

Current Affairs Weekly PDF – January Third Week (21-31)

INDIAN AFFAIRS

- The Ministry of Railway has proposed the Finance Ministry to create a non-lapsable safety fund named 'Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh' over five years with initial corpus of Rs. 20000 crore and contribute a portion to fund it in the upcoming Budget 2017 to be presented on February 1.
- Meghalaya's first ever Apparel and Garment Making Centre was inaugurated on January 30, 2017 jointly by Union Textiles Minister Smriti Zubin Irani and Chief Minister of Meghalaya Dr. Mukul Sangma near Ampati in South West Garo Hills.
- The Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, Narendra Singh Tomar announced on January 31, 2017 that the Ministry of Defence is set to open its Defence Unit in Morena district of Madhya Pradesh. The unit would be set up in Kailaras and Sabalgarh tehsil areas and span over 969.735 hectare of land at a cost of Rs. 1500 crore.
- Bangalore based Start-up firm E-paathsala has launched an integrated accreditation and ERP technology solution for the colleges and universities to enable them better manage their multiple accreditation standards in an easy, efficient and fast manner and bridge the gap identified for specific accreditations.
- Income Tax Department (ITD) led by Sushil Chandra has launched Operation Clean Money on January 31, 2017 to verify the cash deposited in the banks during November 9th to December 30th 2016.
- The Union Cabinet also gave the approval for introduction of the Repealing and Amending Bill, 2017 to repeal 105 Acts.
- The Union Cabinet has given its approval for India to become the full-fledge member of the International Vaccine Institute (IVI) Governing Council. As a part of the membership India will have to contribute an amount of US \$ 5, 00, 00 to the International Vaccine Institute (IVI), Seoul, South Korea.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the 12th Plan Proposal of the DARE/ICAR Plan Scheme for the 'Establishment of Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)- Jharkhand'.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave its ex-post facto approval for the Augmentation of the Corpus of Credit Guarantee Trust Fund for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), a package set up for supporting Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs).
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, O. Paneerselvam has send a draft ordinance to the centre seeking an amendment to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 and removal of "bull" from the list of "performing" animals. This will ensure that provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act will not apply to the bull.
- The state Government of Bihar led by Nitish Kumar launched a 'Nasha Mukta' (Addiction-Free) State Campaign with the formation of world's largest human chain across the state.
- Government of India Think Tank NITI Aayog together with International bodies World Economic Forum, World Intellectual Property Organization and the Cornell University will develop an India Innovation Index to rank the Indian states so as to develop an innovative spirit among them.
- The Indian Railways has decided to set up a \$5 billion Railways of India Development Fund (RIDF) so as to support commercially viable projects in railway sector in India. The World Bank would fund 80% RIDF while 20% fund would be raised by the Indian railways itself and managed independently by a non-government entity.
- A special task force (STF) for women safety has been reconstituted under the Chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Anil Bajjal to review the decisions taken by the Delhi Police and other departments regarding women's safety on January 20, 2017.
- India's passenger train speed will be increased to 200 km per hour with the help of Russian Railways and budget of the high speed train will be shared between the two countries in the ratio 50:50.

- The Chief Minister of Jharkhand Raghubar Das presented the state's annual budget for 2017-18 on January 23, 2017 under the theme of "Garib Kalyan Varsh". The main focus of the budget is on agriculture, education and skill development, rural development and eliminating poverty. The Minister has presented a budget worth Rs 75,673.42 crore out of which Rs 57,861.32 crore would be revenue expenditure and Rs 18,812.10 crore would be capital expenditure.
- The Indian postal department released a special stamp cover titled "Golden girls of India – Pride of Nation" in Agartala. The special covers feature the 2016 Olympic medalist gymnast Dipa Karmakar, shuttler PV Sindu and wrestler Sakshi Malik.
- Tamil Nadu assembly unanimously passed the Jallikattu Bill to replace the ordinance issued on January 21, 2017 to allow the states traditional sport. The bill amends the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, making Jallikattu a permanent sport in rural Tamil Nadu.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the Indian Institute of Management(IIM) Bill, 2017 on January 24, 2017 that aims to declare IIMs as Institutions of National Importance.
- The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval on for interest waiver for the two months of November and December, 2016 for farmers accessing short term crop loans from Cooperative Banks.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal of India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) for redevelopment of Pragati Maidan by setting up of a world class Integrated Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC) at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- The Union Cabinet has decided to transfer the role of advising the government on how to utilize the proceeds from disinvestment from the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) to the Department of Economic Affairs.
- The Supreme Court directed the government to replace the current practice of giving three-times-a-week dosage norm of tuberculosis (TB) drugs with a daily dosage norm within a period of nine months to curb relapse and deaths during treatment.
- The Union Ministry of Steel, headed by Chaudhary Birendra Singh has come out with a Draft National Steel Policy 2017 to increase the supply of domestic coking coal and cut the dependence on imports.
- The National Girl Child Day celebration on January 24, 2017 in New Delhi was marked by the release of National Action Plan for Children, 2016 (NPAC). NPAC has been developed by the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- The Andhra Pradesh under Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu has announced Rs 100-crore fund of funds to invest in Fintech startups.
- The Government of Assam led by Chief Minister Sarbanand Sonowal agreed to a proposal by the Royal Government of Bhutan for setting up of a Consulate General Office in Guwahati and also conveyed this decision to the Union Ministry of External Affairs.
- The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has decided to set up weather stations in 660 districts of the country for better and prompt weather forecasting with major focus on rain-fed and non-rain-fed areas to give crop specific advisories
- The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways and Shipping, Nitin Jairam Gadkari, inaugurated a 3-lane Brahmaputra Bridge at Saraighat in Guwahati.
- The Karnataka state cabinet on January 28, 2017 approved amending Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Bill, 1960 Act to legalize the Kambala and Bullock Cart Race which is a traditional festival held annually in Karnataka.
- The Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) has launched climate change programme to assess the status, distribution and conservation of pheasants and finches in the Central Himalayas. This programme is funded by Oracle and facilitated by CAF-India.

PLACES IN NEWS

- Bihar formed the world's largest human chain in the state on January 21, 2017 by holding hands of each other in order to express unity and support towards liquor ban. The human chain was about 11,292 km comprising of two crore citizens.
- Assam State Governor Banwarilal Purohit inaugurated the Arogya Mitra conference on January 21, 2017 at Silchar. The three day conference has been organised by the south Assam zone of the NGO, Keshab Smarak Sanskriti Surabhi at the campus of Veterinary College, Ghungoor.
- The Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) of India, Syed Nasim Zaidi on January 22, 2017 informed that the state government of Goa has opted for an initiative involving electronic transmission of postal ballot to service voters in the upcoming assembly polls. This initiative will make Goa the first state in the country to do so.
- The Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijju laid the foundation stone for an Integrated Check-Post (ICP) on January 24, 2017 at the Indo-Bangladesh border in Meghalaya.
- Madhya Pradesh Announces Total Ban on Polythene Bags from May 1, 2017.
- The Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Ananth Kumar inaugurated India's first Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) at Metagalli post office in Mysuru on January 25, 2017. The second POPSK simultaneously opened in Gujarat.
- The three-day long Brahmaputra Literary festival began in Guwahati, Assam on January 28, 2017. The festival has been by the State Government jointly with the National Book Trust.
- India's first multi-sports museum, Fanatic Sports Museum (FSM), was inaugurated on January 29, 2017 at the Ecospace in New Town, Rajarhat, Kolkata jointly by Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Abhinav Bindra, Deepa Malik and Devendra Jhalaria.

FOREIGN VISITS

- **Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan 3- Day Visit to India**
The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan was the Chief Guest at the 68th Republic Day Celebration on January 26, 2017 in New Delhi. He is the Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE armed forces.
- India and UAE Signs 14 Agreements to Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation on elevating bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership
- In order to further boost strategic ties, India and United Arab Emirates (UAE) signed 14 agreements on January 25, 2017 after the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan at the Hyderabad House, New Delhi.
- The area of MoUs included defence, comprehensive strategic partnership, shipping, agriculture, prevention and combating human trafficking and other allied sectors.
- During the first half of 2016, the bilateral trade between the UAE and India was calculated at USD 17 billion. Out of this, UAE's import from India rose to USD 11 billion while the non-oil exports to India reached USD 6 billion during the same period.
- The two countries aims at increasing trade by 60 percent to US\$ 100 billion, reaching US\$ 368 billion by 2020.
- Central Power Sector PSU & Central Transmission Utility, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL), signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Abu Dhabi Water & Electricity Authority (ADWEA) & its group of companies on January 25, 2017 in Gurgaon, for cooperation in power sector.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- The US House of Representatives has introduced a legislation on January 30, 2017 making it mandatory to raise the minimum salary of the H-1B visa holders to more than double at USD 1,30,000 from the previous USD 60,000.

- Ireland has become the first country in the world to divest coal, oil and gas investments from Ireland Strategic Investment Fund. The bill was passed in the Irish parliament by gaining 53 votes out of 90. It was introduced by Deputy Thomas Pringle. Hong Kong has withdrawn the visa-on arrival facility for Indians travelling to Hong Kong effective from January 23, 2017.
- In a move to decrease dependence on vegetable imports from India, the Nepal Government has launched a 10-year plan on January 22, 2017 to boost domestic production.
- The parliament of Turkey approved a constitutional reform on January 21, 2017 to strengthen the powers of the presidency by introducing presidential rule in the country and has led the way for a referendum on the issue by the public.
- In an effort to become the super powerful occupier of green energy, China has built the world's biggest solar park, Longyangxia Dam Solar Park, in the western province of Qinghai. The park spans over 27 square km of area and can produce 850 MW of power which is enough to supply up to 200,000 households.
- The new US president, Donald Trump signed a formal executive order on January 23, 2017 to withdraw the country from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade deal, thus keeping his promise made during his presidential campaign.
- Russia, Turkey and Iran have agreed to jointly monitor the fragile cease-fire between the Syrian regime and rebels to find a political solution of ending the six-year conflict.
- United States President Donald Trump signed an executive order to enable construction of a 2,000-mile wall along the southern US border with Mexico.
- The annual "Surya Namaskar Yajna" or "Health for Humanity Yogathon" has been recognized in the US House of Representative on the occasion of its 10th anniversary.
- After being sworn in as the President of United States on January 20, 2017, Donald Trump held his first summit with a foreign leader, British Prime Minister Theresa May on January 27, 2017 in his Oval Office.
- The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Judicial Department, Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has issued a resolution to set up a Personal Status and Inheritance Court for non Muslims in Abu Dhabi.
- American President Donald Trump has signed an executive order on January 27, 2017 to temporarily ban visas for refugees belonging to seven Muslim-majority countries namely Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen. However, the ban would not apply to diplomats and members of international organizations.

RANKING & REPORTS

- According to the 2016 Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), developed by a non-governmental organisation, Pratham, Himachal Pradesh was found to be best performing state in India on the education front as compared to the rest of the states.
- Telangana has been ranked at second spot in the 'Cashless India Scorecard' released on January 26, 2017 and prepared by Walnut app to measure the growth level in digital payments in the country post demonetization. The top three states in the scorecard were Gujarat, Telangana and Haryana respectively with the highest growth in going cashless.
- India has been ranked at 79th spot out of 176 countries in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for the year 2016 released on January 25, 2017 by the Berlin-based corruption watchdog Transparency International (TI). New Zealand and Denmark jointly shared the first position as the least corrupt nations while Somalia was rated as the most corrupt country in the list.
- India at Sixth Position among Eight Great Powers of 2017 List by American Foreign Policy Magazine. The list has been topped by US.
- According to the latest Global Go To Think Tank Index Report, released globally by the Lauder Institute, Pennsylvania University, US on January 27, 2017, the Delhi based Observer Research Foundation (ORF) has been ranked as the top think tank in the China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea category.

SUMMITS & CONFERENCES

- The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017 was held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland from January 17-20, 2017. The theme of 47th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2017 is Responsive and Responsible Leadership.
- India and UAE held the first meeting of their strategic dialogue on January 20, 2017 in New Delhi in an attempt to finalise the cooperation agreement.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Dehradun to inaugurate the Combined Commanders Conference.
- The 29th Kerala Science Congress was inaugurated by Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on January 28, 2017 at the APJ Abdul Kalam hall in the Mar Thoma College in Thiruvalla. The main theme of the congress is 'Genomics in health and disease'.
- The first edition of the North East Investors Summit was inaugurated on January 29, 2017 by the Union Textiles Minister, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani in Shillong, Meghalaya. Theme: Exploring Opportunities in North East Region.

BANKING & FINANCE

Economic Survey 2016-17

The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley presented the Economic Survey 2016-17 in the Parliament on January 31, 2017 that provides a base for the government to prepare the annual Budget.

- The survey has been authored by Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian.

Important Highlights of the Economic Survey 2016-17

GDP Growth

- The Economic Survey has estimated that the GDP growth rate for FY18 will be in the range of 6.75 percent to 7.5 percent.
- The growth rate for the current fiscal has been estimated at 7.1 percent from the previous 7.6 percent by the Central Statistics Office. This estimate does not take into account the effect of demonetization.
- Fixed investment (gross fixed capital formation) to GDP ratio (at current prices) is estimated to be 26.6 per cent in 2016-17 as compared to previous 29.3 percent.

Government Revenues

- The survey stated that the indirect taxes grew by 26.9 percent during April-November 2016.

Inflation

- As per the Consumer Price Index (CPI), inflation remained under control for the third successive financial year. The average CPI inflation was 5.9 percent in 2014-15, 4.9 percent in 2015-16 and 4.8 percent during April-December 2016.
- Based on Wholesale Price Index (WPI), inflation was 2.0 per cent in 2014-15 and lowered to (-)2.5 percent in 2015-16. During April-December 2016 it averaged to 2.9 percent.
- The private sector lender Lakshmi Vilas Bank in partnership with Bangalore based fin-tech startup firm Fisdom, has launched a mobile application "Mission FINFIT" to offer the customers of the bank financial planning and personal wealth management services based on Robo advisory.
- As per the announcement by Reserve Bank of India on January 30, 2017, the daily withdrawal limit from ATM will be removed with effect from February 1, 2017. However the weekly limit to withdraw Rs. 24000 from savings account will still continue. Besides, the Central bank has also removed the cash withdrawal limit from current accounts/ cash credit accounts/ overdraft accounts with immediate effect.

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) started its operations on January 30, 2017 with the pilot services launched in Raipur and Ranchi. The total paid up capital of the bank is Rs. 800 crore and the government has already infused Rs. 275 crore.
- Based on the latest Economic Outlook Survey report released by FICCI on January 30, 2017, the India's GDP is projected to grow 6.8 percent this fiscal which is 0.5 percent points less than FICCI's previous estimate of 7.3 percent.
- As per the report of the rating agency, ICRA, the bank credit growth rate is likely to float between 5-6 percent in the current fiscal year.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval on January 18, 2017 to exclude States/Union-Territories (with Legislature) except Arunachal Pradesh, Delhi, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh from National Small Savings Fund (NSSF) investments effective from April 1, 2016.
- Kerala Gramin Bank has launched a novel programme called FI@School at Assisi Vidyanikethan Public School, Kakkanad to propagate financial literacy among school children on January 20, 2017. The bank has appointed magician Gopinath Muthukad as the brand ambassador for FI@School.
- The GST Council has decided that tax evasion of upto than Rs. 2 crore would be bailable offense to ensure that the trader gets immediate bail while the non-bailable offenses would be limited to 'forgery and non- deposit of collected taxes with the exchequer within the stipulated time frame. Current tax evasion upto Rs 1 crore used to be bailable offense.
- The Cooperative banks have been barred by the Government on January 20, 2017 from accepting deposits under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Deposit Scheme (PMGKDS) to stop any misuse of the deposited amount.
- Mumbai based dairy firm Kwality Ltd has signed an MoU with Bank of Baroda on January 20, 2017 to provide Rs. 4000 crore loans to one lakh farmers out of the established networks from whom the company procures milk.
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched a Contactless Credit Card named PNB Wave N Pay on January 21, 2017 in New Delhi to further enhance its digitalization initiative.
- Varanasi-based Utkarsh Micro Finance started operating its banking business as Utkarsh Small Finance Bank to cater to the needs of the poor mainly in the northern belt. The bank will offer 6% interest on savings bank accounts while deposit rates for one year would be 8.25-8.50% which is about 150 basis points higher than State Bank of India.
- Reserve Bank of India has declared that rescheduling the period of payment of education loans due to the inability of the borrower because of unemployment will not be treated as restructured accounts for computing NPAs. Banks can allow three rounds of extension periods, each not more than 6 months, during the entire lifecycle of the education loan, to be applicable only on unemployment/underemployment borrowers.
- Wholesale reinsurance provider Swiss Re has received approval from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to open a branch in the city.
- The Banking Codes and Standards Board of India (BCSBI) has announced an initiative as per which it would organise "Know Your Rights" programme in select urban and rural areas of the country to enhance awareness on Banking Codes at the grassroot level among the people. The programme, 'interalia' involved skit and a puppet show to describe the banking codes to over 100 participating women in simple language.
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi gave its post-facto approval on January 24, 2017 allowing National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) to raise approx. Rs. 20,000 crore from the market for on-lending to Cooperative Banks.
- France on January 24, 2017 issued its first "Green Bonds" with a record sale of worth seven billion euro (USD 7.5 billion) thus leading a significant way towards establishment of a genuine market in renewable energy bonds.
- The Reserve Bank of India has prohibited the Indian entities on January 25, 2017 from making direct overseas investments in any entity that is located in 'non co-operative countries and territories', as

identified by the inter-governmental body Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

- The State Bank of India has launched a new wealth management product named “SBI Exclusif” in Kochi, Kerala. Later it will be rolled out in other cities of the state during the course of the year.
- Mangaluru based private sector bank Karnataka Bank Ltd signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the leading agricultural equipment/implements manufacturer Tirth Agro Technology Pvt Ltd, Rajkot, on January 25, 2017 in to finance farmers for agri mechanisation. The Tirth Agro Technology Pvt Ltd manufactures agricultural implements under the brand name ‘Shaktiman’. It has a network of more than 685 dealers and 42 distributors across India.
- The Government on January 27, 2017 informed about its plan to launch the biometric based Aadhaar Pay payment platform in few weeks for BHIM App.
- India’s fastest loan giving app for young salaried professionals, CASHe has partnered with Paytm on January 27, 2017 to allow its users to deposit cash transfers from CASHe to their Paytm wallets. CASHe offers multiple loan options ranging from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 1,00,000 payable over 15, 30 and 90 days.
- The India Post has received the final license from the Reserve bank of India to start its operation as payment bank with the name India Post Payment Bank (IPPB). AP Singh has been anointed as the interim MD and CEO of the India Post Payment Bank by the government.
- The Reserve Bank of India on January 29, 2017 informed that the Foreign Exchange Reserves of India rose by 932.4 million dollars to 360.775 billion dollars for the second consecutive week ended January 20.
- Future Generali India Insurance Company (FGII) announced an agency tie-up with Pune based Bank of Maharashtra on January 30, 2017.

BUSINESS

- The Public Sector Oil Companies including HPCL, ONGC and the GAIL have signed MoUs on January 27, 2017 with the Andhra Pradesh Government to invest 1.65 lakh crore in several projects of the state especially the Krishna-Godavari basin.
- American worldwide online transportation network company Uber has launched two-wheeler aggregation service UberMOTO , Upon that one can hire two-wheelers for short-distance commute at cheaper rates to provide the last-mile connectivity from and to the upcoming Metro railway stations.
- The Electronic commerce company Flipkart has been ranked at the top position in the nationwide consumer study titled ‘The Indian E-tailing Leadership Index’ conducted by research firm Red Seer Consulting.
- Digital Payment Platform, FreeCharge has launched a Mutual Funds investment facility on its platform in partnership with Reliance Mutual Fund on January 20, 2017.
- According to the annual 50 Most Innovative Companies survey report published by the management consulting firm BCG (Boston Consulting Group), , Apple Inc. has been named as the World’s Most Innovative Company in 2016. This is the 11th time that the report has been revised since it first appeared in the year 2004.
- UK-headquartered Vodafone India signed an MoU with the West Bengal government to invest Rs 3,000 crore for capacity augmentation and new business initiatives over next three years.
- Moving towards the Make in India initiative, the Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh inaugurated the new Universal Rail Mill at Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) of Steel Authority of India Ltd (SAIL) on January 23, 2017 and flagged off the mills first and world’s longest single rail of 130 meters from the new Universal Rail Mill(URM).
- Telangana based India’s largest incubator for start-ups, T-Hub has launched a ‘GIS Innovation Hub’ (GIH) in collaboration with Esri India on January 23, 2017 for the start-ups belonging to the capital Hyderabad.
- American aerospace major Boeing Corporation launched the “Boeing India Engineering & Technology Center” (BIETC) on January 24, 2017 in Bengaluru in a bid to enhance its aerospace

innovation in global emerging market like India.

- India's largest online travel portal MakeMyTrip has launched the first ever social luxury travel magazine called 'Luxury Travel Times'.
- Nokia Indian operation has bagged a contract worth \$500 million (Rs 3,650 crore) from Mumbai based Vodafone for deployment and expansion of 4G network in the country.
- The Aditya Birla Group on January 27, 2017 announced its plans to invest Rs 7,000 crore in the next two years in Andhra Pradesh.
- Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd(HPCL) and GAIL India Ltd signed a pact with Andhra Pradesh for setting up a Rs 40,000 crore petrochemical plant in the state. The 50:50 joint venture will set up a 1.5 million tons Ethylene Derivatives plant.
- Indian-American entrepreneur, philanthropist and venture capitalist Gururaj Deshpande has decided to launch India's largest startup incubation centre at Hubballi (earlier Hubli) in Karnataka.
- Reliance Defence Signs Contract with Ministry of Defence to Construct 14 Fast patrol Vessels for Indian Coast Guard worth Rs. 916 crore.
- Kakinada SEZ Ltd (KSEZ), a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure Limited (GIL), signed several MoUs with various companies during the CII Partnership Summit 2017 held on January 27-28, 2017 at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. The MoU aimed at setting up World Class manufacturing units at the Kakinada SEZ in Andhra Pradesh spread over 8,500 acres at a cost of Rs. 47000 crore.

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

- A film directed by Ajay Saklani in a Himachali dialect "Saanjh" has won the best feature film award at international Borrego Springs Film Festival held in California, US on January 16, 2017. Saanjh is the first Himachali film has gets international recognition in 100 years of the Indian cinema.
- Three Indian-origin persons have been awarded Australia's highest civilian honor this year for their contributions in the field of medicine and work towards the community. Purushottam Sawrikar, a Sydney-based medical practitioner, Makhan Singh Khangure from Perth and Vijay Kumar received the award for his significant service.
- Dr. A Keshav Krishna, a scientist at the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad has been selected for the 2016 National Geoscience Award in recognition of his work in the field of geo-environmental studies in Applied Geosciences. Besides, Dr. N. Purnachandra Rao, Chief Scientist at the National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), has been selected for 2016 National Geoscience Award for recognition of his work in the field of Geophysics.
- 3 Soldiers from Rashtriya Rifles Awarded Sena Medal for Encountering Hizbul terrorist Burhan Wani. The awardees include Major Sandeep Kumar, Captain Manik Sharma and Naik Arvind Singh Chauhan.
- Over 3.5 lakh people in Gujarat created a world record on January 21, 2017 by singing the National Anthem at an event of installation of idol of goddess Khodiyar at a newly-built Khodal Dham temple in Kagvad town in Rajkot district.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the National Bravery Awards 2016 in New Delhi on January 23, 2017 and distributed bravery awards to 25 young recipients. Among the 25 children, 12 were girls and 13 boys out of which 4 awards were given posthumously.
- Delhi International Airport Ltd.(DIAL) has bagged the prestigious Golden Peacock Award on January 20, 2017 for Corporate Social Responsibility in the transportation sector under the aviation category for the year 2016.
- In a bid to promote digital transaction in Assam, the Chief Minister of Assam, Sarbananda Sonowal on January 22, 2017 announced the launch of 'Chief Minister's Award' while inaugurating the Digi Dhan Mela in the state.
- Russia's President Vladimir Putin was awarded the first ever Hugo Chavez Prize for Peace and Sovereignty by the Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on January 18, 2017 at the Presidential Palace in Miraflores, Caracas, Venezuela. The Peace Prize has been named in honor of late Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez who served as the 64th President of Venezuela from 1999 to 2013.

Complete list of Padma Awards 2017

- This year the President of India has approved Padma Awards to **89 persons**. Out of these 19 are women, 5 awardees are from the category of foreigners, NRIs, PIOs while 6 are posthumous awardees.
- The Award includes 7 Padma Vibhushan, 7 Padma Bhushan and 75 Padma Shri Awardees.

PADMA VIBHUSHAN

No.	Name	Awarded For	State
1	Shri K J Yesudas	Art-Music	Kerala
2	Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev	Others-Spiritualism	Tamil Nadu
3	Shri Sharad Pawar	Public Affairs	Maharashtra
4	Shri Murlī Manohar Joshi	Public Affairs	Uttar Pradesh
5	Prof. Udipi Ramachandra Rao	Science & Engineering	Karnataka
6	Late Shri Sunder Lal Patwa (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Madhya Pradesh
7	Late Shri PA Sangma (Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Meghalaya

PADMA BHUSHAN

No	Name	Awarded for	State
8	Shri Vishwa Mohan Bhatt	Art-Music	Rajasthan
9	Prof. (Dr.) Devi Prasad Dwivedi	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
10	Shri Tehemton Udadia	Medicine	Maharashtra
11	Shri Ratna Sundar Maharaj	Others-Spiritualism	Gujarat
12	Swami Niranjana Nanda Saraswati	Yoga	Bihar
13	H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn (Foreigner)	Literature & Education	Thailand
14	Late Shri Cho Ramaswamy (Posthumous)	Literature & Education – Journalism	Tamil Nadu

PADMA SHRI:

No.	Name	Awarded for	State
15	Smt. Basanti Bisht	Art-Music	Uttarakhand
16	Shri Chemanchery Kunhiraman Nair	Art-Dance	Kerala
17	Smt. Aruna Mohanty	Art-Dance	Odisha
18	Smt. Bharathi Vishnuvardhan	Art-Cinema	Karnataka
19	Shri Sadhu Meher	Art-Cinema	Odisha
20	Shri T K Murthy	Art-Music	Tamil Nadu
21	Shri Laishram Birendrakumar Singh	Art-Music	Manipur
22	Shri Krishna Ram Chaudhary	Art-Music	Uttar Pradesh
23	Smt. Baoa Devi	Art-Painting	Bihar
24	Shri Tilak Gitai	Art-Painting	Rajasthan
25	Dr. Prof. Aekka Yadagiri Rao	Art-Sculpture	Telangana
26	Shri Jitendra Haripal	Art-Music	Odisha
27	Shri Kailash Kher	Art-Music	Maharashtra
28	Smt. Parassala B Ponnammal	Art-Music	Kerala
29	Smt. Sukri Bommagowda	Art-Music	Karnataka
30	Shri Mukund Nayak	Art-Music	Jharkhand
31	Shri Purushottam Upadhyay	Art-Music	Gujarat
32	Smt. Anuradha Paudwal	Art-Music	Maharashtra
33	Shri Wareppa Naba Nil	Art-Theatre	Manipur
34	Shri Tripuraneni Hanuman Chowdary	Civil Service	Telangana
35	Shri T.K. Viswanathan	Civil Service	Haryana
36	Shri Kanwal Sibal	Civil Service	Delhi
37	Shri Birkha Bahadur Limboo Muringla	Literature & Education	Sikkim
38	Smt. Eli Ahmed	Literature & Education	Assam

39	Dr. Narendra Kohli	Literature & Education	Delhi
40	Prof. G. Venkatasubbiah	Literature & Education	Karnataka
41	Shri Akkitham Achyuthan Namboothiri	Literature & Education	Kerala
42	Shri Kashi Nath Pandita	Literature & Education	Jammu & Kashmir
43	Shri Chamu Krishna Shastry	Literature & Education	Delhi
44	Shri Harihar Kripalu Tripathi	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
45	Shri Michel Danino	Literature & Education	Tamil Nadu
46	Shri Punam Suri	Literature & Education	Delhi
47	Shri VG Patel	Literature & Education	Gujarat
48	Smt. V Koteswaramma	Literature & Education	Andhra Pradesh
49	Shri Balbir Dutt	Literature & Education Journalism	Jharkhand
50	Smt. Bhawana Somaaya	Literature & Education Journalism	Maharashtra
51	Shri Vishnu Pandya	Literature & Education Journalism	Gujarat
52	Dr. Subroto Das	Medicine	Gujarat
53	Dr. (Smt.) Bhakti Yadav	Medicine	Madhya Pradesh
54	Dr. Mohammed Abdul Waheed	Medicine	Telangana
55	Dr. Madan Madhav Godbole	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
56	Dr. Devendra Dayabhai Patel	Medicine	Gujarat
57	Prof. Harkishan Singh	Medicine	Chandigarh
58	Dr. Mukut Minz	Medicine	Chandigarh
59	Shri Arun Kumar Sharma	Others-Archaeology	Chhattisgarh
60	Shri Sanjeev Kapoor	Others-Culinary	Maharashtra
61	Smt. Meenakshi Amma	Others-Martial Art	Kerala
62	Shri Genabhai Dargabhai Patel	Others-Agriculture	Gujarat
63	Shri Chandrakant Pithawa	Science & Engineering	Telangana
64	Prof. Ajoy Kumar Ray	Science & Engineering	West Bengal
65	Shri Chintakindi Mallesham	Science & Engineering	Andhra Pradesh
66	Shri Jitendra Nath Goswami	Science & Engineering	Assam
67	Shri Daripalli Ramaiah	Social Work	Telangana
68	Shri Girish Bhardwaj	Social Work	Karnataka
69	Shri Karimul Hak	Social Work	West Bengal
70	Shri Bipin Ganatra	Social Work	West Bengal
71	Smt. Nivedita Raghunath Bhide	Social Work	Tamil Nadu
72	Shri Appasaheb Dharmadhikari	Social Work	Maharashtra
73	Baba Balbir Singh Seechewal	Social Work	Punjab
74	Shri Virat Kohli	Sports-Cricket	Delhi
75	Shri Shekar Naik	Sports-Cricket	Karnataka
76	Shri Vikasa Gowda	Sports-Discus Throw	Karnataka
77	Smt. Deepa Malik	Sports-Athletics	Haryana
78	Shri Mariyappan Thangavelu	Sports-Athletics	Tamil Nadu
79	Smt. Dipa Karmakar	Sports-Gymnastics	Tripura
80	Shri P R Shreejesh	Sports-Hockey	Kerala
81	Smt. Sakshi Malik	Sports-Wrestling	Haryana
82	Shri Mohan Reddy Venkatrama Bodanapu	Trade & Industry	Telangana
83	Shri Imrat Khan (NRI/PIO)	Art-Music	USA
84	Shri Anant Agarwal (NRI/PIO)	Literature & Education	USA
85	Shri H.R. Shah (NRI/PIO)	Literature & Education Journalism	USA
86	Late (Smt.) Suniti Solomon (Posthumous)	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
87	Shri Asoke Kumar Bhattacharyya (Posthumous)	Others-Archaeology	West Bengal

88	Dr. Mapuskar (Posthumous)	Social Work	Maharashtra
89	Smt. Anuradha Koirala (Foreigner)	Social Work	Nepal

- The Reliance Foundation Founder and Chairperson Nita Ambani has been honored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art (The Met) in New York on January 24, 2017 for her philanthropic work in the areas of education, sports, healthcare, rural transformation, urban renewal, disaster response, women empowerment and promotion of the arts.
- Damodar Valley Corporation received NTPC award 20015-16 from Union Power Minister, Piyush Goyal
- List of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards 2016**
The President of India approved the conferment of Jeevan Raksha Padak Series of Awards 2016 on 36 persons on January 25, 2017.

List of Awardees

Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak		
No.	Name	State
1	Ms. Roluahpuii (Posthumous)	Mizoram
2	Shri Shishir Kumar Yadavannavr (Posthumous)	Karnataka
3	Shri Vadmitra Choudhary, (Posthumous)	Uttar Pradesh
4	Shri Rakesh Kumar CN (Posthumous)	Karnataka
5	Shri Suresh NB (Posthumous)	Kerala
Uttam Jeevan Raksha Padak		
No.	Name	State
1	Shri Mrigesh Narayan Barua	Assam
2	Dr. C. Gopakumar (Posthumous)	Kerala
3	Shri Govind Laxman Tupe	Maharashtra
4	Shri Churchill	Mizoram
5	Smt. Roluahpuii	Mizoram
6	Shri Bir Bajrangbali Pandey	West Bengal
7	Master Maurice Yengkhom	Manipur
8	Master Shivansh Singh (Posthumous)	Uttar Pradesh
Jeevan Raksha Padak		
No.	Name	State
1	Shri Yashwant Kumar Pisda	Chhattisgarh
2	Shri Dara Singh	Haryana
3	Shri Dinesh Kumar	Himachal Pradesh
4	Shri Ratheeshan Nambolan	Kerala
5	Master Anandhakrishnan A	Kerala
6	Master Akhil K. Shibu	Kerala
7	Shri Tejesh Brijlal Sonawane	Maharashtra
8	Shri Manoj Sudhakar Rao Barahate	Maharashtra
9	Shri Isac Lalrinchhana	Mizoram
10	Shri Lalmohan Mohanta	Odisha
11	Kum. Nazia	Uttar Pradesh
12	Shri Pankaj Kumar Pandey	Tamil Nadu
13	Shri Anoop Mishra	Uttar Pradesh
14	Shri Kapil Kumar Shishodia	Uttar Pradesh
15	Shri Neelkant Ramesh Harikantra	Maharashtra
16	Shri Manohar Mahato	West Bengal
17	Shri Balen Rajbongshi	West Bengal
18	Shri Dharmendra Kumar Yadav	West Bengal
19	Master Kamlesh Pradhan	Chhattisgarh
20	Kum. Angelica Tynsong	Meghalaya
21	Master Sai Krishna Akhil Kilambi	Telangana

22	Shri Tshewana Thinlay Lachungpa	Sikkim
23	Shri Altaf Ahmed Khan	Jammu & Kashmir

- Dr.Gullapalli N Rao, Founder and Chairman, L V Prasad Eye Institute, has been selected as one of two inductees for the prestigious 2017 Ophthalmology Hall of Fame instituted by the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS).
- The Union Ministry of Defence announced the result of the Republic Day Parade – 2017 on January 28, 2017. For this the Ministry appointed three panels of judges for honoring the participants of the event with the awards in different categories. In Service Category, Madras Engineer Group has been selected as the best marching contingent while in the Para-Military Forces category, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) were adjudged as the best performers.
- Iris Mittenaere of France was crowned as the Miss Universe 2017 in the international beauty pageant event which was held on January 29, 2017 at the Mall of Asia Arena in Manila, Philippines organized by the Miss Universe Organization.
- The First ever National Entrepreneurship Awards 2016 was presented by the Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh at Indian Institute of Technology, New Delhi on January 30, 2017.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNS

Name	Post
AIFF president Praful Patel	FIFA finance committee
Anurag Thakur	Himachal Olympic Association Head
Birender Singh Yadav	Ambassador of India to the Republic of Burkina Faso
Ashok Warriar	Ambassador of India to the Republic of Congo
Vishal Kaul	Chief Operating Officer (COO) of OLA
Nikki Haley	U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
Anerood Jugnauth (resigns)	Mauritius Prime Minister
Indo American Ajit Pai	FCC, US communications regulatory agency-chairman
Uttam Dhillon	Special assistant to the President on ethics and compliance matters-White House position.
Rex Tillerson	Secretary of State US
Derk Segaar	Director of United Nations Information Centre (UNIC)
Virender Sehwal	Kings XI Punjab Brand Ambassador
Siddhartha Murarka	Institute of Company Secretaries of India –Chairman
Mike Pompeo	– US Central Intelligence Agency -Director
V Shanmuganathan (resigns)	Meghalaya Governor
Dushyant Chautala	Table Tennis Federation of India President
Ashok Amritraj	UN in India Goodwill Ambassador for the Sustainable Development Goals.
AP Singh	Interim Head of India Post Payment Bank
Amulya Patnaik	Delhi Police Chief
Assam Governor Banwarilal Purohit	Additional charge of Meghalaya
Nagaland governor PB Acharya	Additional charge of Arunachal Pradesh
Dr. Vijay Pandurang Bhatkar	VC Nalanda University
Chadian foreign affairs minister Moussa Faki Mahamat	African Union Commission head

ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS

- American multinational technology company Microsoft has acquired Sweden-based company Simplygon to accelerate innovation in enabling 3D for everyone.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposed merger of online travel

firm MakeMyTrip's Indian travel business with rival Ibibio Group. The closing of the transaction is expected to be around January 31, 2017.

- The U.S. healthcare giant Johnson & Johnson on January 26, 2017 informed about its intention to buy Switzerland based bio-pharmaceutical firm, Actelion, for \$30 billion (27.9 billion euros).
- Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba's financial arm, Ant Financial on January 26, 2017 reached an agreement to acquire U.S money transfer company MoneyGram for USD 880 million.

MoUs

- Ministry of AYUSH has signed a Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) with the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) to curtail malpractices in the advertisement of AYUSH drugs in New Delhi on January 20, 2017
- The Indian Railways signed a joint venture agreement with the state government of Jharkhand on January 20, 2017 for the development of railway infrastructure in the State. It is the 9th State to form a Joint Venture Company with the Ministry of Railways. Earlier Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat have already signed JV agreement with Ministry of Railways.
- The Union government under PM Modi gave approval for the ratification of the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol on containing the emission of Green House Gases (GHGs) which was adopted in 2012. Till date, 65 countries have ratified the Second Commitment Period.
- The Central Water Commission (CWC) under the Ministry of Water Resources River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation signed two separate MoUs with IIT Madras and IIS Bengaluru on January 27, 2017 in New Delhi.
- The Telangana government on January 27, 2017 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with French Aero campus Aquitaine to set up a world-class aero skills academy in the city in collaboration with academia and industry of the state.
- India and France signed White Shipping Agreement on January 19, 2017 in New Delhi to enable information sharing on maritime traffic and maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- Mauritius along with Gabon, Hungary, Indonesia, Lithuania, Malta and the Russian Federation signed the Multilateral Competent Authority Agreement for Country-by- Country Reporting (CbC MCAA). Now the total number of signatories increased to 57 while India signed the agreement in May 2016.

SCHEMES

- As a part of government's commitment for financial inclusion and social security the Union Cabinet has given its post-facto approval to launch Varishtha Pension Bima Yojana 2017 (VPBY 2017) on January 24, 2017. The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) would be the implementing body of the scheme during the current financial year.
- The Union Cabinet approved a new scheme for promotion of Rural Housing. The scheme would be implemented by National Housing Bank. The Government would provide net present value of the interest subsidy of 3 percent to the National Housing Bank upfront which will, in turn, pass it to the Primary Lending Institutions (Scheduled Commercial Banks, NBFCs etc.) and interest subsidy to every rural household who takes a loan of upto Rs. 2 lakhs and is not covered under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Grameen), PMAY(G).
- The Chief Minister of Kerala, Pinarayi Vijayan launched the IT Project, e-Health Kerala which is named Jeevan Rekha on January 25, 2017 at Peroorkada Model Government Hospital.
- Arunachal Pradesh launched 'Dulari Kanya', a special scheme to check infant mortality in the state, under which the government will deposit Rs 20,000 in the bank account of a girl child, born in any

government hospital.

COMMITTEE

- Vinod Rai, the former Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) was appointed as the head of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) administrative committee by the Supreme Court on January 30, 2017. The court also named historian Ramachandra Guha, Vikram Limaye, Managing Director of IDFC and Diana Edulji, former women test cricket captain as the member of the 4-membered committee
- A committee has been constituted by the Centre on January 22, 2017 to frame uniform rules for the states to avoid delay in proper implementation of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPD) Act across the country. The Committee will be headed by Secretary from Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD).
- N.K. Singh Committee on Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Presents its Report to the Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

- Scientists have discovered an exoplanet named Wolf 1061 located around 14 light years away from Earth that could be the habitable planet in the future after Earth.
- Researchers from Harvard University and Boston Children's Hospital have developed a customizable soft robotic sleeve to encase a diseased heart and help it beat.
- A Bengaluru start-up TeamIndus proposes nameplate on the Moon for Rs.500. Indians are being offered the opportunity to leave their name on the moon, for a price.
- Indian scientists at the Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), lying between Sabarmati River in Gandhinagar and Amul Dairy have taken steps to make use of plasma for healing not only humans but also the earth.
- Scientists at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in the U.S. made a research work in which they have developed a new method of medical testing for faster diagnosis of diseases like HIV, Lyme disease, syphilis and rotavirus infections. As per the research published in the journal "Small", researchers combined cutting-edge nanoscience with a magnetic phenomenon to create the method for speedy medical tests.
- Transportation app Uber will soon launch its on-demand food delivery app 'UberEATS' in the Indian market. UberEATS is currently available in 58 cities globally, including Bangkok, Singapore, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Taipei.
- The Minister of Commerce & Industry, Smt Nirmala Sitharaman launched Rubber Soil Information System (RubSIS) on January 23, 2017 in New Delhi to provide the detail about the soil quality to the rubber growers to enhance productivity besides reducing the cost of production.
- The Multiplex chain operator PVR has launched a theatre on demand service 'VKAAO' on January 20, 2017. Vkaao is an online platform that will enable consumers to watch any movie of their choice at a theatre of their choice. It would empower the viewers to choose what they want to watch, when and where.
- Scientists from Stanford University are trying to find an innovative solution to deal with the shortage of human transplant organs like hearts, kidneys, livers, lungs and other organs. Thus they conducted a study wherein the scientists made an attempt to grow mouse pancreases in rats and then use them to cure diabetes in mice.
- Japan successfully launched its first military communications satellite on January 24, 2017 from Tanegashima Space Centre, Japan on an H-2A rocket, to boost the broadband capacity of its Self Defence Forces. The Kirameki-2 is an X-band communications satellite with a 15-year lifespan built by DSN Corporation for the Japanese Ministry of Defense.
- The Police Department of Pune has launched a Mobile App "Beat Marshall Monitoring Mobile App" to trace the location of the patrolling teams from police stations.
- U.S. scientists from The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI) have announced the development of the

first stable semi synthetic organism, “Escherichia coli bacteria” on January 23, 2017 that has DNA made up of both natural and artificial bases.

- According to the Experts from Food Standards Agency’s (FSA) based in United Kingdom, Bread, chips and potatoes should be cooked to a golden yellow colour, rather than brown, to reduce our intake of a chemical called Acrylamide which could cause cancer.
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully tested its indigenously developed Cryogenic engine designated as C25, on January 25, 2017 for 50 seconds at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu. The cryogenic engine has been developed for use in the Upper Stage of GSLV Mk III rocket, which is scheduled to be launched within the first quarter of 2017.
- Scientists from US-based Oregon State University (OSU) has recently discovered insect preserved in amber that is believed to have been existed 100 million years ago and is entirely different from the existing groups.
- Based on a study report published in the journal Cell on January 26, 2017, an International Team of Scientists from United States have created a Human-Pig Hybrid in a research project paving way to address shortage of organ for transplantation.
- The atomic clocks on the first satellite IRNSS-1A of the NAVIC, an indigenously built satellite system has developed technical complications. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman, A.S. Kiran Kumar informed that one of the three crucial rubidium clock on IRNSS-1A spacecraft failed six months ago while the other two failed subsequently.
- The Indian Weather Satellite, INSAT-3DR, launched by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in September 2016, has led to a remarkable achievement in Indian weather forecasting. The Next Generation INSAT-3DR, will enable detecting Farm Fires.
- Based on a study published in the Astrophysical Journal Letters, an unusual action of a small, six billion old, so called vampire star, has been captured by ASTROSAT, India’s first dedicated multi-wavelength space observatory that was preying on bigger celestial body.

DEFENCE

- The Theatre Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX), an annual Indian Navy exercise kicked started on January 24, 2017 off the Western Seaboard. The last edition of the exercise was conducted in January 2015. TROPEX 17 exercise is aimed at testing combat readiness of the combined fleets of the Indian Navy, and the assets of the Indian Air Force, Indian Army and the Indian Coast Guard.
- INS Vikramaditya, India’s biggest aircraft carrier ship has become the country’s first warship to have an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) onboard the vessel. The ATM has been installed by the State Bank of India (SBI) and will become operational from January 21, 2017. It will be operated through satellite link.
- In a move to rapidly expand its naval fleet, China’s People’s Liberation Army Navy commissioned its 31st stealth warship on January 22, 2017. With the commissioning of the 31st Type—056 class corvette warship, CNS Ezhou, China has become the world’s largest fleet of modern corvettes.
- The Guided Pinaka was successfully test fired from the Launch Complex-III, ITR, Chandipur for a further enhanced range. The Pinaka Rocket Mark-II, equipped with Navigation, guidance and control kit, was transformed into a guided Pinaka.
- Pakistan successfully conducted the first test flight of the surface-to-surface ballistic missile (SSM), ‘Ababeel’ on January 24, 2017.
- The Chief of Army staff Gen Bipin Rawat launched a Whatsapp helpline number on January 27, 2017 to receive grievances of army personnel. The Whatsapp number where soldiers can post their complaints is +91 9643300008. The number will be shared with all soldiers and the number will remain at Rawat’s office.

The Indian Navy has officially issued a Request for Information (RFI) on January 17, 2017 to procure new carrier-based multirole warplane. The Navy intends to procure 57 naval fighter aircraft from a foreign supplier for its rapidly growing fleet of aircraft carriers.

ENVIRONMENT

- Indian has partnered with the British experts over a project that aims to study the air pollution level in Delhi and health problems associated it. The project 'ASAP-Delhi: An Integrated Study of Air Pollutant Sources in the Delhi National Capital Region' would be led by University of Birmingham and would also involve experts from the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, the Indian National Physical Laboratory and the University of Surrey.
- Scientists from European Southern Observatory (ESO) have discovered a sunspot with dark and contorted centre which is about twice the diameter of the Earth. The team observed an enormous sunspot at wavelengths of 1.25 mm and 3 mm using two of ALMA's receiver bands.

SPORTS

- Indian footballer Jayesh Raimalani has signed a deal through Indo-Spanish football venture called Spaindia to join the Spanish Football Team, Club Esportiu JUPITER (CE JUPITER) based in Barcelona.
- The official emblem of St. Petersburg for the 2020 Euro Cup football tournament was unveiled in St. Petersburg. The logo depicts the Palace Bridge which has established itself as one of the most iconic sites in the city.
- Dhruv Sunish won ITF Juniors title at the Dakshin Kalikata Sansad clay courts. The under-18 India number two, who had lost in the finals of the Chandigarh Grade 3 ITF Juniors in the first week of 2017 and 2 ITF Juniors in 2016, played flawlessly to drub the Kazakh 6-2 6-3
- Indian badminton ace Saina Nehwal clinched the 2017 Malaysia Masters Grand Prix Gold women's single title in the summit clash in Sibu, Malaysia on January 22, 2017. The top-seeded London Olympics bronze-medallist, defeated 18-year-old Thai Pornpawee Chochuwong, 22-20 22-20.
- Bengal won the Under-19 Cooch Behar Trophy 2016-17 season against Delhi in the final at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi on January 22, 2017.
- Virat Kohli became the fastest batsman in the world to score 1,000 runs as captain in One-Day Internationals (ODIs) on January 22, 2017 in the third ODI against England at the Eden Gardens. The 28-year-old batsman took 17 innings to reach the landmark, breaking the earlier record set by South Africa's AB deVilliers which was achieved in 18 innings.
- Ronnie O'Sullivan won a record seventh Masters title against Joe Perry 10-7 in the final at London's Alexandra Palace. Perry, in his first Triple Crown final at the age of 42, led 4-1 but missed a straightforward red for a 5-1 lead.
- The All India Football Federation (AIFF) launched its first ever Indian Women's League (IWL) on January 24, 2017 in order to make football a professional sport for women in the country. The first edition of the league will be played from January 28 to February 14 at the Ambedkar Stadium in New Delhi.
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) on January 25, 2017 named four women to be inducted in the strong group of B to conduct the ICC Women's World Cup Qualifier 2017 in February 2017 in Colombo. The ICC Women's World Cup 2017 will be held in England and Wales from 24 June to 23 July 2017.
- Top seeded Ace cue Pankaj Advani won his seventh national title in the finals of Manisha National Billiards and Snooker Championship on January 24, 2017 at the PYC Hindu Gymkhana, Pune. He defeated Rupesh Shah 5-1 in the final. Earlier Advani beat Brijesh Damani in the semifinals on January 23, 2017 to enter the finals.
- Japan based sumo wrestler Kisenosato was promoted to the highest rank of the wrestling, "Yokozuna" on January 25, 2017 after winning his first title at the New Year Grand Sumo Tournament with a 14-1 record.
- Jamaican sprinter, Usain Bolt will have to hand back one of his nine Olympic gold medals won in the 4x100m relay event at the 2008 Beijing Olympics due to his Jamaican team-mate Nesta

Carter who was tested positive for a banned substance.

- The Tokyo Olympic Committee has now announced that Son Goku, a cult anime character from Dragonball Z, will serve as one of its brand ambassadors.
- The TOP Committee has been reconstituted by the Union Minister of State (I/C) for Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Vijay Goel to identify and support potential medal prospects for 2020 and 2024 Olympic Games under the “Target Olympic Podium” scheme.

Australian Open - 2017 Overview

The 105th edition of the Australian Open tournament 2017 was held at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia from January 16 to January 29, 2017.

Title	Winners	Runners
Men's Singles	Roger Federer	Rafael Nadal
Women's Singles	Serena Williams	Venus Williams
Men's Doubles	Henri Kontinen /John Peers	Bob Bryan/Mike Bryan
Women's Doubles	BethanieMattek-Sands /Lucie Safarova	Andrea Hlaváčková/Peng Shuai
Mixed Doubles	Abigail Spears /Juan Sebastián Cabal	Croatia's Ivan Dodig/Sania Mirz

- Siliguri based Abul Hossain won the Kolkata Full Marathon on January 29, 2017 by completing the race in 02:34:02. He defeated Kolkata lad Biswanath Pal who ran in 2:39.16. Paritosh Roy finished third with a timing of 02:52:48 seconds.
- The 2016 Olympic Silver Medallist PV Sindhu clinched her maiden Syed Modi International Grand Prix Gold women's singles title on January 29, 2017 at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium in Lucknow. She defeated Gregoria Mariska of Indonesia 21-13, 21-14 to win her first medal of the year. Overall India won three titles in the tournament out of five events. The Men's Single title was won by National Champion Sameer Verma who beat B Sai Praneeth 21-19, 21-16.
- Two of Australia's greatest top-order batsmen, David Boon and Matthew Hayden, and the brilliant women's all-rounder Betty Wilson will be inducted into the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame (ACHoF) at the 2017 Allan Border Medal ceremony in Sydney.
- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports constituted an 8-membered committee on January 30, 2017 that would work to prepare an action plan for the next three Olympic Games to be held in 2020, 2024 and 2028. The committee had many members which includes badminton coach Pullela Gopichand, Shooter Abhinav Bindra.

OBITUARY

- Urdu poet, lyricist Naqsh Lyallpuri dies at 88
- US Actress Mary Tyler Moore Dies At 80
- Russian Ambassador to India, Alexander M Kadakin passes away
- Hollywood Legend & Harry Porter actor John Hurt dies at 77
- Veteran journalist Devdutt passed away
- French Actress Emmanuelle Riva Dies aged 89
- Father of Pac-Man Masaya Nakamura Dies at 91

IMPORTANT DAYS

- Nation pays homage to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on his 120th birth anniversary on 23 January 2017. It was on this day in 1897, Netaji was born in Cuttack, Odisha.
- The National Girl Child Day was celebrated on January 24, 2017 at a special function organized by the Ministry of Women & Child Development in New Delhi with focus on celebrating the

achievements by nation's daughters during 2016.

- Election Commission of India celebrates 7th National Voters' Day on January 25 with theme "Empowering Young & Future Voters"
- India celebrated its 68th Republic Day on January 26, 2017. The Theme of 2017 Republic Day is: Skill India and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

Important Highlights of Republic Day 2017

Chief Guest: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi- Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan

- On the occasion of Republic Day, the President approved 398 Gallantry awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel and others.
- President Pranab Mukherjee awarded the Ashok Chakra on January 26, 2017 to Havaldar Hangpan Dada posthumously for killing four terrorists who had infiltrated into north Kashmir in May 2016. The award was received by his wife Chasen Lowang at Rajpath.
- Dr. Mahesh Sharma Inaugurates 'Bharat Parv' at Red Fort, Delhi.
- The Hans Raj College of Delhi University hoisted the 'monumental' flag on January 25, 2017 on its campus on the occasion of the 68th Republic Day celebrations, making DU the first public university in the country to get a monumental flagpole.
- The state government of Assam under Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, for the first time organised Farmer's Martyrs Day on January 27, 2017 at Patharughat in Darrang district to pay homage to 140 persons who lost their life in 1894 peasants' uprising at Patharughat.
- The World Leprosy Day was celebrated on January 29, 2017 all over the world.
- The National Immunization Day was observed on January 29, 2017 to spread awareness about eradicating polio. As a part of the day, President Pranab Mukherjee launched the pulse polio programme on January 28, 2017 by administering polio drops to children aged below five years at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.
- India observed the Martyrs Day or Shaheed Diwas on January 30, 2017 to commemorate the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi who was assassinated on January 30, 1948 by Nathuram Godse.
- The 12th Raising Day of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is celebrated today (January 31, 2017) to commend the NDRF for its efforts during disaster response .

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GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR EXAMS!!!

Suggestions are welcomed; Contact us any time
at Affairsccloud@gmail.com & AffairsCloud1@gmail.com