bill to amend the Maharashtra Public Trusts Act 1950 that provides for De-registration of long-defunct trusts.
- The book titled *Gandhi: An Illustrated Biography* was written by Pramod Kapoor.
- The theme of the World Consumer Rights Day that was observed on 15 March 2016 was *Antibiotics off the Menu*.
- The theme for the World Kidney Day that was observed on 10 March 2016 was *Kidney Disease & Children. Act Early to Prevent It!*
- India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi stood 16th in the list of 30 Most Influential People on the Internet list released by Time magazine.

- Federal Open Market Committee of US Federal Reserve decided to maintain the target range for the federal funds rate at 0.25 to 0.5%.
- Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar announced launch of his premium menswear apparel and accessories brand named True Blue.
- Punjab notified swine flu (H1N1) disease under the Epidemic Disease Act.
- As per the UNESCO eAtlas of Gender Inequality in Education, 63 million girls between 6 and 15 age are out of school in the world.
- The 5th edition of India Aviation was inaugurated by the President Pranab Mukherjee in Hyderabad.
- Songkran festival that marks Thai New Year and often referred to as the world's biggest water fight was in news in third week of March 2016.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2016 will join the ranks of prominent global leaders at the famous wax museum Madame Tussauds in London, Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok.
- The Supreme Court has allowed publication of photographs of Governors, Chief Ministers and the Ministers of the department concerned in Government Advertisements.
- Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on 18 March 2016 launched the first phase of Fiber Grid project to provide broadband connectivity to all the households at a throwaway price in Visakhapatnam.
- New Delhi is hosting the first-ever World Sufi Forum.
- Suryassangyini Chaudhary, has become the youngest person to climb the Mt. Kangchenjunga base camp in Sikkim.
- Cameroon sentenced 89 members of Nigerian militant group Boko Haram to death.
- The Orissa High Court asked the state Endowment Commissioner to file an affidavit within two weeks on protection of temples.
- Union Minister Arun Jaitley inaugurated the 6th National Community Radio Sammelan in New Delhi.
- Germany decided to close its embassy in Ankara and its consulate in Istanbul.
- China unveiled its latest spy plane equipped to handle electronic warfare, dubbed as Scout Electronic Reconnaissance Aircraft CSA-003.
- A team of biologists from Yokohama City University, Japan successfully created a tiny liver that functions as efficiently as human one.
- Lower house of Congress of Chile approved a proposal that lifts a ban on abortion in cases of rape, when there is health risk for the mother, or when the foetus is not viable.

- Venkaiah Naidu was conferred with Skoch Lifetime Achievement Award on 17 March 2016.
- State Bank of India claimed the top slot in mobile banking on 17 March 2016.
- Tripura received Krishi Karman Awards 2014-15 in the Category – III states (food grain production less than 1 million tonnes) on 19 March 2016.
- Karnataka received Krishi Karman Awards 2014-15 for the production of coarse cereals in the individual crops category.
- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified new Plastic Waste Management Rules to curb over 6000 tonnes of uncollected plastic waste generated daily by industries on 18 March 2016.
- The theme of the World Sparrow Day 2016 that was observed on 20 March 2016 is Rise for the SPARROW-Experience the power of one.
- The theme of the International Day of Forests 2016 that was observed on 21 March 2016 is Forests and Water.
- ICC suspended Bangladesh's Arafat Sunny and Taskin from bowling in international cricket due to their Illegal bowling action.
- Cisco announced to set up an Internet of Everything (IoE) Innovation Centre in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh to foster regional innovation.
- The Earth Hour 2016 was observed on 19 March 2016.
- Nepal signed 10 agreements with China to extend the strategic Tibet rail link to Nepal on 21 March 2016.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his address to Krishi Unnati Mela in New Delhi announced to double farmer's income by the year 2022.
- 21st March every year is observed as World Poetry Day by UNESCO.
- The name of the campaign that will be launched by the UN illustrating water-environment-climate change link is - #Climatechain.
- The theme of the World Down Syndrome Day observed on 21 March 2016 is My Friends, My Community.
- Jean-Pierre Bemba is a Congolese national who was found guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes by the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- The Mobile application that was launched by Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh in New Delhi to help farmers to bring technology to farm fields on 21 March 2016 is Pusa Krishi.
- French aviation companies Aero Campus Aquitaine and Bordeaux Metropole signed MoU to establish training centre in the State of Telangana.

- Union Ministry of Minority Affairs is hosting the Everlasting Flame International program.
- The noted Malayalam writer, M Sukumaran, was chosen for the CV Kunhiraman Literary Prize.
- The Fast Patrol Vessel that was commissioned on 21 March 2016 in Visakhapatnam is ICGS Arnavesh.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India.
- Mahamadou Issoufou was re-elected as the president of Niger in March 2016.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated broadband connectivity to North Eastern States via Bangladesh.
- European Space Agency (ESA) announced plans to construct lunar villages on the Moon.
- The theme for the World Tuberculosis Day that was observed on 24 March 2016 is United to End TB.
- 9th International Abilympics started on 23 March 2016 at Bordeaux in France.
- The ICTY tribunal of the UN sentenced the former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic to 40-year imprisonment for war crimes. The ICTY stands for International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.
- Famous soccer player Johan Cruyff died on 24 March 2016 in Barcelona, Spain. He played for the national football team of The Netherlands.
- The Gadanki Ionospheric Radar Interferometer or GIRI Radar System was established by the ISRO near – Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh.
- The States/UTs which are not covered for the implementation of rural housing scheme of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin from 2016 to 2019 are Delhi and Chandigarh.
- The Union Cabinet in March 2016 approved transfer of 50 acre of land from Central Sheep & Wool Research Institute (CSWRI) to Rajasthan for establishment of Veterinary University Training and Research Centre.
- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) of 4020.63 crore rupees for the ongoing 720 MW Mangadechhu Hydroelectric Project (HEP) of Bhutan.
- Union Cabinet approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on agriculture with Lithuania.
- Middle East region will dominate the India's import of oil as the country demands increases to 5 million barrels by 2021.
- Manipur will host the North East Business Summit from 7 April – 9 April 2016.

- Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFL) and other mercury containing lamps e-wastes have been covered under the E-Waste Management Rules, 2016 notified by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- About 7008 villages were electrified under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna (DDUGJY) in the year 2015-16 as on 23 March 2016.
- The World War I era tug whose wreck was discovered after 95 years is USS Conestoga.
- The journal that revealed that the spin axis of Earth's moon shifted by about five degrees roughly three billion years ago on 23 March 2016 is Nature.
- The English word that made its first printed appearance in the 23 March 1839 in issue of the Boston Morning Post of the Providence Journal and completed 177 years on 23 March 2016 is OK (Oll Korrect)
- India's biggest ever land, naval and homeland security exhibition, Defence Expo 2016 began on 28 March 2016 in, Goa.
- The state government of Haryana launched a new scheme, 'Adapting homes for the differently-abled' on 26 March 2016.
- As per the Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment, China made highest investments in the renewable energy sector in the world in 2015 worth 102.9 billion US dollars.
- The Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2016 was released by the United Nations Environment Program.
- As per the UNEP's Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2016, India invested 10.2 billion US dollars in the renewable energy sector in 2015.
- The National Tsunami Early Warning Centre (NTEWC) of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Service (INCOIS) installed a Sea-Level Tide Gauge at Gilakaladindi village in AP.
- Former Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Jagmohan, conferred with Padma Vibhushan Award on 28 March 2016.
- Virat Kohli topped the T20 rankings released by the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- Huang Yuxiang from China won the New Zealand Open Grand Prix 2016.
- The American Franciscan nun and founder of the internationally-broadcast cable television and radio networks Eternal Word Television Network, Mother Angelica, died on 27 March 2016.
- The Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Project connects Godavari & Krishna rivers in Southern India.
- The Supreme Court of Bangladesh on 28 March 2016 upheld the constitutional provision that declares Islam as the state religion.

- Delhi government presented 2016-17 annual budget for Delhi on 28 March 2016 which was worth 46600 crore rupees.
- According to Brisbane researchers, New Zealand overtook Australia as the world leader in invasive melanoma rates.
- The rule notified by the Environment Ministry on 29 March 2016 for the first time is Construction & Demolition Waste Management Rules, 2016.
- Indian Institute of Technology Patna organized the First International Symposium on Fifth Generation (5G) technology.
- Indian Medical Association (IMA) urged the Union Government to ensure timely implementation of the 85 percent pictorial health warnings display on both sides of tobacco packages from 1 April 2016.
- The third Asian Kho-Kho championship will begin on 8 April 2016 in Indore.
- Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley inaugurated a new branch of the Union Bank of India in Sydney, Australia.
- Union Health and Family Welfare launched GIS-enabled HMIS application and the self-printing of e-CGHS.
- Union Minority Affairs Ministry launched innovative entrepreneurship and skill development program of MANAS through leading national and international experts in different skill sets on 29 March 2016.
- The Supreme Court approved the guidelines given by Union Government on 30 March 2016 to protect Good Samaritans.
- Arun Jaitley launched the "Made In India" conference in Sydney.

News 1: India kicks off Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi

Raisina Dialogue, a joint initiative of the Ministry of External Affairs and a leading think tank, Observer Research Foundation, kicked off in Delhi after the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated the event. The theme of this inaugural edition of the Dialogue is "Connecting Asia".

The conference was attended by speakers from 40 countries which included former president of Sri Lanka Chandrika Bandaranaike

Kumaratunga and former president of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai. Ms. Swaraj spoke of the importance of building road and rail connectivity through the "BBIN" grouping of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal.



PHOTO CREDIT: istockphoto.org

News 2: M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation To Establish A Research Chair in KISS

MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) has decided to establish a research chair at Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) in Bhubaneswar. An MoU to this effect was signed between Prof M S Swaminathan, Founder of MSSRF and Achyuta Samanta, founder of KIIT & KISS.



These two institutes will work jointly for promotion of knowledge and skill empowerment for less privileged children in India.

FYI: The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is the largest residential institute from KG to PG for the tribals in the world. It provides free accommodation, education, food, health care to more than 25,000 children.

News 3: India Signs Financing Agreement with World Bank for US\$ 300 Million

A financing agreement for IDA credit of US\$ 300 (equivalent) for the "Madhya Pradesh Higher Education Quality Improvement Project" was signed with the World Bank.

The Objective of the project is to improve student outcomes especially of disadvantaged groups in selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and to increase the effectiveness of the Higher Education System in Madhya Pradesh. The project has three components (1) Grants Support to Higher Education Institutions (2) State Level Initiatives and (3) Improving System Management.



The closing date of Madhya Pradesh Higher Education Quality Improvement Project is 31st August, 2021.

News 4: NHAI ties up with Indian School of Business for skill development

NHAI has tied up with Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad to create a pool of officers who can play a critical role in ensuring the utmost professional capability to shoulder the responsibilities at senior management level and guide the NHAI towards its long term vision.

The program on "Leadership Program in Infrastructure Management" in ISB aims at developing skills and competencies relating to multiple disciplines: Strategic Planning, Finance, Economics, Law, Social and Environmental issues, Public Policy etc. in Infrastructure Management.



News 5: Government Cancels IRB Infra's Contract

The government has cancelled the contract given to IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd (IRB Infra) of Zojila Pass Tunnel Building Project. It was India's most expensive (Rs 10,050 Cr) and biggest national highway (NH) project (14.08 km tunnel).

This project was awarded by the ministry of road transport and highways on design, build, finance, operate and transfer (annuity) basis. The contract was cancelled after opposition parties raised concerns.



News 6: Government Plans increase nuclear power generation capacity by three times

The Government of India plans to set up nuclear power plants in Haryana, Bihar and Punjab and increase nuclear power generation capacity by three times in 10 years. If it is 4,780 MW today, the same would go up to 13,480 MW.

The sites identified to build a nuclear plant are Razauli in Bihar's Nawada district, Patiala (Punjab), Dehradun (Uttarakhand) and Bulandshahar (Uttar Pradesh).



News 7: Carriage by Air amendment Bill, 2015 passed by Parliament

The 'Carriage by Air (Amendment) Bill, 2015', was passed by the Upper House. It would enhance compensation for air travelers in case of death, injury, lost baggage or even inordinate delay in flights. The bill was first passed by the Lok Sabha in December 2015 and now will go for the Presidential assent as per Article 111 of Constitution.

The legislation would allow the government to revise the liability limits of airlines in line with the Montreal Convention, which was acceded to by India in May 2009.



News 8: Historic Old War Office in London Acquired by Hinduja Group

The Hinduja Group has acquired the heritage Old War Office in London on a 250-year lease in excess of £350 million. The office was once inhabited by Winston Churchill.

The heritage building at 57, Whitehall, close to the British Parliament and the Prime Minister's residence, covers 580,000 square feet spread over 7 floors connected by more than three km of corridors. The Hinduja Group plans to convert it into a hotel and luxury residences.



News 9: Prime Minister Launches Setu Bharatam Programme

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the Rs 50,000 Cr Setu Bharatam program for building bridges for safe and seamless travel on National Highways in New Delhi.

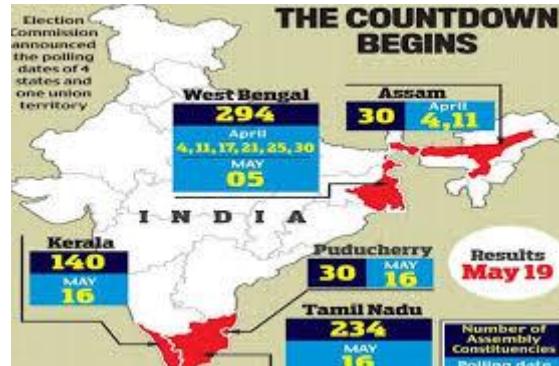
About 208 Railway Over Bridges (ROB)/Railway Under Bridges (RUB) will be built at the level crossings at a cost of Rs. 20,800 crores as part of the program. The government aims to make all national highways free from railway crossings by 2019.



In addition to this, about 1500 old and worn down bridges will also be improved by replacement/widening/strengthening in a phased manner at a cost of about Rs. 30,000 crores. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has also established an Indian Bridge Management System (IBMS) at the Indian Academy for Highway Engineer in Noida, U.P.

News 10: Election Commission declares Assembly Election in 4 States & 1 Union Territory

The Chief Election Commissioner Nasim Zaidi declared the schedule for Assembly polls in four states — West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Assam and for Union Territory Puducherry to be held between April 4, 2016 and May 16, 2016, spread over 43 days. In Assam, elections will be held in two phases while in West Bengal, it will be held in six phases. In Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala, the elections will be held on May 16. Counting of votes for all five states will be done on May 19.



For the first time, a symbol, created by the National School of Design, allotted to NOTA (None of the above) will be placed at the bottom of the list of candidates. There will also be all-women polling booths.

News 11: India files a complaint against US in the WTO on temporary working visa issue

India has filed a complaint in the WTO against the decision of United States to impose high fees on temporary working visas. The US has introduced a hefty US \$4,000 fee for certain categories of H-1B visa and US \$4,500 for L1 visa.

WTO said that India has complained on the sides of the current measures appearing to be "inconsistent" with the terms, limitations and conditions agreed to and specified by the US in its commitments under the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services).



News 12: President of India inaugurated the first National Conference of Women Legislators

The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated the first two-day Conference of Women Legislators on the theme 'The Role of Women Legislators in Nation Building (Mahila Janpratinidhi – Sashakt Bharat Ki Nirmata) in New Delhi.

The organization of the 'National Conference of Women Legislators' is a step in the right direction to carry forward the agenda of United Nations of sustainable development through gender equality. He wished the Conference all success.



News 13: Foundation Stone of the First High Octane Fuel Unit, Octomax, laid at Mathura (UP)

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gases, Dharmendra Pradhan, laid the foundation stone of Octomax unit at Mathura refinery. First of its kind unit, Octomax is a novel technology developed in-house by the research and development centre of Indian Oil for production of high-octane gasoline blending stock from the C4 stream to give very high-octane number of the product.



The refinery will setup a plant of 55 KTA capacity at an estimated cost of Rs 43 Cr. It is expected to be completed by October 2017.

News 14: "Mahila e-Haat", an online marketing platform for women launched

Minister of Women and Child Development, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched "Mahila e-Haat", an online marketing platform for women in New Delhi. Mahila e-Haat portal, <http://mahilaehaat-rmk.gov.in>, is a unique online platform where participants can display their products. It is an initiative for women across the country as a part of 'Digital India' and 'Stand Up India' initiatives



It is a Joint initiative of Union Women and Child Development Ministry and Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK).

News 15: PM adopts Nagepur village in Varanasi for development under SAGY

PM Narendra Modi adopted Nagepur village in his Lok Sabha Constituency of Varanasi under the 2nd phase of Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY). In the first phase of SAGY, the PM had adopted Jayapur village in Sevapuri Assembly segment of Varanasi.

"Villagers are glad that the PM has adopted our village. Now, we hope to see development like Jayapur," said Nagepur Pradhan Paras Nath Rajbhar.



News 16: Centre to import 8,500 tonnes of pulses

The Union Government has contracted import of 8,500 tonnes of pulses and the shipments are on the way. Pulse procurement is carried out by Food Corporation of India (FCI), agri-cooperative NAFED and the Small Farmers' Agriculture-Business Consortium (SFAC).

For creating pulse buffer stock, the government has set a procurement target of 50,000 tonnes from kharif season and 1,00,000 tonnes from rabi season of the 2015-16 crop year. The government's pulse procurement for buffer stock has touched 51,000 tonnes, surpassing the target of 50,000 tonnes from kharif season.



News 17: India to host BRICS Friendship Cities Conclave in Mumbai in April

India will host BRICS Friendship Cities Conclave in April in Mumbai which will involve top Urban Policy makers and Planners from BRICS Nations. It is being organized jointly by the Maharashtra government and the External Affairs Ministry between April 14 and 16.

The event becomes significant for Mumbai to become a global financial centre and is inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plan to promote cooperation among BRICS Nations.



News 18: Germany extends support to Develop Kochi, Coimbatore, Bhubaneswar as Smart Cities

Germany has extended its support to the government's 'Smart Cities' program by taking up projects in Bhubaneswar, Kochi and Coimbatore. German companies will help in construction of residential housing, efficient water supply, waste water management and renewable energy in these three cities.

India is the biggest partner of Germany's development cooperation program worldwide. In 2015 alone, this collaboration reached a new record level of 1.5 billion euros (Rs. 11,000 crores).



News 19: Central Government notified Maximum Sale Price of Bt Cotton Seed

The Central Government notified the maximum sale price of Bt cotton seed for 2016-17. As per the notification, the price of BG-I version of Bt cotton hybrid (9450 grams of Bt Cotton plus 120 grams refugia) was fixed at 635 rupees, while the price of BG-II version was fixed at 800 rupees.

The notification was released as per the Cotton Seed Price (Control) Order, 2015 that was issued under the Section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.



News 20: 108-feet Jain Teerthankar idol enters 'Guinness Book of Records'

The impressive 108 feet tall idol of Lord Rishabhdeva, which is located atop Mangi Tungi Mountain near Teharabad village of Baglan tehsil in this North Maharashtra district, has entered the "Guinness World Records" as the world's tallest Jain statue. Till now, the 57 feet tall idol of Lord Bahubali in Karnataka was considered the world's tallest statue.

The idol has been carved from a single stone and more than 300 sculptors have worked on carving of the idol since 2012. Panchkalyanak Pratishtha & Mahamastakabhishek Mahotsav of the idol was performed last month for several days.



News 21: Cabinet Approves Rs 8,000 Crore Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved Rs 8000 Cr Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana – Scheme for Providing 5 crore free LPG connections to Women from BPL Households. The Scheme provides a financial support of Rs 1600 for each LPG connection to the BPL households.

The identification of eligible BPL families will be made in consultation with the State Governments and the Union Territories. This Scheme would be implemented over three years, namely, the FY 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19. Providing LPG connections to BPL households will ensure universal coverage of cooking gas in the country and further empower women and protect their health.



News 22: Cabinet Clears Amendment to MMDR Act, 1957

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for the amendment to the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 (MMDR Act, 1957).

The amendment will allow transfer of captive mining leases not granted through auction. Transfer of captive mining leases, granted otherwise than through auction, would allow mergers and acquisitions of companies. It will facilitate ease of doing business for companies to improve profitability and decrease costs of the companies' dependency on supply of mineral ore from captive leases.



News 23: Union Government to sign agreements worth over Rs. 72,000 Cr at Shipping summit

The Union Government is expected to sign agreements worth over Rs. 72,000 crores for 109 identified projects with private players on port-related projects at the Indian Maritime Summit to be held in Mumbai from April 14-16.

Under the Sagarmala Project, the major development programs identified by the government include port modernization (Rs. 90,000 crores), port connectivity (Rs. 1.20 lakh crore) and port-led industrialization (Rs. 90,000 crores) besides coastal community development.



News 24: 116 PSUs Spent Over Rs 2400 Crores in CSR in 2014-15

The Government of India has declared that 116 Public Sector Enterprises (PSUs) have spent an amount of Rs. 2447.59 Crores on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in 2014-15 and no complaint has been received on misuse of these funds.

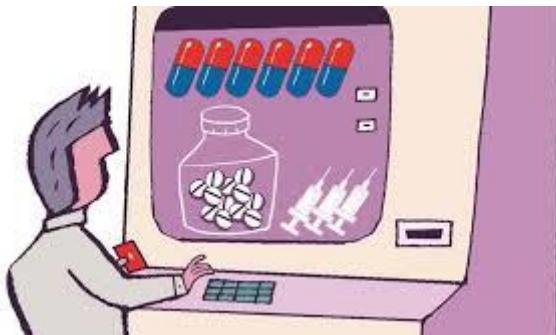
Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises Minister Anant Geete said this in Rajya Sabha during the question hour after several members expressed concern over media reports suggesting that there have been misuse of CSR funds, especially by private companies.



News 25: 5 Healthcare ATMs Launched in 4 States that dispense medicines

The Health Ministry has come up with 5 healthcare ATMs in four states — MP, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

Each ATM will be manned by a multipurpose public health worker (MPHW) or an auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM). For starters, basic health parameters such as temperature, blood pressure, blood glucose and blood hemoglobin will be checked and the data instantly transmitted to a medical call centre through a GSM-based monitor.



News 26: Government plans of policy to promote wind energy projects

With an aim to boost the wind energy potential in India, the government is planning to give incentives including an interest discount of 0.25 % for increasing the capacity of Wind mills of up to 1MW.

The objective of the policy is to promote optimum utilization of wind energy resources by creating facilitative framework for repowering, as per the draft. The present installed capacity of wind power in India is over 25 GW which is fourth largest in the world after China, USA and Germany.



News 27: Railways forms SPV to implement Bullet Train Project

Railways have formed a new Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to implement the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Bullet Train project. The entity has been named the National High Speed Rail Corporation Limited.

In order to complete the project on time, a Joint Committee has been formed under the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog with the secretaries of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Departments of Economic Affairs and Foreign Ministry as its members along with the Chairman of Railway Board.



News 28: 'Women Transforming India' Campaign launched by NITI Aayog

The NITI Aayog, in partnership with the UN in India and MyGov, launched the Women Transforming India initiative on 8th March. Under the campaign, participants need to make entries in the form of written essays or stories. The stories should reflect women empowerment or encourage and recognize women who have made a difference particularly by demonstrating leadership in the economic, socio-cultural and environmental front.

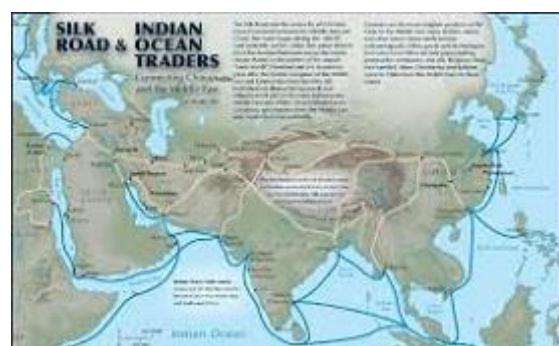


Entries must be filled online (<https://mygov.in/task/women-transforming-india-womentransform/>) on or before March 31st, 2016. 8-10 best shortlisted entries would be put to poll on MyGov.in to determine the top three entries.

News 29: Project 'Mausam' of Ministry of Culture aims to explore Multi-Faceted Indian Ocean 'World'

Ministry of Culture initiated Project Mausam with the research support of Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and to be implemented by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the nodal agency.

This project aims to explore the multi-faceted Indian Ocean 'world' – collating archaeological and historical research in order to document the diversity of cultural, commercial and religious interactions in the Indian Ocean.



News 30: Rajya Sabha Passed National Waterways Bill, 2015

The Rajya Sabha passed The National Waterways Bill, 2015. The Bill will be useful for development of inland water transport as it is considered to be most cost effective and economical mode of transport from the point of view of fuel efficiency. Total number of National Waterways in the bill is 111.

However, environmentalists have been opposing the bill, claiming that because of the numerous large and small dams, the water flow in the rivers is severely restricted.



News 31: India signed agreement to save Birds of Prey

India became the 56th country to sign the 'Raptor MoU' - a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on conservation of birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia. The MoU covers 76 species, out of which 46 includes vultures, falcons, eagles, owls, hawks, kites, harriers and others found in India.

This agreement was signed on March 7 at the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in Abu Dhabi by Ambassador of India to the UAE T P Seetharam. The agreement, under Article IV paragraph 4 of the CMS, is not "legally binding".



News 32: India to Supply Diesel Locomotive to Myanmar Railways

India will supply 18 Meter Gauge 1350 HP Diesel Electric Locomotives to Myanmar to augment the locomotive fleet of Myanmar Railways to meet increasing demand for passenger and freight traffic. These locomotives will be manufactured by Diesel Locomotive Works, Varanasi. These engines will have with modern features like microprocessor controls, fuel-efficient engine and ergonomic cab design, the statement added.



The supply contract of locomotives is a vital project being funded under an existing line of credit extended to Myanmar by the Indian government.

News 33: Railways launches "Clean My Coach" Service

The Minister for Railways Suresh Prabhu announced the launch of 'Clean My Coach' service. Customers can make request to clean up dirty coaches by sending an SMS on 58888 or by using an android app 'Cleanmycoach Indian Railways' or webpage 'cleanmycoach.com' for logging the request which will be immediately acknowledged via SMS on mobile phone along with a code.



The railways are running the 'cleanliness drive' Swachh Rail Swachh Bharat'.

News 34: Aadhar Scheme Collects Biometric Data of 99 Crore Indians

The AADHAR Bill intends to reduce corruption and enhance transparency by assigning beneficiaries unique identity numbers, called Aadhaar. The government has become successful in doing so by getting registered 99 crore Indians on Aadhaar.

IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad also set aside fears of members on the data collected under Aadhaar and said it is sorted within the country at data centers in Bangalore and Manesar and no foreign agency is involved in data collection.



News 35: PM Modi unveils a railway project in Bihar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the newly constructed Digha-Sonepur rail-cum-road bridge and a new rail bridge in Munger. He also unveiled foundation of additional rail bridge near existing Rajendra Bridge in Mokama.



The newly constructed rail portion of Munger Rail-Cum Road Bridge from Sahebpur Kamal end in Begusarai district will also be in operation from now onwards. The Prime Minister will also kick-start the operation of the goods trains on the newly constructed rail portion of Munger Rail-Cum Road Bridge from Sahebpur Kamal end in Begusarai district.

News 36: Cabinet approved ratification of BIMSTEC Convention

The Union Cabinet has accorded approval for signing and ratification of the Bay of Bengal Initiative on Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.



The BIMSTEC includes seven countries viz., Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The mutual assistance in criminal matters will enhance cooperation in the control of criminal activities. The Convention aims at extending widest measures of assistance to each other through mutual cooperation and effectiveness of the Member States in investigation and prosecution of crimes, including crimes related to terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering and cyber-crimes.

News 37: National Led Bulbs Scheme Gets a New Face in 'UJALA'

The LED based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP) was named as UJALA (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All) by the government and is being implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL).



The program is currently running successfully in over 120 cities across India. UJALA is successfully running across 12 states in India namely Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Jharkhand, Bihar and Uttarakhand.

News 38: IMF and India to Set-Up a South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC) in Delhi

India and International Monetary Fund (IMF) signed a MoU to set up South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Centre (SARTTC) in New Delhi. The aim of this center is to enhance the capacity development and training of officials in dealing with macroeconomic and financial issues.



SARTTAC will offer courses and seminars for policymakers and other government agencies from India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Funding will come from contributions by Regional Member countries and Development Partners.

News 39: Union and State Ministers Are Public Authorities under Right to Information Act, 2005: CIC

The Central Information Commission (CIC) has ruled that all Union and state ministers are public authorities under the provisions of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. They have a statutory obligation to answer queries seeking information.

The ruling was given by the Central Information Commissioner Sridhar Acharyulu while adjudicating the case filed by Hemant Dhage of Ahmednagar.



News 40: Maritime India Summit to be held in Mumbai

The flagship event of Union Ministry of Shipping, Maritime India Summit 2016 (MIS 2016), will be held in Mumbai from 14 to 16 April 2016 at Bombay Convention and Exhibition Centre. The partner country of the event is Republic of Korea.

The objective of this conference is to explore potential business opportunities in the country's maritime sector. The three-day event will hold B2B and G2B meetings besides conferences, exhibitions and demo sessions. This summit is expected to attract investments worth ₹10 billion.



News 41: Health Minister Shri J P Nadda launches project 'Clean Street Food'

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare Shri J P Nadda launched Project 'Clean Street Food'. The project of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) aims at to raise the safety standards of foods sold on streets across the capital city of New Delhi by training 20,000 roadside vendors to be skilled under PMKVY (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana) on aspects of health and hygiene, in the first phase.

FSSAI will partner with the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship to train street food vendors at more than 40 centers across Delhi.



News 42: Parytak Mitra Programme to enable Students to act/work as Tourist Facilitators

The Ministry of Tourism has launched a programme open to college going students to inculcate in them appropriate tourism traits and knowledge, to enable them to act/work as Tourist Facilitators (Parytak Mitra).



The Parytak Mitra Programme targets college-going students including those enrolled with the NCC& NSS, in the age group of 18-28 years. Each course will be of 10 days duration. The programme will be implemented by the Indian Institute of Tourism & Travel Management.

News 43: 253 Indian Villages Lit Up Under the Scheme Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna

About 253 villages were electrified last week under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojna (DDUGJY). Out of the 253 villages, 111 are in Odisha, 81 in Assam, 40 in Jharkhand, 13 in Rajasthan, 4 in Bihar, 3 in Madhya Pradesh and 1 in Uttar Pradesh.



In view of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's address to nation, on Independence Day, Government of India has decided to electrify remaining 18,452 un-electrified villages within 1000 days i.e. by 01st May, 2018.

News 44: Lok Sabha passed Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2016

The Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2016. It looks out to amend the Constitution Scheduled Castes Order 1950. The bill was passed after receiving proposals from Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Kerala, Odisha and West Bengal, for modification of Scheduled Castes list in their states.



Social Justice Minister Thawar Chand Gehlot said the Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Scheduled Castes have conveyed their concurrence to the proposed modifications.

News 45: Lok Sabha passed Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Bill, 2015

The Lok Sabha has passed the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Bill, 2015. The Bill looks up to set up a Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA). The Bill was earlier passed by Rajya Sabha on 10th March, 2016.

The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Bill is a pioneering initiative to protect the interest of consumers, promote fair play in real estate transactions and to ensure timely execution of projects.

The Real Estate (Development & Regulation) Bill



News 46: MoU Signed Between M/O Tourism and Ecotourism Society of India for Responsible and Sustainable Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Ecotourism Society of India (ESOI) to take its commitments to Responsible and Sustainable tourism to the next level. Through this MOU, it is expected that sustainable tourism and Responsible Tourism will take the forefront and achieve the commitments of the Ministry's action plan.



The ESOI will prepare a 10-year road map for advocacy and certification under the sustainable tourism criteria after consultations.

News 47: Rajya Sabha passes Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Rajya Sabha has passed the Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Bill, 2016. The Bill proposes to remove the exception given to Sehajdhari Sikhs in 1944 to vote in the elections to select the members of the Board and the Committees constituted under the Act.

"There is unanimity to pass the Bill without discussion. I am passing it," said Deputy Chairman PJ Kurein while passing the bill. Sehajdhari Sikhs were given the right to vote in SGPC elections in 1944.



News 48: Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan launched FCI's Online Depot System

Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan launched the FCI Online Depot System in New Delhi. The online system will automate all the operations of Food Corporation of India (FCI) depots. The estimated cost of the project is 63 crore rupees.

It will help align the FCI with Digital India vision for transformation of food distribution supply chain in India. The online depot system will eliminate usage of manual registers. Operations of all the FCI Depot will be online by July 2016. Similarly, remaining depots which include CWC, SWC and hired ones by March 2017.



News 49: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Krishi Unnati Mela in New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated three-day (19-21 March) National Agriculture Fair - 'Krishi Unnati Mela' being held at Pusa campus. The fair will provide useful information on new farm schemes and technologies that will help farmers double their incomes within the next few years.

The fair will have separate workshops on key schemes like e-agriculture marketing, integrated farming system, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sichai Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Beema Yojana, soil health and livestock issues.



News 50: India and Australia ink pact to avoid Double Social Security contribution

India and Australia have signed agreement to avoid double social security contribution under which employees of India deputed to Australia and vice versa will not have to make double social security contribution.

Australia is now the 14th country to have signed a social security agreement with India. Others include Korea, Finland, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Norway and Switzerland.



News 51: Centre unveils Model Building Bye-Laws, 2016; Sets 30-days approval period

The Union Government released the Model Building Bye-Laws, 2016 which aims to boost ease of doing business in the construction sector. It was released by the Union Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu in New Delhi. The new bye-laws provide a single window integrated building plan approval process and set the maximum time limit for all kind of building approvals at 30 days, after which the approval can be considered 'deemed'.



News 52: Union Government introduced new Plastic Waste Management Rules

Union Environment Ministry has notified new Plastic Waste Management Rule. The new rules will help curb over 6000 tonnes of uncollected plastic waste generated daily by industries.

The government has increased the minimum thickness of plastic bags, expanded the area of applicability of these rules to rural areas and introduced polluter pays principle.

Under the new extended producer responsibility concept, producers are responsible for collecting waste generated from their products.



News 53: Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Kisan Suvidha mobile app

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a mobile application called as Kisan Suvidha for farmers. It will provide useful information on subjects such as weather, market prices, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and agriculture machinery.

To begin with, a farmer has to register the mobile number, choose a language—at present limited to Hindi and English—and enter details of the state, district and block or sub-district.



News 54: Finance Minister launched Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley launched the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and the Unified Package Insurance Scheme in Mumbai. The Finance Minister said that the revamped insurance scheme being launched by the Government have the potential to reduce distress in the farm sector.

Finance Minister also launched the NABARD Agri-Credit Monitoring portal, which will help financial institutions to monitor the status of agricultural loans given to farmers. He also unveiled Roadmap of E-Shakti Expansion Program of digitization of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).



News 55: 8th BRICS Summit to be hosted by India in Goa

India will host the 8th BRICS Summit in its capacity as chair of the influential bloc on 15-16 October, 2016 in Goa. India assumed chairmanship of BRICS from Russia on 15th February and it will last till 31st December 2016.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj unveiled a logo and a website of the Summit in New Delhi. The logo for the Summit is a lotus having colors from all the five member countries and a traditional Namaste in the centre. The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship is Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions. During India's BRICS Chairmanship, five-pronged approach - Institution building, Implementation, Integrating, Innovation and Continuity will be adopted.



News 56: Union Government launched new initiatives to combat Tuberculosis

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda on the eve of World Tuberculosis Day launched Bedaquiline – new anti-TB drug for Drug Resistant TB.

Shri Nadda also inducted over 500 Cartridge Based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (CBNAAT) machines in the program. The CBNAAT is a revolutionary rapid molecular test which is fully automated and provides results within two hours.



The Minister also launched the 'Third line ART program for People Living with HIV'. The life-saving third line ART costs nearly Rs. 1.18 lakh per patient per year. Providing these free would not only save lives but improve socioeconomic conditions of the patients.

News 57: India to accede to the Ashgabat Agreement

The Union Cabinet has given its approval for India to accede to the Ashgabat Agreement, an international transport and transit corridor facilitating transportation of goods between Central Asia and the Persian Gulf.

The Ashgabat Agreement has Oman, Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan as founding members. Kazakhstan has also joined this arrangement subsequently. Accession to the Agreement would enable India to utilize this existing transport and transit corridor to facilitate trade and commercial interaction with the Eurasian region. Further, this would synchronize with our efforts to implement the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) for enhanced connectivity.



News 58: Cabinet approves National Capital Goods Policy

The Union Cabinet has approved the National Capital Goods Policy. The policy aims to increase the share of capital goods contribution from present 12% to 20% of total manufacturing activity by 2025. This is a first time ever policy of this sector, with a clear objective of increasing production of capital goods from Rs. 230,000 Cr in 2014-15 to Rs. 750,000 Cr in 2025.

The Cabinet has also approved the doubling of two rail lines in Bihar and Jharkhand and approved incentives for rural housing.



News 59: Cabinet approves “Special Industry Initiative for J&K” Udaan scheme

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, approved the extension of time period of the Scheme “Special Industry Initiative for J&K” (SII J&K) Udaan till 2019-20 from 2015-16.

Udaan provides exposure to the youth of J&K to the best of corporate India. So far, 67 leading corporates have partnered with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under UDAAN to train youth from the State covering Organized Retail, Banking, Financial Services, IT, ITES, Infrastructure, Hospitality etc. It is expected that the target of the Scheme, to train and enhance employability of 40,000 graduates, post graduates and three-year engineering diploma holders, will be achieved by 2019-20.



News 60: World Bank support to Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)

The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the US \$ 1,500 (approx. 9000 Cr) million project of World Bank Support to Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin).

The Project basically provides for incentivizing States through World Bank Credit on the basis of their performance in the existing SBM-G. The three Disbursement-Linked Indicators (DLIs) to gauge the performance of the states are:



- Reduction in the prevalence of open defecation
- Sustaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in Villages
- Increase in percentage of rural population served by improved Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM)

News 61: Revised Cost Estimate of the Mangadechhu Hydroelectric Project in Bhutan

The Union Cabinet gave its approval to Revised Cost Estimate (RCE) of Rs. 4020.63 crore for the ongoing 720 MW Mangadechhu Hydroelectric Project (HEP) in Bhutan.



The bilateral agreement to execute the Mangadechhu HEP was signed between India and Bhutan in April, 2010 at the approved cost of Rs. 2896.3 crore (March 2008 price level) with funding by Government of India as 30% grant and 70% loan at 10% annual interest to be paid back in thirty equated semi-annual instalments. The total cost escalation for the project, at this stage, is Rs.1124.359 crore.

News 62: India and France sign MoU for construction of six nuclear reactors at Jaitapur

India and France have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for construction of six nuclear reactors at Jaitapur in Maharashtra. MoU was formally signed by Electricite de France (EDF - French public utility) and National Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL).

The Jaitapur nuclear power project, proposing a nuclear power plant of 9900 MW, consists of 6 European Pressurized Reactors (EPR) of 1650 MW each.



News 63: President Pranab Mukherjee greets Greece on Independence Day

President Pranab Mukherjee greeted and felicitated the government and people of Greece on March 24th on the eve of their Independence Day.

In a message to President Prokopis Pavlopoulos he said, "On behalf of the government, the people of India and on my own behalf, it is with great pleasure that I extend warm greetings and felicitations to Your Excellency and to the people of the Hellenic Republic (Greece) on the occasion of your Independence Day".



News 64: Implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana — Gramin

The Union Cabinet approved the implementation of the rural housing scheme of Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin. It is proposed that one crore households would be provided assistance for construction of pucca house under the project during the period from 2016-17 to 2018-19 at an expense of Rs 81975 Cr.



The scheme would be implemented in rural areas throughout India except Delhi and Chandigarh. The cost of houses would be shared between Centre and States in the ratio 60:40 in plain areas and 90:10 for North Eastern and hilly states. The unit assistance has been enhanced to 120000 rupees in plain areas and to 130000 rupees in hilly states/difficult areas /IAP districts.

News 65: Government launched Rotavirus vaccine as part of Universal Immunization Program

Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J P Nadda launched the indigenously developed rotavirus vaccine as part of the Universal Immunization Program (UIP). Rotavirus vaccine will enable to directly address the problem of diarrhoeal deaths. It is being introduced initially in four states of Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Odisha.



FYI: Mission Indradhanush: in December 2014 to fully immunize more than 89 lakh children who are either unvaccinated or partially vaccinated.

News 66: Union Government disclosed Defence Procurement Procedure 2016

Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar unveiled the Defence Procurement Procedure 2016 (DPP 2016) on the sidelines of the DefExpo-2016 in Goa. The DPP 2016 will replace the DPP 2013 and will come into force on 1 April 2016.

The recommendations of the DPP 2016 are based on the Dhirendra Singh committee report. As per the new DPP, IDDM (indigenously designed, developed and manufactured), will be the first preferred category of preference.



News 67: India to have new emergency number to dial: 112

The inter-ministerial panel of Telecom Commission approved a single emergency number, 112, similar to 911 and 999 of United States and United Kingdom respectively.

Indian citizens can now just dial the single-number 112 for all emergency services such as police, ambulance and the fire department.

All existing emergency numbers will be phased out within a year of rolling out 112, depending upon the awareness about this new facility.



News 68: "Stand Up India" Scheme to be launched on 5th Of April

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the 'Stand Up India' initiative on 5th April at a function in Noida (UP). The initiative is aimed at creating jobs and promoting entrepreneurs among SC, ST and women by extending loans at cheaper rates.

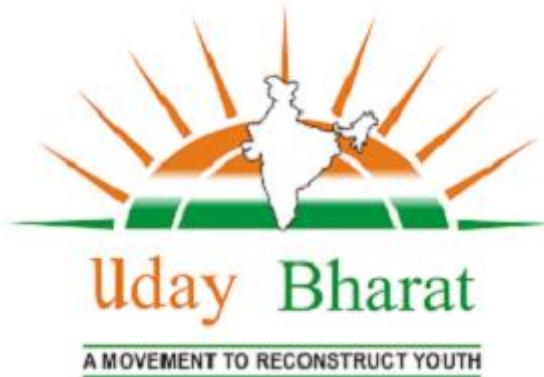
Every bank branch of both public and private sector banks, will give loans between Rs 10 lakh and 1 crore to at least one SC/ST and one-woman entrepreneur under the scheme.



News 69: Government to launch Gram Uday to Bharat Uday Abhiyan from 14th to 24th April, 2016

Starting from 14th April to 24th April 2016, the Central Government, in collaboration with States and Panchayats, will organize a 'Gram Uday Se Bharat Uday Abhiyan' (Village Self Governance Campaign).

The campaign aims to generate nation-wide efforts to increase social harmony across villages, strengthen Panchayati Raj, promote rural development, and foster farmers' progress.



News 70: BHEL commissions 40 MW hydropower unit in West Bengal

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has commissioned the second 40 MW hydropower generating unit at the Teesta low dam hydroelectric project (HEP) stage IV in West Bengal.

Teesta HEP is being set up by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC), on the River Teesta. BHEL is also executing the 3x40MW Rammam Stage-III hydro-electric project of NTPC in West Bengal.



News 71: Prime Minister Modi Reached Brussels for India-EU Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Brussels. He will hold a bilateral summit with Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel and then attend the 13th India-European Union (EU) Summit.

Then on March 31, the Prime Minister will attend the two-day Fourth Nuclear Security Summit to be hosted by US President Barack Obama in Washington. Further, he will be visiting Saudi Arabia at the invitation of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud for a two-day visit.



PERSONS IN NEWS

News 1: American Astronaut, Scott Kelly, Returns to Earth After 340 Days in Space

NASA astronaut and Expedition 46 Commander Scott Kelly and his Russian counterpart Mikhail Kornienko returned to Earth Tuesday after a historic 340-day mission aboard the International Space Station. They landed in Kazakhstan. Joining their return trip aboard a Soyuz TMA-18M spacecraft was Sergey Volkov, also of the Russian space agency Roscosmos. Scott has become the first American astronaut to spend a year in space.



News 2: Maria Sharapova fails drug test at Australian Open

Maria Sharapova failed a drugs test at the Australian Open after she tested positive for Meldonium.

She was provisionally suspended from March 12th pending further action. She is the seventh athlete in a month to test positive for meldonium, which is used to treat diabetes. Meldonium was only banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency as of Jan 1, 2016.



News 3: Sonakshi Sinha becomes Guinness World Record Holder For Nail Painting

Actress Sonakshi Sinha has entered into Guinness World Records title after she along with several other women participated in an initiative to set a record for 'most people painting their fingernails simultaneously'.

The event was organized on the occasion of International Women's Day in collaboration with Inglot, manufacturers in color cosmetics, and its Indian franchise partner Major Brands.



News 4: Astronaut Scott Kelly to Retire from NASA in April

NASA astronaut and one-year crew member Scott Kelly will retire from the agency, effective April 1. Kelly joined the astronaut corps in 1996 and currently holds the American record for most time spent in space.

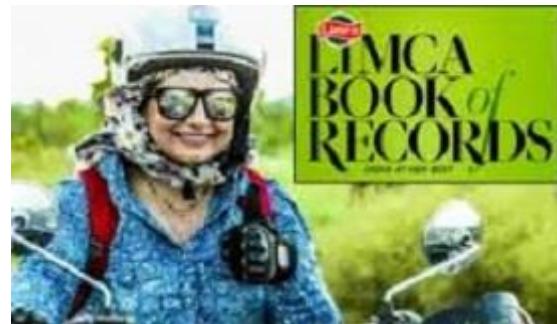
After retiring, Kelly will continue to participate in the ongoing research related to his one-year mission.



News 5: Pallavi Fauzdar becomes 1st Solo Woman to cross Mana Pass

Pallavi Fauzdar became the first solo woman to ride across the Mana Pass in Uttarakhand. She registered her name in the Limca Book of Records. She hails from Agra.

Mana is situated at an altitude of 5,638 m (18,497 ft) above sea level, on the border between India and Tibet. It is one of the most difficult biking trails.



PLACES IN NEWS

News 1: Chennai becomes India's first city to have self-cleaning Smart Toilets

Chennai has become the first Indian city to have a total of 183 self-cleaning public eToilets installed. They can be located through an Android app called eToilet. Each automatic unmanned toilet comes equipped with sensors for exhaust fan and light to ensure that they consume less water and power.

The smart toilets are work of Eram Scientific Solution, an Indian social enterprise. In 2012, it even won a grant of \$450,000 from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



News 2: Alappuzha Backwaters to Get India's First Solar Ferry

A 75-seater solar-powered passenger ferry, being built by NavAlt, a Kochi-based joint venture, in collaboration with a French company, is expected to be commissioned within the next three months at Aroor in Alappuzha district.

The cost of the first of its kind boat is Rs.1.7-crore and it will make no noise or cause any pollution, unlike the diesel powered ones. It may work out to be a cheaper option too. The 20-meter-long, 7-meter-wide boat, with a maximum cruising speed of 7.5 knots, is to be deployed in the backwaters of Alappuzha by the Kerala State Water Transport Department (KSWTD).



News 3: "Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit 2016" starts in Gurgaon

'Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit 2016' started in Gurgaon. The first two-day event will see participation from 12 countries.

The participating countries are Czech Republic, Japan, Mauritius, New Zealand, China, Korea, Malawi, Peru, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom and Tunisia.



News 4: Honey festival began in Mangaluru from March 12

Horticulture crops are the mainstay of Mangaluru and the said honey festival is aimed at encouraging apiculture among farmers of the district.

Apart from increasing the productivity of horticulture crops, apiculture also provides a good source of income to farmers. Deputy Director of the Karnataka Horticulture Department, said bee colonies of various species and materials required for bee-keeping would be displayed at the festival.



The Dakshina Kannada Bee-Keepers' Cooperative Society will make arrangements for the sale of honey at the festival. The organizers will also conduct a bee-keeping training program as part of the honey festival on March 13, he said.

News 5: Free Wi-Fi Service launched at Srinagar International Airport

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has launched free Wi-Fi services at the Srinagar international airport.

Tourists visiting the Kashmir valley can now access hi-speed Internet services at the international airport here free of charge for the first 15 minutes as BSNL today launched its state-of-art Wi-Fi HotSpot services.



News 6: Arun Jaitley inaugurated National Community Radio Sammelan in New Delhi

The 6th National Community Radio Sammelan was inaugurated by Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Arun Jaitley in New Delhi. He said 191 community radio stations are currently working and more than 400 new stations have been permitted.

The theme of the three day Sammelan is "Community Radio in India: Towards Diversity and Sustainability. Community radio is known for its role in good governance and community learning and promoting livelihoods, water conservation, financial inclusion and literacy.



News 7: Wilson College in Mumbai adopts railway station for cleanliness

21/03/2016. Students of Wilson College in Mumbai have adopted the Charni Road station here for cleanliness and upkeep as part of the Swachch Bharat Abhiyan. The students put up posters, performed street plays and songs and gifted water purifiers and plants.

Governor and Chancellor of the University CH Vidyasagar Rao congratulated the college for its excellent initiative. A week back, students of Mithibai College adopted the Vile Parle station.



News 8: 4-day National AROGYA Fair to Be held in Goa

The four-day National AROGYA fair, organized by AYUSH Ministry and Confederation of Indian Industry, will be held in Goa from March 26-29 with the objective of promoting and popularizing Indian Medicine Systems to the general public and update industry of the latest developments in the sector.

Free medical check-ups, distribution of medicines and technical sessions will be organized during the fair. Approximately, 15,000-20,000 people are expected to attend the four-day event.



REGIONAL

News 1: Kerala Government launches first of its kind Air Ambulance service

Government of Kerala has launched first of its kind Air Ambulance to be used exclusively for the speedy organ transplant. An MoU was also signed at the function between Rajiv Gandhi Academy for Aviation Technology and Kerala Network for Organ Sharing (KNOS), Mritasanjeevani, for operating the air ambulance.



An amount of Rs 5 crore had been earmarked towards this project.

News 2: Chapchar Kut Festival Celebrated Across Mizoram

Chapchar Kut, the most important traditional festival of the Mizos was celebrated across Mizoram and as well as in the Mizo-inhabited areas in the neighboring states. It is a spring festival celebrated every year in month of March.

The people dressed themselves in traditional attire, exuberant dancers danced to the tune of typical music and songs. In Aizawl, state home minister R Lalzirliana was the 'Kut pa' or father of the festival, while state Art and Culture Minister R Romawia was the 'Kut thlengtu' or host of the festival.



News 3: Karnataka Chief Minister Launches Mukhyamantri Santwana Harish Yojana

Karnataka Chief Minister launched Mukhyamantri Santwana Harish Yojana. This scheme aims to provide free medical treatment to road accident victims for the first 48 hours (2 days) in the nearest government or private hospital.

The scheme was named after Harish Nanjappa who had donated his eyes moments before his death due to mishap in February 2016. The scheme also provides Rs 25,000/- to the accident victims.



News 4: Telangana, Maharashtra CMs ink pact on Godavari water projects

The Chief Ministers of Telangana and Maharashtra K. Chandrasekhar Rao and Devendra Fadnavis, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Mumbai on setting up an inter-state water board on Godavari projects.

The agreement will pave the way for the two States on the construction of Medigadda barrage, 20 km downstream of Kaleshwaram in Warangal District. The barrage would allow irrigation of 16.4 lakh acres in Telangana and over 50,000 acres in some tribal areas of Maharashtra with the help of four small lift irrigation schemes.



News 5: Career Guidance Counselling Centers launched in Delhi-NCR to improve employment opportunities for young women

Career Guidance Counselling Centers, a first of its kind for women, were launched in Delhi-NCR on the findings of a UNDP commissioned study which revealed that almost 80 percent of young women in Delhi did not have access to accurate and timely information on educational and job opportunities. These centers will provide dedicated career services to young women seeking employment in the region.



The career counselling centers are set up as part of a collaboration between UNDP, the IKEA Foundation, Xyntéo, and the India Development Foundation

News 6: Maharashtra Cabinet Approved Prohibition of Social Boycott Bill, 2016

Maharashtra Cabinet approved the Maharashtra Prohibition of Social Boycott Bill, 2016. The bill provides for the prohibition of social boycott of a person or group of persons including their family members by an individual or a group like Caste Panchayat.

Once the bill is approved by the State legislature, Maharashtra will become the first State in the country to enact a law against social boycott.



News 7: J & K Joins “UDAY” Scheme; Would Derive an Overall Net Benefit of Rs 9800 crore Through “UDAY”

The Government of India, and the State of Jammu & Kashmir signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) under the Scheme UDAY – “Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana” for operational and financial turnaround of the State’s Power Distribution Department. An overall net benefit of approximately Rs.9800 crores would accrue to the State by opting to participate in UDAY.

Under UDAY, nine states (including J&K) have signed MoU till date with the combined DISCOM debt around Rs.1.94 lac crore, to be restructured which is approximately 45% of the total outstanding DISCOM debt of Rs.4.3 lac crore as on 30th September, 2015.



News 8: Jammu & Kashmir Government approved Industrial Policy–2016

Jammu & Kashmir State Administrative Council (JKSAC) approved the Industrial Policy-2016 for the next ten years with an aim to attract over 2000 crore rupees’ investment per annum.

The policy targets to create annually 15000 direct and indirect employment opportunities. It targets creation of land bank of 2500 acres across the state. Setting up of an asset reconstruction company in partnership with J&K Bank was envisaged.



News 9: UP Cabinet approved Senior Citizen Policy

The Uttar Pradesh Government approved a policy for senior citizens. Under the policy the state government will set up old age homes where 25 per cent seats will be reserved for the BPL category people and also announced increase in monthly pension by 100 rupees, that is, monthly pension will increase from existing 300 rupees to 400 rupees.

The policy will come into effect from 1 April 2016 and the nodal agency for this new policy is social welfare department.



News 10: AAHAR 2016 kicked off at New Delhi

The largest fair on Food and Hospitality Sector in India, AAHAR 2016 has kicked off at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. It is the 31st edition in this series of the fair and is organized by India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO) under aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

AAHAR 2016 will cover two separate but concurrent exhibitions (i) Hospitality India: It will cover Hotel & Restaurant Equipment and Supplies (ii) Food India: It will cover Foods, Processed Foods, Food Processing and Beverages.



News 11: Feni is now Heritage Spirit of Goa and not country liquor

"Feni", a form of spirit produced exclusively in the state of Goa was classified as Heritage Spirit of Goa by the Goa government. According to Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar, "Feni has achieved first geographical indication (GI) in Goa and is also the first liquor product in the country to obtain that status."

Feni is made from coconut or cashew and is synonymous with the Goan ethos and identity. It used in various cultural traditions, cuisines and is well known for its medicinal value also.



News 12: Desmi Technology of Denmark to set up Pumps Manufacturing Unit near Hyderabad

Danish firm, Desmi Technology, a leading international manufacturer of pumps and pump solutions, has expressed its interest to set up a plant on the outskirts of Hyderabad under the Make in India program. A high-level delegation headed by Chief Executive Officer Henrik Knudsen of Desmi Technology and Lars Boldt Rasmussen met Telangana Industries Minister Jupally Krishna Rao.



Desmi is a leading international manufacturer of pumps and pump solutions. This product is very well known globally and in Indian market especially in Marine I.e. Shipyards for private ships, Indian Navy and Coast Guard vessels.

News 13: AP Government to launch AP Fiber Net for net cheap connectivity

The Government of Andhra Pradesh signed an MOU with Cisco to design and implement the AP FiberNet project. Under the project, Internet connections would be provided at Rs. 149 per month to households and 100Mbps connection for offices at Rs. 999 per month in districts of Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam and Vizianagaram by April. It will cover the rest of the state by end of July this year.



According to Executive chairman of Cisco John T Chambers, Cisco will set up an Internet of Everything (IoE) Innovation Centre in Visakhapatnam. It will help to foster regional innovation and will enable partners and startups to build solutions around IoE and engage in rapid prototyping.

News 14: Punjab passed the Punjab Settlement of Agricultural Indebtedness Bill, 2016

Punjab Assembly passed The Punjab Settlement of Agricultural Indebtedness Bill, 2016. The bill stipulates that the interest payable on debt shall be calculated at such rate as may be notified by the government which would be in consonance with the interest rates charged by banks on yearly basis.



The Bill also stipulates that if the total repayment is equal to double the principal amount, the pledged property of the debtor shall stand released and debt deemed to be discharged.

News 15: Himachal Pradesh and Mumbai to have eco-friendly electric buses

The department of heavy industry has granted in-principle approval to Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) and Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) to introduce zero-emission retrofitted electric buses. The buses are introduced under its flagship scheme FAME India (faster adoption and manufacturing of hybrid & electric vehicles in India) which will fund up to 75 per cent cost of the buses.



HRTC and MMRDA will roll out 25 electric buses each. Himachal Pradesh would be the first state in India to introduce zero-emission electric buses.

News 16: Mizoram government signed agreement with JICA to promote Sustainable Agriculture

The Mizoram government signed an agreement with the Japanese International Cooperative Agency (JICA) on Capacity Enhancement for Sustainable Agriculture and Irrigation Development.

Training programs would be conducted in Japan both for officials and farmers from Mizoram and the expenses would be borne by the Japanese government.



News 17: Andhra Pradesh becomes first state to implement Lift Irrigation

Andhra Pradesh became the first Indian state to implement lift irrigation. Andhra Pradesh government is all set to inaugurate Pattiseema Lift Irrigation project. It is the first river linking project in the country connecting Godavari with Krishna. It has been completed in a record 1-year time.

The Rs 1,300-crore project, designed to lift 80 tmc (trillion metric cubic feet) of flood water in a span of 110 days during the flooding season between July and October from Godavari, was awarded to Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MEIL).



News 18: World Bank approved \$250 million loan for Electricity Distribution Sector Reforms in Rajasthan

The World Bank Board approved a 250 million US dollar First Programmatic Electricity Distribution Reform Development Policy Loan for Rajasthan.

The objective of the development policy loan (DPL) is to support the government of Rajasthan in improving the performance of its electricity distribution sector under the State's 24x7 "Power for All program".



News 19: Haryana cabinet approved Jat reservation bill

Haryana cabinet passed the Bill to provide 10% reservation to Jats in government jobs (Class III and IV) and education. The draft Bill also approved reservation to four other castes - Jat Sikhs, Rors, Bishnois and Tyagis.

It has proposed 6 per cent reservation for Jats and the four other castes in Class-I and Class-II jobs.

Jat organizations have been demanding 10 per cent quota in jobs and educational institutions under the OBC category.



News 20: Himachal Pradesh government published Sixth Economic Census report

The Government of Himachal Pradesh released the Sixth Economic Census. The state became the first state in the country to complete this process of economic census.



Highlights of the Census:

- The number of establishments rose by 59.71% while the number of persons employed increased by 71.54% in comparison to fifth census held in 2005.
- The annual increase in women participation was 13.84%.

News 21: President's Rule imposed in Uttarakhand

President Rule was imposed in Uttarakhand after President signed the proclamation under Article 356 of the Constitution dismissing the Congress government headed by Harish Rawat. The Union Cabinet recommended president rule in the state citing a constitutional breakdown.

The major reasons behind the imposition of President's Rule have been the involvement of Horse-Trading and a rebel section of Congress MLA's led by Vijay Bahuguna.



News 22: ITBP Modern Weapon Training Centre to be set up in MP

The Government will set up ITBP modern weapon training center at an estimated cost of Rs 2,100 crore in an area spreading across 1,800 acres at Batiagarh, Damoh in Madhya Pradesh. It is the first weapon training center to be set up in MP. A similar training center is already operational in Allahabad.

The newly recruited constables of ITBP will be given training at the center for operating all kinds of small and big weapons.



REPORTS

News 1: Mukesh Ambani richest Indian according to Forbes 2016 List

Once again, Reliance Industries chairman, Mukesh Ambani, topped 84 Indian billionaires in Forbes 2016 list of the world's richest people. Bill Gates, with a net worth of \$75 billion, was the highest ranked billionaire. He has topped the list for 17 of the last 22 years. The second and the third spot was acclaimed by Spanish clothing Amancio Ortega, best known for the Zara fashion chain and Warren Buffett respectively.



United States led with the greatest number of billionaires, with 540, followed by China with 251, Germany with 120, India with 84 and Russia with 77. About 198 newcomers made it to the list. China added 70 to the list 33 from USA, 8 from India and 28 from Germany. Notable newcomers included Flipkart co-founders Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal (No. 1476) of India.

News 2: TCS Recognized as the Top Global Employer

Tata Consultancy Services has been recognized as a Global Top Employer by the Top Employers Institute. This makes it one in only eight organizations worldwide to have achieved this status. In its assessment of 1,072 companies worldwide, the Top Employers Institute rated TCS as an exceptional performer across nine core Human Resources (HR) areas: talent strategy, workforce planning, on-boarding, learning and development, performance management, leadership development, career and succession management, compensation and benefits and company culture.



This certification is only awarded to the best employers around the world — organizations that demonstrate the highest standards of employee offerings.

News 3: India Ranked 90th in terms of energy security, access

In the latest Global Energy Architecture Performance Index Report prepared by World Economic Forum, India has been ranked 90th in terms of Energy Security. The report had 126 countries in the list based on their ability to provide energy access across three dimensions of the “energy triangle” – affordability, environmental sustainability, security and access.



The top ten countries in the list are – Switzerland (1st), Norway(2nd), Sweden (3rd), France (4th), Denmark (5th), Austria (6th), Spain (7th), Colombia (8th), New Zealand (9th) and Uruguay (10th). Among the BRIC nations, Brazil was ranked 25th, followed by Russia (52nd), India (90th), China (94).

News 4: Gujarat, Delhi, Tamil Nadu Top States for investment potential

According to a report submitted by NCAER (National Council of Applied Economic Research), Gujarat has topped the list of 21 states with most investment potential, followed by Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. The lowest in the rankings are the UP, Bihar, and Jharkhand.

The 21 states were ranked on the basis of five factors - political stability, infrastructure, economic climate, governance, and perceptions.



News 5: Sustainable Plus Survey reveals Reliance Industries, Tata Motors among top 10 sustainable firms

The Sustainable Plus survey conducted by CII-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development revealed that corporate giants like Reliance Industries, Vedanta, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Motors and Wipro are among the top 10 companies, to have been listed as India's most sustainable firms. The other power packs in the list were ITC, Tata Power, Tata Chemicals, Hindustan Zinc and ACC.



News 6: India becomes second biggest investor in London

London & Partners, the official promotional company for London, has announced that India has become the second biggest investor in London after the US and ahead of China with a 117% increase in Indian companies across all sectors investing in the British capital during 2015. Also, there has been a 133 per cent increase in tech companies investing in the city, which accounts for 46 per cent of all projects.



The figures were released at the inaugural India Emerging 20 (IE20) event.

News 7: TIME magazine released the 30 Most Influential People on the Internet

TIME magazine revealed its second annual 30 Most Influential People on the Internet list. The list has been topped by the artist and entrepreneur Kanye West. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi stood at 15th in the list.

Editors from TIME compiled the list based on two primary criteria: global impact through social media and overall ability to drive news.

The 30 Most Influential People on the Internet

TIME.COM · March 03, 2016 · Updated March 05, 2016 8:23 PM ET

Our second annual roundup of the most influential people on the Internet. TIME sorted its contenders by looking at their global impact on social media and their overall ability to drive news. Here's who made this year's annotated list.

Josh Holz and Daniel Lara

View all List · 5 of 30

Josh Holz and Daniel Lara

The beauty of the Internet age—isn't it? Depending on who you ask—it's the engine of our planet's global phenomenon. Case in point: A high school boy from his friend's country and their rock star while reporting "Dogeza, Donald!" in an otherwise weird internet, and suddenly the video is everywhere. Josh Holz's unique cinematic creation, which is equivalent to "Reverie" and stitched together into a longer clip, is the viral video that truly penetrates mainstream pop culture. Here and later on.

Top 10 among Time's 30 Most Influential People on the Internet list:

1. Kanye West
2. Joy Cho
3. James Corden
4. Laci Green
5. Josh Holz and Daniel Lara
6. DJ Khaled
7. Johnetta Elzie and DeRay Mckesson
8. J.K. Rowling
9. Felix Arvid Ulf Kjellberg (a.k.a. PewDiePie)
- 10 Donald Trump

News 8: India ranks 118th on USDN's World Happiness Index

The World Happiness Report 2016 Update, which ranks 156 countries by their happiness levels, was released in Rome by the United Nations Social Development Network (UNSDN) in advance of UN World Happiness Day, March 20th.

Denmark topped the list as the happiest place in the world and Burundi was ranked at the bottom as the least happy nation. India slipped one rank this year to be ranked 118th out of 156 countries.



The top ten countries include Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, Finland, Canada, Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia and Sweden.

News 9: 14 Indians Among World's Top 100 Venture Capitalists

In a report prepared by CB Insights, a research firm that tracks VC and angel investments, Fourteen Indian-origin investors find place in a list of top 100 global venture capitalists (VCs). Peter Fanton of Benchmark Capital was the topper of the list.

The report evaluated the investors on the basis of their investments since 2008. Sameer Gandhi of Accel Partners at rank 25 was the top-ranked Indian venture capitalist.



News 10: Surat, Rajkot Cleanest Railway Station; Varanasi, Pune Among the Dirtiest: Survey

According to a survey released by Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), Surat is the cleanest railway station in the country, followed by Rajkot and Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) among the 75 A1-category railway stations followed by Solapur and Mumbai Central in Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Bhubaneshwar (Odisha) and Vadodara (Gujarat). The least clean stations included Guwahati, Hazrat Nizamuddin (Delhi), Sealdah (West Bengal), Kanpur Central (UP), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) and Muzaffarpur (Bihar).



Varanasi's railway station ranked poorly in terms of cleanliness as it stood at 65, among the 75 A-1 railway stations (those earning revenue more than Rs. 50 crore) surveyed. As many as 75 A1 and 332 A category stations across 16 zonal railways were covered by the survey. IRCTC had engaged TNS India Pvt. Ltd for undertaking the work.

News 11: Hinduja brothers top United Kingdom's 'Asian Rich List'

Hinduja brothers, G P Hinduja and S P Hinduja, have emerged as the richest Asian-origin entrepreneurs in Britain for the fourth consecutive year. They had added one billion pounds to their personal fortune in a year to be worth an estimated 16.5 billion pounds.

The 'Asian Rich List' assesses the total wealth of Britain's top 101 richest Asians. It is compiled by UK-based publishing house Asian Media and Market. Steel tycoon Lakshmi Niwas Mittal stood second in the list.

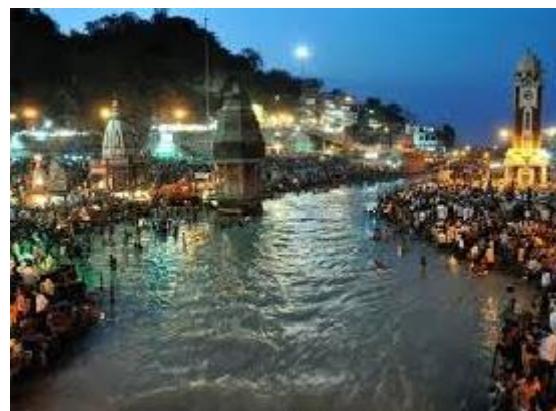


News 12: Detailed Project Report on Forestry Interventions for Ganga released

Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Uma Bharti released the Detailed Project Report (DPR) on Forestry Intervention for Ganga. The DPR has been prepared by Forest Research Institute (FRI) Dehradun.

Altogether, 40 different plantation and treatment models have been selected for implementation by Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and West Bengal.

The project will be implemented over a period of five years by the State Forest Departments of these five states in Phase-I (2016-2021).



News 13: Health Ministry Launches Longitudinal Ageing Study in India

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare launched the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India (LASI). It is the largest survey of its kind. It will survey more than 60,000 elderly over 25 years plan and will provide scientifically validated data on various issues of the elderly.

The International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai in collaboration with Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH) and University of Southern California (USC), USA is undertaking the LASI survey.



News 14: Fortune names Arvind Kejriwal among world's 50 greatest leaders

Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, has been named among the world's 50 greatest leaders by Fortune magazine. Ranked 42 in the Fortune's third annual 'World's 50 Greatest Leaders' list, he is the sole Indian leader on the list. The list is topped by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos. Fortune credits Kejriwal for his efforts to curb pollution in New Delhi through the odd-even scheme.



The list includes German Chancellor Angela Merkel (2), Myanmar's pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi at (3), US astronaut Scott Kelly and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko (22), IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde (36), Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Co-chair and CEO Melinda Gates and Susan Desmond-Hellmann (41), Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (48) and Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay (50).

News 15: India, China led investments in Renewable Energy in 2015: UN report

According to a report, 'Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2016', published by the UN Environment Program, the developing countries committed USD 156 billion investment in renewable energy as compared to USD 130 billion by developed countries.



China with USD 102.9 billion made the most, almost one third of the global investment. India was also among the top 10 investing countries with its commitments rising 22 per cent to USD 10.2 billion. The US, Japan, UK, Brazil, South Africa, Mexico and Chile all made it to the top 10 investing countries in 2015.

RESIGNATIONS & RETIREMENTS

News 1: Vijay Mallya resigned as the Director of Royal Challengers Sports Pvt. Ltd

Vijay Mallya has submitted his resignation as director of the Royal Challengers Sports Private Limited (RCSPL). He will however, hold the post of chief mentor. Vice-president (commercial operations and cricket academy) Russell Adams has been designated as points-man for all further correspondence. Mallya will continue to have honorary title of chief mentor.

The 60-year-old bought RCB in 2008 but the popular franchise has not been able to win a single Indian Premier League title in eight attempts.



News 2: Shane Watson announced retirement from International Cricket

The 34-year-old Australian all-rounder Shane Watson announced about his plans to retire from international cricket at the end of the ongoing World Twenty20 tournament in India.

He took 168 ODI wickets and holds the Australian record for the highest ODI score of an unbeaten 185.

Watson had retired from Test cricket at the end of last year's Ashes tour of England and has not played One-Day Internationals (ODI) since September last year.



News 1: Rahul Sachdev clinched the 1st All India Open Invitational Snooker Championship 2016

Rahul Sachdev clinched the 1st All India Open Invitational Snooker Championship 2016 in Aurangabad, Maharashtra. This the first maiden title for Rahul. In the final, he defeated Pushpender Singh of Railways with 5-3 Score.

This tournament was organized by Billiards and Snooker Association of Aurangabad and was nowhere related to Cue Sports India.



News 2: Armaan Ebrahim awarded with FMSCI Motorsports Man of the Year Trophy

Armaan Ebrahim was awarded the title of FMSCI Motorsports Man-of-the-Year Trophy at ceremony organized in Delhi by the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI). He was awarded the Raymond Gautam Singhania Rolling Trophy along with prize money of Rs 2lakh for his performance in the Lamborghini Blancpain Super Trofeo Asia Series.



Founder of FMSCI, B.I. Chandhok, was honoured with the lifetime achievement award for his contribution towards the motorsports in India.

News 3: Bahadur Singh Rana clinched Gold Medal in 50 Km Race Walk in National Championship

London Olympian Basant Bahadur Singh Rana, representing Delhi, won the gold medal in men's 50 km race walk event of the 3rd edition of the National Championships held in Jaipur.

Rana clocked 4 hours 7 minutes and 24 seconds to finish first, but he could not touch the revised Olympics qualification time of 4:06:00. Chandan Singh of Uttarakhand clinched the silver medal with a time of 4:09:50 while Jitendra Singh of Rajasthan won the bronze medal with an effort of 4:12:10.



News 4: ICC Suspended Aaron Phangiso for illegal Bowling Action

South African left-arm spinner, Aaron Phangiso, has been suspended from bowling after his action was found to be illegal. An International Cricket Council (ICC) movement expert found his arm extended beyond the 15 degrees allowed.

Phangiso's action was reported while playing for Highveld Lions against Warriors at Wanderers in a domestic one-day match where he managed to pick two wickets.



News 4: BCCI creates three associate sponsors role, PepsiCo signs a 4-year deal

PepsiCo has been signed as the first associate sponsor of BCCI for a period of 4 years. The four-year deal will give PepsiCo on-ground visibility along with pouring and snacking rights in around 20 matches per year. Apart from that, Gatorade, energy drink of PepsiCo, will be the new performance drink for team India.

The other two parties in talks with BCCI to be associate sponsors are Hyundai and Intex. BCCI would get Rs. 150 crores for the next four years from the associate sponsors as revenue. Paytm is the official title sponsor of the BCCI.



News 5: Jitu Rai clinched Gold in the 50m Pistol Gold at the ISSF World Cup

Indian shooter, Jitu Rai, clinched the 50m pistol gold at the ISSF World Cup held in Bangkok.

He edged past some big names like China's former World and Olympic Champion Pang Wei (2nd), China's Olympic Bronze medallist Wang Zhiwei (3rd) and Former World Champion Tomoyuki Matsuda of Japan.

News 6: Patna Pirates Win the 3rd Season of Pro Kabaddi League

Patna Pirates became the champions of Season 3 of Star Sports Pro Kabaddi league when they defeated the defending champions U Mumba 31-28 in the final. Puneri Paltan clinched the third spot after they defeated Bengal Warriors.

Rohit Kumar of Patna Pirates was awarded as the Best Raider and Mohit Chillar of U Mumba the Best Defender of the Match. Rishank Devadiga of U Mumba finished a dream season as the most successful raider with 106 points.



News 7: Asia Cup 2016: India beat Bangladesh to win its 6th Asia Cup Title

India defeated Bangladesh by 8 wickets in the final to win their 6th Asia Cup title. The 13th Edition of Asia Cup was a Twenty20 International (T20I) cricket tournament. It was held in Bangladesh from 24 February to 6 March 2016.

While they did get the wicket of their choice, mother-nature rained over early proceedings. a thunderstorm delayed the game by an hour and a half and changed the playing conditions.



News 8: Hyundai becomes the Official Partner of BCCI

Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) has signed as the second associate sponsor of BCCI for a period of 4 years. As per the deal, Hyundai will use its fleet of premium cars for transporting various stakeholders of the game throughout the event, in-stadium car displays and branding.

BCCI would get Rs 150 crore for the next four years from the associate sponsors as revenue. PepsiCo has already signed a 4-year deal as associate sponsor. The other party in talks is Intex. PayTm is the official title sponsor of the BCCI.



News 9: Lin Dan won his sixth All England Badminton Championships title, Nozomi Okuhara first

Lin Dan of China won the sixth All England Badminton Championships title after he defeated compatriot Tian Houwei 21-9, 21-10 in the final. Lin added the title to his collection of wins in 2004, 2006, 2007, 2009 and 2012.

In the women's final, Nozomi Okuhara of Japan defeated two-time champion Wang Shixian of China 21-11, 16-21, 21-19 in their thrilling final.



News 10: Services defeat Maharashtra 2-1 to defend Santosh Trophy

Services won the Santosh Trophy National Football Championships title after they defeated Maharashtra 2-1 in the summit clash at SEC Railway Stadium in Nagpur.

Arjun Tudu scored two goals in the space of 11 minutes (26th and 37th) to help Services clinch their fifth title overall. The winner and the runner-ups received 5 lakh rupees and 3 lakh rupees respectively.



News 11: UK Anti-Doping to spearhead Olympics-focused Anti-Doping Taskforce

The World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) has announced that UKAD will act as the secretariat for an International Olympic Committee (IOC) Pre-Rio Anti-Doping Taskforce to ensure a coordinated effort amongst all relevant National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs) in the build up to Rio 2016.

The primary objective of the Taskforce is to identify potential testing gaps around the globe across all Olympic sports.



News 12: Yogeshwar Dutt finishes with gold medal in Asian Olympics Qualifiers

Yogeshwar Dutt secured an Olympic quota place for India in the men's 65kg freestyle category after he won a gold medal in the Asian Olympic Qualification tournament at Astana in Kazakhstan. He became the second Indian wrestler after Narsingh Yadav to qualify for the Rio Games, to be held in August 2016.

Dutt beat China's Katai Yeerlanbieke by 'forfeit' in the Astana final to claim the gold.



News 13: Gurmeet Singh becomes the 1st Indian to win Asian 20 km Race Walk

Gurmeet Singh created history by becoming the first Indian athlete to clinch a gold medal in the Asian 20 km Race Walk Championships. The 30-year-old Gurmeet clocked 1 hour 20 minutes and 29 seconds. He beat Japan's Isamu Fujisawa (1:20:49) in a close fight in the last 5km. Kazakhstan's Georgiy Sheiko won the bronze medal in 1:21:52.

In the women's 20-km walk race event, National Games champion and Rio Games-bound Sapna finished fourth in a time of 1:35:57. Rui Liang of China won the gold in 1:28:43 and Kumiko Okada of Japan (1:30:03) and South Korean Jeongeun Lee (1:33:53) took the silver and bronze respectively.



News 14: Bangladesh bowlers Arafat Sunny and Taskin suspended by ICC

The International Cricket Council (ICC) suspended Bangladeshi bowlers Arafat Sunny and Taskin with immediate effect after an independent assessment found their bowling actions illegal.

However, with the consent of Bangladesh Cricket Board, the two bowlers may be able to play in domestic cricket.



News 15: Wrestler Hardeep Singh booked an Olympic quota place for India in Greco-Roman wrestling

Indian wrestler Hardeep Singh booked an Olympic quota place for India in Greco-Roman wrestling after he won silver medal in the Asian Olympic Qualification Tournament held in Astana, Kazakhstan. In the final he lost to Di Xiao of China.

As of now, Yogeshwra Dutt and Narsingh Yadav in men's freestyle and Hardeep Singh in greco-roman have qualified for Rio Olympics 2016.



News 16: Novak Djokovic and Victoria Azarenka won BNP Paribas Open titles in Indian Wells

Novak Djokovic defeated Milos Raonic of Canada 6-2, 6-0 in the men's final to win the men's singles titles of the BNP Paribas Open at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden in Southern California. Djokovic won his fifth Indian Wells title and third in a row. He equaled Rafael Nadal's 27 ATP Masters titles.

Victoria Azarenka of Belarus defeated top seed Serena Williams 6-4, 6-4 to win the women's singles titles. She lifted her second BNP Paribas Open title and her 19th singles title.



News 17: Nico Rosberg won 2016 Australian Grand Prix

Nico Rosberg of Germany (Mercedes) won the 2016 Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix at Melbourne Grand Prix Circuit at Albert Park, Melbourne, Australia. It was his 15th Formula One victory and fourth in succession after he had won the final three races of last season.

Lewis Hamilton came second in the race while Sebastian Vettel came third.



News 18: India to host 2017 FIFA Under-17 World Cup

The Union Cabinet approved the hosting of FIFA Under-17 World Cup to be held in India in 2017, in the month of September–October 2017. The total estimated cost will be within Rs 95 Crores.

The venues chosen are:

- JLN Stadium, New Delhi;
- D.Y. Patil Stadium, Navi Mumbai;
- JLN Stadium, Kochi;
- Salt Lake Stadium, Kolkata;
- JLN Stadium, Fatorda Goa and
- I.G. Stadium Guwahati.



News 1: ISRO set to launch India's 6th navigational satellite IRNSS-1F

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is all set to launch its sixth navigation satellite IRNSS-1F on 10th March at 4 pm.

The satellite will be launched into orbit from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. This system aims at developing an independent regional navigation satellite system for India just like America's reliable Global Positioning System (GPS).



The Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System-1F (IRNSS-1F) is the sixth navigation satellite in the IRNSS system. The satellite will be launched by PSLV C32 which will go on its 34th mission on Thursday.

News 2: 25 Foreign Satellites to be launched this Year by India

India will launch 25 foreign satellites of seven countries in 2016-17. Antrix, the commercial arm of ISRO, has signed the agreements for launching 12 satellites of USA, one each for Japan and Malaysia, Algeria and Canada for launching three satellites each and four for Germany.

India till date has launched 57 foreign satellites of 21 countries using the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV). ISRO earned 80 Million Euros during the last three years when 28 satellites were launched belonging to 13 countries.



News 3: Europe and Russia jointly launched ExoMars 2016, an unmanned spacecraft to Mars

Europe and Russia launched a joint mission to Mars to analyze methane, a gas which on Earth is created in large part by living microbes, and traces of which were observed by previous Mars missions. The satellite, called the ExoMars Trace Gas Orbiter (TGO), lifted off from Baikonur in Kazakhstan at 09:31 GMT.

The ExoMars program is a joint endeavour between European Space Agency (ESA) and the Russian space agency, Roscosmos.



News 4: Paleontologists discover fossils of 250-million-year-old reptile Teyujagua in Brazil

Scientists have discovered a new fossil reptile that lived 250 million years ago in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, southernmost Brazil. The species has been identified from a mostly complete and well preserved fossil skull that the team has named *Teyujagua paradoxa*.



The reptile, named Teyujagua or fierce lizard, is the close relative of a group that gave rise to dinosaurs, crocodiles and birds.

News 5: MIT, Pune starts India's first education focused accelerator program – Edugild

Pune-based Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT) in Pune has set up India's first education technology (edtech) accelerator called Edugild. The accelerator is the first of its kind in the country to focus only on the education sector. Edugild will conduct two batches every year. Under the Edugild program, start-ups will receive seed funding worth Rs 15 lakh in return for a minority stake (sub 10%).

an MIT Pune's initiative



India's first EduTech Startups Accel

In its first year, from an application of 300 companies, four companies (Classboat, Instafeez, Simulanis and Gradopedia) were selected by Edugild for its accelerator programme.

News 6: Indian Railways signs agreement with ISRO for route surveys

The Railway Ministry has signed an agreement with the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) regarding Effective Use of Space Technology in Remote Sensing and Graphic Information System (GIS) based Governance Application. ISRO with the help of space technology will help railways by providing passenger information in all trains, map railway assets and help survey new route alignments.



ISRO was also asked to conduct studies in order to find ways to ensure smooth rail traffic during the foggy season.

News 7: ISRO established GIRI Radar System at Tirupati

ISRO established the Gadanki Ionospheric Radar Interferometer (GIRI) near Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh. It was set up at the National Atmospheric Research Laboratory (NARL) which is an autonomous research institute of the Department of Space.

GIRI is a 30 MHz radar system that will be engaged in meteor and space weather research in a comprehensive way.



News 8: CIMAP Scientists claim Mint plant can be used in anti-cancer drugs

Scientists at CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP) have found that a medicinal compound called 'L-Menthol' derived from *Mentha* plant or mint plant has medicinal values that can cure cancer.

The study was published recently in the international journal, 'OMICS: A Journal of Integrative Biology'. Its production is cost-effective and easily available in comparison to anti-cancer compound used at present obtained from the bark of European Yew tree.



News 9: Microsoft shuts Artificial Intelligence Robot – Tay

Microsoft, which launched artificial intelligence (AI) powered Chatbot, Tay, on Twitter for a playful chat with people, only to silence it within 24 hours as users started sharing racist and offensive comments with the chatbot.

Tay — an AI project built by the Microsoft Technology and Research and Bing teams — was coded with information which can tell users' jokes or offer up a comment on a picture you send her.



News 10: China launched their 22nd BeiDou Navigation Satellite System

China launched its 22nd satellite for its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) to support its global navigation and positioning network from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in the southwestern province of Sichuan. The satellite was taken into orbit by a Long March-3A carrier rocket.

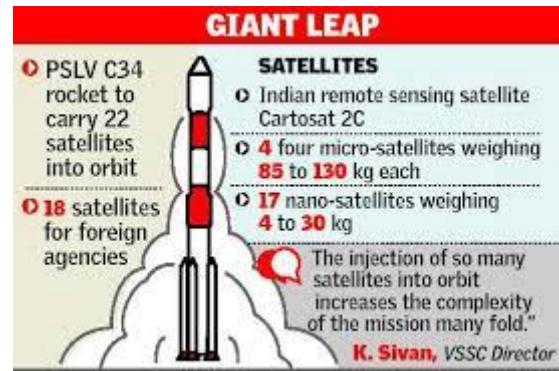
The BeiDou system will be completed in 2020 and will comprise over 30 satellites.



News 11: ISRO to launch 22 satellites on one rocket

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is set to launch a record number of 22 satellites in a single mission in May 2016 with the help of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV C34.

The satellites to be launched include Cartosat 2C along with four micro-satellites weighing 85 to 130 kg each and 17 nano-satellites weighing 4 to 30 kg. 18 of these satellites are being launched for foreign agencies including the United States, Canada, Germany and Indonesia.



VARIOUS COMMITTEES

News 1: Committee set up to consider ST status to six Communities of Assam

The Government has set up a Committee headed by Shri Mahesh Kumar Singla, Special Secretary (Internal Security), Ministry of Home Affairs to recommend the modalities for granting of Scheduled Tribe status to six Communities namely Koch Rajbongshi, Moran, Matak, Tai Ahom, Chutia and Adivasi (Tea Tribes) in Assam.



The Committee shall submit its report by May 31, 2016.

News 2: Ashok Lahiri Committee to review excise duty on jewelry articles

The Union Ministry of Finance constituted a committee headed by former Chief Economic Advisor Dr. Ashok Lahiri. The committee will review excise duty imposed on different jewelry articles in Budget 2016-17. The Committee will submit its report within 60 days of its constitution.

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, in his budget speech had proposed the Central Excise duty at the rate of 1 percent (without input tax credit) and 12.5 percent (with input tax credit) on jewelry items.



News 3: Akhilesh Ranjan committee submits recommendations on Taxation of e-commerce

A committee, headed by Akhilesh Ranjan, Joint Secretary (CBDT) and constituted by the Central Board of Direct Taxes to examine the business models for e-commerce, identify the direct tax issues in relation to e-commerce transactions and provide suggestions submitted its report.

According to this report, Equalization Levy at the rate between 6 to 8 percent of the gross sum received may be imposed on payments to non-residents for specified services by a separate chapter in the Finance Act, 2016.

