

January Current Affairs

Appointments

1. Ajendra Bahadur Singh is appointed as Chief of Western Naval Command of Indian Navy.
2. Anandiben Patel has been appointed as Governor of Madhya Pradesh.
3. Anil Khanna is appointed as Chairman of Finance Commission of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).
4. Biocon Chief Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw and IDFC Bank founder Rajiv Lall have been appointed to board of US India Business Council. USIBC is chaired by Nisha Desai Biswal.
5. Dilip Asbe is appointed as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
6. Errol D'Souza has been appointed by HRD Ministry as director of IIM Ahmedabad.
7. Facebook appointed outgoing American Express CEO Kenneth Chenault to its board, making him first African-American to be on board.
8. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) appointed Dilip Chenoy as its Director General.
9. Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) appointed Pramod Agarwal as its new chairman.
10. Gopal Guru IS appointed as Editor of the Economic and Political Weekly (EPW).
11. Government appointed AB Mathur as its representative to hold talks with United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).
12. Government appointed Sivan K as New Chairman of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization) and Secretary in Department of Space. He will replace A S Kiran Kumar as ISRO Chief.
13. Government appointed Vijay Keshav Gokhale as new Foreign Secretary of India. He is considered Diplomatic Expert on Chinese matters.
14. Harman International named actress Priyanka Chopra as global brand ambassador for its JBL and Harman Kardon audio brands.
15. Hemant Kumar Sharma is appointed as Divisional Commissioner of Jammu (J & K).
16. Indian American Manisha Singh has been appointed as Assistant Secretary of State of USA for economic and business affairs. She is the first woman appointed to the post.
17. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) appointed Vikram Singh Sisodia as *Chef de Mission* for 21st Commonwealth Games to be held at Gold Coast in Australia.
18. Indian-American Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen is elected as Vice Chairman of US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF).
19. JK Tyres & Industries appointed Rajiv Prasad as president of India Operations.
20. Jerome H Powell has been appointed as Chairman of Federal Reserve System, Central banking system of USA.
21. Juan Orlando Hernandez has been re-appointed as President of Honduras (Central America) for 2nd term.
22. Kerala Government appointed V J Mathew as Chairman of Maritime Board.
23. Kookhyun Shim is appointed as MD and CEO of Kia Motors India (subsidiary of Hyundai India). While, Tata Motors appointed Hanne Birgitte Sorensen as an additional and independent director.
24. Members of *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* have moved *Doomsday Clock* upward by 30 seconds, to bring it just 2 minutes from midnight, closest since 1953 Cold War.
 - Doomsday Clock is a symbol that represents likelihood of a man-made global catastrophe, Maintained since 1947.
 - It represents an analogy for threat of global nuclear war. Since 2007, it also reflected climate change and new developments in life sciences that could inflict irrevocable harm to humanity.
 - It represents hypothetical global catastrophe as *midnight*. Its original setting in 1947 was seven minutes to midnight.
 - It has been moved 22 times till now, closest ever to midnight being 2 mins (in 1953 and 2018) and largest 17 mins (in 1991).
 - On January 28 of 2018, Clock is set at 2 minutes to midnight, amid global threat of nuclear war between USA & North Korea.
25. Milos Zeman won 2nd 5 year term as President of Czech Republic (Central Europe).
26. New Indian Ambassadors Appointed -
 - Srikumar Menon - Angola (Southern Africa)

- Tsewang Namgyal - Poland (Eastern Europe)
 - Rajesh Agarwal - Niger (Western Africa).
27. Noted Musician AR Rahman is appointed as brand ambassador of Sikkim State, during Red Panda Winter Festival in Gangtok (Sikkim).
 28. Noted scientist S Somanath has been appointed as Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
 29. Om Prakash Rawat has been appointed as Chief Election commissioner (CEC) of India. Besides, Ashok Lavasa has been appointed as an Election Commissioner of India, after Mr. Rawat has been promoted as Chief Election commissioner.
 - Election commission of India consists of a Chief EC and 2 ECs. Other election commissioner currently is Sunil Arora.
 30. Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) appointed Hasan Sardar as head coach of national team.
 31. Pankaj Jain is appointed as Managing Director of India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL). Additionally, Devika Shah is appointed as MD and CEO of Indian Clearing Corporation Ltd (ICCL).
 32. Rajesh Ranjan is appointed as next High Ambassador of India to Botswana.
 33. Rajinder Khanna (Former RAW chief) is appointed as new Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) of India.
 - Ajit Doval is current National Security Adviser (NSA) of India.
 34. S Selvakumar is appointed as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd (SPMCIL).
 35. Sauli Niinisto has been re-elected as President of Finland (Northern Europe) for 2nd term.
 36. Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved appointment of Vijay Kumar as Managing Director and CEO of National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX).
 37. Singapore-based Indian-origin businessman Sunny Verghese is appointed as Chairman of World Business Council for Sustainable development(WBCSD).
 38. Sita Ram Mardiyani is appointed as new Director General of Police (DGP) of Himachal Pradesh.
 39. Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga is appointed as new Prime Minister of African Nation Mali (West Africa).
 40. Sudeep Lakhtakia is appointed as new Director General of National Security Guard (NSG).
 41. Supreme Court collegium recommended senior advocate Indu Malhotra for appointment as a judge of Supreme Court. She is first woman lawyer from India to be directly elected for post of judge of Supreme Court.
 42. Tamil Nadu government appointed B. Rajendran as chairperson of Real Estate Appellate Tribunal (REAT) for Tamil Nadu and Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Additionally, T S Tirumurti is appointed as the Secretary (Economic Relations) in External Affairs Ministry.
 43. Telangana government formed state Minorities Commission with Mohammed Qamaruddin as Chairman and Rajarapu Pratap as vice chairman.
 44. Usha Ananthasubramanian became first woman chairman of Indian Banks' Association (IBA). She is MD and CEO of Allahabad Bank.
 45. V Narayanan has been appointed as Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC). He succeeded S Somanath who was appointed as Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).
 46. Vijay Keshav Gokhale took charge as new foreign secretary of India, succeeding S Jaishankar.
 47. Viorica Dancila is appointed as First Female Prime Minister of European Nation Romania.

Awards

1. 60th Annual Grammy Music Awards held in New York City (USA) -
 - Album Of The Year - Bruno Mars
 - Song of the Year - That's What I Like by Bruno Mars
 - Record Of The Year - 24K Magic by Bruno Mars
 - Best Pop Solo Performance - Ed Sheeran's Shape of You
 - Best Pop Vocal Album - Ed Sheeran's Divide
 - Best Music Film - The Defiant Ones
 - Best Children's Album - Feel What U Feel by Lisa Loeb
 - Producer of the Year (Classical): David Frost
2. Actor Sudhir Dalvi is honored with Janakavi P Sawlaram award, instituted by Thane Municipal Corporation and Janakavi P Savlaram Kala Samiti.

3. Afghanistan residents awarded Donald Trump a bravery medal for rebuking Pakistan over its failure in curbing terrorist havens.
4. Awards and Decorations announced on the eve of Republic Day.
- 50 people named for Prime Minister's Shram Awards 2016, including 3 women.
 - Shram Ratna Award - No awardees.
 - Shram Bhushan - 12.
 - Shram Vir/Shram Veerangana Award - 18.
 - Shram Shree/Shram Devi Award - 20
 - 44 Persons honored by Jeevan Raksha Padak Awards 2017.
 - 7 girls and 11 boys honored by National Bravery Awards.
 - President approved 390 Gallantry Awards and other Defence decorations to Armed Forces personnel. This includes one Ashok Chakra (Air Force's Corporal Jyoti Prakash Nirala), one Kirti Chakra (Army's Major Vijayanta Bisht), 14 Shaurya Chakras and Other Awards -
 - 28 Param Vishisht Seva Medals
 - 4 Uttam Yudh Seva Medals
 - 2 Bar to Ati Vishisht Seva Medals
 - 49 Ati Vishisht Seva Medals
 - 10 Yudh Seva Medals
 - 2 Bar to Sena Medals (Gallantry)
 - 86 Sena Medals (Gallantry)
 - 1 Nao Sena Medal (Gallantry)
 - 3 Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry)
 - 2 Bar to Sena Medals (Devotion to Duty)
 - 38 Sena Medals (Devotion to Duty)
 - 13 Nao Sena Medals (Devotion to Duty)
 - 14 Vayu Sena Medals (Devotion to Duty)
 - 1 Bar to Vishisht Seva Medal
 - 121 Vishisht Seva Medals.
5. Bengali actor Soumitra Chatterjee has been honored with France's highest civilian award, Legion d'Honneur.
6. Bihar CM Nitish Kumar is awarded first Mufti Mohammad Sayeed Award for Probity (*Honesty*) in Public Life, instituted by J & K government to mark death anniversary of Mufti M Sayeed.
7. Biopic on Noted Cricketer Sachin Tendulkar, titled *A Billion Dreams* won 2 awards at 11th Tehran International FICTS Festival 2018 in Iran -
- Helmer James Erskine won the Best Director of a Long Documentary trophy.
 - Producer Ravi Bhagchandka won Special Award for Best Film in Long Documentary section.
8. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman gave Republic Day Parade Awards 2018 -
- Total 23 tableaux participated, of which 14 were from States & UTs, 2 were from Ministry of External Affairs and rest from other Ministries/Departments -
 - Among states, Maharashtra depicted coronation of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was adjudged best.
 - Among Ministries/Departments - Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports depicting 'Khelo India' was given first prize.
 - Best marching contingent was Punjab Regiment Among 3 Services and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) among Among para-military and other auxiliary forces.
 - School children items category -
 - First prize went to South Central Zone Cultural Centre in Nagpur (Maharashtra), performing 'Baredi Dance' from Madhya Pradesh.
 - Consolation prizes was awarded to North East Zone Cultural Centre in Dimapur (Nagaland) and Oxford Foundation School, Najafgarh (Delhi).
9. French government will present *Legion of Honour* award to Indiann actor Soumitra Chatterjee, at 42nd International Kolkata Book Fair.
- France will be Theme country for International Kolkata Book Fair 2018.
10. Indo British Scientist Pratibha Laxman Gai is named for damehood (female equivalent of a knighthood), in British Queen Elizabeth's New Year's Honours List 2018.

11. Industrial Awards in Jan 2018 -

- Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Mumbai) won *Samudra Manthan - Caring Organisation of the Year* award, instituted by maritime industry publication *Bhandarkar Shipping*.
- Central Board of Irrigation and Power (CBIP) conferred Special Recognition Award 2018 on Central Water Commission (CWC), for promoting health and safety of large dams in India through World Bank aided Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP).

12. Magahi writer Shesh Anand Madhukar has been honoured with Sahitya Akademi Bhasha Samman Award 2018, becoming 2nd writer of Magahi language get this award.

- Sahitya Akademi honours writers from 24 regional languages, but Bhasha Samman identifies those languages which are equally spoken in different parts of country. Award prize consists of INR 1 lakh cheque and a memento.

13. Malayalam actor Mohanlal and athlete P. T. Usha were awarded honorary Doctorate of Literature (D.Litt) by Calicut University (Kerala).

14. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports launched Pledge for Khelo India at Khelo India School Games Carnival in Delhi. Its vision is to inspire youngsters to build mass participation and excellence in sports.

- Khelo India School Games were launched under Khelo India Programme. It encompassed 16 sports disciplines under which overall 199 gold medals, 199 silver medals, 275 bronze medals are to be awarded.
- Khelo India Programme was launched in 2016 for building inclusive and comprehensive sports ecosystem in country.
- Under Khelo India, Sports Ministry will select 1000 athletes every year Through School Games, for a scholarship of Rs 5 lakhs each for eight successive years.
- It subsumed earlier 3 schemes into 1, namely *Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan (RGKA)*, *National Sports Talent Search Scheme (NSTSS)* and *Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme (USIS)*.

15. NITI Aayog Member Vinod Paul has been awarded prestigious *IhsanDoğramacı Family Health Foundation Prize* by World Health Organisation (WHO), in recognition to his services in the field of family health. He is the first Indian to receive this global honour.

16. Noted playback singer Asha Bhosle has been chosen for 5th Yash Chopra Memorial Award for her contribution to Hindi film industry.

17. Odisha's Mangalajodi Ecotourism Trust won United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Award for Innovation in Tourism Enterprise at 14th UNWTO Awards in Madrid (Spain), in recognition of Mangalajodi's business model that is both economically viable and environmentally sustainable based on principles of community ownership and Eco Tourism.

18. Outstanding Parliamentarian Awards 2013 - 2017

- 2013 - Najma Heptulla (Rajya Sabha).
- 2014 - Hukumdev Narayan Yadav (Lok Sabha)
- 2015 - Ghulam Nabi Azad (Rajya Sabha)
- 2016 - Dinesh Trivedi (Lok Sabha)
- 2017 - Bhartruhari Mahatab (Lok Sabha)

19. P.P. Chaudhary (Minister of State for Law and Justice & Corporate Affairs) has been conferred Honorary Fellowship of Institute of Company secretaries of India (ICSI).

20. Padma Awards 2018 -

- Conferred every year by President of India around March / April.

- In 2018, 85 Padma Awards including two duo cases (in a duo case, the award is counted as one) have been announced.

- Awards comprise 3 Padma Vibhushan, 9 Padma Bhushan and 73 Padma Shri Awards. 14 awardees are women. Padma awards do not carry any monetary incentives.

- Awardees are -

- Padma Vibhushan

Sl. No	Name	Field	State
1	Illaiyaraja	Art-Music	Tamil Nadu
2	Ghulam Mustafa Khan	Art-Music	Maharashtra
3	P. Parameswaran	Literature and Education	Kerala

- Padma Bhushan

Sl. No	Name	Field	State
1	Philipose Mar Chrysostom	Others-Spiritualism	Kerala
2	Mahendra Singh Dhoni	Sports-Cricket	Jharkhand
3	Pankaj Advani	Sports- Billiards/Snooker	Karnataka
4	Alexander Kadakin (Foreigner/Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Russia
5	Ramachandran Nagaswamy	Others-Archaeology	Tamil Nadu
6	Ved Prakash Nanda (OCI)	Literature and Education	USA
7	Laxman Pai	Art-Painting	Goa
8	Arvind Parikh	Art-Music	Maharashtra
9	Ms. Sharda Sinha	Art-Music	Bihar

Sl. No	Name	Sub Category	State
Sports			
1	Ms. Saikhom Mirabai Chanu	Weightlifting	Manipur
2	Somdev Devvarman	Tennis	Tripura
3	Kidambi Srikanth	Badminton	Andhra Pradesh
4	Murlikant Petkar	Swimming	Maharashtra
Science and Engineering			
5	Amitava Roy		West Bengal
6	Vikram Chandra		Uttarakhand
7	Rajagopalan Vasudevan		Tamil Nadu
8	Manas Bihari Verma		Bihar
Social Work			
9	Malai Haji Abdullah Bin Malai Haji Othman (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Brunei Darussalam
10	Sudhanshu Biswas		West Bengal
11	Ms. Sitavva Joddati		Karnataka
12	Ms. Subhasini Mistry		West Bengal
13	Ms. Sulagitti Narasamma		Karnataka
14	Sampat Ramteke (<i>Posthumous</i>)		Maharashtra
15	Ms. Lentina Ao Thakkar		Nagaland
16	Damodar Ganesh Bapat		Chhattisgarh
Medicine			
17	Yeshi Dhoden		Himachal Pradesh
18	Ms. Lakshmikutty	Traditional	Kerala
19	Pankaj M Shah	Oncology	Gujarat
20	Abhay Bang (<i>Duo</i>)		Maharashtra
	Ms. Rani Bang (<i>Duo</i>)		Maharashtra
21	M R Rajagopal	Palliative Care	Kerala
22	Sanduk Ruit (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Ophthalmology	Nepal
Literature and Education			
23	Prafulla Govinda Baruah	Journalism	Assam
24	Pandit Shyamlal Chaturvedi	Journalism	Chhattisgarh
25	Anwar Jalalpur (<i>Posthumous</i>)		Uttar Pradesh
26	Piyong Temjen Jamir		Nagaland
27	Ms. Malti Joshi		Madhya Pradesh
28	Arvind Gupta		Maharashtra
29	Digamber Hansda		Jharkhand
30	Arup Kumar Dutta		Assam

31	Ms. Joyshree Goswami Mahanta		Assam
32	Zaverilal Mehta	Journalism	Gujarat
33	Krishna Bihari Mishra		West Bengal
34	Tomio Mizokami (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Japan
35	Keshav Rao Musalgaonkar		Madhya Pradesh
36	Habibullo Rajabov (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Tajikistan
37	Chandra Sekhar Rath		Odisha
38	Maharao Raghuveer Singh		Rajasthan
39	Bhagirath Prasad Tripathi		Uttar Pradesh
40	Panatawane Gangadhar Vithobaji		Maharashtra
41	A Zakia		Mizoram
Art			
42	Mohan Swaroop Bhatia	Folk Music	Uttar Pradesh
43	Ms. Langpoklakpam Subadani Devi	Weaving	Manipur
44	Doddarange Gowda	Lyrics	Karnataka
45	Ramli Bin Ibrahim (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Dance	Malaysia
46	Manoj Joshi	Acting	Maharashtra
47	Vijay Kiehlu	Music	West Bengal
48	Pran Kishore Kaul		Jammu and Kashmir
49	Pravakara Maharana	Sculpture	Odisha
50	Sisir Purushottam Mishra	Cinema	Maharashtra
51	Ms. Vijayalakshmi Navaneethakrishnan	Folk Music	Tamil Nadu
52	I Nyoman Nuarta (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Sculpture	Indonesia
53	Gobaradhan Panika	Weaving	Odisha
54	Ibrahim Sutar	Music	Karnataka
55	R Sathyanarayana	Music	Karnataka
56	Bhajju Shyam	Painting	Madhya Pradesh
57	Rudrapatnam Narayanaswamy Thyagarajan AND Rudrapatnam Narayanaswamy Tharanathan (<i>DUO</i>)	Music	Karnataka
58	Baba Yogendra		Madhya Pradesh
Trade & Industry			
59	Rameshwarlal Kabra		Maharashtra
60	Jose Ma Joey Concepcion III (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Philippines

Others			
61	Bounlap Keokangna (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Architecture	Laos
62	Narayan Das Maharaj	Spiritualism	Rajasthan
63	Ms. Nouf Marwaai (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Yoga	Saudi Arabia
64	Somdet Phra Maha Muniwong (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Spiritualism	Thailand
65	Ms. V Nanammal	Yoga	Tamil Nadu
66	Siddeshwara Swamiji	Spiritualism	Karnataka
67	Nguyen Tien Thien (<i>Foreigner</i>)	Spiritualism	Vietnam
68	Romulus Whitaker	Wildlife Conservation	Tamil Nadu
Civil Service			
69	S S Rathore		Gujarat
Public Affairs			
70	Tommy Koh (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Singapore
71	Hun Many (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Cambodia
72	Bhabani Charan Pattanaik		Odisha
73	Dr Thant Myint – U (<i>Foreigner</i>)		Myanmar

21. President Ram Nath Kovind felicitated 112 exceptional women achievers who are the first to set a milestone in their respective fields, selected by Women & Child Development Ministry. Noted Names Include -

- Bachendri Pal - First Indian woman to reach Mount Everest summit.
- Deepa Malik - first Indian woman to win a medal at Paralympics.
- Priya Jhingan - First Lady Cadet to join Indian Army.
- P V Sindhu - first Indian woman to become Olympic silver medallist (Badminton)
- Nicole Faria - First woman from India to win Miss earth title.
- Karnam Malleswari - first Indian female Olympic medal winning weightlifter.
- Diana Edulji: First ODI captain of first ever Indian Women's Cricket Team.

22. President Ram Nath Kovind honored four 4 artists and scholars in performing arts with *Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowships* and 43 artists with *Sangeet Natak Akademi awards* 2016.

- Fellowship awardees receive INR 3 lakh and Akademi Puraskar Awadees receive INR 1 lakh, along with angavastram and a tamrapatra.

23. Rachel Morrison (USA) became first female cinematographer to receive an Oscar nomination in 89-year old history of Academy Awards, for her work in *Mudbound*.

24. Ravi Menon, The Indian Origin Managing director of Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS), has been named best central bank governor in Asia-Pacific for 2018 by UK-based magazine *The Banker*.

25. Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palanichamy received UNESCO Award of Merit awarded to iconic Srirangam Ranganathaswamy temple in Tiruchirapalli. This Award of merit was awarded by UNESCO Asia Pacific region for temple's reconstruction without affecting its traditional splendour and Vedic rituals.

26. Vice President Venkaiah Naidu conferred Badminton Association of India Lifetime Achievement Award to 1983 World Championship medallist Prakash Padukone.

Books

1. *Dilli Meri Dilli: Before and After 1998*, Book by former Delhi CM Sheila Dikshit Dikshit has been released.
2. Book *Home at Last: A Journey to Higher Consciousness*, written by Sarada Chiruvolu has been released.
3. Book *Majuli: Resources and Challenges*, that appreciates beauty and challenges of Majuli (Assam) has been released. It is by Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti.
4. Book *Staniya Svasasan Mei Addhi Aabadhi*, by Sadhana Pandeyhas been released.
5. Book *The Heartfulness Way*, authored by Kamlesh D. Patel has been released.

6. Book *The Tall Man Biju Patnaik*, written by Sundar Ganesan has been released. Biju Patnaik was father of Odisha's CM Naveen Patnaik.
7. Former Indian Cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar's autobiography *Imperfect* has been launched.

Committees

1. Central Government formed committee headed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley to decide on old, pre existing projects in ports, which have become unviable.
2. Election Commission constituted a 14 member committee headed by Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Umesh Sinha, to suggest changes to Section 126 of Representation of People Act 1951 (RP Act) in view of social media expansion.
 - It will study impact of new media and social media during the silence period(48 hours period prior to elections) and its implications. It will suggest modifications to election law and model code of conduct.
3. Retired Justice Shiv Narayan Dhingra is appointed as head of a new committee to re-investigate 186 closed cases related to 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

Days

1. Jan 01, 2018 - 125th Birth Anniversary of Noted Indian Scientist Satyendra Nath Bose.
 - He is best known for his work on quantum mechanics in early 1920s, providing foundation for Bose–Einstein statistics and theory of Bose–Einstein condensate. He was A Fellow of Royal Society (UK) and was awarded India's second highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan in 1954.
2. Jan 04 - World Braille Day. It commemorates contribution of Louis Braille who invented reading and writing system that helped blind people across world.
3. Jan 09 - Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) in India, marking return of M K Gandhi to India from south africa on Jan 9, 1915. It was first celebrated by NDA Government in 2003.
 - This year marks 25th anniversary of India's partnership with ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Nations and theme was *Ancient Route, New Journey: Diaspora in Dynamic ASEAN INDIA Partnership*.
 - On this occasion, first ever Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Parliamentary Conference held in Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra (PBK) in New Delhi.
4. Jan 10 - World Hindi Day. It marks holding first *World Hindi Conference* on 10 January, 1975. Jan 10, 2018 also marks 25th Raising Day of Army Air Defence.
5. Jan 12 - National Youth Day in India. It marks birth anniversary of legendary social reformer Swami Vivekananda.
 - On this occasion, 22nd National Youth Festival (NYF) organised in New Delhi by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports at Gautam Buddha University (Greater Noida).
 - On this occasion, Jharkhand Govt organized Skill Summit and Provided Employment to 27852 Youth in Private Sector.
6. Jan 15, 2018 - 70th Indian Army Day. It commemorates the day when K.M Cariappa took over command of Indian Army from F.R.R Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949.
7. Jan 21 - Statehood Day for North Eastern States of Tripura, Manipur and Meghalaya.
 - On this occasion, Manipur Government launched *Chief Minister-gi Hakshelgi Tengbang (CMHT)*, a health assurance scheme for the poor and disabled people. It will provide cashless treatment to poor at government hospitals, health centres and other empanelled selected private hospitals.
8. Jan 24 - National Girl Child Day.
 - Delhi Govt held *Girl Child Week programme* to celebrate girl child and spread awareness on gender equality.
9. Jan 24 - Uttar Pradesh Diwas. On this occasion, UP Government approved *one district, one product* scheme to promote products indigenous to every district. Under this, one product indigenous to every district of Uttar Pradesh would be showcased at 3 day UP Diwas event.
10. Jan 25 - National Voters' Day. 2018 Theme is *Accessible Elections*.
11. Jan 25 - Statehood Day of Himachal Pradesh.
12. Jan 26 - International Customs Day. 2018 theme is *A secure business environment for economic development*.
13. Jan 26, 2018 - 69th Republic Day of India.
 - As part of Republic Day celebrations, 6 days *Bharat Parv* event began at Red Fort (Delhi).

- This year, Government heads of 10 ASEAN countries were Chief Guests at Republic Day Parade. Participating Guests are –

Name	Nation
Hassanal Bolkiah	Brunei
Hun Sen	Cambodia
Joko Widodo	Indonesia
Thongloun Sisoulith	Laos
Najib Razak	Malaysia
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi	Myanmar
Rodrigo Roa Duterte	Philippines
Lee Hsien Loong	Singapore
Prayuth Chan-ocha	Thailand
Nguyen Xuan Phuc	Vietnam

- Government advised not to use a national flag made of plastic and asked all states and UTs to ensure strict compliance of Flag Code in view of Republic Day celebrations.

14. Jan 27 - International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Holocaust means *destruction or slaughter on a mass scale, especially caused by fire or nuclear war*.

15. Jan 28, 2018 - World Leprosy Day 2018. It is observed internationally every year on last Sunday of January.

16. National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) celebrated its 13th Raising Day on Jan 19, 2018.

17. On 16th January, Goa celebrated Opinion Poll Day as Asmitai Dis (Identity Day). It marks historic poll in 1967, when people of Goa voted not to merge with Maharashtra.

Defence

1. 2nd indigenously built offshore patrol vessel (OPV) *Vijaya* has been commissioned into Indian Coast Guard.

2. *Alpha Design Technologies* received INR 45-crore deal with Ministry of Defence to supply indigenous simulators for gunnery and missile firing from BMP II vehicles to Indian Army. Under this, 57 simulators will be manufactured at company's Bengaluru facility in 2 years.

3. *DefExpo India 2018* will be hosted by Chennai (TN) for the first time in April 2018.

- DefExpo India is a largest event of India's defence sector, held biannually. It displays latest technologies and products manufactured by both Indian and foreign companies.

4. A Defence Innovation Centre would be set up by CODISSIA in Coimbatore, to assist small industries in manufacturing components for the defence sector. CODISSIA will identify small and micro units as well as start-ups, that can manufacture components required for defence production.

5. Biennial Joint exercise by Indian and Japanese Coast Guards held in Bay of Bengal, as 8th in series of *National Maritime Search and Rescue Workshop and Exercise*.

6. Border Security Force (BSF) launched *Operation Alert* along 200 km long International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir to prevent infiltration attempts by terrorists from Pakistan.

7. Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) chaired by Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman approved procuring 72,400 assault rifles and 93,895 carbines on fast track basis for INR 3,547 crores, to meet needs of Army that is countering continuous threats from Pakistan and China.

8. Defence Ministry Nirmala Sitharaman cleared 2 procurement proposals -

- 131 Barak missiles will be procured from Israel's Rafael Advance Defence Systems of Israel for INR 460 crores.

- 240 precision guided bombs will be procured from JSC Rosoboron Exports (Russia) for INR 1254 crores.

9. Defence Ministry approved procurement of P-8I Training Solution for Indian Navy and Low Intensity Conflict Electronic Warfare System (LICEWS) for Indian Army at total cost of INR 2419 crores.

- Low Intensity Conflict Electronic Warfare System (LICEWS) will be procured from Bharat Electronics Limited for 470 crores.

- P-8I Training SolutionThe P-8I Training Solution will be brought from Boeing (USA) for Rs.1949.32 crore.

10. Defence Ministry sanctioned raising Territorial Army (TA) battalion comprising ex-servicemen of Indian Army as part of its mission to clean Ganga by 2020, named as Composite Ecological Task Force (CETF) battalion.

- CETF will be raised in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh as a pilot project for which INR 167 crores are allocated. It will be commanded by Colonel-rank officer. It will have 8 officers, 20 JCOs and around 500 other ranks on its roll.
- 11. Government sanctioned construction of 14460 bunkers at cost of INR 416 crores for people living along Line of Control (LoC) and International Border (IB) in Jammu & Kashmir. It is aimed at protecting locals from ceasefire violations from Pakistan.
- 12. Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched 'Bharat Ke Veer' graphic novel series on Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) martyrs.
- 13. INS Karanj, the 3rd Scorpene class submarine constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited has been commissioned into Indian Navy.
- 14. India-Vietnam Bilateral Army Exercise (VINBAX-2018) conducted at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, as first military exercise between India and Vietnam.
- 15. Indian Coast Guard (ICG) commissioned *Charlie-435* patrolling vessel at Karaikal in Puducherry.
- 16. Indian Coast Guard Ship C-161 (ICGS C -161) commissioned at Porbandar in Gujarat.
- 17. Indian Navy decommissioned INS Nirbhik and INS Nirghat warships.
- 18. Indian Navy signed MoU with Cochin Port Trust (Kerala) for leasing of 228 metres of berths at Mattancherry Wharf for 5 years, to meet requirements of Navy with sizeable increase in its fleet scheduled in the near future.
- 19. Indian Navy's largest ship and only aircraft carrier, INS Vikramaditya IS formally affiliated to Indian Army's Bihar Regiment and No. 6 Squadron of the Indian Air Force.
- 20. Indo-US joint military exercise *Vajra Prahar* will be held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) in Seattle (USA) in last week of Jan 2018.
- 21. Long Range Surface-to-Surface Ballistic Missile Agni-5 has been successfully fired for 5th time, for its full range of above 5000 KM.

Economy

1. 25th Meeting of GST Council held in New Delhi, chaired by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley. Changes made in GST Regime -
 - Late fee for failure to furnish FORM GSTR-1 (supply details), FORM GSTR-5 (Non-resident taxable person), FORM GSTR- 5A (OIDAR) or FORM GSTR-6 (Input Service Distributor) is reduced to 50 rupees / day (20 rupees per day for NIL filers).
 - Facility for generation, modification and cancellation of e-way bills is provided on trial basis on ewaybill.nic.in.
 - Recommended reduced GST rates for 29 goods and 53 services, to come into force from January 25.
2. A MOU is signed Between Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and Allahabad Bank to provide a centralized platform for processing interest subsidy to eligible beneficiaries under Self Employment Programme (SEP) component of Deendayal AntyodayaYojana- National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY NULM).
 - The Portal will -
 - Enable processing interest subsidy for NULM schemes, which will be credited to Aadhaar linked beneficiary accounts through DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer).
 - Facilitate on-line validation of loans granted by Banks, through Urban Local Bodies.
 - Self-Employment Component (SEP) of NULM and Need for Portal -
 - Under SEP, loans for setting up micro- enterprise are available to individuals (upto 2 lakhs) and groups (upto 10 lakhs). Interest subvention from Ministry is available for amount of interest charged above 7%. Women SHGs are eligible for additional 3% subvention on timely loan repayment.
 - Currently, interest subvention is processed manually, making it a time taking Process and No mechanism was there to ascertain whether beneficiary has received subsidy or not.
 - Under Proposed Common centralized IT platform to be managed by Allahabad Bank, Claims will be uploaded by Central/Zonal HQ of banks on portal, concerned States/ULBs will verify thebeneficiaries, after which the claim amount will be transferred.
 - Allahabad Bank will charge a service fee of 1.05% of interest subsidy amount released.
3. AU Small Finance Bank signed MoU with LIC to offer Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY). It will provide life cover of INR 2 lakh, at a premium of Rs 330 per annum.
4. According to RBI's *Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct Investment Companies 2016-17* -

- Mauritius was largest source of foreign investment (FDI) in India (21.8% share at market value) followed by USA, UK, Singapore and Japan.
- Singapore (19.7%) was major ODI (Outward Direct Investment) destination, followed by Netherlands, Mauritius, and US.
- The census carries information on market value of foreign liabilities and assets of Indian companies arising on account of FDI, ODI and other investments.
- 5. Allahabad Bank became 11th bank to face *prompt corrective action* (PCA) by RBI, amid rise in its bad loans.
- 6. Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank (APGVB) operationalised its first desktop ATM in Warangal (Telangana), to facilitate customers to withdraw small amounts.
- Desktop ATM has low power requirements and is designed to work in harsh climatic conditions. It is meant for rural customer who typically have small cash needs.
- 7. As per RBI, housing loans in up to Rs. 2 lakh slab had the highest level of non-performing assets (NPAs).
- For housing loan slab up to 2 lakh, NPAs of Public Sector Banks and HFCs was 10.4 % in FY17 as compared to 9.8 % in FY16.
- Lowest NPAs were reported for housing loans in Rs. 25 lakh and above slab.
- 8. As per international rights group *Oxfam's* Survey -
- Richest 1% in India earned 73% of wealth generated in country last year. Also, 67 crore Indians comprising population's poorest half saw their wealth rise by just 1%.
- 9. Bank of Baroda tied up with Digital invoice discounting marketplace *Invoicemart*, as TReDS (*Trade Receivables Electronic Discounting System*) partner. TReDS is an online platform through which, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) can access funds for working capital without hassle of applying for loans. Invoicemart is a joint venture between Axis Bank and mjunction services.
- 10. Bhopal-based Prodigee Finance Limited received Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC-ND) license from Reserve Bank of India (RBI). ND indicates Non-Deposit accepting NBFC.
- 11. Bombay Stock Exchange's India International Exchange (India INX) listed Indian Railway Finance Corporation's (IRFC's) green bonds on its debt listing platform, Global Securities Market (GSM). India INX lists IRFC's green bonds, becomes first debt security at IFSC.
- Green Bonds: Main difference between regular bond and Green Bond is that funds raised through Green Bonds are used for financing projects/business activities that are environment-friendly.
- 12. Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) relaxed norms for levy of minimum alternate tax (MAT) for insolvent companies, to make Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016 more effective and minimise hardships faced by companies going in for insolvency resolution.
- Minimum alternate tax (MAT) aims is to bring into tax realm the companies who do not pay any tax.
- This exemption facility will be available only for companies against whom application for corporate insolvency resolution process has been admitted by the adjudicating authority.
- This decision was taken after various hardships were faced by companies against whom application for corporate insolvency resolution process was admitted by Adjudicating Authority due to restriction in allowance of brought forward loss for computation of book profit.
- 13. Central Government divested 2.52 % of paid-up capital in National Mineral Development Corporation (NMDC) for approx INR 1200 crores.
- 14. Central Statistics Office (CSO) revised gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate for 2015-16 to 8.2% from earlier estimates of 8% and kept 2016-17 growth unchanged at 7.1%.
- Real GDP (*GDP at constant (2011-12) prices*) for 2016-17 and 2015-16 stands at 121.96 trillion and 113.86 trillion INR, showing growth of 7.1% during 2016-17 and 8.2% during 2015-16.
- In terms of real gross value added (GVA) at constant (2011-12) basic prices, It grew 7.1% in 2016- 17, as compared to 8.1% in 2015-16.
- 15. Chinese Bike Sharing Firm *OFO* launched its services across seven Indian cities (*Indore, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Delhi, Pune, Coimbatore, and Chennai*), in partnership with digital payments firm *Paytm*.
- 16. Chkfake Brand Protection Solutions launched global app named *Chkfake* to check authenticity of currency notes of all major currencies worldwide.
- 17. Crisil launched *FPI Index*, to measure performance of investments of foreign portfolio investors (FPI) in fixed-income market. It will serve as benchmark for performance of FPI investments in government securities and high rated corporate bonds with maturity greater than three years.

18. Department of Commerce signed MoU with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), for integrated development of Logistics sector. Government aims to reduce Logistics cost from 14% of GDP to under 10% by 2022.
19. Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)'s Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM), launched IPPrism for university students as a unique Intellectual Property (IP) Competition, in association with ASSOCHAM and ERICSSON India.
- It aims to foster culture of innovation and creativity in younger generation and invites students to submit films on piracy & counterfeiting under categories of 30 and 60 seconds.
20. Dev Information Technology will set up *DevX*, largest Accelerator Center for startups in Gujarat.
21. Economic Survey 2017-18 Presented in Parliament by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, prepared by chief economic adviser Arvind Subramanian.
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) -
 - GST Regime was launched at midnight on July 1, 2017. This induced Twin Balance Sheet (TBS) problem that was addressed by sending major stressed companies for resolution under Indian Bankruptcy Code and implementing major recapitalisation package to strengthen Public sector banks.
 - Under GST Regime, there has been 50% increase in number of indirect taxpayers, with 9.8 million GST registrants till Dec 2017. It is more than total Indirect Tax registrants under old system (where many taxpayers were registered under several taxes). After adjusting multiple countings of a single entity, GST has increased number of unique indirect taxpayers by over 50 % (3.4 million).
 - Business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions account for only 17 % of total, while business-to-business (B2B) and exports are collectively 30-34 % of all transactions.
 - **GDP Growth** - Economic Survey Predicts 7-7.5 % Growth in 2018-19 and 6.75 % in 2017-18. GDP growth averaged 7.3% for 2014-15 to 2017-18, highest among major economies of the world.
 - **Sectoral Growth** - Agriculture, industry and services sectors are expected to grow at the rate of 2.1 %, 4.4 %, and 8.3 % respectively in 2017-18.
 - Facts about Services Sector -
 - Out of the 32 States and UTs, 15 have Services Sector as dominant sector, contributing over half of Gross State Value Added (GSVA).
 - However, wide variation in seen in terms of share and growth of services GSVA -
 - In terms of services GSVA share- Delhi and Chandigarh are at top with over 80 % share, while Sikkim is at bottom (31.7 %)
 - In terms of services GSVA growth - Bihar is at top and Uttar Pradesh at bottom with 14.5 % and 7.0 % growth respectively.
 - FDI equity inflows to services sector grew by 15.0 % during 2017-18 (April-October), amid number of reforms by govt to ensure that India remains an increasingly attractive investment destination.
 - During April-September 2017-18, Growth in Services Exports and Services Imports stayed good at 16.2 % and 17.4 % Respectively. India was 8th largest exporter in commercial services in 2016 with share of 3.4 %, double to India's merchandise exports in world at 1.7 %.
 - **Other Factors** -
 - Forex Reserves are on an all time high of \$409 Billion.
 - Fiscal Deficit is on a 4 year low in 2017 - 18, being 3.2% of GDP. It was 3.5 % of GDP in 2016-17.
 - Inflation - WPI Based Inflation expected to be 2.9 % in 2017-18 (compared to 1.7 % in 2016-17). While, CPI Based Inflation expected to be 3.3 % in 2017-18 (compared to 4.5 % in 2016-17). Economic Survey sees average crude oil prices rising 12% in FY19.
 - GVA (Gross Value Added) growth seen at 6.1% in 2017-18 vs 6.6% in FY2016-17.
 - **India's External Sector** -
 - Exports grew positive during 2016-17 (5.2%) and expected to grow faster in 2017-18 (12.1%).
 - India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) stayed 1.2 % of GDP in Q2 of 2017-18, less than 2.5 % of GDP in Q1 of 2017-18.
 - **Notable Points about Indian Economy** -
 - India's formal sector (formal non-farm payroll) is greater than what it currently is believed to be.
 - When *formality* was defined in terms of social security provisions like EPFO/ESIC, formal sector payroll was 31 percent of non-agricultural work force.

- When formality was defined in terms of being part of GST net, formal sector payroll share was found to be 53 %.
- For first time in India's history, data on international exports of states has been dwelt in Economic Survey. It indicates States that export internationally and trade with other states are richer.
- There has been addition of 1.8 million in individual income tax filers since November 2016.
- India's firm export structure is substantially more egalitarian than in other large countries. Top 1 % of Indian firms account for 38 % of exports, much less than greater share such as 72, 68, 67 and 55 % of exports in Brazil, Germany, Mexico and USA respectively.
- Sanitation coverage in rural India increased substantially from 39 % in 2014 to 76 % in January 2018, post launch of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) on October 2, 2014. So far, 296 districts and over 3.7 lakh villages have been declared Open Defecation Free (ODF).
- India is improving in Science and Technology with 14 % growth of annual publications between 2009 to 2014. This increased India's share in global publications from 3.1% in 2009 to 4.4% in 2014 as per Scopus Database.
- Relief from embedded state taxes (ROSL) announced in 2016 boosted exports of ready-made garments (but not others) by 16 %.
- Indian society exhibits strong son "Meta" preference as Parents continue to have children until they get the desired number of sons.
- There is substantial avoidable litigation in tax arena which government action could reduce. Tax department's petition success rate is very low (below 30 %). Note that 0.2 % of cases accounted for 56 % of value at stake; whereas 66 % of pending cases (under 10 lakh) accounted for only 1.8 % of value at stake.
- Own direct tax collections by Indian states and local governments are significantly lower than that in other federal countries.
- Impact of climate change is evident and extreme weather adversely impacts agricultural yields.
- INR 20339 crores approved by Government in 2017-18 to meet various obligations arising from interest subvention being provided to farmers on short term crop loans.
- 22. Federal Bank partnered with *Hedge Equities Ltd* for providing Portfolio Investment Scheme (PIS) services to NRIs.
- 23. Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Arun Jaitley launched India's First Agri-commodity Options in Guar Seed by National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Limited (NCDEX). It is first-of-its-kind hedging tool in India, as an effort to make agrieconomy more efficient and bring huge amount of value for the farmers.
- 24. Flipkart-owned payments firm PhonePe tied-up with *FreeCharge* Wallet to enable over 45 million users to link their existing FreeCharge Wallet to PhonePe app. PhonePe customers will be able to utilise their FreeCharge wallet balance for all online and offline transactions.
- 25. Government launched Savings Bonds with 7.75% Interest, commencing from 10th January 2018. Features -
 - Applications in form of Bond Ledger Account will be received in designated bank branches and SHCIL (numbering about 1600).
 - Bonds will be issued in multiples of INR 1000 (face value).
 - Interest on the Bonds will be taxable under Income-tax Act 1961. Bonds will be exempt from Wealth-tax under Wealth Tax Act 1957.
 - Bonds will have a maturity of 7 years carrying interest at 7.75% per annum payable half- yearly (cumulative value of 1000 at end of 7 years will be 1703).
- 26. Government lowered additional borrowing requirement for current fiscal to INR 20000 crores from previous estimate of 50000 crores, considering revenue receipts and expenditure pattern. Lesser borrowing will enable restricting fiscal deficit within target.
- 27. Government notified Companies (Amendment) Act 2017 that amends Some provisions of Companies Act 2013 and eases implementation of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016.
 - Amendment Act allows companies to issue shares at a discount to its creditors in instances wherein its debt is converted into shares, which was prohibited under Section 53 of Companies Act 2013.
 - For defaulting companies, payment of managerial remuneration in excess of 11 % of net profits will now require approval of all stakeholders involved (banks, public financial institutions and other creditors).
- 28. Government notified terms of Scheme of Electoral Bonds, to curb flow of illegal money into political activities -
 - With issuance of electoral bonds, donors can purchase electoral bonds from specific State Bank of India (SBI) branches, and receiving political parties can encash them only through a designated bank account.

- Electoral bonds will be available at specified SBI branches for 10 days each in the months of January, April, July and October.
 - Electoral Bond shall be a bearer instrument in the nature of a Promissory Note (P-notes) and an interest-free banking instrument. Any Donor can buy bonds of any amount among INR 1000 / 10000 / 100000 / 1000000 and 10000000.
 - Electoral bonds will not carry the name of payee or buyer and will have a life of only 15 days during which it can be used for making a donation to political parties.
 - To receive the electoral bonds, Political party must have secured over 1% of the votes polled in last general elections.
29. Government signed agreement with ONGC for strategic sale of its 51.11% equity share-holding in HPCL for INR 36,915 crores. After this, ONGC will become India's first vertically integrated 'oil major' company, having presence across entire value chain. However, HPCL will continue to be a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE).
30. Government stated that from January 1, 2018, customers will not have to pay any transaction charges for payments made through debit card, BHIM app and Aadhaar-enabled payment systems for up to Rs 2000, as Merchant discount rate (MDR) Charges will be borne by Government (costing approx 2500 crores INR). Government will reimburse MDR to banks.
31. Government will infuse INR 88139 crores in 20 public sector banks during current fiscal ending 31st March, to boost lending and revive growth. IDBI Bank is biggest recipient with INR 10610 crores, followed by Bank of India (9232 Crores) and SBI (8800 crores).
32. HDFC Bank partnered with Rajasthan State Government to promote and nurture the start-ups in state, by providing solutions like current accounts, credit cards and other solutions to start-ups in Rajasthan under its SmartUp programme.
33. Haryana Government will form a non-banking financial company named *Haryana State Financial Services Limited*, for efficient management of funds. It will be in-house treasury manager and will be responsible for efficient management of surplus funds of State public enterprises. Authorised capital of this NBFC will be Rs.10 crore while the paid up capital will be Rs. 2 crore.
34. India signed \$100 million Loan Agreement with World Bank to help Boost Rural Economy of Tamil Nadu.
35. India signed \$120 million Loan Agreement with World Bank to improve access to Water Supply Services in Uttarakhand.
36. India signed \$250 million loan agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) to finance construction of 6254 kilometres allweather rural roads in States of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal under Prime Minister's Rural Roads Program (PMGSY).
37. Indiabulls Housing Finance raised INR 1000 crores by selling India's first *Social Bonds*, that are debt instruments issued to raise funds which is to be deployed in financing/re-financing eligible social projects such as affordable housing, water supply, sanitation, transport etc. Yes Bank was sole investor in these bonds with 5 year maturity.
38. Indian GDP Growth Forecasts in Jan 2018 -
- HSBC predicted 6.5 % GDP Growth for India in FY 2017-18 and 7.0 % in 2018-19.
 - As per government's Central Statistics Office (CSO), Indian economy will grow by 6.5% in 2017-18, as compared to 7.1% in 2016-17. GDP grew by 5.7 % in Apr - June Quarter and 6.3% in July - September quarter.
 - 2018 Global Economics Prospect (GEP) report by World Bank has projected India's growth rate to increase to 7.3% in 2018 and 7.5 for 2019 and 2020.
 - India Ratings and Research projected GDP will improve to 7.1 % in 2018-19 as compared to 6.5 per cent in 2017-18.
 - International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected Indian GDP to grow at 7.4% in 2018 and 7.8 % in 2019. India's growth rate dropped to 6.7%. In its latest World Economic Outlook update released in Davos (Switzerland).
39. Indian IT Firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) signed over GBP 500 million (USD 690 million) deal with M&G Prudential (UK and European savings and investments business of Prudential plc).
40. Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) and India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) signed agreement for training of IPPB employees in area of payment banking.
- IPPB is Government's attempt to boost *financial inclusion* by providing basic banking services to unbanked population.

41. Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management-Kerala (IIITM-K) and Blockchain Education Network (BEN) will jointly set up Kerala Blockchain Academy in Thiruvananthapuram, as first of its kind in India and aims to utilise blockchain technology for welfare of public, promote innovations and entrepreneurship with blockchain technology.
42. Indian Overseas Bank signed MoU with National Housing Bank for Rural Housing Interest Subsidy Scheme (RHIS) of Ministry of Rural Development. RHIS provides subsidy for housing loans taken by those living in rural areas for construction and modifications of their dwelling units. Interest subsidy is 3% for a loan amount of 2 lakh for 20-year tenure.
43. India's factory output, measured by Index of Industrial Production (IIP) rose to 17 Months high of 8.4% in November 2017, up from 2% in October 2017, due to better performance by manufacturing and capital goods sectors.
44. India's most-valued Bank *HDFC Bank* crossed INR 5 trillion market capitalisation for first time (Approx 85 Billion USD), making it only 3rd Indian company (after TCS and Reliance) to achieve this milestone.
45. IndusInd Bank will introduce India's first battery-powered, interactive payment cards, in association with Dynamics Inc (Pennsylvania(USA) based firm that manufactures intelligent, battery-powered payment cards). New card will have multiple buttons which will allow consumers to pay in multiple ways (through credit points / monthly instalments).
46. Karnataka Government will hold a Blockchain Hackathon for Governance, for students, startups, and other IT professionals. Cloud-based blockchain technology providers will be invited to provide platforms for use in this hackathon. Karnataka is 3rd Indian State (After Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) to announce plans to adopt blockchain for governance.
47. Karnataka topped among all states with investment intentions of Rs. 1.49 lakh crore till October 2017, accounting for 43 % of India's total investment intentions.
48. Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) and Zone Startups India launched *Accelerator Program for three months*, to promote startups in early revenue stage. It will help startups achieve product-market fit through a curated customer validation process. It will introduce startups to investors, relevant customers and industry connects.
49. Maharashtra Government approved Nanaji Deshmukh Krishi Sanjivani Yojna, with expenses of INR 4000 Crores INR. It will be active between 2018-19 to 2023-24.
- Scheme will be implemented in 5,142 villages across 15 districts, to improve soil quality, develop foodgrain varieties which can sustain climate variations and effect necessary changes in crop pattern as per availability of water.
 - 70% of cost will be borne by World Bank while state will contribute 30% over six years.
50. Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) launched National CSR Data Portal & Corporate Data Portal for bringing accountability and transparency for corporate India. It aims to provide easy accessibility to general public and also ensure high level of compliance and will help in institutionalising and consolidating CSR activities.
51. Mobile payments Firm Paytm and Alibaba Group-owned AGTech Holdings formed a joint venture to launch 'Gamepind' a gaming platform aimed at mobile users in India, with AGTech holding 45% in JV and Paytm owns 55%. Capital invested is \$16 Million.
52. NBFC *Capital First* has been merged with IDFC Bank. Merged entity will have assets under management of Rs 88000 crore, customer base of over 5 million and branch network of 194.
53. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) sanctioned Rs 372.51 crore loan assistance to Odisha for irrigation and rural bridge projects, that are to be undertaken during Jan- March 2018 period, under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).
54. Norway's fertiliser firm *Yara International* acquired India's Tata Chemicals' 1.2 million tonnes per annum production capacity urea plant at Babrala in Uttar Pradesh, for INR 2682 crores. It is first foreign direct investment (FDI) in India's urea sector.
55. Paytm Payments Bank partnered with IndusInd Bank to introduce a facility to create a fixed deposit (FD) when customer's balance exceeds Rs. 1 lakh at end of day, and earn up to 6.85 % annual interest.
56. Paytm has set up a new entity called *Paytm Money* that will offer investment and wealth management products and will invest close to \$10 million in new entity. Paytm Money is 4th product from One97 Communications, after Paytm Mall, Payments Bank and wallet.
57. Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) approved expansion of Government's Atal Pension Yojana (APY) through operational Payments Banks and Small Finance Banks in India. Participation in

APY builds a pensioned society and adds sustainable fee income to Banks by way of attractive incentive for mobilizing APY @ Rs 120-150 for each Account. Currently, operational Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks are -

- Small Finance Bank-
- Ujjivan SFB
- Janalakshmi SFB.
- Equitas SFB.
- A U SFB.
- Capital SFB.
- ESAF SFB.
- Utkarsh SFB.
- Suryoday SFB.
- Fincare SFB
- Payment Bank
- Paytm PB
- Airtel PB
- India Post PB
- Fino PB.

58. Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) permitted partial withdrawal (up to 25%) under National Pension System (NPS) for specified expenses such as construction of residential premises, higher education / marriage of children and treatment of critical illness. This is applicable only to those who have contributed for 3 years.

59. Punjab National Bank (PNB) and National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) signed MoU to provide financial assistance to Scheduled Caste (SC) families living below Double Poverty Line (DPL).

- Persons with annual family income below 40000 in rural areas and 55000 in urban areas are considered to be below double poverty line.

60. Rating agency CRISIL upgraded its outlook on 18 Indian public sector banks (PSBs) from “negative” to “stable”, after recent news of INR 88139 Crores Infusion by Government into PSBs. Along with capital infusion announcement, Government also unveiled ‘Enhanced Access and Service Excellence (EASE)’, a six-fold roadmap for reforms in PSBs which will improve the overall functioning of these banks.

61. Reliance Communications (RCom) unveiled Eagle express submarine cable system to lay a 68000-km undersea cable for carrying data across Europe and Asia, as a *cloud and fiber initiative* which will be laid at a cost of \$600 million. This submarine cable system will connect its base in India with Italy to west and Hong Kong on east. It is expected to be operational by 2020.

62. Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd will launch its own cyptocurrency based on Blockchain Technology, named JioCoin, led by Mukesh Ambani’s son Akash Ambani.

63. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched new design chocolate brown ten rupee note, with height 63mm (unchanged) and width 123mm (slightly lesser than 137mm width of existing note). Another difference is that reverse of note will carry a motif of Konark Sun Temple, as compared to images of fauna of India - rhinoceros, elephant and tiger o existing note.

64. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stated that all the 14 designs of Rs 10 coin are valid and legal tender for transactions, as it was observed that some traders and members of public were reluctant to accept INR 10 coins owing to a doubt about it genuineness.

65. SBI and NABARD signed agreement with five NGOs in Bengal for promotion of 2,500 joint liability groups (JLGs) in select districts. JLGs are informal groups of 4-10 members engaged in similar economic activities and willing to jointly repay loans taken by group.

66. SBI reduced base rate and benchmark prime lending rates by 30 basis points each, brining down Base rate to 8.65 % and benchmark prime lending rates to 13.4 %.

67. Telangana government's Telangana Industrial Health Clinic Ltd received RBI clearance to function as a non banking finance company (NBFC). It had won SKOCH Platinum Award earlier under smart governance category in MSME segment.

68. Vodafone partnered with e-commerce firm Flipkart to provide a range of entry-level smartphones at an effective price of INR 999 ,under #MyFirst4GSmartphone campaign.

69. World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation (IFC) will provide \$440 million debt to *Mahindra Renewables Pvt. Ltd, Acme Group and global private equity fund Actis Llp* to build Rewa solar park in Madhya Pradesh.

- Earlier, three 250MW projects were awarded to *Acme Solar Holdings, Mahindra Renewables and Actis LLP's Solenergi Power*.

70. YES Foundation (*social development arm of YES Bank*) launched 5th *YES! i am the CHANGE' (YIAC)* campaign to inculcate spirit of responsible youth citizenship and drive social impact through the medium of films.

- Yes foundation invited participation in *YIAC Social Filmmaking Challenge*, to depict stories of change in a three-minute film. Selected entities will receive a grant of Rs 7.5 crore, for scaling up and capacity building and will also receive three-year mentoring for creating onground tangible social impact.

71. Yes Bank and Nearby tied up to provide Aadhaar- enabled cardless and pinless ATM service through which, customers can deposit or withdraw money at retailers' place, using PayNEARBY mobile application.

International

1. Renault-Nissan-Mitsubishi automakers alliance overtook Volkswagen as biggest seller of light vehicles in 2017 -

- Renault-Nissan Group posted total of 10.61 million light vehicles sales in 2017, taking over Volkswagen's 10.53 million. Volkswagen group also includes Audi, Skoda, Seat and Porsche brands.

- Toyota was 3rd with 10.2 million light vehicles sold in 2017.

2. 2 Days after Saudi Arabia Allowed Indian Haj Pilgrims to travel to Haj via Sea Route, Saudi Arabia has now Increased India's Haj Quota for 2018 to 175025 (1 Lakh 75 Thousand and 25 Pilgrims), an increase of 5000 compared to previous year.

- Additionally, Women above 45 years of age will be allowed to travel for Haj in groups of 4 or more women, without a Mehram (Male Companion).

3. 2017 Global Talent Competitiveness Index by INSEAD -

- India is ranked 81st among 118 countries, improving from 92nd rank last year.

- Top 5 Nations - Switzerland, Singapore, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden.

4. 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer Report -

- In Both Categories of General Public and Informed Experts - China ranked 1st and India ranked 3rd. Indonesia is at 2nd place in both categories.

- Note that In 2017 report, India was at top in both categories.

5. 34th Harbin International Ice and Snow Festival (world's largest ice festival) began in Harbin (north-east China). It highlights ice sculptures of castles, historic landmarks and famous figures.

6. *Global Manufacturing Index* released by World Economic Forum (WEF, titled *Readiness for the future of production report* -

- Japan is at top, while India is ranked 30th. Top 5 Nations -

1	Japan
2	South Korea
3	Germany
4	Switzerland
5	China

7. A 910-carat gem diamond, considered 5th largest gem-quality diamond ever found has been discovered in a Lesotho mine (Africa). It is more valuable as it is colourless, with worth of approx \$40 million.

8. A film on life of Indian Nobel Peace laureate *Kailash Satyarthi* won USA Documentary Grand Jury Award at Sundance Film Festival in Utah (USA). The documentary titled *Kailash* has been directed by Derek Doneen.

9. According to Sanctum Wealth Management report, India will become the fastest growing large economy in the world in 2018, surpassing China and the country's equity market will jump to become the fifth largest in world.

10. According to World Steel Association (WSA), India overtook USA to become 3rd largest steel producer in 2017, with crude steel production growing 6.2% to 101.4 million tonnes (MT). China remains 1st by producing 831.7 MT in 2017, followed by Japan (104.7 MT).

11. According to wealth index based on data from 4th National Family and Health Survey (NFHS-4) 2015-16,
- Wealth index was prepared on basis of information of scores on ownership of consumer goods and household characteristics such as availability of clean drinking water, classified into wealth quintiles.
 - State wise wealth Distribution -
 - Delhi and Punjab are richest with over 60% of their households in top wealth quintile. They are followed by Goa (54.5% in top bracket). Bihar is poorest with half of its households in bottom quintile. Rajasthan has most equitable wealth distribution with similar number of households in all quintiles.
 - Wealth distribution in religious groups -
 - Jains - 70% population in top quintile.
 - Sikhs - 59.6% in top quintile.
 - Hindus and Muslims have similar and also most equitable wealth distribution across all quintiles.
 - Community wise wealth distribution -
 - Scheduled tribes are poorest with 45.9% of their people in lowest quintile.
 - Rural and Urban wealth -
 - 29% of rural India belongs to bottom quintile, while it is just 3.3% for urban India.
12. American and Japanese armies launched 13th edition of their joint exercise named Iron Fist, in California (USA).
13. Andhra Pradesh Government and Zurich (Switzerland) signed a letter of intent to promote mutual prosperity and development.
14. Annual survey of *Gallup International* ranked Indian PM Narendra Modi as 3rd among world leaders, with German chancellor Angela Merkel at top and French president Emmanuel Macron at 2nd place.
15. As per data by *International Air Transport Association (IATA)*, India topped worldwide growth chart of domestic air passenger traffic for November 2017 with growth by 16.4 %, highest in world.
16. As per data by Sri Lanka Govt., India remains top source of tourists to Sri Lanka in 2017, with over 3.8 Lakh Indians visiting Sri Lanka. India was followed by China and United Kingdom (UK).
17. As per survey by personal finance platform *GoBankingRates*
- India is 2nd cheapest country to live or retire among 112 countries, after South Africa. It is based on four metrics – local purchasing power index, rent index, Groceries index, and Consumer price index. These metrics evaluate relative affordability as compared to New York city.
 - Most Expensive - Bermuda (112), Bahamas (111), Hong Kong (110), Switzerland (109) and Ghana (108).
18. Bangladesh, India and Nepal approved operating procedures for passenger vehicle movement (Passenger protocol) in sub-region under Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA).
19. Bank of Cyprus selected digital security company Gemalto to supply world's first biometric payment card for both chip and contactless payments. These cards will use fingerprint recognition instead of a personal identification number (PIN) to authenticate the cardholder.
20. Bollywood Film Padmaavat has been banned in Malaysia by country's censor board, stating that it touches on the *sensitivities of Islam*.
21. Brazil's securities regulator prohibited local investment funds from buying cryptocurrencies such as Bitcoin, Ethereum.
22. Bulgaria taken over European Union's six-month revolving presidency, from Estonia.
23. California became 6th USA state (after Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Nevada), to permit sale of cannabis for recreational use.
24. China Navy commissioned indigenously developed missile frigate named *Rizhao* and a new 4000-ton Type 054A Jiangkai II-class guided-missile frigate.
25. China constructed a 330-foot tall air purifying tower in Xian (Shaanxi Province), biggest in world. It has produced more than 10 million cubic meters of clean air since launch.
26. China has developed a new underwater surveillance network which will help its submarines to accurately track target vessels and will protect its interests in the Indian Ocean and South China Sea. It will acquire information about underwater environment, streaming acquired information to intelligence centres and providing actionable information to Chinese navy which will use it for tracking, navigation and positioning.
27. China has set up world's first 3D-printed bus stops in Fengjing (Shanghai). The bus stops have a closed loop design, accommodating two-round stools inside the structure.

28. China launched 2 BeiDou-3 satellites to provide navigation and positioning services to countries along Belt and Road initiative (BRI) by end of 2018. Launched satellites were BeiDou-3 M7 and BeiDou-3 M8 (26th and 27th satellites) in BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS).
29. China launched 2 high-resolution optical remote sensing satellites - *Jilin-1 Video 07 and 08*, onboard Long March-11 rocket along with 4 other small commercial satellites.
30. China will build its second foreign naval base in Pakistan, after Djibouti (Nation in Horn of Africa).
- It will be set up in Gwadar on the southwestern coast of Balochistan, that holds strategic significance as Gwadar is located near Chabahar port in Iran, that is being jointly developed by Iran, India and Afghanistan.
31. China will establish 3 international courts (*in Beijing, Shenzhen and Xi'an*) to deal with disputes related to its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a development strategy focused on road connectivity and maritime cooperation between Eurasian countries.
32. China will provide financial support to construct counter-terrorism base in Badakshan province of northern Afghanistan that would prevent cross-border infiltration of Chinese Uyghur militants.
33. China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) will issue its first US dollar-denominated bond with minimum worth of \$1 billion by June 2018.
- Minimum size of issuance will be 1 billion USD, which will be increased upon increase in demand for first bond.
- Bond Maturity will be 3 - 5 years, depending on investor demand. AIIB plans to cap its total 2018 borrowing volume at US \$3 billion.
34. Ecuador granted citizenship to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange.
- In 2012, Assange, an Australian-Ecuadoran, was granted asylum at Ecuadorian Embassy in London to avoid extradition to Sweden, where he faced an investigation over rape allegations.
35. Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2018 by World Economic Forum (WEF) in collaboration with Yale - University and Columbia University -
- India is ranked 177 among 180 countries.
- Top 5 countries - Switzerland, France, Denmark, Malta and Sweden.
- Bottom 5 countries - Nepal (176), India (177), Congo (178), Bangladesh (179), Burundi (180)
36. Equatorial Guinea, Ivory Coast, Kuwait, Peru, Poland and Netherlands joined UN Security Council as non permanent members.
- UN Security Council has 15 members, including 5 with permanent seats who have power to veto resolutions – Britain, China, France, Russia and USA.
37. European Nation Iceland became First Nation to legalise equal pay between men and women, by passing a law that makes it illegal to pay men more than women, applicable for Companies employing minimum 25 people.
38. Financial Times London's Global MBA Ranking 2018 -
- Rankings of Prominent Indian B-schools -
- Indian School of Business (ISB) - 27th (28th last year)
- IIM Ahmedabad - 31st (29th last year)
- IIM-Bangalore - 35th (49th last year)
- IIM-Calcutta - 78th (95th last year)
- Stanford Graduate School of Business, US has topped the ranking followed by France's INSEAD.
39. First India-UK Createch Summit will be held in Mumbai in February 2018, to explore convergence of creativity and technology, 'Createch' and its application across a range of areas.
40. Fortune magazine's *World's Most Admired Companies* List 2018
- Apple topped the for 11th Consecutive year.
- E-commerce firm Amazon retained 2nd spot, followed by Google's parent Alphabet.
41. Government of South Australia approved building a major solar thermal plant which will be largest such thermal power plant in world and will power 35 % of households in South Australia. It will be developed by a US Firm, Solar Reserve at cost of Australian Dollar 650 million.
42. India and Bhutan jointly unveiled *Special logo* for Golden Jubilee (50 years) celebrations through video conference. During 2018, India and Bhutan will conduct several high-level exchanges.
43. India and Saudi Arabia signed bilateral annual Haj 2018 agreement, allowing Indian Haj pilgrims through sea route also (that was suspended in 1995). Sending pilgrims through ships will help cut down travel expenses significantly.

44. India become top borrower from Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with USD 1.5 billion worth of loans in 2017.

- Indonesia is at second position with USD 600 million worth loans.
- AIIB is headquartered in Beijing (China) and has authorized capital of 100 Billion USD. India is 2nd largest shared holder in AIIB (8.52%) after China (26%). AIIB is preferred lender as it charges only 1 to 1.5 % interest with long term repayment and 5 year grace period.

45. India contributed \$50,000 to United Nations (UN) Secretary General Antonio Guterres's Office of Envoy on Youth to help with its mission of involving young people in UNs goals.

46. India emerged as 5th most attractive market for investments and the optimism over global economic growth is at a record level, as per survey of CEOs by global consultancy PwC.

- USA remains as top spot for global investment with 46% global CEOs considering USA as most attractive market for investment, followed by China (33%) and Germany (20%).

47. India excluded Pakistan from list of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) member countries with which it will be connecting its National Knowledge Network (NKN), a multi-gigabit pan-India network aimed at providing a unified high speed network backbone for educational institutions in India. Researchers from different educational networks can collaborate with each other through NKN.

- NKN will be connected from these countries either to Delhi, Mumbai or Kolkata, depending on the proximity.

48. India joined *Australia Group*, an informal bloc (group) of countries that keeps a tight control over exports of substances used in making of chemical weapons. It is expected to strengthen India's bid to enter 48 member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

- India is now part of 3 of 4 key export control groups in world dealing with non-proliferation. Other 2 are -
- Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) - an informal partnership among 35 countries that regulates trade in sensitive equipment and technologies to ensure there is no proliferation of missile and unmanned aerial vehicle technology capable of carrying payloads above 500kg for more than 300km.
- Wassenaar Arrangement - An informal grouping of 42 countries, exercising control over the export of dual use goods and technologies in December 2017.

49. India provided financial assistance of USD 45.27 million to Sri Lanka for upgrading Kankesanthurai (KKS) Harbour (northern Sri Lanka) into a commercial port, through Export and Import Bank of India (Exim Bank).

50. Indian peacekeepers in UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have re-built a 300-metre-long river bridge in Akoka village in record time. This bridge will enable people to cross the river and reach a town to access basic services.

51. India's IndiGo is ranked 4th most *Punctual mega carrier* in world, ahead of British Airways and Lufthansa in a List by Aviation Analytics Company OAG. The list ranks Japan Airlines is at top.

52. India's first sovereign wealth fund National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) and Dubai-based ports operator *DP World Pvt. Ltd* jointly created an investment platform to invest up to \$3 billion in ports, terminals, transportation and logistics businesses in India. This is the first investment platform from NIIF.

53. Institute of Management and Technology (IMT) Ghaziabad announced as one of champions of United Nations' initiative on Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), at World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland).

- PRME Champions Group consists of B-Schools involved as PRME signatories, working on real-time implementation of sustainability principles from various part of world. It aims to create activities that focus on UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

54. Iran banned English from being taught in primary schools, amid suspected Western cultural invasion.

55. Iranian government lifted restrictions on use of Internet, including messaging app Telegram, that were put after protests against unemployment and rising consumer prices in December 2017.

56. Israel formally withdrawn from UNESCO (*United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization*). Tensions began after UNESCO admitted Palestine as a member state in 2011.

- Israel has been a UNESCO member since 1949, having 9 sites on UNESCO heritage list.

57. Israel's parliament passed a law requiring a supermajority to relinquish (*leave*) control over any part of Jerusalem, that could hamstring city's division in any future peace deal. It will bar the government from ceding Israeli sovereignty over any part of Jerusalem without approval of at least 80 of the legislature's 120 members.

58. JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) approved Official Development Assistance loan for Yen 45 billion for Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Project (Phase 3) (I). People of this area will be provided with safe water supply and sewerage services.

59. Japan's Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched *new Earth observation satellite ASHARO-2*. It will perform Earth observation tasks for 5 years from its orbit at an altitude of about 500 km.

60. Johannesburg (South Africa) based Global Market Research Group New World Wealth Report 2017 -

- Based on Total wealth of countrymen, Top 10 wealthiest countries are (amount in USD Billion)-

- USA - 64584

- China - 24803

- Japan - 19522

- United Kingdom - 9919

- Germany - 9660

- India - 8230

- France - 6649

- Canada - 6393

- Australia - 6142

- Italy - 4276

- Report in Context of India -

- India is now 6th richest in terms of wealth held by its people.

- Since 2016, Indians' wealth increased 25% from 6584 to 8230 Billion USD in Just 1 year, which is more than China's 22 % increase over the period.

61. Kazakhstan surpassed Iraq as biggest oil over-producer in among Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Nations. Kazakhstan's oil output in November and December 2017 was nearly 130000 barrels a day and Kazakhstan promised to pump out 20000 barrels a day less as per OPEC pact.

62. Maitre-2, second passenger bus to Kolkata via Dhaka flagged off from Agartala (Tripura), to boost trans border relationship between India and Bangladesh.

63. Messaging App WhatsApp launched *Business app*, to help small enterprises to connect efficiently with their customers, initially in Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, the UK and USA. In it, a small enterprise owner can create a Business Profile containing details like business description, contact details etc. It will be highlighted to regular users on WhatsApp.

64. National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) signed MoU with SME Corporation Malaysia for cooperation in small and medium businesses (SMBs).

65. Nepal banned solo climbers from scaling its mountains, including Mount Everest, to reduce accidents.

66. Nepal started accessing internet from China after commercial operations began at Nepal-China optical fibre link via Rasuwagadhi gateway across Himalayan Mountains. It ends Nepal's dependence on India for internet bandwidth, considered strategic loss for India. It is believed that initial speed by Chinese fibre link will be 1.5 Gigabit per second (gbps), less than 34 gbps provided by India.

67. Pakistan Navy successfully test fired indigenously built surface-to-surface anti-ship missile *Harba*, from newly commissioned Fast Attack Craft PNS Himmat.

68. Pakistan allowed Chinese currency Yuan for exports and financing transactions. Chinese Yuan is an approved foreign currency for denominating foreign currency transactions in Pakistan.

69. Philippines expressed its displeasure over construction of an apparent airbase on a man-made island in the South China Sea by China.

- China reportedly uses cabbage strategy for militarization of large areas in disputed south china sea, which is protested by neighboring nations (including India, Japan, Bhutan, Philippines, Japan, Malaysia and Brunei) claiming control on various parts of mineral rich south china sea.

- Cabbage strategy is also called *salami-slicing* strategy, Under which a contested area is surrounded by multiple security layers to deny access to the rival nation and is claimed subsequently. As per the observers, China, for a long time, has been pursuing this strategy.

70. Saudi Arabia and UAE became first countries of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to introduce Value Added Tax (VAT) for first time to increase their revenue away from oil reserves.

71. South Korea and Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) signed MoU for industrial co operation, with a focus on automobile, defence and textiles sectors. It aims to help Gujarat-based small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to explore opportunities through joint ventures with South Korean firms.

72. Sri Lanka banned import of vehicles without airbags for driver and front seat passenger, Anti-Locking Braking System standards (ABS) and other safety features.
73. Thomson Reuters Corp's First 'Top 100 Global Technology Leaders list 2018 -
- Top 3 - Microsoft (1), Intel (2), Cisco Systems (3)
 - 45 % of 100 tech companies are headquartered in USA. Japan and Taiwan are tied for second place with 13 companies each, followed by India with 5 tech firms (TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra).
74. UNESCO Included *bird language* of Black Sea villagers (in northern Turkey) in list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. This high pitch system of whistling to communicate in the rugged terrain in Black Sea Regions dates back to some 500 years ago.
75. USA President announced that USA will no longer give any fund to Pakistan to fight terrorism, as Pakistan has not properly utilized approx 33 Billion USD given to it over past decade.
76. USA Space Firm *SpaceX* launched secret Zuma Mission for USA government, onboard Falcon 9 rocket.
- Zuma mission remains a secret as its nature or purpose and the agency behind it has not been made public.
77. USA lifted ban that it had imposed on refugees from 11 nations, which it termed as high-risk countries. The 11 Nations are - *Egypt, Iran, Libya, South Sudan, Yemen, Sudan, Iraq, Mali, North Korea, Somalia and Syria*.
78. USA placed Pakistan on newly formed Special Watch List for *severe violations of religious freedom*, as Pakistan continues to harass its religious minorities, tolerates extra-judicial violence in the guise of opposing blasphemy.
- Moreover, USA also re-designated 10 countries as *Countries of Particular Concern* under International Religious Freedom (IRF) Act - Myanmar, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.
79. United Kingdom (UK) government formed a dedicated national security unit to counter fake news and disinformation. It will flag fake information on social media.
80. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Health Organisation (WHO) will collaborate to accelerate curbing environmental health risks.
81. Valletta (capital of Malta), is officially named European Capital of Culture 2018, along with Netherlands' city Leeuwarden.
- *European Capitals of Culture* initiative aims to highlight diversity of European culture and to increase citizens' sense of belonging to a common cultural area.
82. Venezuela Government announced 40 % increase to minimum wage, amid hyperinflation in oil-rich but crisis-stricken southern american nation.
83. World Economic Forum (WEF)'s Inclusive Development Index 2018 -
- India ranked at 62nd place. China is on 26th position, Pakistan is on 47th and Bangladesh is ranked 34th.
 - Top 5 Advanced Economies - Norway, Ireland, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Denmark.
 - Top 5 Emerging Economies - Lithuania, Hungary, Azerbaijan, Latvia, Poland
84. World Economic Forums's (WEF's) Global Risks Report 2018 -
- On dimensions of Likelihood and impact, 5 environmental risks - *extreme weather, major natural disasters, biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse, man-made environmental disasters, and failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation* are accorded highest weightage.
 - Top-ranking global risk on dimension of impact was *use of weapons of mass destruction* while on dimension of likelihood, *extreme weather events* ranked top.
85. e-Commerce Major Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos became richest person ever as his wealth has hit \$105.1 billion, according to Bloomberg Billionaires Index. He passed Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates' previous record from 1999 (Gates is now worth \$93.3 billion).

Meetings

1. 16th International Energy Forum (IEF) Ministerial meeting will be held in New Delhi in April 2018. India will host this in association with China and South Korea.
2. 2nd meet of China and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) held in Santiago (Chile). During this, China invited Latin American and Caribbean countries to join its 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, to deepen economic and political cooperation. CELAC was formed in Venezuela in 2011 and it does not include USA and Canada.
3. 48th annual meeting of World Economic Forum (WEF) held in Davos (Switzerland) -

- Theme for event was *Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World*.
- PM Narendra Modi Visited On India's Behalf, along with several other union ministers. He became First Indian PM to Visit Davos WEF Meet in past 20 years, after H D Deve Gowda's Visit in 1997.
- World Economic Forum (WEF) launched Global Centre for Cybersecurity to safeguard world from hackers and growing data breaches. Headquartered in Geneva, centre will become operational from March 2018.
- Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan has been honoured with 24th Crystal Award at WEF Meet in Davos, for his *leadership in championing children's and women's rights in India*
- During this Visit, India and Vietnam signed MOU for cooperation in field of Information and Broadcasting and space. India and Vietnam also launched first ever set of commemorative postage stamps to highlight bilateral ties between them, with theme *ancient architecture*.
- India announced to host informal Ministerial meeting of World Trade Organisation (WTO) in March 2018 in New Delhi.
- 4. 4th ASEAN-INDIA Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture and Forestry held in New Delhi .ASEAN stands for *Association of SouthEast Asian Nations*.
- 5. 7th Asia Steel International Conference will be organized in Bhubaneswar (Odisha) in February 2018, by Tata Steel and Indian Institute of Metals.
- 6. Bilateral Meetings in Jan 2018 -
 - 5th Bilateral Technical Meeting of India and Malaysia on cooperation in Traditional Systems of Medicine held in New Delhi.
- 7. Himalayan Hydro Expo 2018 held at Kathmandu (Nepal), to highlight hydropower potential of Nepal.
- 8. India attended meeting of international military cooperation departments of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) for first time, in Beijing(China).
- 9. India-ASEAN commemorative summit meeting held in New Delhi to mark Silver jubilee (25 Years) of India ASEAN partnership.
 - A day before, India - ASEAN business and investment conference was held in New Delhi.
 - External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated Bharat-ASEAN Maitri Park in Delhi.
 - ASEAN consists of 10 countries - *Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos and Brunei*.
- 10. International Dam Safety Conference held at Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
- 11. International Solar Alliance (ISA) hosted *International Solar Alliance Forum* at Future World Energy Summit (WFES) 2018 in Abu Dhabi (UAE). It is ISA's first global Outreach Program after it came into force On 6th December 2017, upon being ratified by 15 Nations. Some key announcements were made during the event -
 - Raj Kumar Singh (*Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy*) stated that India will achieve its target of 175 GW of installed Renewable Energy capacity well before 2020. India will set up of a \$ 350 million solar development fund for solar projects financing.
 - Upendra Tripathy (Interim DG of ISA) informed that 2nd RE-INVEST meet will be held in India in April 2018, and over 100 projects shall be signed by ISA by April 2018.
 - YES Bank committed financing solar projects of over \$5 Billion. While CLP and NTPC announced partnership with ISA and committed contribution of \$1 million each to ISA fund corpus. Yes Bank also tied up with *Amplus Energy Solutions* to cofinance solar energy projects in India.
- 12. Syrian National Dialogue Congress began in Sochi (Russia). This first Syrian peace talks meet has been sponsored by Russia, Iran and Turkey.

National

1. 63rd Jio Filmfare Awards 2018 Mumbai -
 - Best Film - Hindi Medium
 - Critics' Award for Best Film - Newton
 - Best Actor (Female) - Vidya Balan for 'Tumhari Sulu'
 - Best Actor (Male) - Irrfan Khan for 'Hindi Medium'
 - Best Director - Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari for 'Bareilly Ki Barfi'
 - Best Actor In A Supporting Role (Male) - Rajkummar Rao for 'Bareilly Ki Barfi'
 - Best Actor In A Supporting Role (Female) - Meher Vij for 'Secret Superstar'
 - Best Music Album - Pritam for 'Jagga Jasoos'
 - Best Playback Singer (Male) - Arijit Singh for 'Roke na ruke naina' - 'Badrinath Ki Dulhania'

2. Election Commission announced that State Assembly elections will be held for 3 North East states in Feb 2018 - Meghalaya and Nagaland (Feb 27) and Tripura (Feb 18).
3. 10th Global Forum for Food & Agriculture was held in Berlin (Germany) with theme *Shaping the future of livestock – sustainably, responsibly, efficiently*. India was represented by Minister of State (MoS) for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
4. 11 days Dhanu Yatra festival held in Bargarh district of Odisha.
5. 12th International Film Festival on Art and Artist began in Bhubaneswar, organised by Bhubaneswar-based Jatin Das Centre of Art (JDCA).
6. 171st Araadhanai Music Festival started in Thiruvaiyaru (Tamil Nadu). Thyagaraja is one of Trinities of Carnatic music.
7. 3 Municipal Corporations of Delhi jointly brought out mobile application named *311*, to enhance engagement of citizens in the resolution of grievances and improvement of civic services in city. It aims to empower users by giving them locations of nearby police / metro stations / petrol pumps / toilets / parking / hospitals and other public places.
8. 3 day annual Flamingo Festival held at Pulicat lake and Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary in Sullurpet mandal (Andhra Pradesh). Somewhere between 9,000 to 12,000 Migratory birds from Siberia visit this place during winter season for breeding.
9. 3rd Science Film Festival of India will held in Goa, titled *SCI-FFI Goa*.
10. 4th India International Science Festival will be held in Lucknow, on dates to be decided later.
11. *Sammakka Saaramamma Maha Jathara* tribal festival began in Eturunagaram (Telangana). Tribal people from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh would participate in this festival.
12. *TrackChild* and *Khoya-Paya* portals launched by Ministry of Women and Child Development to track missing and found children. Ministry also provides support for children in trouble through the dedicated toll free number - 1098.
13. A Kashmiri publishing house *Gulshan Books* entered Limca Book of Records for a huge collection of 80,000 books. It is the only bookshop-library on a lake.
14. A MoU was signed between National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) and *IL&FS Transportation Networks* for construction of over 14 km long 2-lane bi-directional Zojila Tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir.
 - This would be India's longest road tunnel and longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia. It will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh.
 - Cost of project is INR 6808 crores and will completed in 7 years.
15. Airports Authority of India (AAI) allocated Rs 3400 crore for upgradation of airports in North East region.
 - Assam - INR 1720 crores
 - Tripura - INR 525 crores
 - Manipur - INR 800 crores
 - Arunachal Pradesh - INR 211 crores
 - Mizoram - INR 60 crores
 - Nagaland - INR 42 crores
16. An important heritage attraction at National Rail Museum (New Delhi) - a 108 years old monorail became operational, that was used by Maharaja of Patiala *Bhupinder Singh*. The Museum takes visitors on an exciting journey into Railway history and heritage and depict their contribution to industrial and economic progress of country.
17. Andhra Pradesh Government signed MoU with NITI Aayog to create an online dashboard for the 115 most backward districts of India, under *Transformation of Most Aspirational Districts* Scheme.
 - Backward districts were selected based on education, health, nutrition, rural road connectivity, rural household electrification, access to potable water, individual toilets, etc.
 - Jharkhand has the highest number of the listed backward districts.
 - Note that West Bengal, Kerala and Odisha recently opted out of Central Government's *Transformation of Aspirational Districts* scheme. Bringing down number of districts to 102 (from 115).
18. Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu inaugurated World War II Memorial Museum in Changlang district. It is located adjacent to historic Stilwell Road and is expected to boost tourist inflow especially from Southeast Asian countries.

19. Arunachal Pradesh would get its first (and India's 2nd) Film and Television Institute (FTII). First Film and Television Institute of India of India was set up in Pune in 1960.
20. As per Airpocalypse II report by environmental Non-governmental organization (NGO) Greenpeace India -
- Airpocalypse II analysed PM10 (*inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 10 micrometers and smaller*) annual averages for 280 cities monitored by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) under its national air quality monitoring programme. Highlights of Airpocalypse II -
 - 47% of population in India is living in areas where there is no air quality monitoring.
 - Out of 63 crore million people living in 280 cities where air quality is monitored by CPCB, 55 crore live in areas exceeding national safe standards for PM10. CPCB has set 60 micrograms per cubic metres PM10 as safe standard.
 - Top 5 Polluted Cities
 - Delhi - 290
 - Faridabad (Haryana) - 272
 - Bhiwadi (Rajasthan) - 262
 - Patna (Bihar) - 261
 - Dehradun, (Uttarakhand) - 238
 - Least Polluted Cities
 - Hassan (Karnataka) - 26
 - Pathanamthitta (Kerala) - 26
 - Nongstoin (Meghalaya) - 26
 - Darjeeling (West Bengal) - 29
 - Tura (Meghalaya) - 30
21. As per Govt. Data, India is leading global milk producer globally in past 3 years, with annual growth rate of 5.53% compared with 2.09% globally. India's Milk production was approx 163 million tonnes in 2016-17.
22. As per a survey by *Ixigo*, Kozhikode railway station (Kerala) is ranked best in terms of cleanliness, while Hazrat Nizamuddin (Delhi) is ranked lowest. Among trains, Swarna Jayanti Rajdhani is rated cleanest train while Karnataka Express is given lowest ratings.
23. Assam Assembly will introduce digital budget in its upcoming session, instead of conventional printed booklet. Apart from digital budget, new features to be introduced will be *Members Hour (tuesday)*, *a year long calendar*, *Best Legislator Award*, *formation of Pay Commission for MLAs' salary and fellowships for research work on history of Assembly*.
24. Assam Government released a postage stamp in memory of eminent football player Talimeren Ao.
25. Assam Govt. launched *Chah Bagichar Dhan Puraskar Mela 2017-18*, that enables INR 2500 to be credited to accounts of people belonging to tea community, who opened bank accounts during demonetisation.
26. Assamese and Manipuri language versions of PM's Official website (www.pmindia.gov.in) have been launched. Now PM INDIA website is available in 11 regional languages - *Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu*.
27. BSES Rajdhani Power launched *Solar City Initiative (in partnership with USA agency for International Development (USAID) PACE-D and Indo-German Collaboration (GIZ))* aimed to maximise rooftop solar power use in south and west Delhi. Under this, rooftop solar installations will be provided at a single point for entire apartment complex unlike conventional method of having individual installations.
28. Bengal Global Business Summit 2018 held in Kolkata with *Japan, Italy, Poland, Germany, Republic of Korea, Czech Republic, Great Britain, France and UAE* as Partner countries and theme *Bengal Means Business*.
29. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Amit Shah launched *Yuva Udghosh programme* in Varanasi (UP), focusing on enrolling youths above 17 of age.
30. Bhogali Bihu harvest festival, also called as *Magh Bihu* festival began in Assam.
31. Bihar Government banned electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), that are handheld battery-run devices which are used like a conventional cigarette. However the ingredient (in liquid form) may differ.
32. Bikaner camel festival celebrated in Rajasthan to honour camels.
33. Cabinet Approvals on 04-01-2018,
- Establishment of new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Bilaspur (Himachal Pradesh) under Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY).
 - CCEA Approvals -

- Construction of 2-lane bi-directional Zojila Tunnel on Srinagar-Leh section connecting NH-1A in Jammu and Kashmir, to provide all-weather connectivity to Leh region. It will be Asia's largest 2-lane bi-directional tunnel (14.150 km long).
 - Implementation of Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) for capacity augmentation of navigation on 1,380-km Haldia- Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 (NW1) on Ganga River, at cost of INR 5,370 crores. It will enable commercial navigation of at least 1500 tonne vessels on the Ganga river.
 - Mandatory packaging of foodgrains and sugar in jute material for Jute Year 2017-18 (1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018). It aims at sustaining core demand for jute sector and supporting livelihood of workers and farmers dependent on Jute sector.
 - Amendments in Model Concession Agreement (MCA) to make Port Projects more investor-friendly and make investments more attractive in Port Sector. It calls for setting up Society for Affordable Redressal of Disputes – Ports (SAROD-PORTS) as dispute resolution mechanism, similar to provision available in Highway Sector.
 - MOUs Approved -
 - With London's transportation authority *Transport for London* to improve public transport in India.
 - With Italy for co-operation in Renewable Energy.
 - With Israel for co-operation in Oil and Gas Sector.
 - With Belgium for co-operation in ICT&E.
 - With Myanmar on Land Border Crossing, as an enabling arrangement for movement of people across border of both countries.
 - Will sign MOU with Sri Lanka for cooperation in traditional systems of medicine and homoeopathy.
34. Cabinet Approvals on 10-01-2018 -
- FDI Policy Changes -
 - 100% FDI under automatic route for Single Brand Retail Trading
 - 100% FDI under automatic route in Construction Development
 - Foreign airlines allowed investing up to 49% under approval route in Air India
 - FIIs/FPIs allowed investing in Power Exchanges through primary market
 - CCEA Approvals-
 - Fixed term of 3 years for Chairperson and Members of National Trust for the Welfare of Person with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities.
 - Continuation of Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) till term of 14th Finance Commission (31-03-2020). It will entail total allocation of INR 11850 crores over 3 years, with additional annual allocation of 5 crore for monitoring through independent agency(ies) and for capacity building/training to State/District officials.
 - MOUs -
 - With Canada for cooperation in Science & Technology.
35. Central Government approved establishment of Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) at Raichur (Karnataka), as 2nd IIIT in Karnataka after one in Dharwad.
36. Central Government approved state Logo designed by West Bengal Government, highlighting the "Biswa Bangla" theme with Ashoka Pillars.
37. Chhattisgarh High Court asked all trial courts in state to obtain Aadhaar Cards of accused persons and sureties before issuing release warrant of a prisoner/accused, to curb rampant practice of obtaining bail on the basis of forged revenue papers or by impersonating real surety.
38. Committee of Governors submitted report titled *Rajyapal — Vikas Ke Rajdoot: Catalytic Role of Governors as Agents for Change in Society* to President Ram Nath Kovind. Committee of Governors was Formed in October 2017 during 48th Conference of Governors in New Delhi.
39. Delhi Govt. launched a common card for rides on public buses and metro, becoming first Indian city to have such common mobility card.
40. Department of Heavy Industries (*Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises*) allowed Karnataka government to purchase electric vehicles (EVs) under FAME India scheme, at maximum of 60% subsidy.
- Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles (FAME) India was launched in 2015 under National Electric Mobility Mission (NEMM) aims at promoting eco-friendly vehicles in the country.
41. Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) provided quota to people with autism, mental illnesses, intellectual disability and victims of acid attacks in Central government jobs. In direct recruitment, 4% of

vacancies (up from existing 3%) in groups A, B and C will be reserved for people with over 40% specified disability.

42. Environment Minister Harshvardhan launched *Mihir*, a 2.8 PetaFlops capacity high-performance computer system in Noida (UP). It will help Meteorological department to predict climate based calamities and issue warnings for fishermen.

43. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj inaugurated Puducherry's First Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) at Karaikal. It will enable locals to avail passport related services without having to travel to Puducherry.

44. External Affairs Ministry announced that Passports will no longer serve as a valid proof of address as its last page will not be printed from now onwards, that includes Names of father / guardian, and address.

- Additionally, Passport holders with ECR (Emigration Check Required) status would be issued a passport with orange passport jacket and those with non-ECR status would continue to get a blue passport. As per Govt., This is meant to identify less educated (under 10th) labourers and prevent them from exploitation abroad.
- Note that Indian passports have a blue cover, diplomatic and official passports have white and red jackets, respectively. Applicants who haven't cleared 10th standard are given a passport with ECR category (now with orange jackets).

45. FY 2017 - 18 Winter Session passed Bills in Jan 2018 -

- Rajya Sabha passed Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2017 to pave way for tightening loopholes in existing code and to make resolution process more effective. It Bill amends Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016. It was passed by Lok Sabha recently. Main Features Include -

- It Bill prohibits certain persons from submitting a resolution plan in case of defaults.

- A penalty of minimum Rs 1 lakh and maximum Rs 2 crore has been proposed for contravening any of the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

- It allows asset reconstruction companies, banks and alternative investment funds registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India to bid for insolvent companies.

- Parliament passed National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Amendment) Bill 2017, with approval of Rajya Sabha (Lok Sabha already passed it in August 2017). It amends NABARD Act 1981 and -

- Allows Government to increase capital of NABARD from Rs. 5000 crore to Rs 30,000 crore (even beyond if required, upon Consultation with RBI).

- Government must hold at least 51% capital share of NABARD, and share capital held by RBI valued at 20 crores (.4%) will be transferred to Government.

- Bill replaces terms 'small-scale industry' and 'industry in tiny and decentralised sector' with terms 'micro enterprise', 'small enterprise' and 'medium enterprise' as defined in MSME Development Act 2006.

- Lok Sabha passed Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment) Bill 2017 to allow government to take up infrastructure projects within prohibited areas around protected monuments. It amends Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act 1958.

- Lok Sabha passed High Court and Supreme Court Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Amendment Bill 2017 to hike salaries of judges of Supreme Court (SC) and High Courts (HCs), with effect from January 1, 2016.

- It amends HC Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act 1954 and SC Judges (Salaries and Conditions of Service) Act 1958.

- Hiked Monthly Salaries will be (INR) -

- Chief Justice of India (CJI) - 2.80 lakh

- Judges of Supreme Court and Chief Justices of High Courts - 2.5 lakh

- Judges of High Courts - 2.25 lakh

46. First all-women staff (41 females) railway station in India, Matunga on Central Railway (CR) in Mumbai, entered Limca Book of Records.

47. First draft of National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam containing names of 1.9 crore Indians in state has been released, updated after 1951.

48. GAIL commissioned India's second largest rooftop solar power plant in Uttar Pradesh, as a 5.76 MWp (Mega Watt peak) solar plant at GAIL's petrochemical complex at Pata in UP, covering area of 65,000 square meters.

- Largest rooftop solar plant in India was commissioned in December 2015 by Tata Power Solar in Amritsar (Punjab) with 12 MWp capacity.

49. GAIL will set up *coal to synthesis gas* conversion plants in Odisha, with Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) as technology partner.

- Synthesis gas is expected to be cheaper than domestic gas as its a mixture comprising of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide.

50. General Conferences (Jan 01 - 10, 2018) -

- 8 day long New Delhi World Book Fair begun in New Delhi, with theme *Environment and Climate Change* and European union as Guest of Honour country.

- 18th All India Whips' Conference held at Udaipur (Rajasthan). During this, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA) proposed rolling out of e-Sansad in Parliament and e-Vidhan in State Legislatures to digitize and make their functioning paperless.

- Annual Conference of DGPs and IGPs held at BSF (Border Security Force) Academy in Tekanpur (Madhya Pradesh). It was attended by PM Narendra Modi.

- 4th International Conference on Dharma-Dhamma held at Rajgir (Bihar), organised by Nalanda University with an aim to provide an opportunity to academics and policy makers from India and abroad to share ideas.

- Conference on Transformation of Aspirational Districts held in New Delhi, organized by NITI Aayog. During This, NITI Aayog announced to issue a ranking of 115 aspirational districts by April 2018.

- Centre for Transportation Research and Management (CTRAM) organized a National Rail Transport Seminar with theme *Railways for Sustainable Development* in New Delhi.

51. General Conferences (Jan 11 - 20, 2018) -

- Ministry of Culture organized 7th *Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav* under *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* matrix in Karnataka.

- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated 'Economic Democracy Conclave at Thane (Maharashtra), organised by Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini (charitable organisation in domain of training of social-political activists).

- International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (IWDRI) organized by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in Delhi.

- 65th Meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held under Chairmanship of HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar in Delhi.

- 3rd geo-political conference *Raisina Dialogue* held in New Delhi, attended by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and jointly organised by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Observer Research Foundation (ORF). 2018's theme is *Managing Disruptive Transitions: Ideas, Institutions and Idiom*.

- Raisina Dialogue is an annual conference held in New Delhi, envisioned as India's flagship conference of geopolitics and geo-economics.

- Indian and Israeli PM duo also launched *I4Fund Call for Proposal*, that provisions establishing a 40 million USD Fund by India's Department of Science and Technology and National Innovation Authority of Israel.

- A single day Conclave called *Nirman Samvaad*, first ever interaction between Railways Ministry and Construction Industry held in Delhi, organized by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL).

- Lalit Kala Akademi's 59th National Exhibition of Art held in New Delhi, to exhibit brilliance of works of various artists.

- 60th India International Garment Fair (IIGF) held at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi).

- National Conference on Improving Accessibility held in New Delhi. During this, 100 accessible websites for Divyangs have been launched to empower Divyang persons.

52. General Conferences (Jan 21 - 31, 2018)

- Raipur Municipal Corporation (Chhattisgarh) organized *Kachra Mahotsav 2018* as India's first Garbage Festival. It aims to increase waste usage awareness.

- Election Commission of India (ECI) hosted International Conference on 'Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Election Process' in New Delhi.

- 21st India International Seafood Show (IISS) held in Margao (Goa). IISS is a biennial meeting point for various stakeholders of marine products sector such as producers, processing machinery manufacturers, processors, and technical experts.

- First *Khadi Haat* of India launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in New Delhi, to held artisans earn better.

- Axis Bank launched 4th edition of *Evolve*, its an annual multi-city knowledge series for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) customers, titled *Transform your Family Business into your dream company*.

- 19th India International Watch and Clock Fair *Samaya Bharati 2018* held in Mumbai (Maharashtra).

- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) conducted a 'Day at Sea' event for children of fishing hamlets at Frazerganj in South 24 Parganas district (West Bengal).
- 53. German auto major Mercedes-Benz unveiled India's first BS-VI-compliant S Class car produced at its Pune facility.
 - Government's deadline for switching to new BS-VI emission norms is of April 2020.
 - BS-VI-compliant S Class can run on BS-IV fuel, which will bring down NOx emissions by 68% and PM by 82% and will lower CO2 burden by 13% and fuel demand by 10%.
- 54. Government announced completion of 1st phase of BharatNet project, after laying 254895 km of optical fibre cables (OFC) covering 1,09,926 GPs out of which 1,01,370 GPs are service ready.
 - BharatNet project forms backbone for Digital India initiative. It aims to bring high speed broadband to all 2.5 lakh gram panchayats (GPs) through optical fibre by March 2019. It approved in 2011 as National Optical Fibre Network.
- 55. Government announced names of 9 new cities selected under Smart Cities Mission, with proposed investment of INR 12824 crores. After four rounds of selection, 99 cities have been selected for Smart Cities Mission so far.
- 56. Government approved 2018 as *National Year of Millets* to boost production of the nutrient-rich millets and the sunrise agri industry involved in it.
- 57. Government decided to end Haj subsidy from this year, as a part of its policy to 'empower minorities without appeasement'.
 - Note that despite withdrawal of subsidy, record number of 1.75 lakh Muslims would be Haj undertaking pilgrimage this year from India after Saudi Arabia increased India's quota by 5,000.
- 58. Government launched 3rd version of its National Procurement Portal, Government e Marketplace (GeM).
 - GeM 3.0 will offer several features as standardised and enriched catalogue management, search engine, real time price comparison, template-based Bid and RA creation, demand aggregation, e-EMD, e-PBG, user rating, advanced MIS and analytics and more.
- 59. Government sanctioned projects over 10,000 crore rupees in North East for better network connectivity, Including uncovered areas in North Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.
- 60. Gujarat topped Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) index released at 3rd meeting of Council for Trade Development and Promotion.
 - LEADS Index is about mobility of goods and efficiency of logistics chain, developed by Commerce and Industry Ministry along with Deloitte.
 - Gujarat is followed by Punjab and Andhra Pradesh. Among UTs, Daman & Diu topped, followed by Delhi and Chandigarh.
- 61. Haryana Government Inauguraed India-Japan Smart Grid Pilot Project in Panipat. It was also annouced to install 10 lakh smart meters across state, to solve various complications faced by power distribution sector.
- 62. Haryana became first state to launch High-Risk Pregnancy (HRP) Portal, to help in early identification of high-risk pregnant cases and ensure their timely referral to civil hospital. This portal is designed to track every high-risk pregnant woman till 42 days after delivery.
- 63. Haryana government mandated installation of Solar Photovoltaic Power plant in new buildings as per specified norms, aimed at conserving electricity and use it efficiently.
- 64. Haryana government will implement integrated solar based micro irrigation scheme (ISBMI) in all districts and formed a Committee to chalk out a plan in this regard.
 - ISBMI will focus on saving electricity and water, and will also be economical for farmers as they will not be required to install tubewells at their own level instead they just have to pay a nominal amount for water according the crops.
- 65. Health Ministry launched India's first digital Online Oncology Tutorial Series designed by Tata Memorial Center, to train doctors for early detection, prevention, palliation, rehabilitation and treatment of various cancers.
- 66. Himachal Pradesh Goverment launched women's safety app named *Shakti*. It comes with a panic button and would not require internet connectivity.
 - Once triggered, app would send a message to nearest police control room and start recording audio and video after 20 seconds.
 - *GUDDIYA* helpline number 1515 and *Hoshiyar Singh* helpline number 1090 were also launched, to fight crimes against women in state.

67. Himachal Pradesh Government launched Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) project to promote organic farming, aimed at doubling income of farmers by the 2022. In ZBNF natural farming methods, cost of growing and harvesting plants is zero as no fertilizers and pesticides are added. It requires almost no monetary investment and envisages use of 'Jeevamrutha' and 'Beejamrutha'.

68. Himachal Pradesh Government launched a state-level nutrition scheme for HIV-positive children, which will provide nutritional supplement to boost immunity for concerned children.

69. Himachal Pradesh govt will set up 24X7 'Gudiya helpline' for reporting crimes against women. Under which, three special crime cells would be set up (one each at Mandi, Shimla and Kangra).

70. Home Ministry declared Nagaland as *disturbed area* for 6 more months (till June 2018) under Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act – AFSPA.

- Under AFSPA, armed forces attain several overriding powers including authority to open fire and use force against any person acting against the law.

71. Home Ministry will set up Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) as an apex centre to deal with cyber crimes such as financial frauds, circulation of pornographic and communal contents. I4C will be located in Delhi. It will coordinate with state governments in matters of cyber crimes and will monitor cyber space and social media.

- Information and Broadcasting Ministry will also set up a social media communication (SMC) hub for keeping a tab on trending news in districts and gather feedback on Government's flagship schemes, with investment of INR 17 crores for setting up 707 SMC hubs.

72. Hyderabad became 2nd large city (above 1 crore population) to be declared open defecation free (ODF), after Mumbai.

- Maharashtra government also imposed spot fine of Rs 500 for open defecation, littering, spitting and urinating in public places.

73. India missed December 2017 deadline announced for elimination of Kala Azar (black fever) in 2017-18 Budget by Government.

- Elimination is defined as reducing annual incidence of disease to less than 1 case per 10,000 people at sub district level.
- Kala-azar (visceral leishmaniasis) , also known as black fever and Dumdum fever is most severe form of leishmaniasis. It is slow progressing indigenous disease caused by single-celled parasite of Leishmania family.

74. India will have its own automated ocean pollution observation system called *automated moorings* from April 2018, to help monitor ocean pollution levels besides offering insights on changes in marine system. It will do away with present practice of collecting water samples from the sea and studying their pollution levels thereafter.

75. India's first food testing lab in IITs opened in IIT Kharagpur campus, after National Accreditation Board for Calibration and Testing Laboratories (NABL) approved it for certifying food items based on nutritional value and perform adulteration checks.

76. Indian Army established a Skill Training Centre in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, to empower and Train Kashmiri youth.

77. Indian Railways will deploy Drone cameras (UAV/NETRA) for various railway activities especially maintenance of tracks, project monitoring and other railway infrastructure, in-line with Railways' desire to use technology to enhance safety and efficiency in train operations.

- Railways also finalised plan to equip over 8500 stations with Wi-Fi facilities at an estimated cost of INR 700 crores, by March 2019.
- At 1200 stations, Wi-Fi facility will be provided to rail passengers while at about 7300 stations, facility will be available to all (passenger and locals).

78. Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) and Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited (RUMSL) signed agreement worth 210 Crores INR for financing shared infrastructure of 2 large Solar Parks in Madhya Pradesh.

- It is under recent US\$ 100 Million agreement between Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE), World Bank & IREDA for creating common infrastructure for ultra-mega solar parks in India to achieve 100 GW solar capacity addition target by 2022.

79. India's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education increased from 24.5% in 2015-16 to 25.2% in 2016-17, according to All India Higher Education Survey (AIHES) 2016-17. Tamil Nadu has highest GER at 46.9%, while Bihar has least with GER of 14.9%.

80. India's first automatic Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) will be launched in March 2018 in Odisha, under *National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project*.
- It will provide Odisha's entire population residing on 480 km length coastline a pre-warning siren in event of occurrence of natural disasters like tsunami or cyclone.
81. Infosys Foundation (philanthropic arm of Infosys) signed MoU with Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation for a grant to create a child-friendly village for improving children's health, providing education and creating a non-violent environment.
82. International Kite Festival held at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad (Gujarat).
83. J & K government signed MoU with Central Govt. to create normalcy in Jammu & Kashmir by means of education reforms, named *School Education Transformation Roadmap*.
84. Jammu & Kashmir Student Exchange programme 'Maitreyi Yatra' held in New Delhi. It is organized by Ministry of Human Resource development with an objective to acquaint youth of Jammu & Kashmir with culture, language and development of different parts of India.
85. Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Government launched *Muhafiz* (meaning *Guardian* in English) scheme, for providing institutionalized socio-economic security to workers in unorganised sector. Registered workers will also be offered Micro Credit facility with a credit limit of INR 10000.
86. Jammu and Kashmir government formed a committee to study scope and definition of horticulture, headed by chief secretary of Jammu Kashmir Bharat Bhushan Vyas. Study will help in improving and assessing growth of horticulture in Jammu and Kashmir.
87. Jammu and Kashmir will host its first international martial arts games event in Srinagar in October 2018, named *Asian Martial Arts Games*.
88. Jharkhand Government launched *Pradhan Mantri LPG Panchayat* in Dumka district. Jharkhand is first state where beneficiaries are provided stoves along with gas connections., with an investment of 300 crores.
89. Jharkhand Govt. launched *Saubhagya Yojana*, aimed at providing 24*7 electricity to approx 30000 villages across state by December 2018. Under this, above poverty line (APL) families would get electricity connection by paying Rs 500 (Rs 50 each month for 10 months).
90. Journalists and social activists celebrated 238th anniversary of India's first newspaper, *The Hicky's Bengal Gazette*. James Augustus Hicky is also considered as founder of journalism in India.
91. Kerala government allowed prisoners in Kerala jails to donate organs to their close relatives.
92. Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport became 5th in India having CAT III B landing system runway, enabling flights to land even when visibility is 50 metres with decision height of 15 meters.
93. Madhya Pradesh became first state to completely implement door-to-door garbage collection in all urban areas, using measures like solid waste management at landfill sites and processing through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.
94. Madhya Pradesh government imposed 50 paise per litre cess on petrol and diesel, to be used for strengthening road infrastructure across state and laying metro railroad in Bhopal and Indore.
95. Madhya Pradesh government initiated *Mission One Click scheme* to distribute 30 types of scholarship in schools, through Samagra Education Portal.
96. Maharashtra Government approved 1% reservation for orphans in government jobs and education.
- It is termed as *parallel reservation* as It will be provided under general category. It means that government does not need to increase its caste reservation quota that has already reached 52%. Out of total jobs available under general category, 1% will be only for orphans.
97. Maharashtra Government framed helipad policy that lays down strict guidelines for helipads, their location and other procedures to be followed. Need for such policy was felt owing to a series of near-mishaps during last year.
98. Maharashtra Government proposed a 100 point Performance-linked marking system for 7.5 lakh state government employees. Out of 100 marks, 60 marks will be assigned for performance on objective parameters (*speed of completion of task, punctuality, attentiveness*), while 40 marks will be given for subjective parameters (*quality of file notings, contribution in policy making, articulation of thought*).
99. Maharashtra Government will form an education board for non-English medium schools, that will prepare syllabus for non- English medium schools in Maharashtra.
100. Maharashtra Health department and Johnson and Johnson signed MoU to train rural midwives and social health activists regarding tuberculosis and maternal and infant mortality. Nearly 10,000 auxiliary nurse

midwives (ANMs) and 60,000 Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) in Maharashtra will be trained by Johnson and Johnson at district level.

101. Maharashtra became first state to unveil Public Cloud Policy that virtually mandates state government departments to shift their data storage onto cloud.

102. Maharashtra government approved to provide sanitary napkins at a subsidised rate of Rs 5 to women living in rural areas.

103. Maharashtra government banned sale of tobacco in shops selling Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) items in state, to ensure that youngsters do not get addicted to tobacco products.

104. Maharashtra government launched *Balasaheb Thackeray Shaheed Sanmaan scheme*, under which family members of martyrs would be provided jobs with Maharashtra State road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). Apart from jobs, wives of martyrs would also be provided with lifetime free bus passes.

105. Mankidia tribe in Odisha has been denied habitat rights in Similipal Tiger Reserve (Odisha) amid possibilities of tribals being attacked by wild animals (especially tigers). It is notified under historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.

- Mankidia is one of 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) and depends on making rope with siali fibre that's richly available in Similipal.

106. Minister of Women & Child Development, Maneka Gandhi launched NARI portal, aimed at providing women citizens with easy access to information on government schemes and initiatives for women.

- e-Samvad portal is also developed which will be inaugurated soon. It will be a platform for NGOs and Civil Societies to interact with Ministry of Women & Child Development.

107. Ministries of Railways, Human Resource Development and Department of Science & Technology signed an MoU for joint funding of Technology Mission for Indian Railways, worth approx 300 Crores INR. Funding percentage is - Railways (30%), Human Resource Development (25%) AND Department of Science & Technology (25%).

108. Ministry of *Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation* signed A MOU with Bihar and Jharkhand state governments for completion of balance works of North Koel reservoir project at an estimated cost of INR 1622 crores.

- North Koel project was started in 1972 but was later halted in 1993. It is situated on North Koel river (a tributary of Sone river), that will provide irrigation to 1,11,521 hectares of land annually in most drought prone areas of Palamu and Garhwa districts in Jharkhand and Aurangabad and Gaya districts in Bihar.

- Out of cost of balance works of INR 1622 crores, component of INR 1013 crores shall be borne by central Govt. as a grant from LTIF under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY).

109. Ministry of Civil Aviation awarded 325 air routes under 2nd phase of government's flagship UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam naagrik) regional connectivity scheme.

- Government announced that 73 underserved airports and helipads will be connected under phase 2 of UDAN Scheme. Interglobe Aviation (parent firm of IndiGo) was awarded a maximum of 20 proposals, followed by SpiceJet that won 17 proposals.

- Around 40% or 129 of 325 air routes were awarded to newly created category of 'priority areas' that include Jammu and Kashmir, Northeastern and hill states, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands.

- UDAN 2 will provide over 26 lakh seats per annum that will be covered with airfare cap of INR 2500 per hour of flying.

- Funding for UDAN 2 will be INR 617 crores, significantly more than 213 crores in First Phase.

110. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITy) launched *Stree Swabhimani* Initiative aimed at creating sustainable model for providing adolescent girls and women an access to affordable sanitary products by leveraging Common Service Centres (CSCs). CSCs will provide access to affordable, reliable and modern (eco-friendly) sanitary napkins (menstrual pads) to adolescent girls and women in rural areas.

111. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched *Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative* to strengthen cybersecurity ecosystem in India, in association with National e-Governance Division (NeGD). It will leverage expertise of the IT industry in cybersecurity and will be operated on principles of awareness, education and enablement.

112. Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) refused captive breeding of Chiru (Tibetan antelope), whose underfur is used for making famous shahtoosh shawls.

- Chiru have been for long time for their underfur, which is renowned for its quality which is traditionally woven into an extremely fine fabric to make Shahtoosh shawls.

113. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare announced to increase number of AMRIT pharmacy stores by 4 times by end of 2018 from existing 111.
- So far, over 50 lakh patients bought discounted drugs (60 to 90% less than market price) from AMRIT (Affordable medicine and reliable implants for treatment) stores and saved over INR 267 crores.
114. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Allied and Health care Professional Database portal to make data repository robust to ensure better systems and frameworks for healthcare workforce in country, to help tracking number of professionals and streams of allied and health care professions.
115. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will launch *National Programme for Control of Viral Hepatitis*, as a new scheme free treatment of Hepatitis C from 2018-19, with focus on free anti-viral treatment of Hepatitis C. For this, budget of INR 600 crores is marked for 3 years.
116. Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) exempted cruise tourists arriving with e-visa from the requirement of biometric enrolment for a period of three years (till 2020), to promote cruise tourism in India.
117. Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will set up Cyber Warrior Police Force (CWPF) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) to tackle internet-related crimes such as cyber threats, child pornography and online stalking, under MHA's new Cyber & Information Security (CIS) Division.
118. Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched *Protocol for Star Rating of Garbage-Free Cities* in Goa, under Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban. It has 7-star rating system for cities, based on multiple cleanliness indicators for solid waste management. City will be given rating of 3 star or above only after it is declared ODF (Open Defecation Free).
119. Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs (MoHUA) launched Liveability index to rate 116 Indian cities, funded by World Bank.
- It aims to measure quality of life in 99 smart cities, capital cities and those with a population of over one million.
 - Index will rank cities based on set of 79 parameters related to various aspects.
120. Ministry of Science & Technology announced 4 new schemes to promote young scientists and researchers in country – Teacher Associateship for Research Excellence (TARE), Overseas Visiting Doctoral Fellowship (OVDF), Distinguished Investigator Award (DIA) and AWSAR (Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research). These schemes aim at early recognition and reward to young talent in field of science.
121. Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched Management Information System (MIS) portal for Anganwadi Services Training Programme. It enables submission of applications and estimates by NGOs for carrying out Anganwadi Services (ICDS) Training through Anganwadi Workers Training Centres (AWTC) and Middle-Level Training Centres (MLTC).
122. Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched beneficiary module of Rapid Reporting System (RRS), a monitoring system for Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG). It will facilitate monitoring of SAG and take corrective measures by ensuring faster flow of information, accurate targeting of beneficiaries and reduction of leakages. URL for the portal is 'sag-rrs.nic.in.'
123. NITI Aayog launched first course on Sustainable Urban planning using remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) at IIT Kanpur's outreach centre in Noida (UP). This is first course under Global Initiative on Academic Network (GIAN) Program of HRD Ministry, that aims to boost quality of higher education through international collaboration.
- Course aims to impart high level remote sensing and GIS skills to allow them managing rapidly changing urban environment, with focus on water related activities.
124. Nation-wide cleanliness survey *Swachh Survekshan* launched to evaluate achievements in cleanliness level in Urban areas, Deemed as world's biggest survey. It will be conducted in over 4,000 cities and will run till 10 March 2018.
125. National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) approved 5 Namami Gange projects worth Rs 295 crores in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
126. Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF) launched India's internationally benchmarked Forest Management Certification Standard (FMCS). FMCS enlists measures to be taken for responsible utilisation of natural resources and trade of forest products.
127. North Korea and South Korea will march together under a single unified Korean flag at Winter Olympics 2018 in Pyeongchang (South Korea). They agreed to field a joint women's ice hockey team after rare peace talks. These are first high-level talks between 2 Koreas in over 2 years.

128. Odisha Government launched *Odisha e-Hospital Management Information System (OeHMIS)* online platform that hosts all clinical parameters of patients and reporting of performance criteria of hospitals. It also enables viewing and downloading individual electronic health records.
129. Odisha State Government announced 'Mukshyamantri Kalakar Sahayata Jojana' (MMKSJ), under which artists from across the state will get a monthly assistance of Rs 1200, to benefit approx 50000 artists from across state.
- Odisha government also changed eligibility criteria as compared to previous artist assistance scheme, under which only 4000 artists were being given Rs 1000 per month. As per new criteria, any male artist can avail assistance under scheme after attaining the age of 50 years (earlier 60 years), while females have relaxation of 10 years.
130. Odisha government signed agreement with Software Technology Park of India (STPI), to set up an incubator at IIT Bhubaneswar for promoting research, named *Centre of Excellence for Virtual & Augmented Reality (VARCoE)*.
131. Oxford Dictionaries declared 'Aadhaar' as Hindi Word of the Year for 2017, during Jaipur Literature Festival 2018.
132. PM Narendra Modi inaugurated project commencement of Rajasthan oil refinery at Pachpadra in Barmer district, as first one to be set up in Rajasthan. It is as a joint venture of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Rajasthan government, with budget of INR 43000 crores and expected to be operational in 4 years.
133. Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA) under Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas launched month long Saksham 2018 (Sanrakshan Kshamta Mahotsav, that aims at creating focused attention on fuel conservation through people centric activities and sensitize masses about efficient use of petroleum products.
134. President Ram Nath Kovind launched Pulse Polio Immunization (PPI) Programme ear 2018, on eve of National Immunisation Day (NID) observed on 28 January in 2018.
135. President Ram Nath Kovind on recommendation of Election Commission of India (ECI) disqualified 20 Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs from Delhi, citing that they held offices of profit.
- In 2016, ECI issued show cause notices to 27 AAP MLAs from Delhi who held offices as parliamentary secretaries.
 - Office of Profit is a Term used in Article 102 (1)(A) of Constitution that bars member of Indian Parliament / Legislative Assemblies from holding an office that would give its occupant the opportunity to gain a financial advantage or benefit. It refers to a post under central/state government which yields salaries, perks and other benefits.
136. Puducherry goverment launched a special police force to safeguard tourists, provided with special blue colour head gears.
137. Punjab Government launched Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojna (MGSVY) for welfare of downtrodden citizen across state, on lines of Antyodaya principles (means *rise of the last person*) and will be implemented in rural areas.
138. Punjab Government signed MoU with Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to set up bio-gas and bio-CNG plants in state, to find sustainable solutions to paddy straw burning. Total 400 such plants will become operational in 3-4 years with investment of INR 5000 crores.
139. RS Puram Police station in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) is named best in India in SMART Police Stations initiative of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). SMART stands for *Sensitive and Strict, Modern with mobility, Alert and Accountable, Reliable and Responsive and Trained and Techno-savvy*.
140. Railways launched SFOORTI (*Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information*) App for Freight Managers which provides features for monitoring and managing freight business using Geographic Information System (GIS) Views and Dashboard. Features Include -
- *Freight Operation Information System Map View* provides Layered views of freight trains on Railways, that can help plan traffic flows and optimize freight operations.
 - *Forecasted Rakes Awaiting Interchange* enables Monitoring of all loads, which have been forecasted for the divisional interchange, but the same interchange has not yet reported.
 - *Stock Specific / Commodity specific Rake Position* can be viewed. Loaded and Empty Rakes of specific Rake Types are plotted on Railways network map in Different colours.
 - Monitoring of New Origination-Destination Added in Railways.

- Loading Trends for Major Commodities during a period.
 - Performance of Freight Trains can be monitored
141. Railways will standardize trains in terms of number of coaches so that all trains can run on all routes. Soon, all trains would have 22 coaches, making them suitable for running on any route.
- Currently, coaches are of two kinds (ICF and LHB) and number of coaches in a train could be 12, 16, 18, 22 or 26, depending on its demand, making it difficult for the railways to substitute one with the other.
142. Rajasthan government will digitise administrative and historical records of Rajputana's princely states (10000 Pages/day), to protect old and fragile documents.
- Rajasthan State Archive consists of 30-40 crore administrative and historical records of 22 princely states, and will digitise 3-4 crore documents considered important.
143. Reliance Industries commissioned and achieved design throughput of world's largest refinery off-gas cracker at Jamnagar (Gujarat). Refinery will have a capacity of 1.5 million tonnes per annum along with downstream plants and utilities.
144. Research Designs & Standards Organisation (RDSO) of Railways has launched *New Online Vender Registration System*, to make related procedures digital and transparent. New system provides major improvements such as Public access to information, expeditious process completion with defined timelines, round-the-year services, availability of all related information on RDSO Website etc.
145. Residents of Bhanakpur village in Faridabad (Haryana) will begin day by singing national anthem daily at 8 am. Panchayat has installed 20 loudspeakers and 22 CCTV cameras for the purpose. This village is first in Haryana and second in India (after Jammikunta Telangana), to introduce this system.
146. Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated several projects in Uttar Pradesh entailing investment of INR 6517 crores.
147. Road transport ministry Mandated All taxis, buses and public transport vehicles (except three-wheelers and e-rickshaws) to have location tracking device (GPS) and an alert button from April 1, 2018 onwards.
148. Shripad Yesso Naik (Minister of State (IC) for AYUSH) laid foundation stone for Central Research Institute (CRI) in Jaipur (Rajasthan), as 3rd CRI under Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH).
149. Sikkim Government allowed people to forge fraternal ties with trees, under *Sikkim Forest Tree (Amity & Reverence) Rules 2017*. Purpose is to preserve trees by encouraging people to forge relationship of brotherhood with trees through tradition locally known as Mitini / Mith.
150. Sub-committee of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) looking into issues of girl's education has recommended free and compulsory education for girls up to post-graduate level across country.
151. Supreme Court stayed Karnataka High Court's order to reduce size of pictorial warnings on packages of tobacco products to 40% of package space from earlier 85%.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in 2014 prescribed mandatory 85% statutory warnings space on both sides of tobacco packaging telling consumers that cigarette smoking and tobacco chewing were harmful to health.
 - In December 2017, Karnataka HC quashed MoHFW rules related to 85% statutory warnings on packaging of tobacco products, holding that they violated Constitutional norms. This order is now stayed by Supreme Court.
 - Supreme Court also ruled that playing national anthem before screening movies in cinema halls is not mandatory. Government has formed a committee to finalize on the same and committee will submit report in 6 months. Committee is headed by B.R. Sharma (Additional Secretary in MHA).
152. Tamil Nadu Government launched e-governance policy to help public, government and commercial establishments avail all services through digital medium. It lets government to allocate 0.5 % of annual funds for digital initiatives and further increase it to 3 % in 5 years.
153. Telangana Government inaugurated India's first National Park for differently abled people in Hyderabad. It has speech therapist, vocational training instructors and physiotherapist for differently-abled children.
154. Telangana government signed MoU with *Clean Authority of Tokyo (Japan)*, for municipal solid waste incineration facilities.
155. To Address Privacy Concerns, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) introduced a new concept of Virtual ID which Aadhaar-card holder can generate from its website and give for various purposes, wherever Aadhaar number is necessary to provide.
- Virtual would be a random 16-digit number and a user can generate as many Virtual IDs (Older ones will be cancelled when generating new).

- It will give limited details (like name, address and photograph), which are sufficient for verification by any authorised agency.
- Aadhaar-issuing body will start accepting virtual ID from March 1, 2018 and From June 1, it will be obligatory for all agencies that undertake authentication to accept Virtual ID from their users.
- 156. Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDA) introduced face authentication as an additional means of Aadhaar authentication along with fingerprint and iris scan, to enable easy authentication for those who face difficulties in other biometric authentication such as fingerprint and iris scan. It will be available by 1 July, 2018.
- 157. Use and sale of imported petroleum coke has been banned in National Capital Region (NCR) by environment ministry, to control air pollution. It also ruled that cement plants in NCR should not store pet coke for over 3 months.
- 158. Uttar Pradesh Government banned use of unauthorised loudspeakers at public places, including religious places.
- 159. Uttar Pradesh Government inaugurated Mahesra Bridge at Sonauli-Gorakhpur National highway, that links Gorakhpur and other eastern Uttar Pradesh districts with Nepal.
- 160. West Bengal Govt. launched water ATM project to ensure bacteria-free drinking water in schools, initially in Kolkata.
- 161. West Bengal, Kerala and Odisha opted out of Central Government's *Transformation of Aspirational Districts* scheme.
 - Aspirational districts refer to selected 115 backward districts that are lagging on specific development parameters. Central Government undertook a major policy initiative for rapid transformation of these districts. With exit of 3 states, total districts under this scheme is now reduced to 102.
 - These states objected that criteria for identifying backward districts was fixed without taking respective State Governments into confidence.
 - Transformation of Aspirational Districts' conference was held in New Delhi in recently, in which NITI Aayog said it will come out with a ranking of 115 aspirational districts by April 2018.
- 162. Western Railways introduced modern Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Kiosk Machines for fast and easy printing of tickets booked through UTS App, in Mumbai. Additionally, Bhopal became first railway station to have Sanitary napkin Vending Machine.

Persons

1. A health worker from Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh, Verma has featured in World Health Organization (WHO) calendar for 2018, for her efforts to ensure hundred per cent coverage of her area of operation under measles and rubella programme.
2. Actress Kajol became an advocacy ambassador for a *Swachh Aadat Swachh Bharat* initiative.
3. American Actor Angelina Jolie will be honoured by American Society of Cinematographers with ASC Board of Governors Award.
4. Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman became first woman defence minister to fly in an IAF Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter aircraft.
5. Indian-origin boy Mehul Garg (10 years age) in UK became youngest applicant in decade to achieve highest score in Mensa IQ test, beating geniuses like Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking by scoring maximum score of 162.
6. Kolkata (West Bengal) became first Indian city to get a floating market, located on lake at Patuli in South Kolkata which is 400 metres long and 60 metres wide. Lake has been transformed into the floating market similar to one in Thailand.
7. Mihai Tudose resigned as Prime Minister of Romania (Southeastern Europe).
8. Minister of State (IC) of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Jitendra Singh has been conferred with degree of Honorary Doctorate by Amity University in recognition of his lifetime achievements in field of academics, research and public life.
9. Obituaries in Jan 2018 -
 - Radha Vishwanathan - Carnatic vocalist (daughter of legendary classical singer M S Subbulakshmi).
 - Anwar Jalalpuri - Noted Urdu poet.
 - Ambalavaner Sivanandan - Noted Sri Lanka novelist.

- John Young - Noted American astronaut, who walked on Moon and was only agency astronaut to go into space as part of Gemini, Apollo and space shuttle programs.
 - Shrivallabh Vyas - Bollywood Actor.
 - Jerry Van Dyke - Noted American comedian and actor.
 - Peter Sutherland - Former Irish World Trade Organization (WTO) director general.
 - Shashikant Bhagwat - Noted sports journalist.
 - Saksham Yadav - Former Powerlifting world champion.
 - Baldev Raj - Noted Nuclear Physicist and Director of National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS).
 - Sukhchain Singh Cheema - wrestler and Asian Games bronze medalist.
 - Doodhnath Singh - Noted Hindi writer.
 - Charu Rohatgi - Noted TV Actress.
 - Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta - Sarod maestro.
 - Raghunath Jha - Ex-Union minister of State for Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises.
 - Gnani Sankaran - Noted Tamil writer and journalist.
 - NK Tripathi - Noted Journalist.
 - W.B. Rao - Noted Hindi film cinematographer.
 - Jo Jo White - Noted USA Basketballer (Basketball Hall of Famer).
 - Kashinath - Noted Kannada film actor.
 - Leslie Harding Pde - Noted Khasi author (Meghalaya).
 - Chandi Lahiri - Noted Cartoonist.
 - Hugh Masekela - Noted Composer and singer. Known as *father of South African jazz*.
 - Ursula K. Le Guin - Noted American Writer.
 - Sulaiman 'Dik' Abed - Former South African Cricketer.
 - Honsen Lyngdoh - Meghalaya's Noted philanthropist.
 - Jimmy Armfield - Noted England footballer.
 - Supriya Devi - Noted Bengali actress.
 - Chandrashekhar - Noted Kannada actor
 - Gurcharan Singh Kalkat - Noted agricultural scientist and pioneer of India's Green Revolution.
 - Ingvar Kamprad - Noted Swedish Industrialist and World's 5th Richest Person with net worth of \$58.7 billion. He was founder of Furniture Giant IKEA.
 - Dinesh Nandan Sahay - Chhattisgarh's first Governor.
 - Daya Nath Singh - Noted journalist.
10. Paul Romer resigned as World Bank's chief economist.
11. Tracey Crouch is appointed as UK's first-ever minister for loneliness, charged to tackle loneliness and combat social isolation. This role has been created in memory of Labour MP Jo Cox, who was murdered in 2016.
12. Visits from India (Jan 1-10, 2018) -
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj visited three South East Asian countries – Thailand, Indonesia and Singapore.
 - Indonesia - Co-chaired 5th meeting of India-Indonesia Joint Commission.
 - Singapore - Inaugurated Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas of ASEAN countries.
 - Union Minister (Road Transport & Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation) Nitin Gadkari visited Singapore to inaugurate ASEAN India Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
13. Visits from India (Jan 11 - 20, 2018)
- Minister of State (MoS) for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju Visited UK. On this occasion, India and UK signed 2 MoUs dealing with return of Indians residing in Britain as illegal migrants and sharing of criminal records and intelligence.
 - Minister for Information Technology, Ravi Shankar Prasad visited Sri Lanka. During His Visit, India and Sri Lanka signed agreements for
 - Collaboration in Information and communication technology (ICT) sector
 - Connecting National Knowledge network (NKN) for collaboration among universities and academics
 - Setting up of e-office system.
14. Visits from India (Jan 21 - 31, 2018) -

- India's Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar Visited Victoria (Seychelles). During this visit, India and Seychelles signed a revised agreement that will allow India to build military infrastructure on Seychelles' Assumption Island. Note that Vijay Gokhale is now new Foreign Secretary of India.

15. Visits to India (Jan 01 - 10, 2018)

- King Letsie III and Queen Masenate Mohato Seeiso of Lesotho (Southern African Nation) visited India.
 - H Wiranto (Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal and Security Affairs) visited India, To attend first bilateral security dialogue between India and Indonesia.

16. Visits to India (Jan 11 - 20, 2018)

- Prime Minister Of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu Visited India. Several MOUs were signed during his visit -
 - Cyber Security.
 - Oil and Gas
 - Air Transport
 - Film-co-production
 - Homeopathic Medicine
 - Space
 - During this Visit, central Delhi's Teen Murti Chowk is formally renamed as *Teen Murti-Haifa* after Israeli City Haifa.
 - Both PMs dedicated to nation, the iCREATE facility located near Ahmedabad (Gujarat). *iCreate* is an independent Centre created with the objective of facilitating entrepreneurship through a blend of creativity, engineering and leveraging emerging technologies to deal with major issues such as food security, water, cybersecurity, IT and electronics, energy, bio-medical equipment etc.
 - Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu also visited India-Israel Business Summit in Mumbai.

17. Visits to India (Jan 21 - 31, 2018)

- Heads Of Government of 10 ASEAN Nations visited India to participate in India's 69th Republic day celebrations as Chief Guests. Visiting Delegates are –

Name	Nation
Hassanal Bolkiah	Brunei
Hun Sen	Cambodia
Joko Widodo	Indonesia
Thongloun Sisoulith	Laos
Najib Razak	Malaysia
Daw Aung San Suu Kyi	Myanmar
Rodrigo Roa Duterte	Philippines
Lee Hsien Loong	Singapore
Prayuth Chan-ocha	Thailand
Nguyen Xuan Phuc	Vietnam

- During this visit by Laos President Thongloun Sisoulith, Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed an agreement with Laos Government for providing SkyRev360, a e-data gathering, invoicing and collection system developed in collaboration with International Air Transport Association (IATA).
 - During this Visit by Cambodian President Hun Sen, India and Cambodia signed MOUs in several Trades -
 - Cultural Exchange Programme with Cambodia for Period 2018-2022.
 - Criminal Matters and prevention of Human Trafficking.
 - Credit Agreement between EXIM Bank of India and Cambodia for Line of Credit to finance *Stung Sva Hab Water Resource Development Project* for US\$ 36.92 million.

Science

1. A new endangered flowering plant species named 'Primula Zhui' has been discovered by scientists in Yunnan Province of China, known in Chinese as Zhu Hua Baochun.
 2. A new research at Bhopal's Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IIS) has proved D - 29 virus as capable of destroying cancer cells. The research is led by Scientist Soumya Kamilla. Now challenge is to transmit this virus to cancerous cells in body. Upon success in this, the method can be much more successful than Chemotherapy in eliminating cancer.

3. Acer launched *Acer Swift 7*, that claims to be the world's thinnest laptop, priced at \$1,699. It has thickness of 8.98mm and is powered by Intel Core i7 processor.

4. Chinese scientists for first time have successfully cloned two identical long-tailed macaques (monkeys), named Zhong Zhong and Hua Hua using same technique that produced Dolly sheep two decades ago. This makes them world's first primates (*order of mammals that includes monkeys, apes and humans*) to be cloned from non-embryonic cell.

- These identical long-tailed macaques were cloned using process called somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT), that involves transferring the nucleus of cell, which includes its DNA, into egg whose nucleus is removed.

- Similar work in primates earlier, had always failed, leading some scientists to wonder if primates were resistant.

5. Indian Scientist Satish Tailor has developed a new thermal spray coating technology for use in gas turbine engine in spacecraft, called controlled segmented Yttria-Stabilised Zirconia (YSZ)-Plasma sprayed coating technology. It can reduce thermal spray coating cost by 50%.

- Current costly techniques such as SPS or EB-PVD develop cracks through very expensive processes and are not controllable, while YSZ develops vertical cracks (segmentation) in coating, beneficial for gas turbine engine application used in spacecraft. It can be industrially adopted to make a strain-tolerant coating more economical.

6. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched 31 satellites along with Cartosat-2 surveillance satellite (weighing total 1383 KG), onboard 42nd Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C40) rocket.

- Among 31 satellites, 3 belong to India and rest 28 are of six other countries.

- Cartosat-2 series Satellite weighs 710 KG, making it heaviest satellite that PSLV has carried till now. It will beam high-quality images for cartographic, urban and rural applications, coastal land use and utility management.

7. India's fastest and first multi-petaflops (PF) supercomputer named Pratyush (meaning *Sun*) unveiled at Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). It will enable better weather related forecasts including monsoon, cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, lightning etc.

- Pratyush has 6.8 PF computational power installed at two MoES Institutes. 4.0 Peta Flops HPC facility at IITM, Pune and 2.8 Peta Flops facility at NCMRWF, Noida.

- Pratyush is fourth fastest supercomputer in world for weather and climate research, after supercomputers in Japan, US and UK.

- It will enable mapping regions in India at resolution of 3 km and globe at 12 km.

- Fastest Supercomputers in world –

Supercomputer	Peak speed (Rmax)	Location
TaihuLight (<i>Sunway</i>)	93.01 PFLOPS	China
Tianhe-2 (<i>NUDT</i>)	33.86 PFLOPS	China
Piz Daint (<i>Cray</i>)	19.59 PFLOPS	Switzerland
ZettaScaler (<i>Gyokou</i>)	17.14 PFLOPS	Japan
Titan (<i>Cray</i>)	17.59 PFLOPS	USA

8. NASA tested a new technology that allows aircraft to fold their wings between zero and 70 degrees while in flight. Built from a shape memory alloy, it operates without a hydraulic system, reducing wing weight by up to 80%.

9. NASA will launch Parker Solar Probe in 2018 to explore sun's outer atmosphere, onboard Delta IV Heavy launch vehicle. It aims at Tracing how energy and heat move through solar corona and what accelerates solar wind as well as solar energetic particles.

10. NASA's Hubble and Spitzer space telescope discovered *SPT0615-JD* as farthest known galaxy in universe so far (2,500 light-years away). It is a cluster of 500 million year-old stars. SPT0615-JD was found in Hubble's Reionization Lensing Cluster Survey (RELICS) and companion S-RELICS Spitzer programme.

11. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will soon launch two missions - GOLD (*Global-scale Observations of the Limb and Disk*) and ICON (*Ionospheric Connection Explorer*), to explore ionosphere (96 km above Earth's surface).

- ICON will launched in low-Earth orbit (LEO) located at 560 km above Earth and GOLD will be launched in geostationary orbit over Western Hemisphere (about 35,398 km above earth).
- It will help in full-disk view of ionosphere and upper atmosphere beneath it every half hour.
- 12. Researchers discovered 161 million-year-old fossils of a tiny bird-like dinosaur named *Caihong juji* from China that sported flashy rainbow feathers and a bony crest on its snout to attract mates.
- 13. Researchers from Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) discovered a new species of moth, scientifically named *Elcysma Ziroensis* in Talley Wildlife Sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh.
- 14. Rotavac became first Indigenously developed vaccine from India to be pre-qualified by World Health Organisation (WHO), enabling selling it internationally. Rotavac is first vaccine entirely developed in India to get this WHO status in safety and efficacy.
- Rotavac is developed by Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech Limited and protects against childhood diarrhoea caused by rotavirus. It was developed under collaboration between India and USA.
- 15. Scientists at University of California (USA) stated that increase in warmer global temperatures and dryer weather conditions could pose a threat to survival of fragile cocoa plant, leading to disappearance of chocolate by 2050. To avoid this, gene-editing technology CRISPR must be used to evolve crops that can survive environmental challenges.
- 16. Scientists discovered 4 new balsam species from various locations in Eastern Himalayas in Arunachal Pradesh. They are - *Impatiens haridasanii*, *Impatiens pseudocitrina*, *Impatiens nilalohitae* and *Impatiens roingensis*.
- 17. Scientists found a small population of Red Handfishes (*Thymichthys politus*), walking along seabed off Australia's south coast in Tasmania. This species is only found in isolated island state of south-eastern Tasmania. In this small habitat within radius of 20 metres, fishes walk on seabed, instead of swimming.
- 18. Scientists from Duke University in North Carolina (USA) for first time have developed working human skeletal muscle from stem cells in lab.
- Stem cells are undifferentiated biological cells that can differentiate into specialized cells and can divide to produce more stem cells, found in multicellular organisms.
- Scientists developed human skeletal muscle using adult skin or blood cells that were reprogrammed into a juvenile, versatile state. This may benefit several people suffering of degenerative muscular diseases. It will allow scientists to grow endless amount of functioning muscle in lab to test to test drugs and gene treatments for degenerative diseases.
- 19. Scientists from USA's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory discovered a new material for next-generation smart windows that will not only get a tinted look when Sun is too bright but will also convert solar energy into electricity. Researchers discovered a form of perovskite that works well as a stable and photoactive semiconductor material that can reversibly switch between transparent and non-transparent state, without degrading its electronic properties.]
- 20. World Health Organisation (WHO) has given its pre-qualification to Typbar Typhoid Conjugate Vaccine (TVC) developed by Hyderabad based Bharat Biotech for global use.
- Typbar TCV is world's first typhoid vaccine clinically proven to be administered to children from six months of age to adults, and confers long-term protection against typhoid fever.
- 21. World's biggest flooded cave has been discovered in Mexico, after researchers connected 2 underwater caverns in eastern Mexico to reveal biggest flooded cave on planet. It is significant discovery as it could shed new light on ancient Maya civilization. The total length of cave is 347-kms, after connecting cave system named Sac Actun (262 km) with 83-km long Dos Ojos cave system.

Sports

1. 2nd Elite Women's National Boxing Championships held in Haryana.
2. 2018 Indian Premier League (IPL) Auctions -
 - Among Indian players, Jaydev Unadkat became most expensive at INR 11.5 crores, bought by Rajasthan Royals.
 - Overall, Ben Stokes (England) became costliest buy with 12.5 Cr spent on him by Rajasthan Royals.
 - Sandeep Lamichhane became first Nepali cricketer to get IPL contract after he was bought by Delhi Daredevils for 20 Lakh.
3. 2018 Maharashtra Men's Tennis Title (Also called Tata Open) -
 - Men's Singles - Gilles Simon (France), defeating South Africa's Kevin Anderson

4. 2018 Shenzhen Women's Tennis Open (China) -
 - Singles - Simona Halep (Romania)
 - Doubles - Romania's Irina-Camelia Begu AND Simona Halep
5. 33rd Women Senior National Weightlifting Championships held in Mangaluru (Karnataka). Rakhi Halder lifted 128kgs in clean and jerk for a total of 230kgs to create a new national record.
6. 75th Annual Golden Globe Awards (honoring best film and American television of 2017), Winners are -
 - Motion Picture -
 - Drama - Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri.
 - Musical/Comedy - Lady Bird.
 - Director -
 - Drama- Guillermo del Toro (The Shape of Water).
 - Actor -
 - Drama - Gary Oldman (Darkest Hour)
 - Musical / Comedy - James Franco (The Disaster Artist)
 - Actress-
 - Drama - Frances McDormand (Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri).
 - Musical/Comedy - Saoirse Ronan (Lady Bird)
 - Actor in a Supporting role -
 - Motion Picture - Sam Rockwell (Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri)
 - Actress in a Supporting role -
 - Motion Picture - Allison Janney (I, Tonya)
 - Original Song - *This Is Me* (Benj Pasek and Justin Paul) - The Greatest Showman.
 - Animated Feature Film - Coco.
 - Foreign Language Film - In the Fade (Germany/France)
 - Cecil B. DeMille Lifetime Achievement Award - Oprah Winfrey.
 - 7. Aanchal Thakur from Himachal Pradesh became first Indian to win an international medal in skiing after she won Bronze at Alpine Eider 3200 Cup organised by Federation Internationale de Ski (FIS) in Erzurum in Turkey.
 - 8. Assam Hockey won 8th Hockey India Sub Junior Men National Championship 2018 (B Division) in Assam, defeating Rajasthan.
 - 9. Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and Football Delhi (governing body for football in Delhi) signed MOU for development of sport in Capital.
 - 10. Australian Open Tennis 2018 -
 - Men's Singles - Roger Federer (Switzerland), Defeating Marin Cilic of Croatia. It is 20th grand slam title for Federer.
 - Women's Singles - Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark), defeating Simona Halep (Romania)
 - Men's Doubles - Oliver Marach (Austria) AND Mate Pavić (Croatia)
 - Women's Doubles - Tímea Babos (Hungary) AND Kristina Mladenovic (France)
 - Mixed Doubles - Mate Pavić (Croatia) AND Gabriela Dabrowski (Canada). They defeated Pair of Tímea Babos (Hungary) and Rohan Bopanna (India)
 - Boys' Singles - Sebastian Korda (USA)
 - Girls' Singles - Liang En-shuo (Chinese Taipei)
 - 11. BCCI banned Yusuf Pathan for five months after failed a dope test. However the backdated ban will get over on Jan 14, 2018.
 - 12. Bahrain will hold first ever Baby Olympics in April 2018, where medals will be contested by 2 - 4 year-olds, to promote Olympic principles at very young age.
 - 13. Brazilian football player Philippe Coutinho became second most expensive soccer transfer ever after Liverpool FC sent him to Barcelona FC for 160 million Euros (\$192 million).
 - Brazilian football player Neymar is most expensive ever with his 200 million pounds worth transfer from Barcelona to Paris Saint Germain in 2017.
 - 14. Brisbane International Tennis 2018 -
 - Men's Singles - Nick Kyrgios (Australia)
 - Women's Singles - Elina Svitolina (Ukraine)
 - Men's Doubles - Henri Kontinen (Finland) AND John Peers (Australia)
 - Women's Doubles - Netherlands's Kiki Bertens AND Demi Schuurs

15. Delhi won Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Cricket Trophy, Defeating Rajasthan in Kolkata (WB).
16. Egyptian Footballer Mohamed Salah is named Arab Football Player of 2017, in a poll conducted by over 100 sports journalists from various Arab countries.
17. Football Delhi announced to observe Indian football Captain Sunil Chhetri's birthday (3rd August) as Delhi's Football Day.
18. Former Australian Cricketer Ricky Ponting has been appointed head coach of IPL Team Delhi Daredevils.
19. G Sathiyam became India's highest ranked player in International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) rankings, with 49th Rank globally. He is followed by Sharath Kamal who is at 51st world rank. In women's ranking, Manika Batra topped among Indians with world rank 62.
20. Harjinder Singh is appointed as *Chef De Mission* of Indian Contingent participating in 23rd Winter Olympic Games to be held in Pyeongchang (South Korea) in February 2018.
21. Hyderabad Hunters won 3rd Premier Badminton League championship in Hyderabad, after beating Bengaluru Blasters in final.
22. ICC Cricket Awards 2018 -
 - Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for Men's Cricketer of the Year - Virat Kohli (India). It is Kohli's 2nd Title as ICC Cricketer of the year after 2012.
 - Men's Test Cricketer of the Year - Steve Smith (Australia)
 - Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year - Virat Kohli (India)
 - Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year - Hasan Ali (Pakistan)
 - Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year - Rashid Khan (Afghanistan)
 - David Shepherd Trophy for ICC Umpire of the Year - Marais Erasmus
 - ICC Spirit of Cricket - Anya Shrubsole (England)
23. India at recent misc sports events -
 - Aditya Mehta won Kolkata Open 2018 International Invitation Snooker Championship, defeating England's Alfie Burden.
24. India won Blind Cricket World Cup 2018 by beating Pakistan at Sharjah (UAE).
25. India's Leander Paes and James Cerretani (USA) won men's doubles tennis title of Newport Beach Challenger event at California (USA).
26. Indian Badminton Player Siddharth Pratap Singh won *Swedish Open Junior International Series* as his first international title. He defeated Denmark's Mads Christophersen.
27. Indian golfer Shiv Kapur won Royal Cup at Pattaya (Thailand), his 3rd Asian Tour title of 2017.
28. Indonesia Masters Badminton 2018 -
 - Men's Singles - Anthony Sinisuka Ginting (Indonesia)
 - Women's Singles - Tai Tzu-ying (Chinese Taipei), defeated India's Saina Nehwal
 - Men's Doubles - Indonesia's Markus Fernaldi Gideon AND Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo
 - Women's Doubles - Japan's Misaki Matsutomo AND Ayaka Takahashi
 - Mixed Doubles - China's Zheng Siwei AND Huang Ya-qiong
29. International Cricket Council (ICC) announced that 2018 Women's World T20 will be hosted by West Indies in November 2018. Note that Next Men's T20 WC will be held in Australia in 2020.
30. Kajal Kumari and Moha. Ghufraan won women's singles and men's singles respectively in 24th Federation Cup All India Carrom Championship in Mumbai.
31. Meghalaya signed Host City Contract with Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to host 39th National Games in 2022.
32. New Zealand's Colin Munro became first cricketer to score 3 hundreds in T20 internationals, when he scored 3rd T20 100 against West Indies.
33. Noted Brazilian Footballer Ronaldo formally announced his retirement. He was although not playing for national side since last 2 years.
34. PM Narendra Modi launched first Khelo India School Games at Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, to be held till Feb 08, 2018 -
 - In this first edition of Khelo India School Games, Under-17 athletes are invited to participate across 16 disciplines - Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Football, Gymnastics, Hockey, Judo, Kabaddi, Kho-Kho, Shooting, Swimming, Volleyball, Weightlifting, and Wrestling. 199 gold medals, 199 silver medals and 275 bronze medals will be awarded in this edition.

- *Khelo India* has been introduced to revive sports culture at grass-root level by building a strong framework for all sports and establishing India as a great sporting nation.
 - Talented players identified in priority sports will be provided annual assistance of INR 5 lakh per annum for 8 years.
35. Sharath Kamal won men singles title (8th time) in 79th edition of 11th Even Sports National Table Tennis Championships in Ranchi (Jharkhand). Suthirta Mukherjee from West Bengal emerged new women champion.
36. South Africa's Kagiso Rabada became youngest bowler ever (22 years age) to top ICC Test Bowlers' rankings.
37. Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore launched official anthem and mascot of Khelo India School Games, beginning January 31.
- Government will extend cash incentives to grassroots level coaches of medal-winning athletes in International Games. Now, when an athlete wins a medal at Commonwealth / Asian / Olympic Games, 20 % of money will go to coaches who worked on them at grass-root level and 30 % will be given to developmental coaches.
 - Under Khelo India, Sports Ministry will select 1000 athletes every year Through School Games, for a scholarship of Rs 5 lakhs each for eight successive years.
 - Mascots of Khelo India School Games are *Vijay the tiger* and *Jaya the black buck*. While, *Aur khelna chahte hain hum* is official anthem.
38. Switzerland won 3rd Hopman Cup (Tennis) as Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic beat Germany's Alexander Zverev and Angelique Kerber at Perth Arena (Australia).
39. Tata Mumbai Marathon 2018 -
- Ethiopia's Solomon Deksisa won in Men's Category. Amane Gobena (Ethiopia) won in women's Category.
 - T ZGopi won in Indian Elite Men's category while Sudha Singh won in Indian Elite Women category.
40. Vidarbha won the Ranji Trophy of Cricket for the first time, defeating Delhi in Indore (Madhya Pradesh), with Rajneesh Gurbani named as Man of The Match.
41. WTA Auckland Women's Tennis Open (New Zealand) -
- Singles - Julia Görges (Germany)
 - Doubles - Sara Errani (Italy) AND Bibiane Schoofs (Netherlands)
42. WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) will induct retired player Goldberg into WWE Hall of Fame class, first in 2018.