

Current Affairs:

Sumitra Mahajan inaugurates South Asian Speakers Summit in Madhya Pradesh:

The two-day South Asian Speakers Summit was inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker **Sumitra Mahajan at Indore in Madhya Pradesh.**

The summit is being organised jointly by the **Indian Parliament and Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, a global organisation for multilateral political and legislative discussions. This will conclude with the adoption of an **'Indore Declaration'** at a closing ceremony.

Aadhaar a must for scholarships:

The **Human Resource Development (HRD)** Ministry has made **Aadhaar mandatory for providing scholarships to meritorious school students from economically weaker sections.** Students who want to avail scholarship benefits under **'National Means-cumMerit Scholarship Scheme'** need to get **enrolled under Aadhaar by June 30.** This will **not** be applicable in the states of **J&K, Assam and Meghalaya.**

Kashmir to observe 2017 as the 'Year of Apple':

Chief Minister **Mehbooba Mufti 2017 as 'Year of Apple'** in a major bid to promote the famed **Kashmiri apples** in domestic and foreign markets. The Chief Minister launched the **High Density Apple Plantation Scheme in Srinagar.**

These high-density plants will be routed through J&K Bank along with the subsidy. **"Fifty per cent subsidy** would be provided by the government to the farmers under the scheme.

Aero India- 2017 concludes at Yelahanka in Bengaluru:

11th biennial edition of the **International Aerospace and Defence exhibition- Aero India** concluded at the **Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru.** AIR correspondent reports that Asia's biennial premier air show Aero India 2017, has received overwhelming response from business delegates and general public.

Hyderabad to get new set of twin reservoirs:

Work for the next generation of **twin reservoirs** for the city's **drinking water** requirements might commence this year, more than a century after the **Osmansagar and Himayatsagar lakes** were conceptualised by the legendary **engineer Mokshagundam Visvesvaraya.** The existing **twin reservoirs together** can hold **6 tmc** of water, the future twins are being planned for holding a whopping **20 tmc** of water each.

Swachh Bharat Mission: Tamil Nadu's Perambalur district builds 4666 toilets in 48 hours:

Each unit costed **Rs 12,000** and was constructed with **full government** subsidy. In a mission to provide all rural households with individual toilets in **Perambalur district,** the **District Rural Development Agency (DRDA)** built **4,666 toilets in 121 villages in 48 hours** under the **Swachh Bharat Mission.** The total cost of the work was **Rs 7.20 crore.**

GST Council clears law to compensate states for revenue loss:

The Finance Minister Arun Jaitley-led GST Council finalised the Draft Compensation Bill, in a bid to speed up the rollout of **Goods and Services Tax by July 1, 2017.** The **10th meeting of the GST Council** also cleared the **final drafting of the anti-profiteering** clause to ensure benefit of lower taxes gets shared with consumers. Crucial draft laws pertaining largely to Central GST (CGST), Integrated GST (IGST) and State GST (SGST) are yet to be finalised. The GST Council will now meet next on **March 4 and 5** to give final touches to the **CGST, IGST and SGST laws.**

China to build reactors in South China Sea:

To power its offshore **oil and gas exploration work,** China is stepping up construction of **floating nuclear reactors in the South China Sea,** which is claimed by multiple countries. China is seeking help from Russia to speed up the project. At present, diesel generators are the main power source for China's offshore operations.

India's vaccine regulatory body NRAI gets highest WHO ratings:

WHO completed the assessment of the status of the **Indian vaccine regulatory system** against WHO NRA Global Benchmarking Tool (GBT) and measured the maturity of the system in India.

The **National Regulatory Authority of India (NRAI)** has been given the maximum ratings by global health body **World Health Organisation for vaccine regulations.**

Gambia's new president set for inauguration:

Gambia's new president Adama Barrow is set to be inaugurated this tiny **West African nation** celebrates wider freedoms after a tense political standoff with its former leader.

BCCI General Manager RP Shah resigns:

RP Shah, one of the **three General Managers of BCCI,** resigned from his post citing his age as a "reason". Shah was the General Manager (Commercial) and was considered to be one of the **big decision makers** in board's commercial interests.

SBI associate SBT to raise up to ₹600 crore:

Ahead of its proposed merger with **SBI, State Bank of Travancore (SBT)** will raise up to **₹600 crore** to shore up additional **tier-I capital** by issuing **Basel compliant bonds** through private placement. The bank got approval of its Executive Committee to raise the money.

"The executive committee of the board of directors of the bank at its meeting has approved the raising of up to **₹600 crore** by way of issue of **Basel III** compliant additional tier-I bonds by private placement," SBT said in a regulatory filing.

Axis Bank keeps MCLR unchanged; 1-yr tenor loan at 8.25%:

Private sector Axis Bank has decided to keep the **marginal cost of fund based lending rates (MCLR) unchanged** for the next monthly cycle. "Axis Bank reviews and retains the MCLR at the same levels across tenors. The one

year MCLR stands unchanged at **8.25 percent**".

Sprint and T-Mobile Merger Back on the Table as SoftBank Agrees to Cede Control of Sprint:

Sprint parent company SoftBank is prepared to sell Sprint to **T-Mobile parent company Deutsche Telekom,** reviving a potential merger between the two companies. SoftBank is reportedly frustrated with Sprint's growth in the United States and is ready to surrender control of the company and take a minority stake in T-Mobile.

Lata Mangeshkar gets Legendary Award:

Melody Queen Lata Mangeshkar has been honoured with the **'Legendary Award'** by Brand Laureate. The Brand Laureate Awards recognise worldclass achievement in branding amongst individuals and companies.

Nagpur IIT Madras' first step to cheaper cancer diagnostic alternative:

A team of researchers from the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras** has developed a cheaper yet reliable alternative for **diagnosing leukaemia and colorectal cancer.** Like monoclonal antibodies which are currently used for cancer diagnostics, the fusion protein developed by the researchers has high specificity and sensitivity. The results were recently published in the journal **Molecular Diagnosis & Therapy.**

Inexpensive mass production of smart and stretchable fabric at almost any size:

Michigan State University researchers have developed the **first stretchable integrated circuit** made entirely using an **inkjet printer.** The researchers successfully created the elastic material, the circuit and the organic light-emitting diode, or OLED. The next step is combining the circuit and OLED into a single pixel.

Scientists from Disney Research have found a way to charge electrical devices without using wires:

The method involves inducing electric currents in the **metallised walls** which in turn generate **uniform magnetic fields** that penetrate the interior of a room. This technology could make electricity as accessible as **wifi**.

India get silver at Asian Women's Rugby Sevens Trophy:

The **Indian Women's team** settled for **silver** at the **Asian Rugby Sevens Trophy** held at **Vientiane, Laos**. The team participated under the aegis of the **Indian Rugby Football Union (IRFU)**, the governing body for the sport of **Rugby in India** and supported by Society General, the financial partner of Rugby India.

Sandeep wins in record time:

Sandeep Kumar clocked a **National Record 3 hours 55 minutes 59.05 seconds** in **winning the 50 kilometre gold** in the **Max Bupa National race walking championship** at the **Vinay Marg**. The 30-year-old Sandeep, who beat Jitender Singh and Chandan Singh of the Services in clinching the gold for Haryana, had set the earlier mark of 3:56:22.00 in 2014.

Laker Test' centurion Richardson dies:

Peter Richardson who made a century for England in the 1956 Ashes Test in which **Jim Laker** took a **world record 19 wickets** has died aged 85, his former county Kent announced. Richardson accrued five centuries in the 34 Tests he played between 1956 and 1963.

Famous Hindi novelist Ved Prakash Sharma dies at 61:

Celebrated Hindi novelist **Ved Prakash Sharma**, who has 176 novels to his credit, died in **Meerut**. He was fighting lung cancer for 11 months. Sharma had his **own publishing house, Tulsi Books Publications**, which printed novels and textbooks. Sharma had also written scripts for about half-a-dozen Hindi movies.

His famous novels which broke many records and added to his popularity included **"Qaidi No 100"** and **"Vardi Wala Gunda"**

Former MP Jambuwanttrao Dhote, popularly known as Lion of Vidarbha, passes away:

Former Nagpur MP and firebrand leader **Jambuwanttrao Dhote** passed away at Yavatmal, Former MP Jambuwanttrao Dhote passes away **Maharashtra** Dhote is popularly known as **"Lion of Vidarbha"** because he always stood for the cause of separate Vidarbha.

He was also a legislator for two terms from Yavatmal district. He started

his political career with the Forward Bloc and later moved to the Congress in the late 70s before joining the Shiv Sena.

Senior journalist Yudhisthir Joshi passes away:

Senior **Marathi journalist Yudhisthir Joshi** passed away after a brief illness. He was 81. Joshi passed away at his residence in Mira Road near here, family sources said. He was editor with leading Marathi publications such as Lokmat.

Maharashtra Approves Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme:

The **state government of Maharashtra** has approved a **Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme** to experiment whether cloud seeding produces sufficient rain. Seeding is a technique which involves spraying chemicals into clouds.

Under the programme, the weather scientists will fly airplanes loaded with **silver iodide** over clouds above **Solapur, Maharashtra** during the **monsoon 2017** beginning with a three year initial investigation. The programme is coordinated by the **Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology** and will deal to address the frequent drought in **Vidarbha**.

PM's maternity benefits promise hits roadblock:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi of giving maternity benefits to **all women** has hit a roadblock because of lack of funds and will benefit only those who have their **first child under the programme**. As per the scheme, pregnant and lactating mothers are provided a cash incentive of **Rs 6,000** upon fulfilling several preconditions. Though a fund of **Rs 2,700 crore** was set aside for maternity benefit scheme, according to the ministry this fund would be insufficient.

Drones keep surveillance during polls in Odisha:

For the **first time**, unmanned aerial vehicles or drones were used for surveillance of polling booths in the Maoist-infested **Malkangiri district** during the fourth phase of panchayat polls in the State. Flying at a **height of 300 to 500 metres**, the drones were able to provide detailed information about movements in the remote jungle terrain around the remote hypersensitive booths in Maoist-infested regions.

Sonowal aims to make Assam cleanest State by October 2:

No toilet, no nikah. Maulvis and muftis in **Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab** have decided not to solemnise marriage in a house where there is no

toilet. **Maulana Mahmood A Madani**, secretary general of **Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind**, said having a toilet has been made a mandatory condition for Muslim marriage in the three States and will be soon be applied in all other States in the country.

300 delegates to participate in Digital India conference:

Computer Society of India, Vizag Chapter, chairman and RINL director **DN Rao** said that elaborate arrangements were being made for the **two-day international conference DIGITS-2017 (Digital India in Global IT Spectrum)** to be held from February 24 in the city. The CSI in association with **Visakahpatnam Steel Plant** is organising the event with the **theme of Innovate, Integrate and Transform**.

India Approves USD 340 million Loan to Nepal for Development Programmes

India has sanctioned a **soft loan of US dollar 340 million** to **Nepal** for various infrastructure development programmes on February 19, 2017. The approval paper was handed over by the **Indian Ambassador to Nepal Ranjit Rae** to Physical Infrastructure and Transport Minister of Nepal **Ramesh Lekhak** in the Nepal.

♦ Capital: Kathmandu

♦ Currency: Nepalese rupee

♦ Prime minister: Pushpa Kamal Dahal

♦ President: Bidhya Devi Bhandari

India Vetiver Network (INVN) has been launched at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore:

INVN is a **not-for-profit scientific network** to promote **vetiver** in **India**. Vetiver has worldwide application to tackle many environmental issues like **soil erosion, mitigation of soil and water pollution**. Promotion of research in vetiver-identification of varieties, improved production technologies and distillation techniques.

NASA to create Space Technology Research Institutes for Deep Space Exploration:

In order to focus on deep space missions, the **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** has proposed to set up of **two multi-disciplinary**, university-led research institutes that will work to develop technologies having potential to extend **human presence deeper into the solar system**.

The Space Technology Research Institutes (STRIs) will be created in the two institutes namely **Centre for the**

Utilization of Biological Engineering in Space (CUBES) and **Institute for Ultra-Strong Composites by Computational Design (US-COMP)** with expected outcome **within 5 years**.

Scientists Discover Lost Continent Zealandia Hidden Submerged in Pacific Ocean:

A Lost Continent that sunk about **100 million years ago** has been discovered underneath **New Zealand** by the scientists. **Zealandia**, a lost continent submerged in the southwest **Pacific Ocean**, is large enough to be recognized as a separate continent.

Journal of the Geological Society of America. **Zealandia** covers nearly **5 million sq. km** (1.9 million sq miles) out of which 94 percent is under water and surrounds New Zealand, New Caledonia, Norfolk Island, the Lord Howe Island group and Elizabeth and Middleton reefs.

India's only Volcano in Andaman & Nicobar Island Active Again:

A team of scientists led by **Abhay Mudholkar**, from **CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO)** in **Goa** informed that **India's only live volcano in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands** has started erupting smoke and lava again.

The volcano of Barren Island last erupted in 1991 after lying dormant for 150 years. Again the volcano has started showing sporadic activity in small intervals of 5-10 minutes.

Jang wins Australian Open; Aditi joint 52nd:

South Korea's Jang Ha-Na stormed to a three-shot victory in the **Australian Open** at Royal Adelaide with a blistering eagle-birdie finish. Jang, 24, conjured a remarkable finish with an eagle from long range at the 17th followed by a brilliant birdie at the 18th to reach 10-under 282. **Jang defeated Denmark's Nanna Madsen** on seven under 285. **India's Aditi Ashok** finished tied 52nd.

Nagaland Chief Minister Zeliang resigns:

Nagaland chief minister **TR Zeliang** has resigned but the political and social unrest in the state is far from over. Zeliang, accompanied by several of his senior Cabinet colleagues, submitted his resignation to the **Governor of Nagaland P.B. Acharya**.

Pakistan all-rounder Afridi announces retirement from international cricket

Legendary **Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi** announced his **retirement** from international cricket, ending an illustrious and sometimes controversial 21-year career. The 36-year-old star had **already quit Test and ODI cricket** but still skippered the Pakistan Twenty20 team at the 2016 world championships in India.

Sakshi Malik, Sardar Singh, Babita Phogat get top Haryana sports award:

The Haryana government decorated 42 sports persons with top state sports honour. Those who got **the prestigious Bhim award** also include former **Indian Hockey captain Sardar Singh** and **wrestler Babita Phogat**.

Those who won the **Bhim awards** for the year 2016-17 also include Ankur Mittal (Shooting) **Sakshi Malik** and Babita Phogat (Wrestling), Sandeep Kumar (Athletics), Saurav (Taekwondo), Pankaj (Cycling), Meena Kumari (Shooting), Ritu (Handball), Gauri Sheoran and Vishwajeet Singh (Shooting) Jaideep (Para athletics) and Ranveer Singh Saini (Golf /Special Olympics).

Raj Kummur Rao-starrer Newton wins Art Cinema honour at Berlinale:

Raj Kummur Rao and **Anjali Patil**-starrer political satire **Newton**, which had its world premiere at the **67th Berlin International Film Festival (also called Berlinale)**, has won the International Federation of Art Cinemas (CICAIE) award in its Forum segment. Rao shared the news on Twitter by congratulating the entire team of the **Amit Masurkar**-directed movie.

Pliskova 'dreams' of Grand Slam title:

US Open finalist Karolina Pliskova said it was her "dream" to win a Grand Slam after she enhanced her growing reputation by winning the **Qatar Open**. She was targeting the Wimbledon and US Open to be her breakthrough moment.

Oriental Bank of Commerce Launches Mobile Wallet 'Batuaa':

The **Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC)** launched a series of digital offerings for its customer which also marks the **75th Foundation Day of the bank**. The OBC bank introduced a **new version of mobile banking** in the form of **mobile app** under the name **'Oriental Batuaa'** to provide banking services through app. Besides, OBC also launched **two new RuPay cards, Oriental Premium card and Oriental Prepaid Card**.

Oriental Bank of Commerce (OBC)

♦ Headquarters: Haryana

♦ CEO: Animesh Chauhan

GST Council Approves Law to Compensate States for Revenue Loss:

The GST Council approved a law to compensate states for **any loss of revenue** from the implementation of **the Goods and Service Tax (GST)** in the **first five years**, on February 18, 2017 at the **10th GST Council Meet at Udaipur**. The compensation bill will be taken to Parliament in **2nd half of Budget Session** to be held from March 9, 2017.

Srinagar Airport Gets Its First Foreign Airline Service:

AirAsia became the **first foreign airline** to begin its operations from Srinagar **international airport in Jammu and Kashmir**. Srinagar has **The Sheikh-ul-Alam International Airport** since last five years, but no foreign airlines had yet operated services from there.

Finance Ministry kickstarts listing process of IRCTC and other rail PSUs

The Union Budget announcement, the Finance Ministry started the process of listing three rail PSUs, **IRCTC, IRFC and IRCON**.

The **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)** is scouting for merchant bankers to manage the initial public offering (IPO) of the three PSUs, which is under **the administrative control of the Rail Ministry**. The government currently holds **100 per cent stake** in these **three companies**.

HSBC, UBS stop issuing participatory notes:

With regulatory and enforcement agencies tightening the screws on misuse of **offshore derivative instruments**, commonly known as **participatory notes (P-notes)**, a number of foreign investors including **HSBC and UBS** have **stopped issuing these instruments**.

P-note is an instrument by which a foreigner can invest in Indian stock markets. While **non-resident Indians cannot use P-notes** under the laws, many experts have pointed out that the SEBI has also shared with the government another list of the investors having parked large amounts of money, each worth **\$100 million**, through these instruments. This is often flouted and Indians use this route to launder their ill-gotten wealth.

Former Chief Justice of India Altamas Kabir Dies at the age of 68:

Former **Chief Justice of India (CJI) Altamas Kabir** passed away on Feb 2017 in Kolkata at Apollo Hospital after suffering from kidney ailment. He was 68. He was the **39th Chief Justice of India**

who held office from September 29, 2012 to July 18, 2013.

Richard Lewis died at an age 78:

Richard Lewis, who has died aged 78, was a distinguished **television producer and director**, who worked for **BBC Wales** for more than 25 years.

Khajuraho Dance Festival begins in Madhya Pradesh:

Country's one of the celebrated cultural events, the **42nd annual Khajuraho Dance Festival** will commence in **Chhattarpur district**. The festival will showcase classical dances, including Kathak, Bharatnatyam, Odissi and Kuchipudi, depicting the ancient tales like - **'Mahishasur Mardini'** and **'Krishna Rasa'**.

Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram celebrates Statehood Day:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his greetings and wished state of **Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram on their Statehood Day**, expressing his desire to see development usher into the states.

Statehood Day greeting to the citizens of Arunachal Pradesh. Both Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram were granted statehood in **Feb 20 1987**. Both the states were **Union Territories** before being granted statehood.

Uttar Pradesh to be top producer of sugar:

Uttar Pradesh is all set to overtake **Maharashtra** and become the **top producer of sugar**, going by the latest projection of sugar production released by the **Indian Sugar Mill Association**, an all India body representing sugar mills from all sugar producing States.

Andhra govt allocates land for 9 thematic cities:

Andhra Pradesh government has allocated lands for the construction of **nine thematic cities** in the new capital **Amaravathi**. The government has announced allocation of 11,574 acres of land for the construction of Tourism thematic city in **Amaravathi**, 8,547 acres for Knowledge city, 6,582 for Electronic city, 6,511 for Health city, 5,168 for Finance city, 5,107 for Media city, 4,150 for Sports city, 3,438 for Judiciary and 2,702 for the construction of Administrative city.

IFC invests \$47.5 mn. in Granules India:

World Bank arm **International Finance Corporation (IFC)** plans to part-fund the expansion programme of Hyderabad-based pharma firm **Granules India Ltd**, which includes setting up of a **Greenfield facility** for manufacturing **APIs (active pharmaceutical ingredients)** in Vishakhapatnam, **Andhra Pradesh**. The proposed investment would be the fourth by IFC in the company and in the form of debt investment of up to **\$47.5 million**.

India world's largest importer of major arms in the last four years:

According to a report released by **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)**, **India** emerged as the **world's largest importer** of major arms during **2012-16**.

As per the report, India accounted for **13 percent** of the global total sales. The total volume of international transfers of major weapons has grown continuously since 2004 and increased by **8.4 per cent** between 2007-11 and 2012-16.

According to the data, in Asia, **India** increased its arms imports by **43 percent** between 2007-11 and 2012-16 which is far greater than the imports by its rivals **China and Pakistan**.

SBI rebrands its corporate website as 'bank.sbi':

The country's largest lender **State Bank of India (SBI)** has rebranded its corporate website as **"bank.sbi"** from the earlier **sbi.co.in**. **Bank.sbi** is the highest domain protocol, known as **generic top level domain (gTLD)**.

The adoption of gTLD **enables** an organisation to use its corporate name - **.sbi** - as their website's top-level identifier, instead of using a more traditional **".com"** or **".co.in"** domains, SBI said in a statement.

IRB InvIT Fund gets Sebi's approval to launch IPO:

Market regulator **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has given its approval to **IRB InvIT Fund**, to raise **Rs 4,300 crore** through an Initial Public Offering (IPO).

IRB InvIT Fund is an investment trust sponsored by IRB Infrastructure Developers Limited, an Indian highway construction company **headquartered in Mumbai**. The **IRB InvIT Fund** is sponsored by **Mumbai-based toll road developer** while **IRB Infrastructure Pvt Ltd** is the investment manager to the trust

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

- ◆ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ◆ Chairman: U.K Sinha

Tata Steel owned Katamati Mine Wins Best Green Award:

Katamati Iron Mine, owned by **Tata Steel**, was conferred with the **Best Green Organisation of the Year Award** at the **Global Green Future Leadership Awards** in Mumbai. The Global Green Future Leadership Awards, organized by **World CSR Day**, was honored to Katamati Iron Mine in recognition of its **environmental protection measures**.

SpaceX successfully lands its first-stage Falcon 9 rocket at Cape Canaveral:

Elon Musk-led space exploration startup **SpaceX** successfully launched its **Dragon spacecraft** which will deliver **nearly 2,500 kg** of cargo to **International Space Station (ISS)** for NASA. Dragon spacecraft is also carrying strains of the **MRSA superbug** to study its behaviour in microgravity. The launch was conducted from the same pad used for **NASA's first manned mission to the moon**.

Iran launches 'advanced' rockets during new military exercises:

The Iran's elite Revolutionary Guard launched sophisticated rockets during a military exercise that started in **Iran's central desert**.

The three day maneuvers called '**Grand Prophet 11**'. The models of the small and advanced rockets or their capabilities have not been revealed.

Dustin Johnson takes place of Jason Day as golf's world No1 after win in LA:

Dustin Johnson has taken over from Jason Day as the **No1 player in world golf** following his victory at the **PGA Tour's Genesis Open in Los Angeles** and it had been quite a journey to reach the peak of his sport. Johnson becomes **20th player** to be ranked No1.

Ryan Harrison captures first title:

American **Ryan Harrison** captured his **first ATP title**, winning all 12 break points he faced to defeat **Georgia's Nikoloz Basilashvili** 6-1, 6-4 and win the **Memphis Open**. Harrison, ranked 62nd, will jump into the world **top 50** for the first time since July 2012 by taking the matchup of unseeded 24-year-olds who

had not dropped a set all week at the indoor hard court event.

IPL auction: Ben Stokes breaks the bank at ₹ 14.5 cr:

IPL Auction of 2017, **Ben Stokes** steals the show as he got **Rs 14.5 crore** from **Rising Pune Supergiants**. **Tymal Mills** the 2nd costliest player with **12 crore** **Royal Challengers Bangalore**. For **India**, **Karn Sharma** gets the highest amount at **Rs 3.2 crore** from **Mumbai Indians**.

World Day of Social Justice - February 20th:

The United Nations' (UN) World Day of Social Justice is annually observed on **February 20** to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication. It also focuses on the goal of **achieving** full employment and support for social integration.

Theme: "**Preventing conflict and sustaining peace through decent work**" **Putin 'deeply hurt' over Russian UN ambassador's sudden death in New York**:

Vitaly Churkin, Russia's envoy to the United Nations, died in New York, a day before his 65th birthday. A US official said Churkin died of an apparent **heart attack**.

Nobel panel chairwoman passes away:

Kaci Kullmann Five, the chairwoman of the **Norwegian Nobel Committee**, which selects the Peace Prize laureates, has died aged 65 after a long illness. Kullmann became a member of the **Norwegian Nobel committee in 2003**, and was elected chairwoman in 2015.

Arunachal govt to raise pension for differently abled persons:

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister **Pema Khandu** has announced **raising pension** for **differently abled people under Chief Minister's Disability Pension Scheme**. The ensuing budget will see substantial increase in funds for their welfare. Voicing regret over concerned government department's failure to **fully implement the 5 per cent job quota** for the disabled persons.

India launches 'Cyber Swachhta Kendra' to protect citizens:

Ravi Shankar Prasad launched **Cyber Swachhta Kendra** in **New Delhi** for **Botnet cleaning and Malware analysis** as a part of digital India initiative Cyber Swachhta Kendra.

Aim: To create a secure cyber space by detecting botnet infections. He launched two mobile apps.

(i) Mkavach to protect smart phones and tablets from hackers

(ii) Samvid to protect Desktops from suspicious applications from running.

India, China hold strategic dialogue:

China and India held their upgraded **strategic dialogue** to shore up bilateral ties amid hectic parleys to resolve differences over Beijing's reluctance to **support India's Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)** bid as well as a UN ban on **JeM chief Masood Azhar**.

Foreign Secretary **S Jaishankar** from India held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister **Wang Yi** during this meeting.

India, Rwanda sign aviation, visa deals:

India and **Rwanda** have concluded a **bilateral air services agreement** enabling direct flights between the two countries. This is among the **three** memorandum of understanding (MoUs) concluded during Vice-President **Hamid Ansari's** visit to the African nation.

Rwandan Airways will begin **direct flights** between **Kigali and Mumbai in April**. The other two MoUs pertained to the **setting up** of an entrepreneurial development centre in Rwanda and exemption of visa for entry of diplomatic and official passports.

Dish TV partners with ICICI Bank for digital payments:

Direct-to-home operator **Dish TV** has tied-up with private lender **ICICI Bank** for digital payments. This will enhance a new payment method which is another customer-oriented initiative in the DTH industry to recharge **through unified payment interface (UPI)** transactions by Dish TV India Chief Executive Officer **Arun Kapoor**.

India, Japan ink pact on rail safety:

India signed an agreement with **Japan** on **enhancing railway safety** in the **Indian Railways** with focus on railway track and rolling stock safety. The Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between Railway Board Chairman **A.K.Mittal** and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan Vice-Minister **Hiroshi Tabata**.

The areas of **cooperation** include rail inspection, rail welding and providing automatic railway track safety inspection, maintenance of rolling stock with the **aim to prevent major rail accidents**.

Trump Names Lt. Gen. HR McMaster As National Security Adviser:

H.R. McMaster, an active-duty Army general, will be President **Donald Trump's** next **national security adviser**, according to an announcement.

Cauvery Tribunal gets new head:

The government has appointed Justice **Abhay Manohar Sapre** of the Supreme Court as chairman of the **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal**. He was nominated for the post by Chief Justice **J.S. Khehar**. The post fell vacant following the resignation of Justice **Balbir Singh Chauhan**.

New Tata Sons chairman N Chandrasekaran to focus on shareholder returns, fund allocation:

N Chandrasekaran, who took over as **chairman of Tata Sons**, the holding company of the **\$103-billion Tata group**, he will focus on **boosting shareholder returns and tightening capital allocation rules**. Chandra, as he is popularly known, is the first non-promoter, non-Parsi and non-shareholder Chairman of the 150-year old group.

ISSF aimed at 50 % female participation at 2020 Games:

The **International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)** is all set to put the gun on IOC's shoulder, to decide upon the suggestions aimed towards achieving **50% female participation in the Tokyo Olympics in 2020**.

International Mother Language Day:

International Mother Language Day is celebrated every year on **21st February**. The main purpose of celebrating this day is to promote the awareness of language and cultural diversity all across the world.

It was first announced by UNESCO on November 17, 1999.

2017 Theme: **Towards Sustainable Futures through Multilingual Education**.

World Thinking Day FEB -22:

Each year on **February 22**, Member Organizations of the **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)** celebrate **World Thinking Day**. World Thinking Day is a special day to reflect on our global sisterhood in Guiding and to think about issues that are **important to girls and women around the world**.

World Thinking Day theme - 'Grow'

Director Antony Mitra Das dead:

Director Antony Mitra Das, who made films in **Tamil, Malayalam and Sinhalese** and served in the Army during the **Second World War**, died. He was 103 years old. The centenarian, He was born in Madurai.

The hugely successful **Malayalam version of Harischandra**, in 1955

National Biodiversity Congress 2017 held in Kerala:

Third National Biodiversity Congress (NBC) 2017 held **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**. This year event is comprises of programmes including conference, exhibition, capacity building workshops and Children's Biodiversity Congress.

Theme: "Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Sustainable Development" with four sub-themes.

Cabinet approves ₹ 8,100-cr investment to set up solar parks:

The Cabinet has approved an investment of **₹ 8,100 crore** for setting up at least **50 solar parks and ultra mega solar power** projects. The investment would double the solar power production **target to 40,000 MW**. Notably, the government has laid down a plan to achieve **100 GW Solar Power Capacity by 2022**.

Govt doubles maternity leave for women workers in industries:

The government doubled the **maternity leave** for women working in industries from the existing **three months to six months**. However, the benefit will be restricted to women who make a monthly contribution to the employees' state insurance corpus from their salaries. About **29 lakh** women working across various industries will be benefitted by the move.

Kashmir government turns public libraries to E-learning centers:

Jammu and Kashmir government launched an **e-learning program** by installing computers in the state's public libraries, thus assisting students to prepare for **competitive exams like JEE and CET**. The students can avail the facility by filling a form in the nearest libraries where resources like tabs, computers, and the expert-designed study materials are also available.

Goa to host See Sharp Fest:

The **See Sharp Fest**, a green living and learning festival, will be hosted by **Goa for the first time at Ashwem beach**. The festival will hold classes on composting, connecting solar panels, rain water

harvesting, generating cooking gas from waste food, converting waste oil into detergent, and even starting one's own organic farm.

Openly gay minister of Indian origin could be Ireland's next PM:

Leo Varadkar, Ireland's openly gay social protection minister, is being seen as a frontrunner in the race to replace **Prime Minister Enda Kenny**. Leo Varadkar, an openly gay Irish minister of **Indian-origin**, to become Ireland's next prime minister.

IMF sees India growth rebounding to 7.2%:

The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** foresees India's economic growth rebounding to **7.2 per cent** next fiscal, up from the projected **6.6 per cent** in 2016-17 after demonetisation.

Microsoft's Nadella launches Sangam, LinkedIn Lite and Skype Lite with Aadhaar:

Redmond-based **Microsoft** CEO **Satya Nadella** launched light versions of **LinkedIn** and **Skype** with **Aadhaar Praman services** along with two new products called **Placements** and **Project Sangam** at the **Future Decoded 2017** event in **Mumbai**. He also announced that **cloud computing** was gathering pace in India and all sectors including auto, finance and the public sector was **adopting the new platform**.

Bharti Airtel to acquire Telenor's India operations:

Sunil Bharti Mittal-led India's largest telecom operator, **Bharti Airtel** announced it is buying **Norwegian** telecom company **Telenor's** India operations.

Bharat Financial begins Aadhaar-based cashless loan disbursement:

Microfinance institution **Bharat Financial Inclusion Ltd** launched an initiative for instant loan approval and disbursed them to three women in a village near **Bassi** in **Jaipur district**. The initiative is expected to **help rural areas** embrace cashless transactions. The loans are **cashless** since they are deposited directly to the loanee's bank account.

Queensland varsity, IIT Madras to undertake joint applied research:

A top **Australian** university **Queensland University of Technology (QUT)** has signed an agreement with **IIT Madras** to undertake joint applied research in information security, combustion and health technologies.

Sahitya Akademi awards presented to 24 authors at Festival of Letters:

Twenty-four authors writing in as **many Indian languages** were conferred the **Sahitya Akademi awards** at the annual "**Festival of Letters**". The recipients were awarded a cash prize of **Rs. 1 lakh** each for their "**outstanding books of literary merit**."

Leonardo DiCaprio won his 1st Oscar on sixth nomination

Leonardo DiCaprio won his first Oscar award in **2016 for Best Actor** in a Leading Role for the film '**The Revenant**', after receiving **six Oscar nominations in his career**. He received his first Oscar nomination in the Best Supporting Actor category for 1993 film 'What's Eating Gilbert Grape'. Notably, **DiCaprio** has been **nominated four times in the Best Actor** category.

Shurhozelie Liezitsu sworn in as Nagaland Chief Minister:

Shurhozelie Liezietsu was sworn in as the new **Chief Minister of Nagaland** by **Governor PB Acharya**. The 81-year-old scholar had begun his political career as a member of Nagaland Legislative Assembly in 1969 from northern Angami-I under Kohima district. He has served the office eight times, holding different portfolios, including education and planning.

Astronomers discover 7 Earth-sized planets orbiting nearby star:

NASA announced the discovery of solar system '**TRAPPIST-1**', **40 light-years** away in the constellation Aquarius, with **seven Earth-like planets** that could possibly support life, NASA has announced. Three of these are in the '**habitable zone**', where liquid water and possibly life might exist, researchers added. This is the **first time** that so many Earth-sized planets have been found orbiting the same star.

Mars is forming PLANETARY RINGS just like Saturn as its moons are CRUMBLING:

An analysis of data from a **Mars-orbiting satellite** suggests that Mars is building **Saturn-like rings** from interplanetary dust and fragments from its disfigured moons, Phobos and Deimos. Researchers claim that the ring formation could take **around 2-7 crore years** owing to the two moons being gradually chipped away as they are drawn closer to the red planet by its gravity.

India wins 'Handball-on-skates' World Championship:

India won the **men's Roll Ball World Cup Championship** as they beat **Iran 8-7** in the final. **India also won the tournament in the women's category**, defeating **Iran 6-4** in the final. Roll Ball is a combination of roller-skating, handball, and basketball, and it was invented by an Indian sports teacher Raju Dabhade in 2003.

Roger Federer extends playing career to 2019 with Swiss indoor deal:

Roger Federer has signed a **three-year deal** to play at his hometown event in Basel until the age of 38. The 35-year-old, who missed the second half of last season with a knee injury, has committed to **Swiss Indoors until 2019**.

Messi dons role of health ambassador:

Lionel Messi was in Egypt as the face of an initiative to promote the North African country as a **medical tourism** destination for **hepatitis C patients**. "Medication against hepatitis C saves lives, let's put an end to the waiting lists". Messi has signed to become the ambassador for **Tour n' Cure**.

Blind World Cup winning Indian players to get ₹ 5 lakh each:

India's Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, **Vijay Goel** announced **Rs.5 lakh** each will be given to the members of India's T20 World Cup for the **Blind winning team** as a cash reward. Goel was there in person to present the World Cup trophy to the Indian blind cricket team.

Nobel Prize-winner Kenneth Arrow dies:

Nobel Prize-winning **economist Kenneth Arrow** was a leading figure in the field of economic theory. He inspired generations of students through his decades-long teaching at Stanford. The Nobel Prize, he was awarded the National Medal of Science in 2004, among numerous other awards.

Sikkim becomes 22nd State to join UDAY:

The **Government of India** and the **State of Sikkim** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the **Scheme Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY)**, for operational improvement of the State's Power Distribution Department. With the signing of MoU, the total number of States covered under UDAY has reached **twenty-**

two. Sikkim would derive an **Overall Net Benefit of approximately Rs. 207 crores** through UDAY by way of cheaper funds, reduction in AT&C and transmission losses, interventions in energy efficiency, etc.

Haryana makes must for private schools to set up solar plants:

The **Haryana government** has made it mandatory for **all private schools to install solar systems**. A special grant of **₹ 20,000 per kilowatt** will also be given to the schools for installing solar power plants. Further, the electricity generated from these solar power plants during the summer vacations would be added to the grid.

Kerala to Become First State in India to Have a Public Registry of Sex Offenders:

In a first in India, the **Kerala government** has decided to set up a registry of **sex offenders**. The publically available registry will contain the names and details of people who commit crimes against women.

1st Sherpas Meeting for 2017 BRICS summit to be held in China:

The First **Sherpas** Meeting of the **9th BRICS Summit** will be held in **Nanjing**, capital of east China's Jiangsu Province, from 23rd feb to 24th feb. Chinese State Councillor **Yang Jiechi** will attend the opening ceremony of the meeting and deliver a speech.

Theme: **"Stronger Partnership for a Brighter Future"**.

India, Israel to develop missile for Army:

India has approved a deal to develop jointly a **medium range surface-to-air missile (MR-SAM)** system for the Army worth **Rs.17,000 crore** deal. Joint development deal to be executed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and **Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI)**. The systems will be manufactured in India and would have an **80% indigenous** content.

Deliveries would begin in 2023. The two countries are also in an advanced stage of negotiations for the purchase of two more long-range **Phalcon Airborne Warning And Control System (AWACS)**.

7th tranche of Sovereign Gold Bonds opens on February 27:

The government will launch **the 7th tranche of Sovereign Gold Bonds** under which people will be able to buy securities worth up to **500 grams** of the metal. Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has decided to issue **Sovereign Gold Bonds 2016-17-Series IV**.

Applications for the bond will be accepted from **February 27 to March 3**. The bonds will be issued to eligible applicants **on March 17, 2017**. The bonds will be sold through banks, **Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL)**, designated post offices and recognised stock exchanges, NSE and BSE. The (SGB) investors will be compensated at a fixed rate of **2.50 per cent** per annum payable semi-annually on the nominal value of investment. The tenor of the bonds will be for a **period of 8 years** with exit option from **5th year** to be exercised on the interest payment dates.

Oriental Bank ties up with Chola MS to sell insurance products:

The Public Sector **Oriental Bank of Commerce** has signed a corporate agency agreement with general insurance provider **Cholamandalam General Insurance Company**, for **distribution** of insurance products. Chola MS will offer a wide range of **non-life insurance products** to customers of Oriental Bank of Commerce through its branches.

India to be fastest growing economy among G-20 nations: Moody's

India will be the fastest growing economy among **G-20 countries** clocking a **7.1 per cent** growth in 2017, down from a previous expectation of 7.5 per cent because of the effects of demonetisation, according to the **Moody's Investors Service**.

Airtel Payments Bank may cross-sell products like insurance, third party loans:

Airtel Payments Bank is planning to cross-sell products like **life insurance products** and loans from banks and **non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)** over the next one year. Because **payments banks can not lend**; it is expected that cross-selling banking products will be a revenue stream for these operators. These banks are allowed to take **deposits – savings accounts**.

Airtel Payment Bank MD & CEO: Shashi Arora

Phogat sisters to spread the message of cleanliness:

Commonwealth Games medal-winning wrestlers **Geeta and Babita Phogat** were named as **brand ambassadors of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation's sanitation campaign**. As part of the **Swachh Bharat Mission**, the Phogat sisters, who are from **Bhiwani in Haryana**, will be the face of the SDMC's efforts to improve cleanliness and solid waste management in south Delhi.

Shilpa Shetty appointed ambassador for Swachh Bharat Mission:

Bollywood actress **Shilpa Shetty** has been chosen as the **brand ambassador for the government's cleanliness initiative Swachh Bharat Mission**. Shetty will feature in TV and radio campaigns which are aimed at discouraging people from littering on roads. Campaign posters featuring her will also be displayed at various places across the country.

Cressida becomes 1st woman to head Scotland Yard in 188 yrs:

Britain has appointed **Cressida Dick** as the next commissioner of **London's Metropolitan Police**, making her the **first woman to head Scotland Yard in its 188-year history**. The 56-year-old, who will control a **£3 billion budget** and head 43,000 officers, joined the force in 1983. Her appointment was controversial as she once headed an operation wherein an innocent Brazilian was killed.

Monster pulsar discovered 50 million light years away:

A **monster** has been discovered lurking **50 million light years** away. It's a pulsar, that is, a collapsed star spinning around at an increasing speed and sending out as much energy in one second as our Sun does in **3.5 years**. The discovery was made by scientists using the x-ray observatory **space craft XMM-Newton** managed by the **European Space Agency (ESA)**.

Indigenous cryogenic engine C25 feat to propel GSLV-Mk III launch in April:

Realising a major milestone for the launch of **GSLV Mark III** by April end, ISRO units here have successfully conducted the integrated full duration stage hot test of advanced **Indigenous Cryogenic engine** with **25 ton propellant C25** at **IPRC in Mahendragiri**. It is set for the launch of **GSLV Mark III by April end**.

Karnataka Bank has bagged two 'IBA-Banking Technology' awards.

Karnataka bank was **the winner** in **'Best financial inclusion initiatives (small bank)'** category, and was **runner-up** in **'Best use of digital and channels technology (small bank)'** category. It said that **IBA-Banking Technology award** recognises and rewards individuals, professionals and banks who have recorded noteworthy technology and business benefits in the previous year.

Gujarat artist claims making world's longest fire painting:

An artist from **Gujarat's Vadodra district Kamal Rana** has claimed to have created the **world's longest painting using fire flames**. The artists claims to have developed a technique which uses fire flames, matchsticks, flammable chemicals and powder for painting. The **63 feet long and 7 feet** wide painting is dedicated to the cricket world.

India gets 2019 rifle and pistol WC:

The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) has officially announced that **New Delhi** would host the **rifle and pistol World Cup in 2019**, which would offer Olympic quota places for Tokyo 2020. The other **three World Cups in 2019** would be held in **Munich, Beijing and Rio de Janeiro**. The shotgun World Cups will be held in **Changwon, Lahti, Al Ain and Acapulco**. While deciding that the **World Cup Final in shotgun** would be held in **Al Ain, UAE** in 2018.

Union Sports Minister **Vijay Goel** had very encouraging words for the Indian shooters as he inaugurated the first World Cup of the season at the **Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad (Delhi)**. In the presence of **ISSF president Olegario Vazquez Rana**.

Dohmen, van As win FIH awards Harte again named Goalkeeper-of-the-Year:

The first-ever **FIH (International Hockey Federation) Hockey Stars** event held at **Argentina. Belgium**, which finished runner-up at Rio, saw its **captain John-John Dohmen** named **Player-of-the-Year** while compatriot **Arthur van Doren**, currently participating in the HIL, was named **the U-23 Player-of-the-Year**. This is the **first time a Belgian has won** the award in either category.

Irishman David Harte, meanwhile, was named **Goalkeeper-of-the-Year for the second year** in a row. **India** had two nominations — **P.R. Sreejesh and Harmanpreet Singh** — but couldn't win any either.

The winners: Player-of-the-Year: **Women:** Naomi van As (Ned). Goalkeeper-of-the-Year: **Women:** Maddie Hinch (Eng). U-23 Player-of-the-Year: **Women:** Maria Granatto (Arg). Coach-of-the-Year: **Men:** Danny Kerry (Eng); **Women:** Karen Brown (Eng). Umpire-of-the-Year: **Men:** Christian Blasch (Ger); **Women:** Laurine Delforge (Bel).

Kumar Sangakkara becomes second Asian to feature in 1000 matches:

Former **Sri Lankan** cricketer **Kumar Sangakkara** became the **second Asian, after Mahela Jayawardene**, and 16th overall to feature in 1,000 matches across all forms of the game. Sangakkara achieved the feat after featuring for Karachi Kings against the Quetta Gladiators in the Pakistan Super League. Out of the 1,000 matches, Sangakkara played 587 for the Sri Lankan team.

World Toe Wrestling Championship is held annually in England:

A **'World Toe Wrestling Championship'** is organised in **England**. The contestants are required to play bare feet and compete in three rounds for each game. The sport, which is similar to **arm wrestling**, was invented in the 1970s and is reportedly registered as an international sport.

Central Excise Day in India – FEB 24:

Central excise day in India is celebrated **every year on 24th of February** to encourage the equality among the officers of the **Central Board of Excise and Customs Department** as well as assist them to ensure better tax observance. It is also celebrated to commemorate the establishment of the **Central Excise and Salt Act** on 24th of February in the year 1944.

SDMC to get 2nd waste-to-energy plant soon:

The **South Delhi Municipal Corporation** has begun the process of approving the project, with the **Standing Committee** giving a nod to the **15 megawatt (MW) plant** to be set up at **Tekhand**.

South Delhi may soon get its **second waste-to-energy plant** that would significantly **reduce the amount of garbage** that has collected at the **Okhla landfill** over the years.

Inaugurates 112-foot bust of 'Adi Yogi' at Isha Yoga Centre in Coimbatore:

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** celebrated to the **Mahashivaratri celebrations** after inaugurating the 112-

foot bust of the **'Adi Yogi'** at the Isha Yoga Centre.

Zhong Shan has been named new head of the Ministry of Commerce:

China has appointed a new head for its top **economic planning agency** and a **new commerce minister** as part of a reshuffle ahead of a crucial Communist Party meeting later this year.

Zhong Shan currently a vice commerce minister, has been named **new head of the Ministry of Commerce** taking over from **Gao Hucheng**.

'FDI inflows zoom 18% to \$46 billion in 2016':

Foreign direct investment in **India grew 18% during 2016** to touch **\$46 billion**, data released by the **Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion** showed. The country attracted FDI of **\$39.32 billion in 2015**. The main sectors which attracted the highest inflows were services, telecom, trading, computer hardware and software and automobile. Bulk of the FDI came in from **Singapore, Mauritius, the Netherlands and Japan**.

India, ADB ink pact for industrial corridor:

India and **Asian Development Bank** have signed a **\$375 million** pact for loans and grants to develop **800-km Visakhapatnam-Chennai Industrial Corridor**, which is the first phase of a planned **2,500-km East Coast Economic Corridor**.

ADB had last September approved **\$631 million** in loans and grants for the corridor. The ADB said in a statement that it approved loans comprising a **\$500 million** multitranchise facility.

Mother'son's Sehgal is EY Entrepreneur of 2016:

Vivek Chaand Sehgal, chairman of **Mother'son Sumi Systems Limited (MSSL)**, the flagship company of Samvardhana Mother'son Group (SMG), has been chosen as the **'EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2016'**. **Mr. Sehgal** will represent India at the **EY World Entrepreneur of the Year Award** ceremony at Monte Carlo.

The EOY is a global business award programme, now in its 18th year in India. **Co-Founder of Infosys Nandan Nilekani** gets the **Lifetime Achievement Award** for his contribution to the Unique Identification Authority of India – the Aadhaar initiative, which is a pioneering citizen identification programme.

Jason McCracken took charge as the CEO of the International Hockey Federation (FIH):

Jason McCracken took charge as the **CEO** of the **International Hockey Federation (FIH)** at the same time as **Narinder Batra** became its **president** and the **New Zealander**, who has been an elite umpire, technical official and an administrator for more than 20 years, believed world hockey is in a good place right now.

Shooting World Cup: Song Buhan, Shi Mengyao and Laetisha Scanlan set World records:

Pooja Ghatkar gave **India** a robust start, winning the **women's air rifle bronze** in the **shooting World Cup** at the **Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad**. On a day when **three World records** were set – **two by China's Song Buhan** and **Shi Mengyao**, and one by **Laetisha Scanlan** of **Australia**.

Former PM releases latest edition based on Upinder Singh's 2008 book:

Upinder Singh, renowned historian and **daughter of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh** released the **Hindi edition of her 2008 book** on ancient and medieval history. The book, titled **Pracheen Evam Poorv Madhyakaleen Bharat ka Itihaas – Pashaan Kaal Se 12th Shatabdi Tak**, was released by the former Prime Minister, former West Bengal Governor Gopalkrishna Gandhi. The book has been published by **Pearson India**.

Noida Metro enters Limca book:

The **Noida Metro Rail Corporation (NMRC)** has entered the **Limca book of records** by putting **200 U-shaped girders** in a month on the **30-km metro line**. Uttar Pradesh principal secretary (industries) and **chairman of the Noida Authority Rama Raman**.

The **Noida-Greater Noida metro link** and City Center to Sector 62 trial run to take place this year, however commercial run of both the lines will start in 2018.

Blind people an inspiration: Sampla

A programme to celebrate the achievements of visually impaired people was organised at the **India Islamic Cultural Centre**. The event, **Anhad**, was inaugurated by **Vijay Sampla**, Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment.

Mr. Sampla launched a portal **www.thinkforblind.com** to spread awareness about blindness.

Rajasthan appoints panel on 7th Pay Commission:

The **Rajasthan** government has appointed a **three-member committee**, headed by former **Chief Secretary D.C. Samant**, to study and implement the recommendations of the **Seventh Pay Commission** for employees in the State.

Chief Minister **Vasundhara Raje** may announce implementation of the Pay Commission's recommendations in her upcoming Budget speech during the ongoing State Assembly session.

Railways to manufacture own trainsets that can run at 160 kmph speed:

The **railways** has decided to go ahead with manufacturing on its **own trainsets** that can run at a **maximum speed of 160 kmph**. Suitable named **'Train-2018'**, the **first trainset** – a rake without a separate locomotive – is expected to be ready by March next year and likely to be pressed into service in **Delhi-Lucknow or Delhi-Chandigarh sector**.

Mumbai India's richest city with \$820 bn; Delhi distant second with \$450 bn:

India's financial capital **Mumbai**, which is home to **46,000 millionaires** and **28 billionaires**, is the richest Indian city with a total wealth of **\$820 billion**, says a report. According to **New World Wealth**, **Mumbai** is the richest city in the country followed by **Delhi** and **Bengaluru** in the second and third place, respectively.

India, Germany ratify social security agreement:

India and **Germany** have ratified the **Social Security Agreement (SSA)**, which will come into force **from May 1 this year**, to help promote more investment flows between the two countries.

The requirements to be entitled to a pension can be met by aggregating the **periods of insurance** completed in **India and Germany**, whereby each country pays only the pension for the insurance periods covered by its laws. The period of posting will be **up to 48 calendar months**.

Pak., Turkey signs 10 agreements:

Pakistan has signed **10 agreements** with Turkey to **enhance bilateral cooperation** in various fields, including exchange of **financial intelligence** and **defence cooperation**. They were signed during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to Turkey from February 22-24 during which he co-chaired the **5th Session** of **Pakistan-Turkey**

High Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

'BRICS Bank to finance technological innovation projects'

The **New Development Bank (NDB)** set up by the **BRICS plans** to provide lending to technological innovation projects. The bank **aims to foster technological innovation** in developing nations through its financing, capability building and knowledge sharing, its vice president **Zhu Xian** said at a financing forum held in **Xiamen city**.

Indonesia, Australia agrees to closer naval cooperation:

Indonesian and Australian leaders committed to **free trade** and **closer naval cooperation** as they urged countries in the Asia Pacific region with competing territorial claims to obey international law. Indonesian **President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo** arrived in Sydney. It his **first visit** to Australia as his nation's leader. He and Prime Minister **Malcolm Turnbull** said they had agreed to **finalize a free trade agreement** this year

United Bank of India ties-up with IRCTC:

United Bank of India has announced a tie-up with **IRCTC** to offer its customers facility **to buy railway tickets using the bank's debit card**.

The Kolkata-based lender is the **14th bank & 10th** among government banks to provide the ticket booking facility by having direct tie-up with IRCTC.

South Africa captain becomes fastest to 9000 ODI runs:

South Africa captain **A.B. de Villiers** became the fastest **man to score 9,000 One Day International runs** as he led his side to a 159-run victory over New Zealand in the third one-day match. **A.B. de Villiers** scored 85, having needed just five runs to surpass former **India captain Sourav Ganguly**, who took **228 innings** to achieve the milestone. **De Villiers** did it in his **205th innings**.

Harika settles for bronze after losing semis at World Championship:

Indian Grandmaster Harika Dronavalli had to settle for the **bronze medal** after a heartbreaking defeat against **Tan Zhongyi** of **China** via the tie-breaker in the semi-finals of the **FIDE World Women's Chess Championship** in **Tehran**.

This was the **third bronze medal** for the Indian Grandmaster at the FIDE World Women's Chess Championship.

Panipat to have sex ratio monitoring system:

The **Haryana government** has set up an **online system** for Panipat **to monitor the sex ratio in the district** as part of the '**Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao**' programme.

The system, called the **sex ratio monitoring dashboard**, will have the **data of child sex ratio** collected from all villages by the **Health and Women and Child Welfare Departments** every month.

Telangana, U.P., may get cargo airports:

The Centre is considering a proposal each from **Telangana** and **Uttar Pradesh** for setting up a '**dedicated cargo airport**'. **Telangana** wants a dedicated cargo airport to be built in northern **Hyderabad**.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) had appointed a consultant to study and suggest name(s) of airport(s) or site (s) in the country that can be 'developed' or 'converted' as '**dedicated cargo airport(s)**' – which may also be termed as '**merchant airport(s)**'.

Mittal plans solar farm in Karnataka:

The **world's largest steelmaker ArcelorMittal** may set up a **solar farm** on land allotted to it for the proposed **6 MT Karnataka project** in view of excess global steel capacity and delays in securing raw materials. It had entered into a pact with **Karnataka government** for setting up a **6 million tonne steel plant** with a captive **750 MW power plant** at an investment of **Rs. 6.5 billion**.

Normani Kordei named American cancer society global ambassador:

Fifth Harmony star **Normani Kordei** has been named a global ambassador for the **American Cancer Society**. The singer has partnered with charity bosses to raise awareness about breast cancer screenings and **HPV (human papilloma virus) vaccines**.

Microsoft opens a cyber security centre in Mexico:

To support government efforts **against cyber crime** while also helping companies and citizens to be more secure, **Microsoft** has announced the launch of a **cyber security centre in Mexico**. The Cyber Security Engagement Centre will serve Mexico and other Latin American countries.

By opening this **Cyber Security Centre**, we are offering our clients **protection from attacks** and **security risks**, as well as ways to detect them and find solutions.

General Manager of Microsoft Mexico: **Jorge Silva**

Economic think tank NCAER lowers GDP growth forecast to 6.9 per cent for FY17:

After **RBI** and **IMF**, economic thinktank **National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER)** has lowered the country's growth forecast to **6.9 per cent** for the current fiscal on account of demonetisation. A few days before demonetisation was announced, **NCAER** had projected a growth rate of **7.6 per cent** for 2016-17.

Oxford Dictionaries add 'clicktivism' and 'haterade' as new words for angry times:

'**Clicktivism**' (a word for armchair activists on social media), 'otherize' (viewing a group of people as intrinsically different from oneself) and '**haterade**' (excessive criticism) are among the **new additions** to **oxforddictionaries.com**.

Oscars 2017 LIVE: Winners' list so far:

The **2017 Oscars** have arrived. The **89th Academy Awards** will honor the best movies of the past year and all the people who had a hand in them – from directors, producers, and actors to sound editors, costume designers, and more. It is held at **Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles**.

The list of the winners:

Best Animated Feature - 'Zootopia' by Byron Howard, Rich Moore and Clark Spencer

Best Animated Short - 'Piper' by Alan Barillaro and Marc Sondheimer

Best Foreign Language Film - 'The Salesman' by Asghar Farhadi

Best Actress in a Supporting Role - Viola Davis for 'Fences'

Best Documentary Feature - Ezra Edelman and Caroline Waterlow for 'O J: Made In America'

Best Song, Best score, Best cinematography, Best production design - La La Land

First robot table tennis tutor sets Guinness record:

The world's **first robot table tennis tutor** in **Japan** has set a new Guinness World Record for its uncanny ability of being able to play the game better than most humans. **FORPHEUS** (Future Omron Robotics Technology for Exploring Possibility of Harmonised

automation with Sinic Theoretics) has officially been given the Guinness title for its unique technological intelligence and educational capabilities.

FORPHEUS also features an array of cameras that are situated above the **ping pong table** that monitors the position of the ball at an impressive **rate of 80 times per second**.

Saina to join BWF Commission:

Saina Nehwal, who was appointed a member of the IOC's Athletes' Commission, last year, will **represent** the panel in the BWF. She would join the **BWF Athletes' Commission** as an **IOC AC representative**.

Hyderabad girl sets Guinness record for playing marathon carrom:

Husna Sameera, a sixteen-year-old girl from **Hyderabad** who created a Guinness record along with **22-year-old Allada Pavan** for the "**longest carrom playing marathon**", was felicitated for her achievement at the Press Club of Hyderabad. They played carrom for 34 hours 45 minutes and 56 seconds at a stretch, breaking the previous record of 32 hours and 45 minutes set in 2005.

Kalinga Lancers beat Dabang Mumbai to clinch maiden Hockey India League title:

Last year's finalists **Kalinga Lancers** made amends to lift their **maiden Hockey India League title**, defeating **Dabang Mumbai** 4-1 in the final.

Dabang Mumbai, who were leaders at the end of the league stage, could not find their best as **Kalinga Lancers** emerged victorious to claim the purse of **Rs 2.5 crore**. The runners-up received **Rs 1.25 crore**.

Kalinga Lancers skipper **Moritz Fuerste** and **Turner** also finished as the league's joint highest scorers with 12 goals each in as many matches.

'Apollo 13', 'Titanic' star Bill Paxton dies at 61:

Hollywood actor **Bill Paxton**, best known for his roles in such blockbusters as **Apollo 13** and **Titanic**, has died at the age of **61**. The versatile Texas born actor was a familiar face on U.S. movie screens, with a string of memorable credits to his name.

Neil Fingleton, Game of Thrones star and UK's tallest man, dies aged 36:

Game of Thrones star **Neil Fingleton** has died at the age of **36**. Once named as Britain's tallest man, **the 7ft 7in star** played Mag the Mighty in the fantasy

series and also took on roles in X-Men: **First Class and Jupiter Ascending.**

Chandigarh might face total liquor ban from April 1:

As the **Supreme Court** judgement **banning liquor shops along state** and national highways takes effect from **April 1**, all liquor shops in **Chandigarh** might face closure. On record, all major roads in **Chandigarh** are listed as state highways and fall under the judgement.

Aadhaar linking must for PDS in Karnataka:

Below poverty line and **above** poverty line families in **Karnataka** will not get their monthly ration under the **Public Distribution System (PDS)** from **April 1**, if they fail to link the **Aadhaar number** with the Food and Civil Supplies Department. The Centre has set **June 30** as the **deadline to link Aadhaar with ration cards.**

INS Viraat to be decommissioned on March 6:

INS Viraat, the **second aircraft carrier** in the Indian naval fleet, will be decommissioned on **March 6.** **INS Viraat** holds a **Guinness world record for being the oldest surviving aircraft carrier.** It was first commissioned in the Indian Navy in 1987 after serving the United Kingdom's Royal Navy for 27 years.

EU member states approve visa-free travel for Georgia:

European Union member states approved **visa-free travel for Georgia**, after agreeing safeguards **to prevent** any upsurge in arrivals from **the former Soviet satellite.** Georgia, along with much larger Ukraine, has been urging the EU to grant visa-free travel so as **to show its citizens** that close ties with Europe can deliver concrete benefits.

China to build first underwater platform in South China Sea:

China will build its **first long-term underwater observation platform** in resource-rich **South China Sea**, where it has territorial disputes with many south-east Asian countries including **Malaysia**, the **Philippines** and **Vietnam.**

Dena Bank rolls out RFID-enabled cards to serve valued clients better:

Dena Bank has introduced **RFID-enabled** banking cards whereby a branch/relationship manager **can identify a valued client** entering a branch with the card. Once the client enters the branch,

complete information about him/her will pop up on the manager's desktop.

This will help the branch staff to **take care** of the customer's needs and offer services quickly without any delay. The **RFID card** is being introduced in select branches, and **Dena Bank JVPD branch (Mumbai)** is the **first branch** to be enabled with RFID technology.

Air India's new fuel-efficient Airbus A320 Neo takes flight:

Government-run Air India has put into operation its newly-leased **Airbus A320 Neo** with its maiden flight arriving in **Chennai from New Delhi.** The first A320 Neo aircraft with **161 passengers** on board touched down at the **Chennai International Airport** from the **Indira Gandhi International Airport.**

India, third biggest source of spam:

About **20%** of all spam emails in the fourth quarter of last year, distributed **ransomware Trojans.** Kaspersky Lab says the volume of spam emails in 2016 **increased** to **58.31%** of overall email traffic, up from 3.03% in 2015.

The **US** remained the biggest source of spam (**12.08%**), with second place taken by **Vietnam (10.32%),** and **India** in third (**10.15%**). **Germany** continued to be the country hit most by **malicious mailshots (14.13%).** Then came **Japan (7.59%)** and **China (7.32%).**

Gopal Baglay assumes charge as new MEA spokesperson:

Gopal Baglay has been appointed as the new spokesperson of the **Indian foreign ministry.** Baglay has served as the **deputy high commissioner to Islamabad.** Gopal Baglay, who headed the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)** division dealing with Pakistan, assumed charge as Ministry spokesperson. He was succeeded **Vikas Swarup** who was appointed as India's High Commissioner to **Canada.**

Mapping dolphin proteins may benefit human health:

Mapping all the proteins found in the **dolphin genome** could pave the way for **finding a new way to treat** some common diseases that affect humans, say researchers. **A genome** is the complete set of genetic material present in an organism. "Dolphins and humans are very, very similar creatures," said by Ben Neely of the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

SpaceX to send two people around the moon who paid for a 2018 mission:

SpaceX CEO Elon Musk revealed that two people have paid for a private mission around the moon, tentatively set for **launch in 2018** with the private company's yet **untested Falcon Heavy rocket.** The passengers will be flown to space in a **Dragon 2 spaceship**, launched by SpaceX's in-design Falcon Heavy rocket. The two people will **begin training** for space this year and will need to clear certain health tests.

Japanese scientists develop a new flexible material which is tougher than steel:

Scientists have created a **highly flexible material** that is tougher than steel, by **combining** hydrogels with woven glass fibre fabric, which may have a wide range of potential applications. Researchers from **Hokkaido University** in **Japan** focused on creating a **reinforced material** using hydrogels.

Amarinder Singh's biography, 'The People's Maharaja', was released:

Punjab Congress **chief Amarinder Singh's** biography, **'The People's Maharaja'**, was released. The authorised biography of the erstwhile scion of Patiala royalty, authored by **Chandigarh-based writer Khushwant Singh**, sheds a new light on the sequence of events that led to the 1984 army action at Golden temple in Amritsar.

Meghalaya's root bridge nominated for award:

Meghalaya's "root-bridge" has been nominated for the prestigious **National Innovation Foundation award for grassroots innovations** and outstanding traditional knowledge, community-driven innovation by forest dwellers in the southern slopes of the State.

Padmakar Shivalkar, Rajinder Goel to get C K Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award:

Former left-arm spinners **Rajinder Goel and Padmakar Shivalkar** alongside former women's cricketer **Shanta Rangaswamy** are set to be accorded the **Lifetime Achievement Award** in the upcoming BCCI Annual Awards 2016-17, set to take place on **March 8 in Bengaluru.** **Shanta Rangaswamy** is the **first Indian woman cricketer** to compile a hundred - scoring it in Dunedin against a formidable New Zealand side in 1977.

National and International Polar Bear Day celebrated on February 27th:

National Polar Bear Day, also known as International Polar Bear Day is observed on **February 27th.** International Polar Bear Day is organized by Polar Bears International to **raise awareness** about the impact of **global warming** and reduced sea ice on polar bear populations.

National science day – FEB 28:

National Science Day is celebrated all over India with great enthusiasm on **28th of February** every year in order to commemorate the invention of the **Raman Effect** in India by the Indian physicist, **Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman** on the same day in the year 1928. The **theme** this year is **'Science and Technology for Specially Abled Persons'.**

Ankur Mittal strikes silver; Jitu, Heena win gold in test event:

Indian shooter Ankur Mittal clinched the **silver medal** in double trap after **Heena Sidhu and Jitu Rai** had combined to win the **mixed doubles gold in air pistol**, an event that is being recommended for the **next Olympics in Tokyo in 2020.**

Dominic Thiem wins Rio Open for eighth ATP singles title

Austrian Dominic Thiem secured his **eighth professional title** with a 7-5, 6-4 win over **Pablo Carreno Busta** in the final of the **Rio Open.** Second seed Thiem, who became the favourite after top seed **Kei Nishikori** was knocked out in the first round, did not lose a set the entire tournament.

Virat Kohli named captain of the year, Ben Stokes best batsman at tenth annual ESPN cricinfo Awards:

India Test skipper Virat Kohli has been named **'Captain of the Year'** at the **10th annual ESPNcricinfo Awards.** Kohli led India to nine wins out of 12 Tests in the year gone by **Englishman Ben Stokes** won the **'Test Batting Performance of the Year'** for his incredible counter-attacking innings of 258 runs off 198 balls against South Africa in Cape Town.

Mohamed Hussamuddin Wins Silver at 68th Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament:

Mohamed Hussamuddin lost a closely-contested final to settle for a **silver medal as India** signed off with **three medals** at the **68th Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.**

Russia's Sochi hosts Winter Military World Games:

Military teams from around the globe are participating in the **World Winter Games** being held in the southern Russian city of **Sochi**. International Military Sports Council, which is among the world's largest sporting committees, is organising the games. Over **400 military athletes from 26 countries** will compete in seven disciplines, which include the biathlon, alpine skiing and indoor climbing.

Welsh rugby international Elli Norkett dies in crash:

A woman who died in a crash in **Neath Port Talbot** has been named as **Wales rugby international Elli Norkett**. Miss Norkett, 20, from Llandarcy, Neath, had been the youngest player in the **2014 Rugby World Cup**.

India's Radhanagar Beach among World's Top 10:

Radhanagar beach on **Havelock Island** in the **Andaman** has been ranked the **world's 8th best in Trip Advisor's 'World's Travellers Choice Award-Winning Beaches'**. The beach has also secured the first spot in Asia. The **Baia do Sancho** beach in **Brazil** has topped the list.

Thiruvananthapuram ranked best in Urban Governance:

Thiruvananthapuram has been ranked first among the **21 Indian cities** that were tested on **urban governance parameters**, according to the latest survey by **Janaagraha Centre** for Citizenship and Democracy. **Pune and Kolkata** were respectively ranked **second and third** in the survey. **Chandigarh** was ranked the **lowest**.

Celebration of 25 years of India-Israel Diplomatic Relations in New Delhi:

India and Israel celebrated **25 years of establishment** of their diplomatic relations. The two nations established the diplomatic relations in **1992**.

India and Israel have been cooperating in many areas like defence, agriculture, science and technology, education, dairy, innovation among others.

Israel is also a major contributor of defence technology to India. India imports Israeli defence equipment, including missiles, drones, radars and other critical military components.

Israel:

- ❖ Capital: Jerusalem

- ❖ Currency: Israeli new shekel
- ❖ President: Reuven Rivlin
- ❖ Prime minister: Benjamin Netanyahu

India's first integrated heliport launched in New Delhi:

Civil Aviation minister **Gajapathi Raju** inaugurated the **India's first integrated heliport**. The commencement of services from the heliport would also reduce congestion at the **Delhi airport**. This is the **first of its kind facility in South Asia**, which has been built by **Pawan Hans Ltd**.

The newly developed heliport has been built over an **area of 25 acres** with a total investment of **Rs. 100 crore**. The heliport consists of a terminal building having a capacity of **150 passengers, 4 hangars** with the parking capacity of **16 helicopters and 9 parking bays**.

India, Oman to hold counter-terror exercises:

Oman has scheduled to conduct their **second bilateral exercise, Al Nagah-II 2017**, in March with a **focus on counter-terrorism**. **India** has been deepening its defence cooperation with the region. During the visit Chief of the Naval Staff, **Admiral Sunil Lanba**, to **Oman and the UAE**. The exercise would be held in the **Dhauladhar Ranges at Bakloh** in **Himachal Pradesh** from **March 6 to 19**.

Govt wants all bank accounts internet-enabled by March 31:

The Union ministry of **electronics and information technology** wants all bank accounts to be internet-enabled by **March 31** after seeing the 'phenomenal success' of the **Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) app**. A third of all bank accounts aren't linked to the internet yet. "The IT ministry is looking to ensure all citizens have means to access digital payments.

SIDBI, CSFB pact to help MSMEs avail loans at cheaper rate:

Lender to small industries **SIDBI** signed an agreement whereby it will handhold the **Capital Small Finance Bank (CSFB)** to enable it to provide loans at a concessional rate to **MSMEs**.

This MoU will envisage joint financing/co-financing of MSMEs for capital expenditure under 'SIDBI Make in India Soft Loan Fund for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises', popularly known as **SMILE** at a concessional rate of **9.60 per cent** by **SIDBI**.

GIFT City partners with Dubai International Financial Centre for

expertise in fields of banking and financial services:

GIFT City has signed a pact with **Dubai International Financial Centre**. This will enable both organisations to "share exchange of information on banking, financial service and securities, legislation and regulation, cooperation in the area of training, assistance in organising seminars and conferences on selected issues enhancing mutual development of the centres".

Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance launches iSelect term plan:

Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance expanded its **online product suit** with the launch of **iSelect term plan** meant for **family protection**.

"Our **iSelect Term Plan** is a pure protection online term plan that provides life insurance cover along with the option to cover against accidental death/disability," said by **Anuj Mathur**, Chief Executive Officer, Canara HSBC Oriental Bank of Commerce Life Insurance Company.

OECD cuts 2016-17 GDP growth forecast to 7%:

The **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** cut its growth projection for **India** in 2016-17 to **7% from the 7.4%** it had projected last year. The OECD, in its Economic Survey of India 2017 report, forecast a growth rate of **7.3% for 2017-18** and **7.7% for 2018-19**.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) will be implemented from July 1, 2017:

Goods and Services Tax (GST) will be implemented from **July 1, 2017**. GST will be a reality soon as all states were on board and this, in turn, will unleash the growth potential of the economy. The GST, which will replace a myriad of consumption taxes, could be a "game-changer" over the medium term as it would reduce tax cascading and boost India's competitiveness, investment and job creation.

81-year-old Japanese woman launches her first app for iPhone:

Japan's **Masako Wakamiya** has created her first app for iPhone at the **age of 81**, after starting to use computers at the age of 60. The '**Hinadan**' app teaches people the proper way of staging their traditional doll displays for the festival.

Marijne Sjoerd appointed as the India's Hockey Women Team Coach:

Hockey India officially confirmed **Dutchman Marijne Sjoerd** as the new

women's coach, succeeding **Neil Hawgood** in the role for a period of **four years**.

Lt General Bobby Mathews retires:

Officers training Academy commandant **Lt. General Bobby Mathews** retired after serving the armed forces for close to 40 years. Commissioned into **2 KUMAON** in **1978**, he was an alumnus of National Defence Academy, **Khadakwasla**.

Scientists find evidence of a 'Star Wars' planetary system:

Scientists have for the **first time** found evidence of a **Tatooine-like rocky planetary system** in the Star Wars series about 1,000 light-years away. The system called **SDSS 1557** consists of the remains of shattered asteroids orbiting a double sun consisting of a **white dwarf** and a **brown dwarf**. The discovery led by researchers at **University College London (UCL)** in the **UK**.

First tourist in space paid Rs.133 crore for the trip:

American businessman **Dennis Tito** paid **Rs.133 crore (\$20 million)** for an **eight-day trip** to the **International Space Station (ISS)** in 2001, becoming the **world's first orbital space tourist**. Tito was launched into space aboard a **Russian Soyuz spacecraft**, owing to a deal brokered by the US-based firm Space Adventures.

Real-time blood monitoring using light for first time

US-based researchers have **used light** for the first time to monitor a patient's blood in real-time, to **prevent fatal blood clotting** during heart surgeries.

The technology uses an **optical fibre to beam light through patient's blood and interprets bounced signals**. It can replace blood tests that take up to 10 minutes, proving critical in life and death situations, researchers said.

ISSF Shooting World Cup: Jitu Rai Wins Bronze in 10-Metre Air Pistol:

Jitu Rai won **India's third medal** in the ongoing **ISSF World Cup in New Delhi** when he clinched a **bronze medal** in the **10-metre air pistol** event.

The Indian shooter scored a total 216.7 points in the event. The **gold** went **Japan's Tomoyuki Matsuda** with a world record total of 240.1 points, while **Vietnam's Xuan Vinh Hoang** claimed silver with 236.6 points.

Indian shuttlers win men's doubles at Uganda International:

Indian shuttlers Tarun Kona and Alwin Francis won the men's doubles gold at the **2017 Uganda International Series**.

Zero Discrimination Day – MARCH 1:

March 1 is observed as **Zero Discrimination Day** to create awareness to people from all corners of the world, about the evil consequences of discrimination, to celebrate diversity, and to reject discrimination.

The theme of this year's Zero Discrimination Day is "make some noise".

Tarak Mehta, the man who inspired India's longest running comedy show, passes away:

Tarak Mehta, the popular **Gujarati columnist, humorist and playwright**, passed away at the age of **87**. The columnist's most popular work, **Duniya Ne Undha Chashma**, was adapted to the small screen as **Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah** on SAB TV.

Former Union Minister P Shivshankar passes away:

Former Union Minister **P Shivshankar**, an influential Congress leader during the governments of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, passed away in Hyderabad. He was 90. **Shivshankar** served as a judge in **Andhra Pradesh High Court**, but resigned from his job and practised law in the High Court and Supreme Court.

Class 9-12 Girls Also To Get Mid-day Meal in Delhi:

The **Delhi Government** has extended the mid-day meal scheme for **girls up to class 12**, reportedly making it the **first state in the country** to do so, the city-state government claimed. The scheme will be applicable from **April**. The AAP government will set aside **Rs.50 crore** for extending the scheme, which currently covers all students till **class 8**.

World Bank CEO visits Asia's largest slum Dharavi in Mumbai:

World Bank CEO **Kristalina Georgieva** paid a visit to Asia's largest slum **Dharavi in Mumbai**. She also travelled in a local train from **Churchgate to Dadar**. During her first official visit to India, **Georgieva** will see the operations of bank-supported suburban rail system in Mumbai.

Andhra planning to launch airline named after state capital:

The Andhra Pradesh government is planning to launch an **airline**, named after the state's capital **Amaravati**. The initiatives are aimed at bringing global exposure to the upcoming city and boost the state's aviation sector. The state government may also like to have its own international airport.

Saudi king begins historic visit to Indonesia:

Saudi Arabia's King Salman held talks with Indonesia's President **Joko Widodo** and signed a range of cooperation agreements at the beginning of a **12-day visit**, the first by a Saudi monarch in nearly **five decades**.

The leaders oversaw, among 11 pacts, a new agreement between state energy companies **Saudi Aramco** and **Pertamina**, building on an existing **\$6-billion plan** to expand **Indonesia's biggest refinery**.

HDFC, ICICI, Axis banks will now charge up to Rs 150 after 4 free transactions a month:

Giving a major push to digitalisation and cashless transaction, **HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank** and **Axis Bank** began **charging** a minimum of **Rs 150 per transaction** for deposits and withdrawals **after four free** transactions per month. Previously, the banks used to charge **Rs 20** for deposit and withdrawal after four transactions.

DRDO signs deal with firm to manufacture key alloy 'Non-exclusive' licensing deal for armour applications:

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** signed a technology transfer agreement with **Jindal Stainless (Hisar) Limited (JSHL)** for manufacturing **High Nitrogen Steel (HNS)**. The alloy has significant applications in the defence sector, but currently the country is largely dependent on imports.

The **"non-exclusive"** licensing agreement for armour applications was signed between the **Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory (DMRL)**, the Hyderabad-based laboratory of the **DRDO** and the **JSHL**.

World Bank offers over \$1-billion loan to Maharashtra:

The **World Bank** has announced an assistance programme of over **\$1 billion** in the areas of urban transport and climate resilient agriculture in **Maharashtra**, over

the **next 2-3 years**. This was announced by the World Bank's Chief Executive Officer, **Kristalina Georgieva**, at the end of a day-long visit to the city.

Reliance General Insurance, Catholic Syrian Bank tie up:

Reliance General Insurance (RGI), a part of Reliance Capital, has entered into a **bancassurance** tie-up with **Catholic Syrian Bank**. With this tie-up, RGI will offer its general insurance products to Catholic Syrian Bank's **1.5 million** customer base spread across its 430 branches in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

Interceptor missile test successful:

The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** successfully carried out a test of an **interceptor missile (endo-atmospheric missile)**, which can intercept missiles at ranges of **15-30 km**, launched from the **Abdul Kalam Island** off the **Odisha coast** in response to an incoming 'enemy' missile which was launched from the **Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur**.

J.S. Deepak is India's WTO ambassador:

Deepak was named **India's** next Ambassador to the **World Trade Organisation (WTO)** from **June** this year. A **1982 batch IAS** officer from Uttar Pradesh, **Deepak**, who is at present attending the **World Mobile Congress** at **Barcelona**, has been made Officer on Special Duty in the commerce department.

Tyagi takes over as SEBI chairman:

Finance ministry official **Ajay Tyagi** took over as **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairman** with two likely priorities - developing the country's commodity and corporate bond markets and shoring up corporate governance.

Wrestler Kripa Shankar Patel Bishnoi, 'Dangal coach' becomes international referee:

Wrestler **Kripa Shankar**, who became famous after training **Bollywood star Amir Khan** in the blockbuster movie 'Dangal', has become an international match referee for the **United World Wrestling (UWW)** has announced the inclusion in its international panel of referees.

Dwayne Smith announces retirement from international cricket:

West Indies batsman **Dwayne Smith** has announced his retirement from **all International Cricket**.

Remarkable Israel's Tennis Player Shahar Peer retires:

Shahar Peer, Israel's most successful women's tennis player announced her retirement because of a chronic shoulder injury. Formerly she was **world No. 11** reached **two Grand Slam quarterfinals**, at the Australian and US Opens in 2007, and **won five WTA titles**. She was aged **29**.

Rihanna honoured with humanitarian award:

Singer **Rihanna** has been honoured with the **2017 Harvard Humanitarian of the Year award**. The **29-year-old** singer was honoured by the **Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations** for her work in her native island of **Barbados** and the charities she has founded over the years.

Maria Sharapova given wildcard for Italian Open:

Five-time Grand Slam champion **Maria Sharapova** has been given a **wildcard** to play in the **Italian Open** in May. The former world number one makes her return to the circuit in Stuttgart in April after completing a 15-month ban for doping.

FIFA bans Nigeria's Amos Adamu for two years:

Former FIFA executive committee member **Amos Adamu** has received a second ban for **unethical conduct**. FIFA's ethics committee latest ban was the result of Adamu's "involvement in the organization of an event in 2010" which violated the rules of conduct and constituted a conflict of interest.

Jitu Rai wins gold in 50m pistol, Amanpreet Singh settles for silver at ISSF World Cup:

Jitu Rai clinched a **dramatic gold** in the **50-metre free pistol**, beating compatriot and qualification leader **Amanpreet Singh** by 3.2 points, in the **World Cup** at the **Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad**.

The **silver medal** also went to India as **Amanpreet Singh** took the second position after shooting a total of 226.9. This was his first World Cup final appearance. The **bronze medal** went to **Iran's Vahid Golkhandan** who shot a total score of 208 points. This was his first World Cup medal in international competition.

Kohli first to be named India's best int'l cricketer thrice:

Virat Kohli has been named **India's best international cricketer** of

the year by the **BCCI**, making him the **first player** to win the top honour **three times**. He will be presented the award, which is named after veteran cricketer **Polly Umrigar**, at the annual award ceremony. Kohli had won the award earlier in 2011-12 and 2014-15.

Former England batsman and Test umpire John Hampshire passes away:

Former **England batsman and Test umpire John Hampshire** has died. Hampshire made history on his Test debut by becoming the **first Englishman to score a century** at Lord's stadium in his maiden Test in the series **against the West Indies in 1969**.

Aadhaar to be must for online booking of railway tickets:

The railways will soon move towards **Aadhaar-based online ticketing system** to prevent touts from **blocking bulk tickets**, end fraudulent bookings and curb cases of impersonation.

Aadhaar number has been made **mandatory for senior citizens** to avail concessions in train tickets from **April 1**. An integrated ticketing app will also be launched by May to promote cashless transaction.

Yatra.com signs pact with MP govt. to promote homestays:

Online travel company **Yatra.com** has announced that it signed an agreement with the **Madhya Pradesh** government to jointly promote **homestays** in the state. Under the agreement, Yatra will promote state tourism-approved **homestays**, where travellers can book a room with a local family or the entire house. Yatra had recently signed agreements with the **Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat governments**.

Kashmir gets first cashless hospital:

The **Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir (DHSK)** started its first cashless transaction services at District Hospital **Pulwama**. District Development Commissioner **Pulwama Muneer Ul Islam** launched the service by inaugurating this facility, adding that these services would pave way for **complete cashless transactions** as desired by the Government **post demonetisation**.

Assam govt makes Sanskrit compulsory in schools:

The Assam Cabinet's decision to introduce **Sanskrit as a compulsory subject till Class VIII** has evoked sharp criticism from students organisations. The **All Assam Students' Union (AASU)** has criticised the decision to make Sanskrit

compulsory instead of promoting Assamese in schools.

VSoft to set up centre in Amaravati VIJAYAWADA:

Hyderabad and the **U.S-based VSoft Technologies**, which are in an expansion mode, is planning to set up a software development centre at **Mangalagiri in Amaravati**. The company signed an agreement and registered with the APIIC, which allotted a 1,882- square feet area of land in the IT Park.

India to participate in Permanent Indus Commission meet in Lahore

Pakistan forwarded the invitation to **India** to resolve the **Indus Water Treaty (IWT)**, India is set to participate in the meeting of **Permanent Indus Commission**, scheduled to be held in **Lahore in March**.

The treaty which was signed in **1960** by **Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru** and **Pakistan President Ayub Khan** gives India control over the **three eastern rivers** of the Indus basin, **the Beas, the Ravi and the Sutlej** while Pakistan has the **three western rivers, the Indus, the Chenab and the Jhelum**.

Pakistan returns to SAARC gets Secretary General post:

Pakistan succeeded in getting its **official elected to the post of the Secretary General** of the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**.

The **new chief of SAARC, Amjad Hussein B Sial**, is a veteran Pakistani diplomat.

The incumbent secretary general, Nepal's **Arjun Bahadur Thapa**, will complete his tenure at the **end of February**.

Half of India-Bangladesh border surrounded:

Half of the **4,096-km border India** shares with **Bangladesh** has been fenced. Land acquisition is a major challenge to completing the work by the **2019 deadline**. The border runs along **West Bengal for 2,216.7 km, Assam 263 km, Meghalaya 443 km, Tripura 856 km and Mizoram 318 km**.

The **aim of the project** is to curb infiltration and **smuggling of cattle and fake Indian currency notes**.

Sweden to reintroduce compulsory military service after 6 years:

Sweden announced that it will **reintroduce compulsory military service** starting this **summer** to respond to **global security challenges**, including from **Russia**. "The government wants a more stable staff supply system and to

boost its military capability because the security situation has changed.

Sweden is not a NATO member but has signed the **body's Partnership for Peace programme** launched in **1994** to develop military cooperation between **NATO and non-member countries**.

India to get 'fair share' of BASF's €3 bn. Asia outlay:

Germany-based global chemicals major BASF will invest **€3 billion (₹ 21,000 crore)** between **2017-2021** in the **Asia Pacific Region** to build new capacities. "India will get a **fair share** of it investment".

Sanjeev Gandhi, member of the Board of Executive Directors, BASF.

ICICI Bank's bond sale to raise \$500 million:

Private sector lender **ICICI Bank** hit the **overseas debt market** with a **\$500-million dollar-denominated bond issue** and is expected to close the **5.5-year issue** tonight.

"The **benchmark issue** will be sold through the **Dubai International Finance Centre** branch of the bank, and the lead-managers have given a price guidance of 1.55% over the U.S. treasury". The issue is part of **ICICI Bank's \$7.5 billion global medium-term notes programme** will have a maturity of **5.5 years** and will be listed on the **Singapore Stock Exchange**.

Essar Steel enters defence sector:

Essar Steel has forayed into **high-growth defence manufacturing sector** by developing steel grades which find application in land and naval defence. The estimated expenditure in **defence sector is more than the \$200 billion** over the **next five years**.

Essar Steel aims to participate in the indigenisation of products used in **naval defence, including destroyers, offshore patrol vessels** used by both the **Navy and Coast Guard, rocket launchers**, floating docks and submarines.

Essar Steel MD and CEO: **Dilip Oommen**

'Swati' extensively tested along LoC:

The **DRDO** formally handed over an indigenously developed **Weapon Locating Radar (WLR) system** called '**Swati**' to the Army. It has been extensively tested along the **Line of Control (LoC)**. The organisation also handed over a **Nuclear, Biological and Chemical (NBC) Reconnaissance vehicle** and NBC treatment drugs to the Army.

The **WLR** has been a critical requirement of the Army, and in the aftermath of the **Kargil conflict**, it had to be **imported from the U.S. in 2002** to fill critical needs.

'Kalvari' test-fires anti-ship missile:

Kalvari, the **first** of the **Scorpion submarines** being built in **India**, successfully conducted **its maiden test-firing of an anti-ship missile in the Arabian Sea**.

Kalvari is scheduled to be commissioned into the **Navy** very soon. However, the submarines are still without a **heavy weight torpedo**, their primary weapon. Navy sources said the missile fired was a **French SM-39 Exocet** anti-ship missile. "This launch is a significant milestone.

Visitor's Award for Best University of 2017 was bagged by Jawaharlal Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru University has bagged **Visitor's Award for Best University of 2017**. The award was introduced with the aim to **promote healthy competition amongst Central Universities** and motivating them to adopt best practices around the world.

Book written by Former Indian Cricketer Aakash Chopra launched:

'**Numbers Do Lie**' is a book written by former Indian **cricketer Aakash Chopras** based on '**Impact Index Analytics**' of three personalities Jaideep Verma, Soham Sarkhel and Nikhil Narayan. The launch was attended by **Indian spinner R. Ashwin**.

Roger Federer defeated by world number 116 at Dubai C'ships:

Australian Open champion and former world number one **Roger Federer** was defeated by world number 116 **Evgeny Donskoy** in the second round of the **Dubai Duty Free Championships**. Donskoy defeated Federer 3-6, 7-6, 7-6 to break the Swiss' eight-match win streak this year and mark the third instance since 2007 of Federer being beaten by a qualifier.

World Wildlife Day –March 3:

World Wildlife Day celebrated every year on **3rd March** is celebrated with the aim of **preserve the rich flora and fauna** of our World and to protect the **endangered** species from extinction. Theme: "**Listen to the young voices**".

National defence day – March 3:

National defence day is celebrated on **March 3 every year**. The national Defence Academy is a joint services academy of the **Indian Armed forces**. This day is commemorated with flag unfurling function being **world's largest and tallest Indian Tricolour** was unfurled at Town Park **Faridabad**.

First ever WII-Forest dept survey of dugong numbers:

The **Wildlife Institute of India (WII)** and **Gujarat** forest department will soon begin the first ever joint survey to ascertain the exact population of **dugongs**, a medium sized marine mammal popularly known as "sea cow". The dugong is in the "vulnerable" category of the **IUCN red list**, and is a Schedule-I animal.

Gujarat needs 9.78L affordable houses:

The **Gujarat** state government's recent housing demand survey, by the **Affordable Housing Mission in the state**, has estimated that **9.78 lakh affordable houses** are needed in the state.

The survey was carried out under the government of **India's Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)**. The recent state budget allocated **Rs 1,340 crore** for the various housing schemes. PM Narendra Modi's tall target of "housing for all by 2022". **Gujarat ranks at the top in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY)** and has covered all **171 urban areas of municipal corporations, urban development authorities and municipalities**.

Name changing of Tirupati Airport as Sri Venkateswara Airport got approval from Andhra Cabinet:

Andhra Pradesh State Cabinet which met under the chairmanship of Chief Minister **N Chandrababu Naidu** in Amaravati took several important decisions, including naming of **Gannavaram Airport as NTR Amaravati Airport and Tirupati Airport as Sri Venkateswara Airport**. Proposals for renaming the airports would be sent to the Centre for approval.

Air India flies into record books with flight by all-women crew:

India's national carrier airline **Air India** made history by taking off the flight 'AI 173' - the **world's longest all-women** operated and supported flight. Two days prior to the **International Women's Day**, the all-women crew flight took the non-stop **Delhi - San Francisco route**, successfully covering **14,600 kilometres** with a ground speed of **1200 kilometres per hour**. The total flight route was covered in **17 hours**.

India to have largest Muslim population by 2050, says Pew report:

With over **30 crore** Muslims, India will have the world's largest Muslim population **by 2050**, according to a report by **US-based Pew Research Center**.

Islam is currently the **fastest-growing** major religion in the world and the Muslim population is projected to increase faster than the world population.

Aadhaar must for midday meal cooks, students:

Cook-cum-helpers working under the **midday meal scheme** as well as the **student beneficiaries** will now be required to have an **Aadhaar card** to avail the facility with the HRD Ministry mandating the same. The move, aimed at improving **efficiency** and **transparency**, comes after a push from the Centre to link the **Aadhaar number** with subsidy schemes related to school education.

India to train Myanmar Navy Special:

The Indian Navy will set up **meteorological facilities** and **impart training** to the **Myanmar Navy**. This was agreed upon during a recent visit of a Myanmar delegation to **Kochi**. Myanmar will soon send a proposal with its requirements. This fits into India's overall effort to boost strategic cooperation under the 'Act East' policy and will help offset increasing Chinese presence in its neighbourhood.

China launches new Kaituoze-2 rocket with Tiankun-1 satellite:

China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center (JSLC), the China National Space Administration (CNSA) successfully flew its **first Kaituoze-2 rocket**. It was the country's **third** overall launch of the year. The rocket appears to have succeeded in deploying the **Tiankun-1 satellite** into an elliptical, Sun-synchronous orbit.

The **TK-1 satellite** will carry out **remote sensing tasks** and **experimental small satellite operations**. The spacecraft is the first to be developed by the **China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC)**, and is an expansion of the company's commercial space plans.

13.52 bn US dollar pledged during Nepal Investment Summit – 2017:

A total of **13.52 billion US dollar** has been pledged as foreign investment during the **Nepal Investment Summit-2017** held in the Capital on March 2-3. **China** committed **highest investment** in Nepal with its investment pledge totalling \$8.3 billion. Nepali businessmen have also committed to invest \$11.5 million during the Summit.

Sixteen different companies have announced their commitment to invest in Nepal during the conference jointly organised by **Ministry of Industry and Investment Board Nepal (IBN)**.

Australia to introduce world's first cyber crime university course:

Australia said it will offer the **world's first university** course to train intelligence analysts **to fight cyber crime**, prompted by innovative methods of money transfer among organised crime and militant groups.

GAIL signs time-swap deal with Swiss trader Gunvor to sell US LNG:

State-run gas company **GAIL (India) Ltd** has signed a **time-swap deal** with **Swiss trader Gunvor** to sell some of its **U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG)**, as the Indian firm tries to ease the burden of its costly **foreign LNG supplies**. It is the **first time-swap** agreement by **GAIL**.

L-G transfers WCD Secretary Dilraj Kaur:

Lieutenant-Governor Anil Baijal has transferred **Women and Child Development Secretary Dilraj Kaur**, whose appointment as Member Secretary of the **Delhi Commission for Women** by his predecessor, **Najeeb Jung**, was disputed by Chief Minister **Arvind Kejriwal**.

Ms.Kaur, a 2000-batch IAS officer, has been posted as **Additional Commissioner in the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC)**. She has been replaced by IAS officer **Garima Gupta**.

Sri Lanka Wins Most Popular Tourism Destination Award:

Sri Lanka won the "Most Popular Tourism Destination Award" at the **Guangzhou International Travel Fair (GITF) in China**. The island nation won the prestigious **award for the second consecutive year** which is a testament to its growing popularity among Chinese travel enthusiasts. **China** has been Sri Lanka's **second largest source** market for tourism since 2014.

Angad Vir Singh Bajwa wins mixed bronze with Haley Dunn:

Angad Vir Singh Bajwa helped the host wind up the **shooting World Cup** on a bright note as he **won the mixed skeet bronze medal** with **Haley Dunn of the USA**, at the **Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad**.

Six-time Olympic medallist and **former World champion Kimberly Rhode** won the **gold** with **Hayden Stewart** defeating the brother-sister combination of **Federico** and **Melisa Gil** of Argentina 29-26.

Diego Maradona in talks as football advisor to China:

Argentine football great **Diego Maradona** could accept a position as a **national football advisor in China**, according to the World Cup winner's lawyer **Matias Morla**.

National Safety Day:

National Safety Day/Week is a whole week safety campaign which will be celebrated from **4th of March (Saturday) to the 10th of March (Friday)** in 2017. National Safety Day/week theme of 2017 is "Keep Each Other Safe".

French football great Kopa passes away:

Former France football legend Raymond Kopa, who won **three consecutive European Cups** with **Real Madrid** from 1957, has died at the age of 85. Kopa, who guided France to third place at the **1958 World Cup** and was named the tournament's best player, is one of **four French players** to have won the **Ballon d'Or** award.

The 11th GST Council meeting:

In a significant step towards meeting the **July 1 deadline** for the roll out of the **Goods and Services Tax (GST)**, the GST Council gave its formal approval to the **Central GST (CGST)** and **Inter-State GST (IGST) laws**, with the Compensation Law already having been approved during the previous meeting on February 18. The Council will meet **again on March 16** to deliberate on the **final versions of the remaining two laws** — the **State GST law** and the **Union Territories GST Law**.

"The **SGST law** will apply to **all States and Union Territories** with legislatures (**Delhi and Puducherry**), but will **not apply** to those **Union Territories without a legislature**. "Therefore, we will need to bring out a Union Territories GST law for those Union Territories."

India-Canada pacts to be progressive: Minister

India has recognised that **trade and investment** pacts with **Canada** will have progressive elements, **Canadian International Trade Minister François-Philippe Champagne**. The agreement we reached with the **EU** was the **most progressive trade agreement** ever negotiated by Canada or the EU, including provisions on environment, labour, the right of space to regulate in **health and safety** as well as **protecting cultural diversity**. So we want to be the

destination promoting a progressive trade agenda.

Iran's S-300 system becomes operational:

Iran's advanced **S-300 air defence system**, delivered by **Russia** following a July 2015 nuclear deal after years of delay, is now operational. The **S-300 air defence system** has been tested. The test at a **desert base** had seen several targets, including a **ballistic missile** and a drone, intercepted.

A domestically manufactured air defence system dubbed **Bavar 373** which was **"more advanced than the S-300"** would be tested very soon.

India needs to see the big picture:

China invited **India** to consider the **"larger picture"** of ties, focusing on opportunities that **New Delhi** can avail by participating in the **Belt and Road connectivity initiative**, and not allowing specific differences on counterterrorism to cloud the growing relationship.

Critics say legislation will encourage weddings of minors in Bangladesh:

Bangladesh's new child marriage law that has a special provision **allowing marriage of minors** has raised new concerns in the country, which has **one of the highest rates of child marriages in the world**.

Bangladesh has the **highest child marriage rates in Asia**. Over **half (52%) of girls** get married **before 18** and almost **one-fifth (18%)** are married off **before 15** in the country.

Google India inks MoU with Telangana govt supporting digitization:

Google India and **Telangana** government have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) **aimed** at supporting the **digitisation efforts** of the state. **Google India will provide Google Cloud credits** and access to all cloud platform products to eligible startups engaged with **Telangana government's T-Hub initiative** and through its Developer Relations team provides **technical mentorship** and advisory support to various startups.

Vodafone launches 'ReConnect' programme for women professionals:

Telecom giant **Vodafone** has launched a programme **'ReConnect'** to bring on board women professionals on a career break across **26 countries**. This programme is designed to **attract talented women** who have left the workplace for several years who would like to return to work on a full-time or flexible

basis but are struggling to make the professional connections needed or refresh the skills.

Ola inks pact with M.P. to train 25,000 people:

Taxi-hailing app **Ola** signed an agreement with the **Madhya Pradesh Government** to train about **25,000 people**. The Memorandum of Understanding was signed with **Madhya Pradesh State Skill Development Mission** and **Directorate of Skill Development (Technical Education and Skill Development Department)**. It is part of **Ola's target of skilling 50 lakh drivers by 2020**.

Dr. Reddy's Lab buys Kolkata-based NBFC:

Dr. Reddy's Laboratories announced that it has acquired **100 per cent stake in Imperial Credit Private Ltd, a Kolkata-based non-banking Finance company**. The acquisition was for a consideration of **Rs. 2.05 crore**. The acquisition process was consummated on receipt of applicable regulatory approvals. The company proposes to **undertake** the group's captive financial activities through this entity.

Airtel merges with Millicom International Cellular in Ghana:

Bharti Airtel and **Millicom International Cellular** have entered into an agreement for **Tigo Ghana and Airtel Ghana** to combine their operations in Ghana where **Airtel and Millicom** would have **equal ownership** and governance rights in the combined entity.

GAIL objects to HPCL's gas pipeline project:

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation's plan for a cross country **pipeline to move LPG received on the west coast to bottling plants over 600 km away** in the hinterland has hit a roadblock with **GAIL (India)** raising objections to the project. The project costs **₹ 500 cr.**

Keith Thurman wins split decision to unify welterweight titles:

Keith Thurman beat **Danny Garcia** and holding on to add the **WBC welterweight title** to his **WBA championship**.

Thurman has 22 knockouts in 28 fights, all wins. He won this unification bout, though, by getting tactical and going somewhat conservative.

Haiti's former President Rene Preval dies at 74:

Haiti's former President Rene Preval, an agronomist and champion of the poor who served two terms as the country's leader, died. He was 74.

Preval served as President of Haiti, the poorest country in the western hemisphere, with a long history of political violence, in **1996-2001 and 2006-2011**.

Former IFS and MP Syed Shahabuddin dies:

Former IFS and MP **Syed Shahabuddin** dies at the age of 82 at a hospital in Noida after suffering from prolonged illness. During his time, **Shahabuddin** had strongly opposed the demolition of the **Babri Masjid** and was the **leader of the Babri Action Committee**.

A.P. govt. wants INS Viraat turned into luxury hotel:

On its last day in service on March 6 after three decades of sailing, the fate of **INS Viraat**, the **oldest aircraft carrier of the Indian Navy**, remains unclear as to whether it will be **converted into a luxury hotel** or will it head **to the scrapyard to be broken up**.

The Defence Ministry is yet to take a decision on the proposal from the Government of **Andhra Pradesh (A.P.)** to convert it into an **entertainment hub in Visakhapatnam** through a **joint venture with the Government of India**. A **50:50 sharing** between the **Government of India** and the **Government of Andhra Pradesh** so as to take forward the prestigious and unique project at **Visakhapatnam**.

Centre launches survey on Gangetic dolphins:

The **Centre** has launched the **first ever across-the-river survey in the Ganga** to determine the **population of aquatic life**, including that of the **endangered Gangetic dophin**.

The **first leg of the census** was launched on **March 1 from Narora in Uttar Pradesh to Bijnor (covering distance of nearly 165 km)** to establish the number of the **national aquatic animal**.

Endangered barn owl rescued:

The **Bhitarkanika National Park** officials have rescued an **endangered barn owl**, a scheduled **animal under the Wildlife Act**, from a place of worship at a village in **Odisha's Kendrapara district**.

Owl which had whitish patches over its body, was a protected species **under**

schedule 3 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

Country's tallest Tricolour hoisted at Attari border:

A **Tricolour** was hoisted on a flag mast, said to be the **country's tallest, 323 metres** from the **India-Pakistan border at Attari**. The flag was unfurled at a height of 355 feet from the base — which is five feet high. Add to it another 10 feet, where an aviation light stands, and the **total height of the structure goes up to 365 feet**. The flag is said to be visible from **Lahore**. Previously, **Ranchi** had the **tallest national flag at 300 feet**.

21- Nation Indian Ocean Rim Association summit held in Jakarta:

The **IORA conference** held in **Jakarta in Indonesia** which was addressed by vice president **Hamid Ansari**. Theme of the summit is **"strengthening maritime cooperation for a peaceful stable and prosperous Indian ocean"**.

Travails of NRIs in exchanging demonetised notes:

Non-resident Indians (NRIs) visiting India, especially for a short visit, to their native places are finding it difficult to **exchange the demonetised currencies of Rs.1,000 and Rs.500 notes**, as these notes can be exchanged only at RBI offices in **Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, and Nagpur**. While this facility will remain open for residents (who were abroad during the specified period) from **January 2, 2017 to March 31, 2017**, NRIs can avail this **till June 30, 2017**.

'India's unemployment rate sees sharp decline':

Contrary to market perception, **India's** unemployment rate halved from **9.5 %** in August 2016 to **4.8 %** in February this year and among major States, a sharp decline was registered in **Uttar Pradesh**.

According to the **State Bank of India Ecoflash**, during August 2016 to February 2017, unemployment rate in **Uttar Pradesh** registered the maximum decline from 17.1 % to 2.9 %, followed by **Madhya Pradesh** (10% to 2.7%), **Jharkhand** (9.5 % to 3.1 %), **Odisha** (10.2 % to 2.9%) and **Bihar** (13 % to 3.7%).

Hatsun Agro commissions 24 MW wind power plants in Tamil Nadu:

Hatsun Agro Product has commissioned wind power plant with **24 MW capacity** in **Tuticorin district**, **Tamil Nadu**. 'Hatsun Agro Product Ltd to power

dairy plants with renewable energy', which is being given for the information of the Stock Exchanges, as required under the **SEBI** (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.

Chandigarh to host 'Destination North East' 2017:

Chandigarh will be hosting a three-day long 'Destination North East' 2017 event showcasing North East as a potential destination for investment. The event is being organised by the **Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER)**, government of India and an industry body PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The '**3 H' Mission**, that is **Horticulture, Handicraft and Handlooms**, is the focus of Destination North East 2017.

Nokia, BSNL to develop 5G ecosystem in India:

Nokia and state-run telco **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** will team up to accelerate the development of a **5G ecosystem** in India. With this partnership, Nokia will help the transaction of BSNL through its 5G end-to-end solution, including its **AirScale radio access** portfolio and **AirFrame data centre platform** for extreme broadband and ultra-reliability and low-latency communication.

HDFC Bank launches artificial intelligence-driven chatbot Eva for customer services:

HDFC Bank announced the launch of an **Electronic Virtual Assistant (EVA)**, an **artificial intelligence-driven chatbot**, for customer services. **Eva** is India's first **AI-based banking** chatbot and can answer millions of customer queries across multiple channels instantly (less than 0.4 seconds). "Within the first few days of its launch, Eva has answered **over 1 lakh queries** from thousands of customers from **17 countries** across the globe," it claimed.

Computer OS, short movie stored in DNA:

Scientists have successfully stored a computer operating system, a **short movie and other data in DNA**. It is considered an **ideal storage medium** in the next generation of ultracompact, biological storage devices, which will last **hundreds of thousands of years**.

In a new study, researchers from **Columbia University** and the **New York Genome Centre in the U.S.** showed that an algorithm designed for streaming video

on a cellphone can unlock DNA's nearly full storage potential by squeezing more information into its **four base nucleotides**.

German robot sets Rubik's cube record:

A new **Guinness World Record** has been set in **Germany** for the **fastest-solved Rubik's cube by a robot**, which unscrambled the puzzle in just **0.637 seconds with 21 moves**. The **Sub1 Reloaded** beat a previous record of **0.887 seconds**, which was achieved by an earlier version of the same machine using a different processor.

Querrey Beats Nadal:

Unseeded American Sam Querrey stunned **second seeded Rafael Nadal** 6-3, 7-6 to win the **ATP Mexico Open** and end the Spaniard's run of perfection.

Querrey captured his **ninth ATP title** in an impressive week that saw him beat **four top-10 players** — Belgian David Goffin, Austrian Dominic Thiem, Australian Nick Kyrgios and Spanish Nadal.

Murray solidifies his position at the top of the rankings:

Andy Murray solidified his position at the top of the rankings through a 6-3, 6-2 defeat of **Fernando Verdasco** to win the **Dubai Tennis Championships** for the **first time**. Murray achieved 45th career title.

In a first, IISc breaks into top 10 best small universities rankings:

The **Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore** has entered into the **top 10 global university rankings**. The **Times Higher Education (THE)** revealed the '**Best Small Universities in the World 2017**' in which IISc stood at number **8**.

The **first position** is grabbed by **CalTech** of the **United States of America** while **South Korea's Pohang University of Science and Technology** is at the **third place**. In the 2017 rankings, universities of France and Italian have taken three places in the top 10.

Pension benefits denied in HP:

The government of **Himachal Pradesh** denies pension benefits and the people states that they have been denied of pension benefits in the name of **financial crunch** and forced to work in **MGNREGA** as daily wagers and they are thrown away when they grew old. The allegation among the employees is out of **39000 PSU employees** around **32000**

receive pension and only a few are denied of these benefits.

International Yoga Festival at the Unofficial Yoga capital:

Rishikesh is considered to be the **unofficial yoga capital of world**. The festival was started on March 1 and it is getting ended on March 7. The weeklong celebration took place with participants from around 100 countries.

Committee framed to select a new chairman for ICSSR:

The term for the current chairman **Mr. S.K. Thorat** of **Indian Council for Social Science Research** is coming to an end and the central government framed a two member committee to select the new chairman the members are **National Research professor Ashok Modak** and RSS linked **Satish Mittal**.

Bangladesh to receive additional 60MW of power from India:

North Eastern state **Tripura** agreed to supply **60 MW** of power to **Bangladesh**, the country has been already receiving **100 MW** from March 23, 2016.

Haryana announces Tirtha Darshan Scheme:

Cheif Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** announced that the state government had prepared a **Tirtha Darshan scheme** under which senior citizens **above 60 years of age** and of Haryana domicile would be able to go on a pilgrimage within the country at government expense.

The **scheme** would bear the **entire cost of the tour of the senior citizens** who belongs to **below poverty line** families. Around **400 destinations** can be visited under the scheme.

Netflix partners with Airtel, Videocon, Vodafone:

Netflix announced **partnerships** with **Bharti Airtel, Videocon d2h and Vodafone** as the video streaming service provider looks to expand its reach in the Indian market.

India is one of the most important [markets] and we are delighted to be teaming up with three of India's leading companies. The partnerships with Airtel and Videocon d2h is for **set top boxes** while the Vodafone partnership is for **payment integration**.

Netflix co-founder and **CEO: Reed Hastings**

Tech Mahindra to buy US healthcare IT firm CJS for \$110 million:

Tech Mahindra Ltd, India's fifth-biggest software services exporter, will buy **U.S.-based healthcare IT consulting firm CJS Solutions Group** for an enterprise value of **\$110 million**. CJS, which operates as the HCI Group, specialises in the **implementation of electronic medical records (EMR) software**.

TRAI looking to provide high-speed internet at 2 paise per MB by easing access to Wi-Fi:

Telecom regulator **TRAI** plans to **unshackle Wi-Fi deployment** across the country by allowing individuals, communities, small-time entrepreneurs and content and application providers to offer affordable and high-speed internet to the public. The plan is to provide internet for **2 paise per MB** against the existing rates of around **10 paise** in the mobile telecom market.

Lalji Singh is SERB distinguished fellow:

Former director of **Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)** **Lalji Singh** has been selected for '**SERB Distinguished Fellow**' award by the **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)**, a statutory body of Government of India.

India beat Pakistan in Asia Men's Rugby Sevens Trophy 2017:

The **Indian men's Rugby team**, led by skipper **Gautam Dagar**, defeated **Pakistan** 14-12 to secure the **7th rank at the Asia Men's Rugby Sevens Trophy** held at **Aspire Rugby Field in Doha, Qatar**.

Philippines won the Asia Men's Rugby Sevens Trophy and secured a place in the Asia Rugby Sevens Series, which will feature three legs and will be played between **1st September to 14th October 2017**.

Former LS Speaker Rabi Ray passes away:

Eminent **socialist leader**, former Union Minister and **former Speaker of the Lok Sabha Rabi Ray** passed away due to prolonged illness at SCB Medical College and Hospital. He was 91.

The 48th Kerala State Film Awards:

The **48th Kerala State Film Awards** chose "**Manhole**", directed by **Vidhu Vincent**, as the **best film** and **T.K. Vinayakan** as the **best actor**. Vidhu Vincent was also chosen the best director, becoming the **first woman to win** the award in its **48- year-old history**.

Vinayakan has bagged the award for the **best actor** for his outstanding performance in "**Kammattipaadam**". **Rajisha Vijayan** who played the lead role in "**Anuraga Karikkin Vellam**" won the **best actress** category.

Delhi's per capita income likely to cross Rs.3 lakh in 2016-17: survey

As per the latest **Economic Survey of Delhi**, the **per capita income of the city**, which is already **three times the national average**, is likely to **cross ₹ 3 lakh** during **2016-17**. The advance estimate of the per capita income of Delhi at **current prices** during **2016-17** is estimated at **₹ 3,03,073**," read the survey which was tabled in the Delhi Assembly.

33% sub-quota for women in railway food stalls: IRCTC

Railways have introduced **33 per cent of sub-quota for women** in the allotment of food stalls at rail premises as a special provision in the new catering policy. The new catering policy was launched recently by **Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu** as promised in the **Rail Budget 2016-17**. The allotment of quota for women in catering units **aims to empower women** economically.

CBSE exams 2017: Now an app to locate exam centre:

Now finding the exam centre has become much simpler as the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** has launched a **mobile app for students of Class 10 and 12** appearing for their board exams this year. The app, called **The Exam Locator App**, facilitates in locating exam centres on the basis of the students' roll numbers.

Curative drugs to India for diseases like HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria:

India has been receiving child-friendly syrup for **HIV Lopinavir**, health ministry in the meanwhile released a **6 crore** payment due to **cipla pharmaceuticals**. India is likely to receive drugs from a rapid supply facility routed through the **Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria (GFATM)**.

Power Finance Corp provides Rs 2,703 crore to West Bengal's first super critical project:

PFC, a **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** in **power sector**, has sanctioned a term loan of **Rs 2,703.88 crore** to **West Bengal Power Development Corporation Ltd (WBPDC)** for construction of Unit 5 (1 X 660 MW) under **phase III of Sagardighi**

Thermal Power Station in Murshidabad.

The **660 MW Sagardighi Unit 5** is the **first super critical thermal power plant** being developed by WBPDC in the state, which is expected to be commissioned by **October 2020** at an estimated cost of Rs 3,862.69 crore.

Eight highways in Gujarat to be upgraded at Rs 12,000 crore:

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced investment of **Rs 12,000 crore** in upgrading **eight state highways** to National Highways in Gujarat as part of efforts **to boost infrastructure development** and job generation in the state.

India first in bribery rate:

India had the highest bribery rate among the **16 Asia-Pacific countries** surveyed by **Transparency International** between July 2015 and January 2017, with nearly seven in 10 people who had accessed **public services** in the country during the period paying a bribe.

As much as **69%** of the study group in **India** said they had paid a bribe, given a gift or done a favour to receive services. **Vietnam** follows with **65%**, **Thailand 41%** and **Pakistan 40%**. **China** reported a much lower **26%**.

Indo-Nepal military exercises commence in Pithoragarh:

A two-week-long **Indo-Nepal joint military exercise** began at **Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand** with an aim to **enhance anti-terror cooperation**. **Surya Kiran**, it is **eleventh** such **joint exercise** between armies of the two countries in boosting counter insurgency operations in mountainous terrain. This is a **battalion level joint exercise** between the two armies.

India, Portugal keen to further IT, communication ties: Ravi Shankar Prasad

India and Portugal stressed the need to **further explore opportunities to strengthen ties in the field of information and communication technology**, said by IT Minister **Ravi Shankar Prasad**.

To **fast-track the collaboration**, the government is also looking to **set up a working group to enhance the scope** for furthering ties, which will be a follow-up of a bilateral agreement between both the countries.

China overtakes euro zone as world's biggest bank system:

China's banking system has surpassed that of the **euro zone** to **become the world's largest by assets**, a sign both of the country's increased influence in world finance and its reliance on debt to drive growth since the global financial crisis.

Chinese bank **assets hit \$33tn** at the end of 2016, versus **\$31tn** for the euro zone, **\$16tn for the US** and **\$7tn for Japan**. The value of China's banking system is **more than 3.1 times** the size of the country's annual economic output, compared with 2.8 times for the euro zone and its banks.

MakeMyTrip, PayPal partner for hotel bookings:

Payments platform **PayPal** announced an extension of its merchant partnership with **MakeMyTrip**, Indian online travel booking company, to facilitate hotel and holidays booking in addition to airline tickets.

Government in talks with 300 companies to attract \$62 billion investment:

The government and its investment promotion agency, Invest India, are in talks with close to **300 companies** both Indian and foreign to channelize investment of close to **\$62 billion (over Rs 4 lakh crore)** into the country, which may **help create over 17 lakh jobs**.

Indian economy to grow 7.1% in this fiscal; Dec quarter GDP numbers surprising:

Global rating agency **Fitch** said Indian economy will grow by **7.1 per cent** in the current fiscal before stepping up to **7.7 per cent in the next two financial years**. The US-based agency, however, termed the **7 per cent** GDP growth for the **October-December quarter** as "surprising", a tad lower than 7.4 per cent in the previous quarter.

SBI launches 'Work from Home' facility for employees:

Country's largest lender **State Bank of India** launched a new facility to enable its **employees to work from home**. The Board of the bank has recently approved the **'Work from Home' policy** to enable its employees to work while at home using mobile devices to address any urgent requirement they may have, that prevents their travelling to work.

IDFC launches Aadhaar Pay, becomes the first to launch biometric based payment system:

IDFC has become the **first bank** to launch the **biometric-based payment system Aadhaar Pay** through its network. The bank **aims** to onboard anywhere **between 50,000-75,000 merchant** to the Aadhaar pay module in the next two years with a **total target of touching 1,00,000 merchants over the next 36 months or three years**.

President to award Rajasthan Minister:

President **Pranab Mukherjee** will give away the **Nari Shakti Puraskar** to Rajasthan Minister of State for **Women and Child Development, Anita Bhadel**, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on the occasion of **International Women's Day**. Rajasthan has been selected for its work on improving **child sex ratio**.

International Women's Day Observed on March 8th:

In 2017, the theme of the International Women's Day is **'Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030'**, asking for **#Be Bold For Change**. It **highlights** on to call the masses or yourself to put efforts to make a more gender inclusive world.

Ashwin rewrites Hadlee's record:

R. Ashwin stands where no bowler has stood before. The wicket of **Peter Handscomb** in Australia's second innings was the **off-spinner's 25th five-for in his 47th Test**. He became the **quickest** to achieve the feat, erasing the **record** held by **Richard Hadlee** (62 games). For India, **Anil Kumble** took 86 matches and **Harbhajan Singh** 93.

Pablo Cuevas Wins Third Straight Brazil Open Title:

Uruguay's Pablo Cuevas has won his third straight **Brazil Open tennis title** by defeating **Albert Ramos-Vinolas** of Spain 6-7 (7-3), 6-4, 6-4 in a rain-affected final

Oppo gets Indian team's sponsorship:

Oppo Mobiles India Pvt. Ltd. outbid its counterpart Vivo to bag the prized spot on the front of the Indian team's jersey from **April 2017 to March 2022**.

The **Indian cricket team's sponsorship rights**, for the **next five years**, have been sold for a record high of **₹ 1,079 crore**. **Oppo** will replace **Star India Pvt. Ltd.**

Folk singer Kalikapradas dies:

Well-known musician, researcher and singer **Kalikaprasad Bhattacharya** was killed in a road accident in Bardhaman district. He was **56**.

No new tax proposals in Rajasthan:

Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje presented a **Rs. 1,66,000-crore** budget in the State Assembly, while announcing a slew of measures and financial allocations for **infrastructure development, transport, agriculture, higher education and water resources**. Except a **15% increase** in the value added tax on **tobacco products**, no new tax proposal was made in the Budget.

The budget projected an estimated fiscal deficit for **2017-18 at Rs. 24,753 crore**, which is 2.99% of the GSDP.

Aadhaar must for BPL women for free LPG:

The government has made having an **Aadhaar card must for poor women to avail of free cooking gas (LPG) connection** under the **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana**. While the government in October last year made the unique identification number mandatory for **everyone to get LPG subsidies**, it has now extended the same for **free cooking gas connections** to women of BPL households.

2 more tiger reserves soon in Uttarakhand:

Uttarakhand now has **two tiger reserves – the Corbett Tiger Reserve and the Rajaji Tiger Reserve**. According to the tiger census data released in **2015**, **Uttarakhand has 340 tigers** making it a State with the **second highest tiger population** in the country after **Karnataka**.

With the two new tiger reserves, Uttarakhand would become the **first State in North India** to get four tiger reserves. The **Nandhaur Wildlife Sanctuary**, which falls under the **Terai Arc Landscape spanning across India and Nepal**, and the **Surai Range** in the **Terai East division of the Uttarakhand forest department** are the two proposed tiger reserves.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah launches "Pratibimba" to project achievements:

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah launched a comprehensive **web-based platform** showcasing the government's performance and achievements to the citizens.

Developed as the Chief Minister's dash board, '**Pratibimba**', which **means**

reflection, will serve as a tool to improve efficiency in governance and allow citizens to track government's progress. The dash board is available both in **English and Kannada**.

Toll-free women's helpline launched:

As many **government and non-government organisations** organised many events to mark **International Women's Day across Odisha**, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched a **toll-free helpline number 181 for women in distress**.

The **24x7 helpline**, which will be available in all the **30 districts** of the State, will extend prompt response to women affected by violence and provide information about women-related schemes and a range of other services.

Mega tulip festival in Srinagar from April 1:

As part of its efforts to revive tourism in the **Kashmir Valley**, the **Jammu and Kashmir** government will organise a **first-of-its-kind 15-day festival from April 1** to showcase the treasures of **Asia's largest tulip garden**. At the festival site, **decorated kiosks** and stalls will showcase rich handicrafts and cuisine of the Valley with traditional, ethnic touch.

Over 100 districts now open defecation free: PM Narendra Modi:

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** announced that his dream project of **Clean India mission** has virtually turned into a mass movement and over **100 districts** all over the country have become **open defecation free (ODF)**.

Airport Service quality Survey Hyderabad airport ranked 1st:

GMR's Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHAIL) released a statement in which **Rajiv Gandhi Hyderabad International airport** steadily improved its score from 4.4 in 2009 to 4.9 in 2016 and ranks **first** in the world in **airport service quality**. **Indira Gandhi International airport in Delhi** ranked world's **second** best airport in the **category of passenger handling capacity** of more than 40 million passengers annually.

India announces new policy to boost oil output:

India announced an **Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP)** for conducting oil and gas exploration in India a bidder can carve out areas where they want to drill on their own this will allow

pricing and marketing freedom to operators.

Smart tribal village in Jammu and Kashmir:

Jammu and Kashmir minister of food, civil supplies and consumer affairs minister **Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali** inaugurated "**Habbi**" the first smart tribal village in **Jammu and Kashmir**.

IIT -M wins IEEE spectrum technology in the service of society award:

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers spectrum Technology in the service of society award was awarded to **Indian Institute of Technology Madras** for the year 2017 for its **solar direct current inverter system**.

Digital Life certificate submission through Jeevan pramaan Patra of EPFO has been extended:

The **Employee's Provident Fund Organisation** has extended the date of submission of digital life certificate through **Jeevan Pramaan patra to March 31st 2017 from 28th February 2017**.

Jaipur Airport – 'Best Airport in the world' in 2 to 5 million passengers category:

With the efforts to improve airport services and passenger facilities Airport Authority of India has achieved the target of placing **Jaipur airport** as the best airport in the world in the **category of 2 to 5 million passengers per annum** across the world.

Kotak sells Rs.2,255 cr. bank stake to Canadian funds:

Billionaire Uday Kotak sold **2.76 crore** shares, or **1.5%** of his personal stake, in **Kotak Mahindra Bank for Rs.2,255 crore** to two Canadian pension fund managers in an open market transaction. The move will help the bank comply with a **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** directive on promoter shareholding.

Karur Vysya Bank to leverage on technology:

Karur Vysya Bank, which has invested about **Rs.80 crore** a year on technology for the last two years, will leverage on technology for its next phase of growth. **K. Venkataraman**, MD and CEO of Karur Vysya Bank.

The bank launched three technology services - **FASTag** in association with Indian Highways Management Company, **United Payment Interface** mobile app, and **Bharat Bill Payment System**.

Google acquires Kaggle in boost to data play:

Technology giant **Google** has announced the acquisition of **Kaggle**, a start-up that hosts a number of data scientists, for an undisclosed amount at the **Cloud Next 2017 conference**.

Kaggle is going to **maintain independent brand** said by **Chief Scientist Google Cloud** (artificial intelligence and machine learning) **Fei Fei Li**.

'Social Banking Excellence Award' bagged by Canara Bank

Canara Bank has been declared as the winner of '**Social Banking Excellence Award**' by **ASSOCHAM**. The award was presented under 3 categories. **P.V. Bharathi Executive Director for Agriculture, Banking and Priority Sector Lending**, received the award from **Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State for Finance**.

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan wins best actress IFFAA awards:

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan played a character of Sarabjit Singh's sister Dalbir Kaur won the **best actress award** at the **International Film Festival and Awards of Australia**.

Artist of the year Award to viola Davis:

"**Harvard foundation**" **Artist of the year** was awarded to **Viola Davis** of South Carolina. Davis is the only **African – American** actress to win the **triple crown of acting The Academy award, Emmy award and the Tony Award**.

IBM Researchers Store Data on World's Smallest Magnet -- a Single Atom:

IBM announced it has created the **world's smallest magnet** using a **single atom** and stored **one bit of data** on it. Currently, hard disk drives use about **100,000 atoms** to store a single bit.

The team used **IBM's Nobel Prize-winning scanning tunnelling microscope (STM)** to create and monitor the magnets **using holmium atoms**. Then, they used an electrical current to write and read **binary data (1s and 0s)** on the atom. The ability to **read and write one bit on one atom** creates new possibilities for developing significantly smaller and denser storage devices.

Mumbai takes new mayor Vishwanath Mahadeshwar:

Vishwanath Mahadeshwar, Shiv Sena's candidate has been elected as

76th mayor of Mumbai. He took over the charge from **Snehal Ambedkar** of the same party. He defeated the counterpart of the Congress **Vithal Lokare**.

ICC Announced Sachin Tendulkar as ambassador of ICC Womens World Cup 2017:

The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** appointed Indian cricketer legend **Sachin Tendulkar** as the **UNICEF and Cricket** for **Good Ambassador** for the **ICC Women's World Cup 2017**, scheduled to start from **June 24**.

Shigmo festival to begin from March 14:

Goa's biggest Hindu folk festival, Shigmo, will begin on **March 14** and will continue in various rural areas over a fortnight. Different days have been earmarked for celebrations in different parts of the State.

The festival also depicts the **Goan life** in traditional **folk dances** like **Ghode Modni, Goff, and Fugdi**, performed in troupes along the procession, passing through the streets.

New canyon system found near Kovvada:

Scientists of **CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO)** in **Visakhapatnam** is full of joy. They have found **three new canyons**, forming a **major canyon system** in the **depths of the Bay of Bengal**, close to **Kovvada** in **Srikakulam district**.

The **first time**, they have **clearly mapped the ocean floor** between **Visakhapatnam and Srikakulam** by sending over **32 high density beams** to the depths of the sea. **Canyon systems** are generally formed by the **flow of river water into the sea** and they could be as old as the river system, which is close to **23 million years**.

Over 500 bird species in Himachal, says survey:

The **wildlife wing of the Himachal Pradesh's Forest Department** has claimed that there are around **564 bird species** living in the hill State, which accounts for **45% of the total 1,263 bird species found in India**.

The **four-day survey** called '**Great Backyard Bird Count, 2017**', which was held from **February 17 to 20**, about **83 bird check lists** were uploaded to **eBird** and **319 species** were reported from **eight districts**. The **district of Kangra** was home to the **maximum number of species** – as many as **453** of them.

INS Tillanchang commissioned at Karwar:

INS Tillanchang, a **Water Jet Fast Attack Craft (WJFAC)**, was commissioned into the Indian Navy by **Vice-Admiral Girish Luthra**, the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Western Naval Command in **Karwar, Karnataka**.

Rail service from Ranchi to Tori launched:

The Railways extended passenger services on the newly constructed **broad gauge line up from Ranchi in Jharkhand to Tori in Bihar**. Union Railway Minister **Suresh Prabhu** inaugurated the extension of the **Ranchi Barkichanpi daily passenger service** up to Tori via videoconferencing from New Delhi. The extension will provide train services on the **29.5-km Barkichanpi-Tori section**.

India by the Nile mega cultural festival:

The **fifth edition** of the "**India by the Nile**" festival began in **Cairo Egypt**. India's **ambassador to Egypt Sanjay Bhattacharya** states that the festival is a special moment as it commemorates the **70 years of India's Independence as well as the 70 years of its diplomatic relations with Egypt**.

Qatar Airline plans to set – up a foreign entity in India.

Qatar airways plans to set up a **fully foreign entity** owned airline in India. According to the present norms, an air operator permit is granted to a company only if it is registered in India.

Commonwealth trade meet begins:

An inaugural **Commonwealth summit** focused on stimulating trade within the group kicked off in **London**, as government representatives and business people gathered to discuss opportunities for growth. The Commonwealth leadership is targeting an **increase in intra-group trade to \$1 trillion by 2020, from \$750 billion**.

South Korea impeached its president:

South Korea president Park Geun hye was impeached by the constitutional court as he was accused of colluding with a friend who alleged pressured companies to donate money in return for government favours. The Present **Prime Minister Hwang – Kyo ahn** is serving as the acting president of the country.

Mobile world congress to be hosted by India:

Director General of **Cellular Operators Association of India** announced that the meet will concentrate more on South East Asian Markets. **India** is hosting the conference for the **first time in Pragati Maidan at Delhi**.

Bala Venkatesh Varma is the new Ambassador of India to Andorra:

Venkatesh currently working as the Ambassador of **India to Kingdom of Spain**, he is now accredited as ambassador of India to Andorra with his residence in Spain.

Punjab varsity develops new Bt cotton varieties:

Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana has announced that it has developed the country's **first genetically-modified varieties of cotton** – the seeds of which could be **reused by farmers** with no commercial restrictions, resulting in savings on repeat purchases every season.

"The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has identified **three Bt cotton varieties – PAU Bt 1, F1861 and RS2013** – for cultivation in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

Ancient copper coins found in central Kashmir:

The **Jammu and Kashmir State Archaeology Department** has discovered over **800 coins** dating back to the **11th, 12th Century in Budgam district**. Described as a "**rare numismatic discovery**", the coins are said to be one of the largest recoveries from the district.

Saraswati Samman for Konkani writer:

Eminent **Konkani writer Mahabaleshwar Sail** has been honoured with the **Saraswati Samman 2016** for his novel **Hawthan**. The **74-year-old's novel** was shortlisted out of 22 books written in as many languages. The award carries a cash prize of **Rs.15 lakh** and a citation. Mr. Sail is a **bilingual writer** who has four **Marathi dramas** and **seven Konkani novels** to his credit.

LIC to step up income from non-single premium in FY18:

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), the country's largest life insurer, will step up sale of **non-single premium policies** to about **25 per cent in 2017-18** to **bring balance** in its business growth profile.

RBI to soon introduce new Rs 10 notes with more security features: Five things to know:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that it will soon **issue Rs 10 denomination notes with enhanced security** features for the circulation. Earlier last month **Economic Affairs Secretary Shaktikanta Das** clarified that the government has no plans to introduce new currency notes of Rs 1,000 denomination.

Let's look at five security features which the Central Bank plans to introduce:

- 1) The banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi series-2005 are to carry inset letter 'L' on both number panels, bearing the signature of Governor Urjit Patel.
- 2) The year of printing, 2017, will be on the reverse of the note.
- 3) Numerals on both the panels will be in ascending size from left to right.
- 4) The first three alpha-numeric characters (prefix) will remain constant in size.
- 5) "All the banknotes in the denomination of Rs 10 issued by the Bank in the past will continue to be legal tender," the central bank said.

Nokia to help Tata Power to detect faults in Delhi:

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TATA Power DDL) has become the **first Indian power utility** to deploy tele-protection services over its entire network following a deal with **Nokia**. The **enhanced system** will allow Tata Power-DDL to **receive nearly instant updates of any fault** in its infrastructure and reroute power through alternative lines to **minimise the disruption to the end consumer**.

Book on the Delhi Mughals launched:

The "**Mughal City of Old Delhi**" a book by **Swapna Liddle**, covering the **trajectory of Delhi** as a city since its establishment as the Mughal capital till India's independence was launched at the **Annexe Court of the India International Centre**. Starting from the **mid 16th century** and extending to the **mid 20th century**, he says that the book contains **300 years of Delhi's history**.

World Kidney Day celebrated on March 9 2017:

World Kidney Day (WKD) is a global health awareness campaign focusing on the importance of the kidneys and **reducing the frequency** and impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide. **World Kidney**

Day is observed annually on the 2nd Thursday in March.

Kidney day 2017 Theme: **Kidney Disease & Obesity**

India bought defence equipment worth Rs 2.42 lakh crore in four years: Government:

The government told the **Lok Sabha** that over **Rs 2.42 lakh crore** were spent on purchase of **defence equipment from 2013-14 fiscal to 2015-16 fiscal**. The government has **“approved a Defence Innovation Fund (DIF)** with initial funding by **Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** and **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.”

Enemy property Bill Passed in Rajya Sabha:

The **Rajya Sabha** passed the **Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016**; the **49-year-old law** was amended to guard against **claims of succession or transfer of properties** left by people who **migrated to Pakistan and China**.

Four States come together for elephant census:

The **States of Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand** have decided to conduct a synchronised **elephant census between May 9 and 12**. The four States together have the **maximum number of human-elephant conflict-prone regions in India**. A decision to this effect was taken by senior Forest Department officials of the four States during a regional workshop.

As per the **2015 census, Odisha has 1,954** elephants while **Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal** had approximately **700, 275 and 130** elephants, respectively.

Solar Power plant commissioned in Bhadla Rajasthan:

National thermal power corporation Limited commissioned of **45 MW solar plant in Bhadla Rajasthan**. NTPC intends to become a **130GW upto 2032** with a diversified fuel mix and a **600 billion units company** in terms of generation.

China inducts J-20 stealth Fighters:

China has inducted **J-20 stealth fighters** in its arsenal, marking a solid incremental step in the transition of its air force to the next level. Fighter jets in the **People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF)**, along with the **Y-20** transport planes and **H-6K bombers**, which are already part of the country’s military aviation asset.

Pakistan Parliament passed the Hindu marriage Bill:

Pakistan’s Parliament has finally passed the much awaited Landmark bill to regulate **marriages of minority Hindus in the country**. Pakistan’s Hindus are set to get a separate law to regulate marriages after the National Assembly unanimously adopted the Hindu Marriage bill, 2017.

Germany’s KfW, EESL in energy efficiency pact:

The **German Development Bank (KfW)** and **Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)** signed a loan agreement for **€200 million** to enhance **energy efficiency in India**.

EESL will invest the funds in energy efficiency in households, buildings, street lighting, water supply, agriculture and industry. KfW also signed a funding deal of **€500,000** with the **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency** to maintain solar projects.

Telecom Ombudsman is to be established:

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India planned to set up an office for **“Telecom Ombudsman”** to address complaints and grievances of consumers.

Maharashtra Animal and fisheries Science University awards Doctor of science degree:

Mohan Bhagwat was awarded Doctor of Science degree by the **Maharashtra Animal and Fisheries Sciences University**. Bhagwat is the current chief of the Hindu nationalist Organisation **Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh**.

Manjeev Singh Puri is new envoy to Nepal:

Senior diplomat **Manjeev Singh Puri** was appointed as **India’s new envoy to Nepal**. Mr. Puri, a **1982-batch IFS officer**, is currently India’s Ambassador to **the EU, Belgium and Luxembourg**. **Puri will succeed Ranjit Rae**.

B.P. Kanungo to replace Gandhi as RBI Deputy Governor:

B.P. Kanungo was appointed **Deputy Governor Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** for three years. The **Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC)** has approved his appointment to the post with effect from the date of taking over the charge on or **after April 3**, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry. He has been appointed in place of **R. Gandhi**. **Mr. Kanungo** was in March **last year**

appointed as Executive Director in the central bank.

3,500-yr-old mass burial ground from Megalithic period found by Tirupati varsity:

A **3,500-year-old colossal mass burial ground**, believed to be from the **Megalithic period**, has been unearthed by a research team of Tirupati-based **Sri Venkateswara University**. The discovery was made in Nellore district’s **Pidikitala village**.

The **mass burial ground** is spread over **100 acres** with over a dozen cist burials, each measuring **30 feet by 27 feet**, in **Raakasi Mitta area**, around **60 km** from Tirupati, professor at the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology.

AB de Villiers back on top of ODI rankings:

South Africa's AB de Villiers has displaced **Australia's David Warner** at the top of the ICC rankings for ODI batsmen. This the **tenth time de Villiers has climbed to the top** since **2010** - when he **first went to No. 1** - and this latest stint comes after he top scored in the recently concluded series in New Zealand.

India's Virat Kohli remains at No. 3 behind **de Villiers** and **Warner**, while **England's Joe Root** has jumped four places to No. 4.

Motorsport legend John Surtees passes away:

John Surtees, the only person to win **World Championship** in two- and four-wheeler racing, died. The **83-year-old** Brit won seven motorcycle championships (350cc and 500cc categories) before going on to clinch the **1964 Formula One World Championship with Ferrari**.

Chemistry Nobel winner George Olah dies at 89:

George A. Olah, whose work won a **Nobel Prize in chemistry** and paved the way for more effective oil refining and ways of producing less polluting forms of gasoline, has died at age **89**.

Action plan to reduce IMR:

District-level action plans are being formulated in **Rajasthan** in association with the **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** and the **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** to reduce **Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)**.

The IMR in the State at **present was 32 per 1,000 live births**, while the

target had been set to reduce it to 12 per 1,000 live births by 2030.

India test fired Brahmos missile:

India successfully test fired Supersonic cruise missile **Brahmos** from the integrated test range at **Balasore** off the **Odisha coast**. The supersonic missile is capable of carrying a warhead of **300Kg**. With this successful test firing the extended range Brahmos, India can knock down enemy targets beyond **400kms**.

12th CII – EXIM Bank conclave on India Africa Project:

12th CII-EXIM Bank conclave on India-Africa project partnership in **New Delhi**. The conclave was inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee. The objective is to discuss cooperation in trade, regional integration & Infrastructure development, Finance and consultancy, Mining and Minerals, Agriculture and Agro – processing.

Lok Sabha passed the Admiralty Bill:

The bill confers admiralty jurisdiction in High courts located in **coastal states of India** and this jurisdiction extends upto territorial waters. Admiralty refers to jurisdiction and settlement of Maritime claims. It does not apply to warships and naval auxiliary and vessels used for non- commercial purpose.

Centre has launched a new centre for Ornamental fisheries:

Central Government has planned to launch a new centre for **ornamental fisheries**. The centre would cost around Rs. 61 crore. The project would be launched by **National Fisheries Development Board**.

Himachal Launched a new app for job – seeker:

Himachal Pradesh CM Virbhadrasingh launched a mobile app and website **“Mera Hunar HP”**. Skilled and semi – skilled persons can apply for various jobs as per their convenience. This will increase the employment rate in the state.

Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement:

India and **Belgium** signed a protocol to avoid double taxation in **New Delhi**. This protocol will help the Union Government in its fight against the **black money** that is stashed in the offshore accounts. Prime ministers main motive is to fight against **black money** in whichever form it is.

Ford Foundation appoints Pradeep Nair as regional director:

Ford foundation head – quartered in New-York appointed **Pradeep Nair** as regional director of **India, Nepal and Sri Lanka**. He will succeed **David Hulse**. Nair will lead the global non-profit grant-making organization's operations in New Delhi.

Miss International Queen 2016:

A Contestant from **Thailand Jiratchaya Sirimongkolna** win is crowned as Miss International Queen 2016.

This contest has been named as the world's largest and most popular **transgender pageant**. The second and third place is occupied by a **Brazil** and **Venezuela** candidate respectively.

Revolutionary Patriots exhibition Inaugurated:

127th Foundation Day of National Archives of India conducted an exhibition on the title '**Revolutionary patriots (1905-1947)**'. **Secretary, Ministry of culture N.K. Sinha and Director General of NAI Raghavendra Singh** inaugurated the function.

Sashastra Seema Bal signed MOU with NSDC and NSDF:

In order to execute Skill development programmes **Sashastra Seema Bal** signed a MOU with **National skill development Corporation** and **National Skill development Fund**. The MOU was signed in **New Delhi** in presence of **Minister of state for Skill development and Entrepreneurship Rajiv Pratap Rudy** and **Minister of state for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju**.

Bangladesh declares March 25 as 'Genocide Day':

Bangladesh's unanimously adopted a resolution declaring **March 25 as Genocide Day**, in remembrance of the **atrocities** carried out by the **Pakistani Army** in the night of March 25, 1971. Condemning the denial of history by Pakistan, the Bangladeshi legislators passed the motion unanimously after a marathon seven-hour discussion.

Pakistan is set to conduct its first national census since 19 years:

The census would be conducted with the assistance of around 200,000 troops. The census will take place in two – phases and would be completed on May 25. Around, 118918 civilian staff will be

involved in the census survey said the **Minister of State for Information Marriyum Aurangazeb**.

Welspun Steel gets nod for Rs.14,690 cr. Project:

Welspun Steel Ltd (WSL) has received environmental clearance for setting up an **integrated steel plant** with production capacity of **three million tonnes per annum in Gujarat** at an estimated cost of **Rs.14,690 crore**. The proposed steel plant, to be set up in **Anjar tehsil in Kutch district**, aims to provide **steady supply of slabs** to group company **Welspun Corp Ltd (WCL)** which makes heavy plates and hot rolled coils.

Syndicate Bank launches Synd-Saheli App:

Syndicate Bank launched **Synd-Saheli App** to mark the **International Women's Day celebration**. This app will teach women and children new techniques on safety and essential features like locating **nearest branch and ATM** and information about **women welfare schemes**.

ITPO bags 'Excellence in Display Ward' at AAHAR 2017:

The international food and hospitality fair of **India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO)** has set a **record of highest number of exhibitors** and business visitors from India and abroad. The award was presented at **32nd annual show of AAHAR** to Executive Director **Rajneesh**.

Vijaya Bank starts 200th branch in Tirupati

Vijaya Bank has started its **200th branch in Tirupati** and was inaugurated by Tirupati Tirumala Devasthanam (TTD) Chairman Chadalwada Krishna Murthy. The **MD & CEO of Vijaya Bank Kishore Sansi, Executive Directos B.S. Rama Rao and Nageswara Rao** were present in the function in Tirupati.

Union Bank and UCO Bank won National Payments Excellence Awards:

Union Bank of India won the National Payments Excellence Awards 2016 for Rupay (issuance and commerce) in the Large Banks category. The award was presented by **N.S. Vishwanathan, Deputy Governor of RBI. UCO Bank won the award on selected parameters**.

HSBC appoints insurer AIA's Mark Tucker as chairman:

Europe's biggest bank HSBC Holdings Plc said **AIA Group Ltd Chief Executive Mark Tucker** had been appointed as its chairman, **replacing Douglas Flint**. Tucker would take over responsibility for identifying a successor to HSBC Chief Executive Stuart Gulliver, a process expected to conclude **in 2018**.

SSP Chawrasia wins Indian Open title for second successive year:

SSP Chawrasia clinched his **fourth European Tour title (Golf)**, when he won the **Indian Open for the second successive year** with a seven-shot victory over **Malaysia's Gavin Green**.

Lee Chong Wei clinches fourth All England Championship title:

Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei won his **fourth All England Open Badminton Championships** crown and changed his mind about it being his **13th** and last visit to badminton's oldest championship. After swatting aside first-time finalist **Shi Yuqi of China**.

Arun Jaitley had given additional charge of Defence:

Finance minister **Arun Jaitley** was given the additional charge of the defence ministry **after Manohar Parrikar** resigned to take on the new role of **Goa chief minister**.

India Rhino Vision 2020:

Assam government planned to increase the number of Rhino population to 3000 before **2020**. **Kaziranga national park** has the highest number of one horned Rhinos. State Forest Minister **Pramila Rani Brahma** also states a fresh census on this.

DIPP prepared a new scheme for start-ups:

Government has prepared a **new credit guarantee scheme for start-ups**. A loan of **Rs. 5 crore** will be provided without collateral. The scheme is awaiting cabinet approval. Startup must meet the criteria defined for them by the department to access the benefit announced by the government.

In T.N., Airtel opens 1 lakh SB accounts:

Airtel Payments Bank, offered by telecom major **Bharti Airtel**, announced that more than **one lakh savings accounts** were opened in 100 villages across the state of **Tamil Nadu**. Through the initiative, these villages in the southern state would have access to banking services along with the option of making

digital payments said by MD and CEO of Airtel Payments Bank, **Shashi Arora**.

Hyundai signs €3bn deal for Iran oil project:

Hyundai has signed a deal worth nearly **three billion Euros (\$3.2 billion)** to invest in a major **Iranian oil project** in the second phase of the **Kangan oil production** and refinery project in southwest Iran. The agreement marks one of the **biggest investments** since a nuclear accord with world powers lifted global sanctions on Iran.

Intel's \$15 billion purchase of Mobileye shakes up driverless car sector:

Intel Corp agreed to buy **Israeli autonomous vehicle technology firm Mobileye** for **\$15.3 billion** in a deal that could thrust the U.S. chipmaker into direct competition with rivals **Nvidia Corp** and **Qualcomm Inc** to develop **driverless systems for global automakers**.

National Pi Day is observed on 14th March:

Pi Day is celebrated on **March 14th (3/14)** around the world. Pi (Greek letter "π") is the symbol used in mathematics to represent a constant — the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter — which is approximately 3.14159. Pi has been calculated to over one trillion digits beyond its decimal point.

Commonwealth Day was observed on 2nd Monday of March every year:

Second Monday of March is Commonwealth Day. The **52 countries** of the Commonwealth celebrate Commonwealth Day. The year 2017 marks **40 years** since Commonwealth Day became a global celebration marked on the same day every year.

Theme of Commonwealth Day 2017- 'A Peace-building Commonwealth'**Malayalam film director Diphan dead:**

Filmmaker **Diphan**, who became popular through action-based movies such as **Puthiya Mugham** and **Gangs of Vadakkumnathan**, died. He was **47**. Diphan was admitted to a private hospital here two weeks ago with kidney related ailments.

'Hyderabad has best standard of living':

Hyderabad for the third year in a row has emerged as the **best city in terms of living standards among Indian cities**, while **Vienna** has been ranked at the **top** globally in a list by

consultancy firm Mercer. The **National Capital** for the second straight year hit the **lowest score** among Indian cities for living standards.

Delhi records coldest March day in decade:

The Capital recorded the **coldest day in March since 2007**. The minimum temperature plunged to **9.1 degree Celsius**, seven notches below average, while the maximum temperature was pegged at **26.6 degree Celsius**, three notches below the normal, said by a **Meteorological Department**.

Bangladesh PM on 3-day visit to India from April 7:

Bangladesh Prime Minister **Sheikh Hasina** will pay a state visit to India from April 7 to 10 to further expand the relationship between the two neighbours. Ms. Hasina will travel to India **after seven years**.

Singapore Airlines, SilkAir, Vistara ink pact:

Singapore Airlines (SIA) and its subsidiary **SilkAir** have signed an agreement to code **share on Indian domestic flights** operated by **Vistara**. Vistara is a joint venture between **Tata Sons** and **SIA**.

SIA will add its **'SQ'** designator code to Vistara. SilkAir will add its code to Vistara-operated flights beyond **Bengaluru** and **Kolkata** to **six** destinations.

Tata Steel, Wipro in world's most ethical companies' list:

Two Indian companies, **Tata Steel** and **Wipro**, have been named in the list of **world's most ethical companies** by **American think tank Ethisphere Institute**. The list was dominated by **US-based companies** as around 98 of the 124 companies were from that country.

Uber launches 'realtime ID check' in India for rider safety:

Uber is rolling out a **'realtime ID check'** feature to ensure the driver using the **app matches the account registered** with the ride-hailing platform. The feature is being launched in **five cities** in India - Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kolkata and more locations will follow, said by Uber.

World Bank loan for MP solar plant:

The **World Bank** has agreed to provide loan to develop internal transmission arrangements of the **upcoming Rewa Ultra Mega Solar project** in **Madhya Pradesh**. It will provide **25 per cent of the loan amount**

under its Clean Technology Fund, where the money will be provided at an interest rate of only **0.25 per cent**.

SBI to allow one-time settlement for tractor, farm equipment loans:

State Bank of India (SBI) said it would allow **one-time settlements** for **tractor and farm equipment loans** that make up about **Rs.6,000 crore**. Special SBI OTS for tractor and farm mechanization loans 2016-17. **Avail of benefits until March 31**.

Shashank Manohar resigns from ICC chairman's post:

Shashank Manohar resigned as **ICC chairman** after merely eight months in office citing personal reasons. The **former BCCI president**, who controversially left the board in **May 2016** to take up the post of ICC chairman.

Pawan Goenka to continue as chairman of IIT Madras:

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd managing director **Pawan Goenka** will continue to be the chairman of the board of governors of **Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M)** till **June 2020**. President of India as head of the institution has approved his nomination for a second term.

Biren Singh sworn in as Manipur CM:

N. Biren Singh was sworn in as the **Chief Minister of Manipur** in Imphal. The oath was administered by **Governor Najma Heptulla**. Eight others were also sworn in, taking the number of ministers in the BJP-led government in Manipur to nine. **Yumnan Joykumar Singh** of the National People's Party (NPP) was appointed as **deputy Chief Minister**.

Bhubaneswar to host Asian Athletics:

Bhubaneswar will host the **Asian Athletics Championships** in July after Ranchi pulled out of staging the continental event. **Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar** will host the event from **July 1 to 4**. The state government has **agreed to sanction the required funds**. So, it is now finalised that that Kalinga Stadium will host the event, said by **Odisha Athletics Association President Jagmohan Patnaik**.

Olympic champion Rowsell-Shand retires:

Double Olympic cycling track gold medallist **Joanna Rowsell-Shand**

brought the curtain down on her stellar career. The **28-year-old** won team pursuit gold in the **London** and **Rio Games**. She is also a **five-time World champion in pursuit events**.

Bangladesh becomes the quickest nation to complete a century:

Bangladesh becomes quickest to reach **100 test matches** after they took the field against Sri Lanka in Colombo. The Bangladeshi team, which also became the 10th nation to play 100 Tests, took **16 years, 4 months and 6 days** to achieve the feat, surpassing Sri Lanka's record of 18 years, 3 months and 29 days.

World Consumer Rights Day Celebrated on March 15th every year:

World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) is an awareness day, which is observed on **March 15, 2017**. It is an opportunity **to promote the basic rights** of all consumers, demanding that those rights are respected and protected. **Theme** for World Consumer Rights Day 2017 is **'Building a Digital World Consumers can Trust'**.

Record-breaking marathoner dies at 86:

Ed Whitlock, an England born Canadian runner who became the first **septuagenarian** to run a marathon in under three hours, died at the age of 86. He then set the **World masters marathon** records for ages 75-plus, 80-plus and, most recently, **85-plus**.

Karnataka Budget: Siddaramaiah announces 'Namma' canteen, abolishes VAT on liquor:

Making the announcement, Siddaramaiah proposed to increase the retirement age of private sector employees from the present **58 years to 60 years**. The premium bikes are set to go dearer in Karnataka as government has increased the Motor vehicle tax on two wheeler priced **above Rs 1 lakh by 6% to 18%**.

The government allocated **Rs 100 crores for Namma Canteens** which will provide breakfast for Rs.5, lunch/dinner for Rs.10. Karnataka government also proposed to set up a Centre of Excellence in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence and Cyber Security Centre. The **value-added tax (VAT)** on liquor will be removed **from April 1**.

Amarinder Singh sworn-in as Punjab CM:

Amarinder Singh was sworn-in as **Punjab Chief Minister** at the Raj Bhawan

in **Chandigarh**. The **Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC)** chief is the state's **26th** chief minister. Navjot Singh Sidhu and Congress leader Braham Mohindra also took oath as cabinet ministers.

Best Regional Airport in India an central Asia:

Kempegowda International Airport became the **'Best regional airport in India and central Asia'**. KIA saw **22.18** million passengers in 2016 was conferred the award at the world airport award in Amsterdam. It covered **550** airports worldwide and evaluated traveller experience.

Banana Research Center in Bihar:

In order to fulfil the requirements of local banana growers union Agriculture and Farmer's welfare Minister **Radha Mohan Singh** launched a research center for Banana at **vaishali, Bihar**. This new center will deal with the problems related to production of Banana across the country. Utilization of different parts of the plant.

Jet Airways partners with Uber to provide door to door travel option to fliers:

Jet Airways announced a strategic association with **ride-hailing major Uber** to enhance its guest experience. The airline will partner with Uber to offer its guests greater choice by facilitating their travel to/from the airport once they have booked a ticket on the **Jet Airways app**. This initiative from the airline will offer guests a solution of doorstep to doorstep commute.

Microsoft hybrid cloud platform to power Andhra Pradesh data centre:

The government of **Andhra Pradesh** inked an agreement with the **Redmond**, Washington-based firm to utilise the latter's **hybrid cloud platform, called Azure Stack**, for AP State Data Centre (SDC) located in **Hyderabad**. Under the agreement, the Microsoft cloud solution will be used to **migrate live applications** currently hosted in SDC in Hyderabad to Visakhapatnam data centre.

State Bank of India signs MoU with CREDAI:

State Bank of India and **real estate developers'** body **CREDAI** have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to jointly conduct various initiatives towards **development of the realty sector**. The MoU will be in force for a period of **3 years**. Both of us have a common objective of making every Indian

own a home of their own, said by **SBI Managing Director (National Banking Group) Rajnish Kumar**.

UCO Bank, Future Generali tie up:

Private insurer **Future Generali India Insurance Company** (FGII) has entered into a corporate agency tie-up for its products with public lender **UCO Bank**. The PSU lender will provide a window at its bank branches for marketing **FGII's offerings**.

IndusInd bank acquired Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services Ltd:

100% stake of **Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services Ltd** is acquired by IndusInd bank for an undisclosed amount. **Romesh Sobti, MD** and **CEO of IndusInd bank** stated that IL&FS security services had a total revenue of 277.6 crore.

India hosts world's oldest algae fossil:

Scientists in India have uncovered a pair of **1.6 billion year-old fossils** that appear to contain red algae, which may be the oldest plant-like life discovered on Earth. Until now, the oldest known red algae was **1.2 billion years old**, said the paper in the journal PLOS Biology.

National Theatre Festival begins in Kerala:

National Theatre festival begins in the capital city of **Kerala**. The festival will be organised by the **Information and public relations Department**. There will be a total of 17 plays. Chief Minister of Kerala **Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the function.

Chennai Port trust signed MoU with Puducherry:

In order to promote Industrial growth, create more employment opportunities and attract investment from industries **Port trust of Chennai** and **Puducherry government** signed an MoU in **New Delhi**. The MoU is all about handling of **EXIM cargo** that originates in **Puducherry**.

TN ranks 3rd in India in medium investment decision – NCAER

Tamil Nadu ranks third in the country's medium investment decisions, according to the report of **National Council of Applied Economic Research's (NCAER) State Investment Potential Index (N-SIPI)** survey. D. Jayakumar, the state's finance minister stated that the government has benchmarked **Rs.75 crore** for the next Global Investors Meet 2017-18.

Changi Airport of Singapore becomes world's best Airport:

In the survey of the research firm **Skytrax, Changi airport in Singapore** named as the world's best airport for the fifth time. The Haneda Airport in Tokyo, Incheon airport in South Korea, Munich Airport in Germany and Hong Kong Airport complete the top five.

Women in Politics 2017 - India ranks 148th:

India ranks 148th globally in terms of representation of women in executive government and parliament, according to a report published by the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UN Women**. The report showed that women make up only **11.8%** of the parliament. This level of gender representation is better than the Asian average of 11%. **Indonesia tops the index with 25.6%**. The report was launched on the sidelines of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women.

Parliamentary panel suggests BSNL-MTNL merger for long-term survival:

A **Parliamentary panel** has suggested merger of state-run telecom firms **Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL)** and **Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL)** for their long-term survival.

Paytm is globetrotting enters Canada with an app for bill payments:

Becoming one of the few Indian start-ups to make a global entry, **online mobile wallet major Paytm** that it had launched a bill payments service in **Canada**.

Users there would be able to pay for their **cell phone, cable, internet, electricity and water bills** via a Paytm Canada app. It is available on both Android and iOS in Canada.

Stage set for July 1 rollout: GST Council caps cess on luxury goods at 15%:

The **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** Council cleared a proposal to cap the cess on **luxury cars** and **aerated drinks at 15 per cent** over the peak rate of 28 per cent.

Paan masala, the cap would be **135 percent**. On **tobacco** and **cigarettes**, the cap would be **290 percent** or **Rs 4,170 per 1,000 cigarette sticks**.

The cess on **coal** and **lignite** (environment cess) would have an **upper limit at Rs 400 per tonne**.

Policy seeks to raise health spend to 2.5% of GDP:

The **central government** unveiled the **National Health Policy**, which entails raising public expenditure on health to **2.5 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP)** from the **current two per cent** and introducing **yoga** more widely in **schools** and **workplaces**.

The policy envisions **increasing life expectancy to 70 years from 67.5 years**. The policy aimed at reducing the **under-five mortality rate to 23 (per 1,000 births)** by **2025** and the **maternal mortality rate to 100 (per 100,000 live births)** by **2020**.

ONGC invests Rs. 21,528 crore to develop India deepest gas find by 2023:

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) will invest **Rs. 21, 528 crore** to develop **India's deepest gas** find by **2022-23** to double its output from prime KG basin block. The oil explorer plans to drill **nine wells** and will produce a peak output of 19 million standard cubic metres a day. Last year, the company finalized a \$5.07 billion plan for developing finds by 2019-20 and start flowing from March 2020.

Snapdeal partners with Japan's JETRO:

India's E-Commerce major **Snapdeal** has partnered with **Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)** to showcase Japanese SME products on the online marketplace. "**Customers can now purchase JETRO products directly from Snapdeal**".

De Beers and Volcan Investments Ltd. buys stake in South Africa's Anglo American Plc:

Anil Agarwal billionaire plans to buy stake in **South Africa's Anglo American Plc.** for **£2 bn** to gain a foothold in **diamond mining business**. **De Beers**, the world's leading diamond exploration, mining and marketing company is owned by Anil Agarwal. **Volcan Investments Ltd** announces that it intends to make an investment for about **£2 bn**.

Muthoot Fin to rise up to Rs. 2000 Cr via Non-Convertible Debentures:

Muthoot Finance plans to rise up to **Rs.2000 crore** through a public issue of **Non-Convertible Debentures** to support its lending activities. The **Kerala based gold financing company** said in the draft prospectus filed with SEBI. The issue comprises of secured and unsecured re-

deemable NCDs which comprises an aggregate total of Rs.2000 crore.

Ravi Viswanath – CEO of Reliance Health Insurance

Ravi Viswanath has been appointed as the **first CEO** of newly formed **Reliance Health Insurance**, which is a wholly owned subsidiary departed from Reliance General Insurance. He has 20 years of experience in health insurance sector.

FIFA signs Hero MotoCorp as national supporter of FIFA U-17 World Cup:

Hero MotoCorp has become the **second Indian company** to sign up as a national supporter for the **FIFA U-17 World Cup**, scheduled to be held across 6 host cities between October 6 and 28.

Hero MotoCorp has filled the second of six national supporter slots - after **Bank of Baroda** - for the first ever FIFA event in India. Hosting the **FIFA U-17 World Cup** is a significant landmark for **India** and **Indian football** and at **Hero MotoCorp**, we are immensely proud of being associated with this event.

CMD and CEO of Hero MotoCorp: **Pawan Munjal**

The vice president of the 2017 U-17 FIFA world cup: **Babul Supriyo**

Sports Authority of India appointed Jwala Gutta as a member:

Badminton specialist Jwala Gutta appointed as the member of the governing body of Sports Authority of India. **Jwala** won **14 time national championship**. She also won bronze medal twice in **Olympic** at the 2011 World Championship.

Nine Indian race walkers to compete in Asian race walking championship:

A **nine-member Indian team** will compete in the **20km Asian race walking championship** in Nomi City, Japan, on March 19. The Indian team will be headed by **Olympian K.T. Irfan and Priyanka**. The team: Devender Singh, Ganapathi Krishnan, Jai Bhagwan, Eknath Sambhaji Turambekar, Sunil, KT Irfan Priyanka, Rani Yadav, Shanti Kumari. R

Uttarakhand gets another CM Rawat: Trivendra Singh to take over today, promises corruption-free govt:

Senior BJP leader **Trivendra Singh Rawat**, who has a long RSS background, will be **sworn in** as the **Uttarakhand chief minister**, ending speculation about the party's choice for the post after its landslide assembly election victory.

Fourth generation Technology Park to come up in Amaravati:

Malaysian govt came forward to extend cooperation to set up small and medium companies in **Andhra Pradesh**. The state govt allotted **hundred acres** to set up **fourth generation Technology Park** in the capital region as a mark of beginning to attract 40 companies with an investment of **Rs 350 cr**.

Malaysian Prime Minister **Najib Razak** is scheduled to enter into an MoU with Govt of AP during his visit to the state in April. The **Malaysian industry- govt group for high power technology (MIGHT)** will act as facilitator to set up industries in AP.

Airbus to set up India's first flight simulator near Delhi airport:

To address the **growing demand for trained pilots** and aircraft maintenance engineers, aerospace giant **Airbus** will set up **India's first full flight simulator and training centre** near **Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport**.

The land licence agreement was signed between the DIAL and the Airbus India for a period **till 31st March, 2036**. The DIAL has received the initial security deposit and the **advanced development charges (ADC)** said by **Civil Aviation minister P Ashok Gajapati Raju** in the ground-breaking ceremony of the project.

International Buddhist conference held in Bihar:

International Buddhist conference commenced at **Nava Nalanda Mahavihara Rajgir** in the **Nalanda district** function was inaugurated by **Dalai Lama** an Union Minister for Tourism and culture **Mahesh Sharma**. A book **Pali Tripitaka** was also released at the conference. Around **35** countries participating in it.

China and Pakistan step up military ties:

China appears set to strengthen **Pakistani military forces to protect the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** and to combat cross-border infiltration by militants in China's western Xinjiang province.

Pakistani Army chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa and **Gen. Fang Fenghui**, chief of the Joint Staff Department under the Central Military Commission of China, covered weapon exchanges, including the mass production of **FC-1 Xiaolong**, a lightweight and multi-role combat aircraft developed jointly by the two countries.

Agreement to protect rights of detached workers:

India and **Brazil** signed an agreement in **Brasilia** for exempting detached workers of the two countries from making **social security** contribution in either of the country.

The text was signed between the Indian delegation led by Joint Secretary of the External Affairs Ministry, **K Nagaraj Naidu** and Brazilian delegation led by **Benedito A Brunca**, Secretary, Ministry of Finance, and Government of Brazil.

Bandhan Bank inks pact with Avenues India:

Private sector lender **Bandhan Bank** said it has entered into a partnership with **Avenues India** to help merchants get access to **point of sale and payment gateway products**. It also amid a greater thrust on **digital payments** by the government which includes a target to **double the number of PoS machines to over 20 lakh**.

Long-term supply pact for Sukhoi jets inked:

The deals were signed between **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** from India and the **United Aircraft Corporation** and **United Engine Corporations** of **Russia** at the **first India-Russia Military Industrial Conference** in the national capital.

In a move to address a long-lasting concern of **India** with respect to **Russian-origin military equipment**, the two countries signed two long-term supply agreements for the **Sukhoi fighter aircraft** fleet of the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** to address issues of life-cycle support and maintenance.

YES Bank chooses 12 start-ups for Fintech business:

YES Bank had selected **12 start-ups** for its **Fintech business accelerator programme**. SoCash, Signzy, Rupeeseed, Redcarpet, R1mo, Paykey, Numberz, Morph.Ai, FRS Labs, Click and Pay, Authme, Anytime Loan are the 12 start-ups selected by YES Bank. These start-ups have been working on **Fintech transactions, lending, cyber security, risk intelligence, big data, analytics** and other segments.

Aeries Financial Technologies ties up with Rubique:

Aeries Financial Technologies promotes a product on fin-tech **CASHe** which enter into a partnership with **Rubique** to produce financial products. Rubique will be enlisting CASHe on its online platform for short term loan

products from **CASHe** ranging from **Rs.5000 – 1 lakh** payable over **15, 30** and **90** days.

Arunachal teen develops goggles to help the blind:

A high school student in **Arunachal Pradesh** has invented a **unique pair of goggles** that uses **ultrasound** and **infrared sensors to help the visually impaired** detect obstacles on their path. The State government pledged financial support for him to develop the gadget.

Anang Tadar, a Class XI student of **New Galaxy Academy, Nirjuli**, was recently awarded the **Dinanath Pandey Smart Idea Innovation Award** for inventing a gadget called **Goggle for Blind (G4B)**.

First blood test for autism developed:

In a first, scientists have discovered a way to accurately predict whether a child has **autism spectrum disorder** by **analysing a blood sample**, an advance that opens the door to earlier diagnosis and potential future development of therapeutics said by Juergen Hahn, professor at the **Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the US**.

Regeneron Science Talent search 2017 won by Indrani Das:

Indrani Das is a student of the Medical science technology in Hackensack won the **Regeneron Science Talent search 2017** award for her new approach to **neurological damage**. This award bags an amount of **250,000** dollars. The award ceremony took place in **Washington D.C**.

Sun Pharmaceuticals MD Dilip Shanghvi appointed as Member of RBI:

Reserve Bank of India appointed **Dilip Shanghvi** as a member of western board of RBI. Dilip is the **Managing Director** of **Sun Pharmaceuticals**. The appointment is for **four years** with effect from **March 11, 2017**.

Additional venue for baseball 2020 Tokyo Olympics:

International Olympic Committee approved a plan to add a stadium in Fukushima for newly added games **baseball** and **softball** events. Tokyo organizing committee proposed **Azuma stadium in Fukushima** as a perfect additional venue for baseball and softball.

Poet Derek Walcott dies at 87:

Derek Walcott, a Nobel Prize-winning poet known for capturing the essence of his **native Caribbean** and who became the region's most internationally

famous writer, has died on the island of **St. Lucia**. He was **87**.

Swiss Skier skies backward:

Swiss Skier Switzerland's **Elias Ambuhl**. The 24 – year old freestyle skier broke the previous record of 128.7kmph set by Norway's Anders Backe.

Artificial Throat made using Graphene:

Artificial Throat made out of graphene which can generate and detect sounds. The device was designed by Chinese said. **Graphene-based biocompatible** device is expected to have a significant impact in speech recognition, scientists.

Vaikom Vijayalakshmi is the first person to play Gayathri Veena:

Kerala's playback singer **Vaikom Vijayalakshmi** created a record by playing maximum number of songs in the shortest duration. Around 69 songs in 5 hours on the Gayathri Veena.

CBDT signs another APA with subsidiary of a Japanese Company taking the total APAs entered into by the CBDT to 141:

The CBDT has entered into a bilateral Advance pricing Agreement with rollback provision with a Japanese Subsidiary. With this the total of APAs has increased to **141**.

The Fifth Satellite of Sentinel Series Launched By Europe:

Sentinel-2B satellite developed by **European Space Agency (ESA)** was launched on March 7, 2017 from Europe's spaceport in **Kourou, French Guiana**.

Iran successfully tested Ballistic Missile Hormuz-2:

The **Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** of Iran successfully test-fired a domestically produced **ballistic missile Hormuz-2** from a navy vessel on March 9, 2017.

NASA 2033 manned Mars mission got approval from US congress:

US congress passed a funding bill for a probable human spaceflight mission to mars by 2033. The bill to be signed by Donald Trump appropriates \$19.5 billion to NASA for the fiscal year 2017.

India's first AC rail Ambulance launched at Mumbai:

The central Railway ambulance aims to provide victims of train accidents emergency treatment within the first hour of the accident. Officials said the rail ambulance is capable of providing medical

facilities to 50 patients at a time an transporting organs between states for transplants.

India's largest waste –to-power plant opened at Narela-Bawana in New Delhi:

Inauguration of the plant was done by **Urban Development Minister Venkaiah Naidu**. Minister stated that the plant would not only dispose **1,300** metric tonne of waste on a daily basis it would also generate power. The plant is constructed at **Narela-Bawana in New Delhi**.

Iceland became world's 1st country to make firms equal pay:

Iceland became the first country in the world to force companies to prove they all pay employees the same, regardless of gender sexuality and nationality. Iceland, has pledged to eradicate gender pay gap by **2022**.

Madhya Pradesh starts "Mil Banche MP" programme:

Madhya Pradesh starts "**Mil Banche MP**" (**Let MP read together**) programme in all the **primary and middle government schools** to increase knowledge and the understanding about language among students. Under this programme, all learned persons and government officials will teach and interact with students of all government schools of the state.

Shivraj Singh Chowhan CM, A took classes to motivate the children to do best in their life. He also announced that he would teach in schools twice every month.

'Tarini' – Indian Navy's second sailboat inducted:

'**Tarini**', Indian Navy's second sailboat was inducted at **the INS Mondovi Boat Pool**. It is the first in Indian Navy's first all-woman global circumnavigation. Admiral **Sunil Lanba** stated the challenging expedition by **Tarini** which is set to commence in August 2017.

India's longest non-stop train stations – 528 km

India's longest non-stop train between two railway stations with a distance of **528 km** between **Vadodara and Kota** was taken by **Trivandrum-Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express** in 6 to 7 hours without any stoppages. It breaks the record of India's longest journey of 4200 km in 85 hours.

'Newton' Indian movie Wins Art Cinema Award:

Indian Cinema movie "**Newton**" directed by **Amit Masurkar** was honored with the **Art Cinema Award** in the Forum Segment at the 67th Berlin International Film Festival held in **Berlin, Germany**. Over 43 films were screened in the Forum segment out of which 29 had their world premiere.

Bengali singer Banasree Sengupta passes away:

Noted Bengali singer **Banasree Sengupta** was passed away in **Kolkata**, West Bengal on February 19, 2017.

Daimler India inks MoU with Karnataka Bank

Karnataka Bank Ltd has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with **Daimler India Commercial Vehicles Pvt Ltd (DICV)** for extending finance to customers for the purchase of commercial vehicles manufactured by the company.

Apple acquires Israel's RealFace:

Apple acquires Israel-based start-up **RealFace**, a cyber security and machine learning firm specialising in facial recognition technology for several million dollars. **RealFace** developed facial recognition software as an alternative to traditional passwords and fingerprint recognition.

Frenchmn Jo-Wilfried Tsonga claims Rotterdam tennis title:

Frenchmn Jo-Wilfried Tsonga has claimed the **Rotterdam tennis title**. In the **ABN AMRO World Tennis Tournament** final in **Rotterdam**, sixth seeded **Tsonga** It is the first title for 31-year old **Tsonga** since 2015. He defeated third seeded **David Goffin** of **Belgium**.

Former Goalkeeper Shibaji Banerjee of Mohun Bagan Passed Away:

Former **Mohun Bagan** goalkeeper **Shibaji Banerjee** passed away in **Kolkata** on February 19, 2019 after suffering a cardiac arrest. He was **68**.The soccer legend **Shibaji** had played for the club for **11 years**.

Goa's Raj Bhawan turns cashless:

Goa's Raj Bhawan has turned cashless with all their transactions including household expenses and tour expenditures. Governor **Mridula Sinha** made the first transaction to mark the occasion.

Indian Railway links Kathmandu with Delhi and Kolkata:

An Indian railway is planning to link **Nepal's capital Kathmandu** with

New Delhi and Kolkata through a railway network. The decision was stated by Railways Minister **Suresh Prabhu** while addressing the **Nepal Infrastructure Summit 2017 in Kathmandu**. This project would help in increasing Nepal's connectivity with India.

'Saathiya Resource Kits' launched to improve adolescent health issues:

Union Health Secretary **C.K. Mishra** has launched "**Saathiya Resource Kits**" as part of the **Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)** program and also mobile app '**Saathiya Salah**' that will provide information on adolescent related issues such as puberty and mental health, among others. Under this scheme **1.6 lakh selected communicators** have been identified and will be provided knowledge on adolescent health issues.

Lt. Gen. Herbert Raymond McMaster, new National Security Advisor of U.S

Lt Gen Herbert Raymond McMaster was appointed as new National Security Advisor of U.S by the President of U.S. **Donald Trump** following the ouster of **Michael Flynn** last week. Mr **Trump** described **McMaster**, currently **Director** of the Army Capabilities Integration Center, as a man of tremendous talent and experience.

V. K. Srinivasan, noted bureaucrat and director passes away

V. K. Srinivasan, noted bureaucrat, columnist and director of the Institute of Economic Studies passed away after a prolonged illness in **Hyderabad**.

CCEA approves investment of Arun-3 Hydro Electric Project in Nepal

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved investment proposal for generation component of **Arun-3 Hydro Electric Project in Nepal** by **SJVN Limited**. Power Minister **Piyush Goyal** stated that the decision demonstrates government's commitment to promote clean and green energy in India and the sub continent.

India's first heliport to be commissioned in Delhi:

The first heliport in India will be inaugurated by **Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju in North Delhi**. The heliport, built by state-owned **Pawan Hans**, consists of a terminal building, nine parking bays and four hangars with a parking capacity of 16 helicopters. It was built at an investment of **Rs.100 crore**, said **Pawan Hans** chairman **BP Sharma**.

National Biodiversity Congress 2017 held in Kerala:

Third National Biodiversity Congress (NBC) 2017 held **Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**. Its aim to identify **practical evidence based case studies** at regional level to support the plan of action.

Theme: "Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Sustainable Development" with four sub-themes.

India aims to bring broadband to every village by 2018:

Union government aims to **bring high-speed digital connectivity to every village by 2018** and is profound to share proficiency in the area with other nations. Union Department of Telecom, under the **Universal Services Obligation (USO)** fund, is working to bring high speed broadband to every village in the country by **2018**.

ICRA says GVA growth to decline by 70 bps to 6.2% in Q3:

Gurgaon based Domestic rating agency **ICRA** reported that the **gross value added (GVA)** is set to slip to **6.2 per cent** in the third quarter from 6.9 per cent and **GDP growth** will decline to **6.5 per cent** from 7.2 per cent.

Oricon to set up Rs 100-crore facility for packaging products in Odisha:

Oricon Enterprises Ltd (OEL) is planned to build a manufacturing facility in **Odisha** with an investments of **Rs 100 crores**. This facility will be used to manufacture new packaging products.

AAI, IATA launch e-billing solution SKYREV360 for airport operators:

The state run **Airports Authority of India**, along with **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** launched its **e-billing solution** for airport operators and air navigation services providers across the world. The e-billing solution, **SKYREV360** developed by in-house experts the electronic billing solution for data, e-invoicing and collection of tariff from the airlines is being used by the **AAI** for several years now.

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