



Current Affairs - July to December 2017

Month Type



- **609** Current Affairs were found in **Last Six Months** for Type - **International**

International

- ▶ Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) become first Indian Oil Marketing Company (OMC) to enter lubricant market in Myanmar.
- ▶ India's Essar Ports signed 30-year concession agreement with Government of Mozambique to develop a 20 million tons per annum (MTPA) coal terminal at Beira Port as part of a Public Private Partnership (PPP) project. First phase will be developed at a cost of \$275 million.
- ▶ UNESCO World Heritage Committee's 41st session held in Krakow (Poland) -
 - ▶ During this session, 21 new sites have been included into UNESCO's World Heritage List. The 5.5 km walled city area in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) has been declared India's first World Heritage City by UNESCO. Historic Centre of Vienna (Vienna) is also included in List.
 - ▶ Apart from this, UNESCO World Heritage Committee has amended list of world heritage sites in danger -
 - ▶ West Bank city of Hebron has been included in list, triggering a new Israeli-Palestinian spat at international level.
 - ▶ Australia's Great Barrier Reef has been removed from List.
 - ▶ Gelati Monastery of Georgia has been removed from List.
- ▶ 2 Democratic lawmakers, Ami Bera and Frank Pallone introduced a legislation in USA House of Representative to support India's permanent membership to UN Security Council.
- ▶ 2017 Global Liveability Report compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) -
 - ▶ 10 most liveable cities - Melbourne (1st), Vienna (2nd), Vancouver (3rd), Toronto (4th), Calgary (5th), Adelaide (6th), Perth (7th), Auckland (8th), Helsinki (9th) and Hamburg (10th). Melbourne has topped the list For seventh consecutive year
 - ▶ No Indian City named in top 10 Cities' List.
 - ▶ Least Liveable Cities - Damascus (Syria), Lagos (Nigeria), Tripoli (Libya)
- ▶ 2017 Global Retirement Index (GRI) by French asset management company Natixis Global -
 - ▶ India has been ranked Last (43rd) among 43 Countries in List.
 - ▶ Top 3 - Norway, Switzerland, and Iceland.
- ▶ 2017 Melbourne Mercer Global Pension Index by Australian Centre for Financial Studies (ACFS) -
 - ▶ India has ranked 28th out of 30 countries. India's overall index value in 2017 is 44.9, which marks an improvement over index value of 43.4 in 2016.
 - ▶ Denmark has retained the top spot in this index for sixth consecutive year.
- ▶ 2017 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Index by Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and Bertelsmann Stiftung -
 - ▶ India - Ranked 116 out of 157 nations.
 - ▶ Top 5 -Sweden (1st), Denmark (2nd), Finland (3rd), Norway (4th), Czech Republic (5th).
 - ▶ Bottom 5 - Madagascar (153), Liberia (154), Congo (155), Chad (156), Central African Republic (157)
 - ▶ BRICS - Brazil (56), Russia (62), India (116), China (71), South Africa (108)
 - ▶ Neighbours -Bangladesh (120), Nepal (105), Pakistan (122), Sri Lanka (81)
- ▶ 2017 World Solar Challenge (solar car race) began from Darwin (Australia). In this race, 42 solar cars will cover a distance of 3,000 kms from Northern Australian city of Darwin to southern city of Adelaide.
- ▶ 2018 *World Economic League Table* report released by Centre for Economics and Business Research (UK) -
 - ▶ India will overtake UK and France to become fifth largest economy in 2018, and will further move to 3rd spot by 2032.

China is likely to overtake USA as world's largest economy by 2032.

Russia will fall to 17th place among world's largest economies by 2032, from 11th place in 2017, mainly because of low commodity (oil) prices in international market and its excessive reliance on energy sector.

11. ▶ 21st India-Myanmar National Level Meeting held in Myanmar, attended by Indian Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba.
12. ▶ 2nd India-Afghanistan air cargo route linking Kabul to Mumbai inaugurated at Hamid Karzai international airport in Kabul, to boost export of fresh fruits and medicinal plants from Afghanistan. First air corridor between both countries linking Kabul-New Delhi was inaugurated in June 2017.
13. ▶ 3rd Protocol for amendment of Convention between India and New Zealand for avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income has been notified.
14. ▶ 4 Arab nations boycotting Qatar (*Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt*) have announced willingness to initiate a dialogue with Qatar if it agrees to some of their demands including showing genuine willingness to stop funding terrorism.

In June 2017, 6 Gulf Nations - *Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, Yemen, Libya and UAE* suspended their diplomatic ties with Qatar. They accused Qatar for supporting Terrorist Groups and such suspicious activities.

15. ▶ 5 Day youth film festival of Nordic-Baltic European nations started at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
Nordic-Baltic countries are *Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway and Sweden*. They are tied together geographically and historically through trade, culture and many other value systems.
16. ▶ 70 Indian words were added to Oxford English Dictionary (OED) in September 2017. Example words are - *Dadagiri, Jugaad, Surya Namaskar* etc. and few other regional language words.
17. ▶ 9 metre (30ft) statue of Mikhail Kalashnikov, inventor of AK-47 assault rifle unveiled in Russian capital Moscow.
18. ▶ *Feminism* is named as Merriam-Webster's Word of the year 2017.

Feminism word has its roots in the Latin language, where it was used for "woman" and "female" in 14th century English.

Other Words of The year 2017

Populism - Cambridge Dictionary.

Kwaussie - Australian National Dictionary.

19. ▶ *Government at a Glance 2017* report by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) -
Indian government is ranked 3rd most trusted government in world, with 74 % Indians trusting their current PM Modi led Government.
List is topped by Switzerland, followed by Indonesia.
20. ▶ *The Legatum Prosperity Index 2017* (149 countries) -
India ranks 100th in this list of prosperity.
Top 5 - Norway, New Zealand, Finland, Switzerland and Sweden.

21. ▶ *Transport for London* has been given 2017 *Bad Grammar Award* by Idler Academy in Britain, to highlight *the incorrect use of English by people and institutions who should know better*.

22. ▶ *World's Top 15 Cities* list by Noted magazine Travel + Leisure (T+L). India's Udaipur (Rajasthan) has been featured in the list. Top 5 are -

1	San Miguel de Allende, Mexico
2	Charleston, South Carolina, USA
3	Chiang Mai, Thailand
4	Kyoto, Japan
5	Florence, Italy

23. ▶ A Sweden-India 'Startup Sambandh' initiative has been launched by Invest India and Founders Alliance in Sweden for higher cooperation among start-ups.
24. ▶ A consortium of chinese firms is Constructing Bangladesh's first eco-friendly thermal power plant with ultra-modern clean coal technology, near sea port in Payra town in Patuakhali district of Bangladesh. Estimated cost of the project is USD 1.56 billion.
25. ▶ A global treaty that bans nuclear weapons was adopted at United Nations by 122 Nations, with Netherlands voting in against.
None of 9 countries that possess nuclear weapons - USA, Russia, Britain, China, France, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel took part in negotiations or vote. Nuclear states argue Nuke Weapons serve as a deterrent against a nuclear attack and say they remain committed to nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
Treaty will be open for signature to Nations at UN Headquarters in New York (USA) on September 19, 2017. It will enter into force 90 days after 50th instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession has been deposited.
Current Nuclear Stockpile of nations is approx -
Russia - 7000
USA - 6800

- ✈ France - 300
- ✈ China - 270
- ✈ UK - 215
- ✈ Pakistan - 130
- ✈ India - 120
- ✈ Israel - 80
- ✈ North Korea - 2 to 3

26. ▶ A new representative body US- India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) is being set up to enhance business relations between India and USA. Mukesh Aghi will serve as a USISPF President while Gaurav Verma will serve as Chief Operating officer.
27. ▶ A painting of Christ by Italian Renaissance painter Leonardo da Vinci is sold for USD 450 million, breaking all previous records of artworks sold or auctioned. Previously, Highest price ever for a work of art at auction was USD 179.4 million for Pablo Picasso's painting 'Women of Algiers (Version O)' in May 2015. While, highest sale price for any artwork was USD 300 million for Willem de Kooning's painting 'Interchange'.
28. ▶ A team of researchers led by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen discovered wreckage of World War II warship USS Indianapolis 18000 feet below the surface in Pacific Ocean, after 72 years of its drowning by Japanese Soldiers.
29. ▶ A tomb belonging to a royal goldsmith who lived more than 3500 years ago has been discovered in Luxor (Egypt).
30. ▶ ADIA (Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)) became first institutional investor in India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)'s Master Fund and a shareholder in NIIF's investment management Company. ADIA invested approx 1 Billion USD in NIIF.
31. ▶ According to Country Report on Terrorism released by US State Department -
 - ✈ Countries that faced highest number of terrorist attacks in 2016 - Iraq (2,965 terrorist attacks), Afghanistan (1,340), India (927), Pakistan (734), Philippines (482), Nigeria (466).
32. ▶ According to Forbes Real-Time Billionaires List, Hui Ka Yan (chairman of Chinese real estate giant Evergrande Group) is now Asia's richest man with net worth of \$41.1 billion. Asia's second and third richest persons are Tencent Holdings Chairman Ma Huateng (\$39.1 billion), Alibaba Group Chairman Jack Ma (\$38.9 billion).
33. ▶ According to OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2017-2026,
 - ✈ India will be world's largest milk producer by 2026, with 49 % Increase from current Milk output.
 - ✈ World's population will increase from 7.3 to 8.2 billion, with India's population growing to 1.5 from 1.3 billion. India will overtake China as most populous country by 2026.
 - ✈ Global production of wheat will increase by 11% with registering largest Increase in Production - 15 million metric tonnes.
34. ▶ According to OECD-FAO's Agricultural Outlook 2017-2026 report, India is world's third-biggest exporter of beef (Cattle Meat) after Brazil and Australia.
35. ▶ According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)'s Trade and Development Report (TDR) 2017, India and China at their current levels of growth will not serve as "growth poles" for global economy in near future.
 - ✈ Global Growth will reach 2.6% this year, well below pre 2008 financial crisis average of 3.2%.
 - ✈ India's Growth will slow down to 6.7% in 2017 from 7% in 2016.
 - ✈ China's Growth has been retained at 6.7%, same as in 2016. China's estimated debt-to-GDP ratio is 249%, so it needs to introduce measures to contain its rising debt as domestic demand could be squeezed, with adverse consequences.
36. ▶ According to World Energy Access report by International Energy Agency (IEA) -
 - ✈ Half a billion people have gained access to electricity in India since 2000, almost doubling country's electrification rate. It paves way for India to achieve access to electricity for all in early 2020s.
37. ▶ According to a report by United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), island of Tuvalu is least visited country in 2016. Approx 2,000 people visited Tuvalu in 2016, while 1000 people visited it in 2014. Located in South Pacific Ocean, Tuvalu has a population of 11,000 people.
38. ▶ According to global airlines' grouping IATA -
 - ✈ India's domestic aviation sector grew the fastest and India topped domestic growth chart again in September with 15.5 % Growth, compared to 5.7 % Globally. China is at 2nd place.
39. ▶ According to global climate risk index (CRI) report by Germanwatch -
 - ✈ India is sixth most vulnerable country in world in terms of facing extreme weather events, after Haiti, Zimbabwe, Fiji, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.
40. ▶ According to report by UN Body International Telecommunication Union (ITU), India and China are home to 39% of the 830 million young people worldwide who use Internet.

41. ▶ According to the Zurich-based SNB, money parked by Indians in Swiss banks has nearly halved to 676 Swiss francs (approx INR 4,500 crores) in 2016. Data release comes ahead of a new framework for the automatic exchange of information between Switzerland and India to check menace of black money.
42. ▶ Adani Power signed 25 year Power purchase agreement (PPA) for net capacity of 1,496 MW with Bangladesh Power Development Board to supply electricity from its upcoming 1,600 MW plant at Godda in Jharkhand.
43. ▶ African Nation Zimbabwe's Parliament amended the constitution to give President sweeping powers to appoint country's top judges without consulting any other institution.
44. ▶ African country *Chad* will released limited edition Lord Krishna silver coin on Janmashtami in commemoration of 5,244th birth anniversary of Hindu God.
45. ▶ African country Burundi became first nation to withdraw from International Criminal Court (Hague, Netherlands) that has authority to prosecute individuals for international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.
 - ✎ In recent years, 3 African Nations South Africa, Gambia and Burundi expressed their intent to leave ICC citing reason that it focuses too much on African nations.
46. ▶ After Hindi version, Oxford University Press (OUP) launched online dictionaries in Tamil and Gujarati as part of its special focus on Indian languages, under Oxford Global Languages (OGL) initiative Launched in September 2015.
47. ▶ Agricultural Minister Radha Mohan Singh sent a proposal to United Nations for declaring 2018 as *International Year of Millets*.
 - ✎ Mr. Radha Mohan also stated that total fish production in India remaiend 11.41 million tonnes in 2016-17, makig India 2nd largest fish producing country.
48. ▶ Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) launched promotion of north eastern products in Bangladesh and Myanmar. Exports of APEDA scheduled products to Bangladesh during 2016-17 were US \$396.44 million and US \$24.15 million for Myanmar.
49. ▶ Air India launched its direct flight from New Delhi to Copenhagen (Denmark), as 11th destination for Air India in Europe (described as connecting *Maharaja with the Mermaid*).
50. ▶ Air New Zealand has been named *2018 Airline of the Year* for 5th consecutive year. It is followed by Qantas Airways, Singapore Airlines, Virgin Australia and Virgin Atlantic.
51. ▶ Airbus Perlan 2 Engineless aircraft has set a new altitude world record for a glider, climbing to 52,172 feet in El Calafate (Argentina)
52. ▶ Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft launched open-source and deep learning interface *Gluton* that will help developers to deploy machine learning models across several platforms. It will give developers a place to prototype, build, train and deploy machine learning models.
53. ▶ American Aerospace Firm SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket successfully delivered super-heavy commercial communications satellite *Intelsat 35e*.
 - ✎ With mass of 6,761kg, Intelsat 35e communications satellite is heaviest payload SpaceX has ever launched toward geostationary orbit, approx 36,000km above Earth's surface.
54. ▶ American Chipmaker AMD (Advanced Micro Devices) presented new line of microprocessor chips called 'Ryzen Pro' for commercial desktops to be available in India by end of 2017.
55. ▶ American digital payments company PayPal launched domestic operations in India.
 - ✎ Merchants offering PayPal will be able to process both local and global payments through the platform, getting access to PayPal's more than 20 Crore customers across world.
56. ▶ American electric Carmaker TESLA has builds world's biggest lithium-ion battery to be plugged into an Australian state grid, capable of powering 30,000 homes for up to an hour in the event of a severe blackout.
57. ▶ American fashion luxury brand Michael Kors acquired British global luxury footwear and accessories brand Jimmy Choo for USD 1.2 billion.
58. ▶ American tech Firm Cisco Systems acquired American communication software and service provider BroadSoft for \$1.9 billion.
59. ▶ An Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA) signed between Green Climate Fund (GCF) and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) in Delhi, making NABARD second entity from India (after SIDBI) to be accredited as Direct Access Entity (DAE) that will be able to access GCF resources to help safeguard livelihoods of millions of people against climate change impact.
 - ✎ Green Climate Fund (GCF) is a fund established under UNFCCC to assist developing countries in countering climate change. GCF is based in the new Incheon (South Korea) with Howard Bamsey as current Chief.
 - ✎ GCF acts as a centrepiece of efforts to raise Climate Finance under UNFCCC, and raise \$100 billion a year by 2020.
 - ✎ So far, one project from India on "Installation of Ground Water Recharge System" in Odisha has recently been approved by the GCF for \$34 million India has nominated 5 direct access entities for accreditation by GCF - NABARD, SIDBI, YES Bank, IDFC Bank and IL&FS Environmental Services.

60. ▶ An Indian Army team with T-90 tanks participated in Tank Biathlon 2017 in Russia.
61. ▶ Apple and Google respectively took 2 top spots in list of world's 100 most valuable brands, as per report by consultancy group Interbrand. This is the fifth consecutive year with Apple and Google at top of the list.
62. ▶ Arab Nation Jordan, that is 90% desert, has launched *Sahara Forest Project* near Aqaba City to turn desert land into farming land to produce food using sun and sea water. It is funded by Norway and European Union.
63. ▶ Arab Nation Qatar government announced that citizens belonging to 80 countries including India can now enter Qatar without a visa.
64. ▶ As per *Authentic Brands Study* by Cohn & Wolfe -
 - ▶ Indian consumers regard Google as most authentic brand, followed by Microsoft, Amazon, Maruti Suzuki and Apple.
 - ▶ Amazon tops list globally, followed by Apple.
65. ▶ As per *Global Infrastructure Outlook* by Global Infrastructure Hub (GIH), India will need investments around USD 4.5 trillion till 2040 to develop infrastructure for better economy and community wellbeing and will need additional USD 888 billion by 2030 to provide universal household access to electricity and water.
66. ▶ As per *Peer Review* report by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
 - ▶ India slipped from a rating of 'compliant' to an overall rating of 'largely compliant' in meeting international standards for exchange of tax information.
 - ▶ It suggests that Indian tax authorities should ensure the quality of the exchange of information (EoI) requests sent to foreign tax authorities and should carry out efficient communication with its EoI partners for all cases.
67. ▶ As per Asian tourism market research firm Euromonitor International -
 - ▶ Hong Kong remained world's most visited city by international travelers in 2017 with over 2.5 Crore Arrivals, despite strained relations with neighboring China.
68. ▶ As per Bloomberg Billionaires Index, India's Mukesh Ambani Became Asia's second-richest man with Worth of Approx 35.7 Billion USD, getting past Hong Kong Businessman Li Ka-shing. Mukesh added \$12.1 billion to his wealth in 2017, mainly owing to Jio Infocom, that roped in Over 11 Crore users in Under an year.
69. ▶ As per Credit Suisse Research Institute's (CSRI) report CS Family 1000 -
 - ▶ India has 108 publicly-listed family owned businesses, 3rd highest in world. With average market capitalization of USD 6.5 billion, India ranks 5th in Asia Pacific and 22nd globally, in terms of average m-cap.
 - ▶ Top 5 countries in terms of number of family-owned companies - China, USA, India, France AND Hong Kong
70. ▶ As per Data by Forbes, based on a recent research by Transparency International (TI) -
 - ▶ India beats Vietnam, Thailand, Pakistan and Myanmar inn terms of corruption, making India most corrupt asian nation with 69 % bribery rate.
71. ▶ As per Data by Twiplomacy (Burson Marsteller research project that tracks use of Twitter by governments and international organizations) -
 - ▶ USA Prez Donald Trump is most followed leader on Twitter, followed by Pope Francis and Indian PM Narendra Modi.
72. ▶ As per Forbes' Magazine, Chinese e-Commerce Firm Alibaba's CEO Jack Ma is back as Asia's richest man with worth of \$37.4 billion. He is followed by China's Ma Huateng (Chairman of Tencent) with worth \$36.7 billion.
73. ▶ As per HSBC, India ranks 14th in terms of best country for expats to live and work in. The list is topped by Singapore.
74. ▶ As per Latest Data by Zurich based SNB (Swiss National Bank) -
 - ▶ India is now ranked 88th place in terms of money parked by its citizens with Swiss banks. Indians' Money in Switzerland's banks is now only 0.04% of total funds kept by all foreign clients in Swiss banking system.
 - ▶ Top 2 - United Kingdom (CHF 359 billion (25%)), US (CHF 177 billion (14%)).
 - ▶ BRICS - Russia 19th (CHF 15.6 billion), China 25th (9.6 billion), Brazil 52nd (2.7 billion) and South Africa 61st (2.2 billion).
 - ▶ Neighbours - Pakistan 71st place (CHF 1.4 billion), Bangladesh 89th (667.5 million), Nepal 150th (312 million), Sri Lanka 151st (307 million).
75. ▶ As per Online Streaming Platform Netflix, Indians are 2nd highest Binge watchers (89 %), just behind Mexico (89 %).
 - ▶ Binge Watching Means watching multiple episodes of a television programme in rapid succession.
76. ▶ As per Report by Tourism Australia, Maharashtra is leading Indian tourist source market for Australia with over 59,000 tourists having visited Australia in year ended June 2017, folowed by Delhi and Karnataka.
77. ▶ As per Thomson Reuters Foundation - Delhi ranked fourth in terms of women safety, among 19 assessed megacities of over 1 crore population. Japan's capital Tokyo emerged as safest city in terms of risk of sexual harassment.
78. ▶ As per UK's Department for International Trade, India is now 4th largest foreign investor into UK in 2016-17.

Top 4 foreign investor into UK in 2016-17 - US (577 new projects), China (160 new projects), France (131 new projects), India (127 new Projects).

Australia and New Zealand share the 4th spot with India.

79. ▶ As per UN report *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality 2017* -

India is among 5 countries (including Pakistan, Nigeria, Congo and Ethiopia) that are responsible for half of all new-born deaths in world, with approx 5 Million children dying before reaching age of 5 in 2016.

Also, With 2.51 million deaths in 2015, India is at top in pollution related deaths, according to a report by The Lancet Commission on pollution and health. China follows India with 1.8 Million Pollution Victims.

80. ▶ As per a Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) Report -

Bengaluru is best host among 45 cities worldwide in terms of highest confidence in their digital environment based on people and skills, financial environment, innovation and entrepreneurship and new technology development.

San Francisco (USA) is second followed by Mumbai and New Delhi.

81. ▶ As per a report by *UN Women and the UN Development Programme (UNDP)*, Latin America and Caribbean is most violent region in world for women.

82. ▶ As per consultancy and research firm Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA) -

India will 3rd largest aviation market for departures by 2019, up from 4th place with 131 Million passengers in 2016.

USA is largest aviation market with 815 million passengers, followed by China (490 million) and Japan(141 million).

83. ▶ As per data by Bank of Thailand, India has highest unemployment rate in Asia (8%). Thailand's 1.3% employment rate is ranked best in Asia.

84. ▶ As per data by U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2016 was warmest on record for planet as a whole and it also surpassed temperature records dating back 137 years.

85. ▶ As per new discovery, *Mount Hope* is new tallest mountain in British Antarctic Territory (BAT) with height measured at 3,239 meters above, more than 3,184 meters tall *Mount Jackson*.

86. ▶ As per rankings released by *Fortune Magazine*, Qatar is World's Richest Country in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Per Capita.

Top 5 Nations -

Rank	Country	GDP Per Capita
1	Qatar	\$124930
2	Luxembourg	\$109190
3	Singapore	\$90530
4	Brunei	\$76740
5	Ireland	\$72630

India is Ranked 126th with USD 7170 GDP Per Capita.

87. ▶ As per research by Centre for International Development at Harvard University (CID) -

Economic pole of global growth has moved from China to India and it is likely to remain over India in coming decade. India's exports base now includes more complex sectors such as chemicals, vehicles and certain electronics and India is also well-positioned to continue diversifying into new areas. Study also found decline in China's exports and Its economic complexity.

88. ▶ As per speed tester Ookla, Norway has fastest mobile Internet in the world with 52.6 Mbps speed, followed by Netherlands and Hungary.

89. ▶ Asia Index Pvt Ltd (joint venture of S&P Dow Jones Indices and BSE) launched Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) index, to measure exposure to securities meeting sustainability investing criteria.

90. ▶ Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide USD 152 million to Nepal for implementation and enhancement of its power transmission and distribution.

91. ▶ Assam government signed MoU with Singapore for skilling youth of state. Additionally, Indiana (USA State) and Karnataka signed agreement to establish sister-state ties for cooperation in economic, educational and cultural fields.

92. ▶ Australia and East Timor (Known as *Timor - Leste*) agreed on a maritime boundary and revenue sharing agreement from a natural gas field beneath seabed between them.

93. ▶ Australia became 25th country to recognize same-sex marriage as it passed a bill that changed a 2004 law that stipulated a legal marriage as the one between a man and a woman.

94. ▶ Australia became 35th country to join International Solar Alliance (ISA) initiative jointly launched by India and France. ISA aims to support developing countries to boost their solar production capacity.

India through Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) and Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) is contributing \$1 million to ISA fund. ISA aims to mobilize over \$ 1000 billion by 2030 towards promoting solar power on all fronts.

95. ▶ Australia sent its first uranium shipment to India for testing purposes ahead of possible commercial sales. India and Australia signed an agreement for civil nuclear cooperation in 2014 to meet India's growing energy needs.
96. ▶ Australian Government announced that it will establish a national space agency as a part of long term plan to develop Australia's domestic space industry. It will be called ARSE (Australian Research & Space Exploratio).
97. ▶ Australian government will build world's biggest single tower solar thermal power plant (150-megawatt capacity) in South Australia by 2020. Solar thermal technology uses mirrors to concentrate the Sun's light at the top of a tower, heating stored molten salt and heat is used to operate steam turbines.
98. ▶ Australia's last car factory was shut down as USA carmaker GM Holden Ltd closed its plant in South Australia. It marks end of car manufacturing industry in Australia.
99. ▶ Austria's law banning face veils such as burkhas or niqabs came into effect, to promote cohabitation between majority Austrian population and people from third countries living in Austria.
100. ▶ BRICS - themed subway train with carriages representing five member nations started test operations in China's Xiamen city.
 - ▶ Indian carriage depicts elephants and yoga.
 - ▶ Chinese carriage is red and displays icons such as the Great Wall and Tian'anmen Square.
 - ▶ Brazilian carriage is green and decorated with images of footballs and football stars.
 - ▶ Russian carriage shows country's ballet and matryoshka dolls.
 - ▶ South African carriage displays pictures of diamonds.
 - ▶ Sixth carriage combines cultural elements from all the five BRICS countries.
101. ▶ BRICS Nations' New Development Bank (NDB) approved 2 development projects in India and Russia with loans of \$400 million -
 - ▶ In India, funds procured by means of NDB loan will be used to rehabilitate the Indira Gandhi canal system.
 - ▶ In Russia, loan will be used to build a toll transport corridor connecting M-5 federal highway to Ufa city centre.
 - ▶ New Development Bank is Headquartered in Shanghai (China) with India's K V Kamath as Current President.
102. ▶ Bajaj Auto and Triumph Motorcycles (UK) announced a global partnership, to build a range of mid-capacity motorcycles, building on the collective strengths of both companies.
103. ▶ Bangkok Bank (Thailand) selected India based iGTB (Intellect Global Transaction Banking - a specialist firm of Intellect Design Arena Ltd) as tech partner to implement a cash management platform and corporate portal.
104. ▶ Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina floated a five-point peace proposal at United Nations to find a permanent solution to Rohingya crisis (Over 430,000 refugees fleeing violence in Bangladesh's Rakhine State from Myanmar since August 2017). These Points Include UN Intervention to ensure safe return of all displaced Rohingyas in Bangladesh to their homes in Myanmar and implementing Kofi Annan Commission Recommendations immediately.
105. ▶ Bangladesh and Myanmar signed MOU on return of Rohingya Muslims who fled the Rakhine state in Myanmar to escape a military crackdown.
106. ▶ Bangladesh and USA Armies held Joint Pacific Resilience Disaster Response Exercise and Exchange (DREE) in Dhaka.
107. ▶ Bangladesh will open a new diplomatic station in Chennai, to focus on medical tourism and educational centres that drew thousands of Bangladesh citizens to India every year.
108. ▶ Bank of China formally launched its operations in Pakistan by opening its first branch in Karachi.
109. ▶ Bank of England would not change the way its new plastic banknotes are made, that have small amounts of animal fat used in their production.
110. ▶ Belgium became first country to send a female ambassador (Dominique Mineur) to Saudi Arabia.
111. ▶ Bengaluru based IT Firm Mindtree inaugurated its first international Digital Pumpkin innovation hub in New Jersey (USA).
112. ▶ Bengaluru city signed MoU with C40 cities network to work together to tackle air pollution.
 - ▶ C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40) is grouping of cities aims at tackling climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions in urban areas.
113. ▶ Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) signed agreement with USA's networking solutions provider Coriant to study possibilities of bringing and expanding 5G and Internet of Things (IoT) in India.
114. ▶ Bharti Airtel acquired Consumer Mobile Businesses (CMB) of Tata Teleservices Ltd (TTSL) and Tata Teleservices Maharashtra Ltd (TTML) with over 4 crore TTSL customers joining Bharti Airtel. Bharti Airtel will absorb TTSL's CMB operations across country in nineteen circles (17 under TTSL and 2 under TTML).
115. ▶ Bharti Airtel received Ghana's National Communications Authority's approval for merger between Bharti Ghana (Airtel) and Millicom Ghana (Tigo). Merger will result in 2nd largest mobile network operations in Ghana.

116. ▶ Bharti Airtel signed agreement with Millicom International, under which *Airtel Rwanda Ltd* will acquire 100% equity in Tigo Rwanda Ltd.
117. ▶ Bhutan has become the first country to pledge rapid deployment troops to the UN peacekeeping operations, keeping them at the ready for participation in missions within 60 days.
118. ▶ Biggest X-ray laser gun on earth named, European X-ray Free Electron Laser (XFEL) in German federal states of Hamburg and Schleswig-Holstein, will begin operating in September 2017.
 - ▶ XFEL will shoot 27000 laser pulses per second, 200 times more per second than next highest-performing gun in California (USA).
 - ▶ 1.5 billion-euro laser replaces its predecessor, FLASH, in Germany.
 - ▶ European XFEL is constructed such that electrons produce x-ray light in synchronisation, resulting in high-intensity x-ray pulses with properties of laser light and at intensities much brighter than those produced by conventional synchrotron light sources.
119. ▶ Bilateral Agreement on Trade, Commerce and Transit between India and Bhutan came into force, aiming to strengthen bilateral trade relations between both countries.
120. ▶ Bilateral meetings -
 - ▶ India-US Ocean Dialogue hosted by Ministry of External Affairs at Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Institute of Oceanography (CSIR-NIO) in Goa.
 - ▶ 4th Indo - US Joint Working Group on Aircraft Carrier Technology Cooperation (JWGACTC) held in Goa. Possibilities of using USA's catapult-based aircraft launch mechanism (CATOBAR) for India's 2nd indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC-II) have been discussed.
121. ▶ Brand Finance's Nation Brands 2017 -
 - ▶ India ranked 8th most valuable nation brand while USA retained its top position and China took second spot.
 - ▶ In terms of valuation, India's National Brand Value in 2017 is \$2.04 trillion, down by 1% from last year's \$2.06 trillion. However, India's brand rating has improved from 'AA-' to 'AA'.
122. ▶ Brazil Government abolished a vast national reserve in the Amazon to open up area to mining, covering 46000 sq km. This area straddles northern states of Amapa and Para and is believed to be rich in gold, zinc, phosphate, manganese and other minerals.
123. ▶ Britain launched a new plastic 10-pound note featuring Jane Austen (*renowned British Author*), To tackle counterfeiting. Apart from Queen, Austen is 3rd woman (after Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Fry) to feature on a modern-day British banknote.
124. ▶ British government launched *Grand Trunk Road* project to mark 70th anniversary of India's Partition in August 1947, aimed at bringing British Asians of all faiths and backgrounds together.
125. ▶ Cab Aggregator Uber approved SoftBank Group Corp.'s offer to buy a multibillion-dollar stake in UBER. It will let SoftBank and other firms to invest up to \$1 billion in Uber.
126. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ Trade Agreement with Ethiopia for strengthening and promoting trade and economic cooperation.
 - ▶ Agreement with Armenia on cooperation and mutual assistance in customs matters.
127. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ MOU with Switzerland for technical co-operation in Rail sector.
 - ▶ Approval of Extradition Treaty with Lithuania, to provide a legal framework for seeking extradition of terrorists, economic offenders and other criminals from and to Lithuania.
 - ▶ MoU for upgradation of Women's Police Training Centre at Yamethin (Myanmar).
128. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ MoU with Morocco on cooperation in the field of health.
 - ▶ MoU with Armenia on Cooperation in field of Disaster Management.
 - ▶ Approval for hiving off mobile tower assets of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) into a separate company, fully owned by BSNL.
 - ▶ MoU with Japan for collaborative research in field of silkworm and silk industries.
129. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ MoU with Palestine on cooperation in youth affairs and sports.
 - ▶ Joint Declaration with Germany on Indo German-Centre for Sustainability.
130. ▶ Cabinet Approvals-
 - ▶ Approved enhancement of age of superannuation of doctors other than Central Health Service (CHS) doctors to 65 years.
 - ▶ MOU with Ethiopia in field of Information, Communication and Media.
 - ▶ MoU with Belarus in the oil and gas sector
 - ▶ MoU with Afghanistan on Technical Cooperation on Police Training and Development

- ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare signed a Letter of Intent with Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to extend cooperation in health sector.
 - ▶ Letter of Intent (LoI) with Norway to extend cooperation within health sector through Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI) for 3 years starting from 2018.
131. ▶ Cabinet Approved MoU with Sweden on cooperation in the field of Intellectual Property (IPRs).
132. ▶ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved upgradation of 65 kms of Imphal-Moreh Section of NH-39 in Manipur, a vital link in providing road connectivity up to Thailand and Malaysia.
- ▶ This project is being developed with Asian Development Bank's (ADB) loan assistance under South Asian Sub-Regional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Road Connectivity Investment Program. It aims at upgradation of road infrastructure in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and India (BBIN) to improve regional connectivity.
133. ▶ Cabinet approvals -
- ▶ Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with Japan on *Technical Intern Training Program (TITP)*. Under this, India will send 3-lakh youth to Japan for on-job training for 3-5 years.
 - ▶ MOC with Japan on establishing a Liquid, Flexible and Global LNG Market.
 - ▶ MoU between Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Financial Services Commission (Gibraltar) for mutual co-operation and technical assistance.
 - ▶ MOU between Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Capital Markets Authority (Kuwait).
 - ▶ MoU with Morocco on cooperation in water resources.
 - ▶ Government approved updating status of *International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)* from Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) to Inter-Governmental Organization (IGO). It will bring IALA at par with International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) and will enable more safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels.
 - ▶ Extradition Treaty with Lithuania to provide legal framework for seeking extradition of economic offenders, terrorists and other criminals from and to Lithuania.
134. ▶ Cabinet approvals -
- ▶ MOU with Spain on cooperation in renewable energy.
 - ▶ Establishment of BRICS Agriculture Research Platform (BRICS-ARP), as a natural global platform for science-led agriculture-based sustainable development for addressing the issues of world hunger, under-nutrition, poverty and inequality.
 - ▶ India and Somalia signed agreement for transfer of sentenced persons, to deepen humanitarian cooperation between two nations.
 - ▶ Proposal to extend proxy voting to overseas Indians by amending electoral laws has been cleared. NRIs will also be allowed to use option of proxy, which as of now is only available to service personnel.
135. ▶ Canada has been chosen as partner country for 23rd Technology Summit to be held in November 2017 in New Delhi, organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Department of Science and Technology (DST).
136. ▶ Canadian government announced to allow Transgender citizens to obtain gender neutral passports, by marking **X** in space of gender on their passports and other identity documents.
137. ▶ Central American Nation Guatemala announced to move its Israeli Embassy to Jerusalem, after USA recently recognized Jerusalem as capital of Israel and announced to move USA's Israeli embassy to Jerusalem.
138. ▶ Central American country Nicaragua signed Paris Agreement on climate change, leaving USA and Syria as only 2 countries left to sign this global climate pact.
139. ▶ China Great Wall Industry Corporation (CGWIC) launched Algeria's first telecommunications satellite, Alcomsat-1, aboard a Long March 3B rocket.
140. ▶ China and Australia joint military training exercise *Panda-Kangaroo 2017* concluded in Kunming (China).
141. ▶ China and Nepal have signed three pacts to further boost their ties. Areas of co-operation are gas resources exploration, economic and technological cooperation and promotion of investment.
142. ▶ China and Pakistan Joint Air Exercise *Shaheen VI* has been organized.
143. ▶ China and Russia held their large-scale naval exercise *Joint Sea 2017* in Baltic Sea.
144. ▶ China approved making disrespect of national anthem a criminal offense punishable by up to three years in prison.
145. ▶ China commissioned its first radar-evading J-20 stealth fighter jets into military service.
146. ▶ China displayed its first unmanned combat helicopter AV500W for foreign buyers. The aircraft's length is 7.2 meters.
147. ▶ China has set up its first overseas military base in Djibouti in Horn of Africa, as part of China's rapid global military expansion.
148. ▶ China has shut down its legal government-sanctioned ivory (*elephant teeth*) trade.

149. ▶ China launched 2nd Land Surveying Satellite LKW-2 (also known as Yaogan Weixing-32), to be used for remote sensing exploration of land resources. It was launched on board of Long March-2D rocket.
150. ▶ China launched BeiDou-3 M1 and BeiDou-3 M2 Navigation satellites on board Long March-3B rocket.
151. ▶ China launched its first cyber court specialising in handling internet-related cases in the e-commerce hub of Hangzhou, amid a spike in number of online disputes.
152. ▶ China launched remote sensing VRSS-2 satellite for Venezuela by Long March-2D carrier rocket. This is 3rd Venezuelan satellite launched by China after Venesat -1 (2008) and VRSS – 1 (2012).
153. ▶ China launched world's fastest bullet train *Fuxing* between Beijing and Shanghai at 350 kms per hour, covering 1,250-km in 4 hours and 30 minutes.
154. ▶ China launched world's first all-electric ship, which can travel up to 80 km with 2000-tonnes cargo after a two-hour charge. It is 70.5-metre-long and weighs about 600 tonnes.
155. ▶ China opened a 409-km new expressway linking Tibet's provincial capital Lhasa with Nyingchi, which is close to Arunachal Pradesh border. It has been built at a cost of nearly \$5.8 billion.
156. ▶ China opened a dual-use highway in Tibet to Nepal border which could be used for civilian and defense purposes in China.
157. ▶ China started trial operations of world's biggest automated container terminal at Yangshan Deep Water Port in Shanghai. Terminal covers 2.23 million square metres and has a 2,350-metre shoreline.
158. ▶ China successfully produced natural gas from methane hydrate (also known as *flammable ice*) in South China Sea (SCS). A drilling platform produced a total of 309,000 cubic metres of natural gas from gas hydrate in 60 days.
159. ▶ China today launched three remote sensing satellites to improve observation capability to promote commercial use for remote sensing industry. Satellites are Jilin-1 04, Jilin-1 05 and Jilin-1 06.
160. ▶ China unveiled Asia's largest artificial island-building ship named *magic island maker*, with 140-metre length and capable of digging 6,000 cubic metres an hour.
161. ▶ China will develop national carbon market as world's biggest trading system for climate-warming emissions, initially involving only power sector. China is biggest emitter with 3 billion metric tons of emissions annually.
162. ▶ China will launch 10 satellites into space over next three years to maintain non-stop surveillance on disputed waterway of South China Sea. It would provide scientific support for China's One Belt One Road initiative and emergency response efforts at sea.
163. ▶ China's Shanghai will have first Tesla Electric Car factory outside USA. Tesla is headed by Noted Entrepreneur Elon Musk.
164. ▶ China's Zhejiang Electric Power Company will construct world's tallest power supply pylon in east Zhejiang Province, with 380-metre height. It will get past China's Dabaoshan pylon (370 m).
165. ▶ Chinese Mobile Maker Xiaomi signed agreement for business collaboration and patent licencing with Finnish mobile phone manufacturer Nokia, to acquire key patent assets from Nokia.
166. ▶ Chinese authorities blocked Anti-Islam terms used by Chinese internet users to stigmatise Muslims, to prevent worsening online hatred towards Islam.
167. ▶ Chinese electronics company TCL Corporation will launch a full touchscreen, waterproof Smartphone under BlackBerry name in October 2017.
168. ▶ Chinese spiritual practice *Falun Gong* celebrated in India, that combines meditation and qigong exercises with a moral philosophy.
169. ▶ Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2018 by environmental organisation Germanwatch (56 Nations) -
 - 🇮🇳 India - Ranked 14th This year, up from 20th Rank Last Year.
 - 🇸🇪 Top 5 - Sweden (1), Lithuania (2), Morocco (3), Norway (4), UK (5)
 - 🇷🇺 Bottom 5 - Russia , USA, Australia, South Korea, Saudi Arabia (Last)
 - 🇧🇷 BRICS - Brazil (19), Russia (53), China (41), South Africa (48)
170. ▶ Cross Border Train Service between India & Bangladesh, Kolkata-Khulna Bandhan Express has been inaugurated.
171. ▶ Cuba began a five-month political transition expected to end with Raul Castro's departure from Presidency, due to his family's dominance in country's political system for 60 years.
172. ▶ Delhi Government signed twin city agreement with Seoul (South Korea), to strengthen cooperation i fields of smart city, e-governance, climate change and transportation.
173. ▶ Denmark launched USA based global alliance to manage Climate change in Copenhagen. It is called Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G).
 - 🇺🇸 P4G is supported by China, Indonesia and C40(group of more than 90 large cities of world that represent 25% of global economy).
174. ▶ Disney acquired certain assets of 21st Century Fox (FOXA), for approximately USD 52.4 billion in stocks, with transaction valued at USD 66.1 billion including 21st Century Fox's debt.

175. ▶ Dubai police officers set a Guinness World Record by pulling the world's largest passenger airliner Airbus A380 for a distance of 100 metres.
- ✍ Plane that weighs 3.02 lakh kg was dragged by 56 police officers to break previous record set by 100 people who pulled a 2.18-lakh kg airplane at Hong Kong International Airport in 2011.
176. ▶ E-commerce Major Amazon acquired a startup named Blink that builds wireless home security systems.
177. ▶ East African Nation Kenya has put Toughest laws against use of Plastic Bags, with imprisonment of up to four years or fines of \$40000.
178. ▶ East African country Zimbabwe banned import of fruits and vegetables to preserve scarce foreign currencies.
179. ▶ Economist Intelligence Unit's Safe Cities Index 2017 -
- ✍ Japanese capital Tokyo topped the list of 60 cities. Singapore and Japanese city Osaka ranked second and third.
 - ✍ Indian cities Delhi and Mumbai have been ranked 43rd and 45th respectively.
180. ▶ Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) of India launched UJALA (Unnati Jyoti by Affordable Lighting for All) Scheme in Melaka State of Malaysia. Malaysia became 2nd country after United Kingdom (UK) where EESL launched UJALA scheme. Under this, each household in Melaka will get 10 high quality 9-watt LED bulbs at a cost of only RM 10.
181. ▶ European Nation Malta became 24th Overall and 15th European Union Member to allow same-sex marriages.
182. ▶ European Parliament approved Its first-ever cooperation deal between European Union and Cuba.
183. ▶ European Union Election Observation Mission (EUEOM) launched to monitor general and provincial polls in Nepal to be held in Nov - Dec 2017, with 3.5 million euros allocated for entire election observation process.
184. ▶ Export control regime Wassenaar Arrangement included India as its 42nd member, during its plenary meeting in Vienna (Austria).
- ✍ Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, is a multilateral export control regime established to ensure regional and international security by promoting transparency in transfer of arms and dual-use goods and technologies.
 - ✍ This will enhance India's credentials in field of non-proliferation, although, India is not a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
185. ▶ External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will lead a ministerial delegation to the ASEAN-India 'Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas' (PBD) to be held in 2018, in Singapore. PBD 2018 will also mark 25 years of the ASEAN-India partnership.
186. ▶ Extremism Affected Nation Syria signed Paris Agreement on climate change, leaving USA as only one left to sign this global climate pact.
187. ▶ FIFA lifted ban on Sudan Football Association (SFA), making it eligible to benefit from FIFA development programs.
188. ▶ Facebook Launched new tools (*called Facebook Creator App*) for video creators to join its platform *Watch* in an attempt to take on Google-owned YouTube. It will help creating original video, go live with exclusive features and connect with their community on Facebook.
189. ▶ Facebook acquired artificial intelligence (AI) startup Ozlo, aimed at building more elaborate personal assistant for Messenger users.
190. ▶ Facebook rolled out *Watch* video platform to take on Google-owned YouTube. It is a platform for all creators and publishers to find an audience, build a community of passionate fans, and earn money for their work.
191. ▶ Fifteen countries elected to UN Human Rights Council by UN General Assembly Including Afghanistan, Nepal and Pakistan. They will serve a three-year term from January 1, 2018.
192. ▶ Fifty Indian peacekeepers stationed in South Sudan awarded with UN Medal for their professionalism and service in protecting civilians and building durable peace in conflict-ridden South Sudan.
193. ▶ Fiji, Niger, Tuvalu and Seychelles ratified ISA Framework Agreement and became members of ISA framework agreement.
- ✍ ISA will need the ratification of just 4 more countries to become a recognized inter-governmental body (Total 15 were needed). After which, ISA can embark on its task to channelise \$300 billion in 10 years to promote renewable energy globally.
194. ▶ Finance Ministry imposed anti-dumping duty on certain *textured toughened (tempered) glass* imported from China (for five years), to protect domestic industry from cheaper imports.
195. ▶ Financial Services Commission of Mauritius opened its representative office in Mumbai, to strengthen its partnership with its Indian counterparts in capacity building, financial literacy and exchange of expertise.
196. ▶ *First Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index* released by international NGO Oxfam International -
- ✍ India is ranked **132nd** out of 152 countries.
 - ✍ Top 5 - Sweden (1st), Belgium (2nd), Denmark (3rd), Norway (4th) and Germany (5th).
 - ✍ Bottom 5 - Nigeria (152), Bahrain (151), Myanmar (150), Albania (149), Panama (148).
 - ✍ Neighbours - Pakistan (146), Bangladesh (148), Nepal (81), Sri Lanka (138)
197. ▶ First Israeli satellite for environmental research - *Venus* has been launched from French Guiana (France), as a joint effort by the Israel Space Agency and the French Space Agency (CNES).
198. ▶ First Meeting of India-Australia Joint Steering Committee (JSC) held in New Delhi.



















199. ▶ First USA crude oil cargo of 1.6 million barrels bought by Indian Oil Corporation reached Paradip Port (Odisha). Indian Oil became placed order of 3.9 million barrel from USA.
200. ▶ First ever *Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) - India Music Festival* held at Purana Quila in New Delhi, to celebrate 25 year anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations.
201. ▶ First meeting of Japan-India Coordination Forum (JICF) for Development of North-Eastern Region held in New Delhi.
202. ▶ First metro train of Pakistan arrived from China as a gift. It has been called *Orange Line Metro Train service* and will begin operations in December 2017. Also, Pakistan and Iran signed MoU to improve border security.
203. ▶ First project funded BRICS *New Development Bank* has started operations in Shanghai (China), that was set up using \$76 million loan granted to Shanghai Lingang Distributed Solar Power Project from NDB.
204. ▶ First regional centre of New Development Bank has been opened in SouthAfrica. NDB has been set up by India and other BRICS nations with an authorized capital of USD 100 billion. Its headquarters is in Beijing (China).
205. ▶ Five Indian-origin persons featured in Fortune's annual list of 40 young and influential people in business globally.
 - ▶ Indian Origin Persons - Leo Varadkar (Irish Prime Minister), Divya Nag, Rishi Shah, Shradha Agarwal and Leila Janah.
 - ▶ List is topped by 39-year-old French President Emmanuel Macron (France's youngest leader since Napoleon).
206. ▶ For the first time, WHO will add gaming disorder to its International Classification of Diseases (ICD)
 - ▶ ICD is a diagnostic manual published by WHO that was last updated 27 years ago. 11th edition of the manual is due in 2018.
207. ▶ Forbes Highest Paid TV Actresses 2017 -
 - ▶ Modern Family' star Sofia Vergara earned USD 41.5 million (Rs 271 crore), topping the list for the sixth consecutive year.
 - ▶ India's Priyanka Chopra ranked 8th, as she made USD 10 million (INR 65 crore).
208. ▶ Forbes Magazine has named former Tesco supermarket worker Dan Middleton (UK) as world's richest YouTuber after he made a fortune of \$16.5 million this year. He shares videos of himself playing video games and describes gameplay and strategies on his YouTube channel, DanTDM.
209. ▶ Forbes annual list of the highest-paid musicians -
 - ▶ Top 3 -
 - ▶ Diddy (\$130m) (USA)
 - ▶ Beyonce (\$105m) (USA)
 - ▶ Drake (\$94m) (Canada)
210. ▶ Forbes list of top-earning dead celebrities -
 - ▶ Michael Jackson remained at top for 5th straight year, with \$75 million earnings.
 - ▶ Golf legend Arnold Palmer claims No. 2 spot with \$40 million and Peanuts creator Charles Schulz ranks third with \$38 million income.
211. ▶ Forbes' Highest Earning Male Actors List 2017 -
 - ▶ Mark Wahlberg (\$68 million)
 - ▶ Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson (\$65 million)
 - ▶ Vin Diesel (\$54.5 million)
 - ▶ Adam Sandler (\$50.5 million)
 - ▶ Jackie Chan (\$49 million)
 - ▶ Robert Downey, Jr. (\$48 million)
 - ▶ Tom Cruise (\$43 million)
 - ▶ Shah Rukh Khan (\$38 million)
 - ▶ Salman Khan (\$37 million)
 - ▶ Akshay Kumar (\$35.5 million)
212. ▶ Forbes' Highest Paid Models List 2017 -
 - ▶ American model Kendall Jenner remained at top with earnings \$22 million, followed by Gisele (\$17.5 million).
213. ▶ Forbes' Highest Paid Women in Music List 2017 -
 - ▶ American singer Beyonce at top with earnings of \$105 million (Rs682 crore).
 - ▶ Top 5 - Beyonce (\$105 million-USA), Adele (\$69 million-ENG), Taylor Swift (\$44 million-USA), Celine Dion (\$42 million-Canada), Jennifer Lopez (\$38 million-USA).
214. ▶ Forbes' Highest-Paid Athletes of All Time-
 - ▶ Retired American Basketball Legend Michael Jordan is named as highest-paid athlete of all time with \$1.7 billion income, followed by golfer Tiger Woods (\$1.7 billion) and Late American golfer Arnold Palmer at 3rd place (\$1.4 billion).

215. ▶ Forbes' Top Grossing actors 2017 -
- ▶ American Actor Vin Diesel is at top with \$1.6 billion in global ticketing receipts from his film 'The Fate of the Furious'.
 - ▶ Second spot was occupied by Dwayne Johnson with \$1.5 billion receipts.
 - ▶ Wonder Woman actress Gal Gadot's films earned \$1.4 billion worldwide, ranking her third.
216. ▶ Forbes' best countries in world for business in 2018 (153 Nations) -
- ▶ UK stayed at top of List, followed by New Zealand and Netherlands.
 - ▶ India is ranked 62nd on list. China ranks 66th.
217. ▶ Forbes's list of *The World's Most Innovative Companies*. 2017 -
- ▶ Top 5 - Salesforce (1st), Tesla Motors (2), Amazon (3), Shanghai Raas Blood Products (4) and Netflix (5)
 - ▶ Indian Companies - Hindustan Unilever Limited (7th), Asian Paints (8th) and Bharti Airtel (78th).
218. ▶ Force Motors signed agreement with Rolls-Royce Power Systems AG (UK) to produce engines for power generation and rail application and complete power generation systems.
219. ▶ Foreign Policy magazine's 2017 list of '50 Leading Global Thinkers' List -
- ▶ Indian-American California senator Kamala Harris topped the List. South Korean President Moon Jae-in is ranked second in list and Indian-origin stand-up comedian Hasan Minhaj ranked 3rd.
220. ▶ Foreign ministers of India, US and Japan held a trilateral meeting in New York on sidelines of 72nd annual session of UN General Assembly. It was attended by Sushma Swaraj on India's Behalf.
- ▶ Miroslav Lajcak (Slovakia) is president of 72nd UN General Assembly.
221. ▶ Fortune Most Powerful Women in Business List -
- ▶ USA - Indian Origin PepsiCo chairman Indra Nooyi ranked at 2nd, led by General Motors chairman and CEO Mary Barra.
 - ▶ Outside USA - Chanda Kochhar (ICICI Bank CEO) ranked 5th and Axis Bank CEO Shikha Sharma ranked 21st. List is topped by Banco Santander group executive chairman Ana Botin.
222. ▶ Fortune's 'Businessperson of the Year' list -
- ▶ It is annual ranking of world's top 20 heads of companies.
 - ▶ Aditya Puri, Managing Director of HDFC Bank, is the only Indian on (ranked 18th).
 - ▶ Top 3 - Jensen Huang (Nvidia), Jamie Dimon (JPMorgan Chase), Marc Benioff (Salesforce)
 - ▶ Indian Origin Person on list -Ajay Bagga (Mastercard, 6th), Shantanu Narayan (Adobe)
223. ▶ France's lower house of parliament approved new Anti-Terror Law. Now several controversial measures under state of emergency that has been in act for nearly two years have been made permanent.
224. ▶ French Government approved controversial legislation to further strengthen France's anti-terror laws in country.
225. ▶ French Govt. approved banning all exploration and production of oil and natural gas by 2040 within country and its overseas territories.
226. ▶ French anti-doping laboratory of Chatenay-Malabry provisionally suspended by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), upon self-reported analytical issues to WADA by laboratory.
227. ▶ German Automobile Maker BMW opened its new R&D centre in China, which is also its largest outside Germany.
228. ▶ German Development Bank KfW signed agreement with India's North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) for Providing \$20 Million of Additional Funding for India's *Pare Hydroelectric Plant* project under Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation.
229. ▶ Germany Based It Firm *itelligence* acquired Hyderabad-based SAP services provider named vCentric Technologies.
230. ▶ Germany passed Network Enforcement Act law, under which social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube could face a hefty fine of 50 million if they fail to remove hate speech within 24 hours.
231. ▶ Germany will assist Indian Railways to make country's existing rail corridors semi high speed (max speed of 200 km per hour) on existing 643 km Chennai-Kazipet corridor of Indian Railways.
232. ▶ Global Financial Centres Index 2017 by Z/Yen Partners and the China Development Institute (CDI). It is released twice a year, in March and September, and ranks 92 financial centres. Top 10 -
- ▶ London
 - ▶ New York
 - ▶ Hong Kong
 - ▶ Singapore
 - ▶ Tokyo
 - ▶ Shanghai
 - ▶ Toronto

 Sydney

 Zurich

 Beijing

233. ▶ Global Human Capital Report 2017 by World Economic Forum (130 Nations) -
-  Top 5 - Norway (1), Finland (2), Switzerland (3), United States (4), Denmark (5)
 -  Bottom 5 - Mali (126), Ethiopia (127), Senegal (128), Mauritania (129), Yemen (130)
 -  Neighbours - Bangladesh (111), Pakistan (125), Nepal (98), Sri Lanka (70)
 -  BRICS - Brazil (77), Russia (16), **India (103)**, China (34), South Africa (87)
234. ▶ Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2017 report released by Washington-based International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) -
-  India ranked 100th position among 119 countries, slipping 3 positions as compared to 97th rank in 2016 GHI.
 -  Neighbours - Nepal (72), Bangladesh (88), Sri Lanka (84) and China (29), Pakistan (106).
 -  BRICS - Brazil (18), Russia (22), **India (100)**, China (29), South Africa (55)
 -  Top 5 - Belarus (1), Bosnia & Herzegovina (2), Chile (3), Croatia (4), Cuba (4)
 -  Bottom 5 - Zambia (115), Madagascar (116), Sierra Leone (117), Chad (118), Central African Republic (119)
235. ▶ Global TB Report 2017, released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) -
-  India tops list of seven nations, accounting for 64 % of the 10.4 million new tuberculosis (TB) cases worldwide in 2016.
 -  India is followed by Indonesia, China, Philippines, Pakistan, Nigeria and South Africa.
 -  Estimated 1.7 million people died from TB in 2016.
236. ▶ Global ranking for least and most stressful cities, by Zipjet (150 Cities) -
-  Top 5 - Stuttgart (Germany), Luxembourg (Luxembourg), Hannover (Germany), Bern (Switzerland), Munich (Germany)
 -  Bottom 5 - Cairo (Egypt), Dakar (Senegal), Lagos (Nigeria), Kabul (Afghanistan), Baghdad (Iraq) (150th)
 -  India - New Delhi (142), Mumbai (138), Kolkata (131), Bangalore (130)
237. ▶ Google acquired a part of electronics company HTC Corporation's engineering and design teams for \$1.1 billion. Bought team of approx 2000 engineers are the ones that worked on *Pixel smartphones*.
238. ▶ Google launched *Datally* App that will help users understand, control and save on their mobile data. It will enable users to track their data usage in real time, and get personalized recommendations on saving data along with notifications of public Wi-Fi spots available nearby.
-  Google also launched *Files Go* app that takes a mobile-first approach to freeing up space, finding files faster and easily sharing them with others, even when offline.
239. ▶ Google launched its version 8.0 of operating system as Android *Oreo*. It boasts of a double faster boot speed, autofill option, and a longer battery life. The new update comes with a Picture-in-Picture feature that allows the user to see two apps simultaneously.
240. ▶ Google will open a research lab focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Beijing (China), its first such centre in Asia.
241. ▶ Google will shut down its high-end smartphone Augmented Reality (AR) platform named *Tango* and will focus on its mass market product *ARCore*. *Tango*, support will stop on March 1, 2018.
-  *Tango* was introduced in 2014 and relied on advanced camera hardware to build 3D meshes of spaces.
 -  It was difficult for Google to get phone manufacturers to build this expensive functionality into their products.
242. ▶ Government approved Joint Interpretative Notes (JIN) on Agreement between India and Bangladesh for Promotion and Protection of Investments. JIN approval will impart clarity to interpretation of existing agreements between India and Bangladesh for Promotion and Protection of Investments (BIPA).
243. ▶ Government approved Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) in respect of tax matters between India and BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa).
244. ▶ Government imposed a five year anti-dumping duty on Sodium Nitrite imports from China, amid injury caused to domestic industry by the same.
245. ▶ Government of India will assist Mauritius to develop and set up digital locker services, under DigiLocker (a key initiative of Indian government under its flagship Digital India program).
-  This service provides citizens a shareable private space on a public cloud wherein they can store their documents, aimed at paperless governance.
246. ▶ Government restricted imports of gold and silver items from South Korea in a bid to contain rise in inbound shipments of precious metals from South Korea.
247. ▶ Grant Thornton's International Quarterly Business Report (IBR) -
-  India remained 7th in *business optimism* index In Jul - Sep 2017 quarter, compared to 2nd slot in previous Quarter.

- Indonesia is at top, followed by Finland and the Netherlands.
248. ▶ Guinea became a member of International Solar Alliance (ISA) as it handed over its instrument accession to India-initiated ISA (headquarters in Gurugram (Haryana)).
- ▶ Additionally, International Solar Alliance (ISA) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) signed Joint Financial Partnership Declaration for cooperation on renewable energy projects around world.
249. ▶ Gulf Nation Qatar announced that it will introduce a minimum wage for workers, amid increasing global scrutiny over its alleged ill-treatment of migrant labourers.
250. ▶ Gulf airline Etihad Airways appointed former Abu Dhabi airport chief Tony Douglas as its Group Chief Executive Officer. Etihad also launched *Fly Now Pay Later* Scheme, allowing fare repayment in EMIs.
251. ▶ HP (Hewlett-Packard) launched its new all-in-one point-of-sale (POS) system *ElitePOS* at *India Retail Forum 2017* in Mumbai, priced at Rs.59,999.
252. ▶ HSBC (Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation) Pledged to provide \$100billion of finance for low-carbon technology and sustainable development by 2025 as part its commitment to tackling climate change and other “green” goals.
253. ▶ Haryana Agriculture University (HAU) and Netherlands government will jointly work on a project to tackle issues like crop residue management, bio-defence strategy, protected cultivation, peri-urban and urban horticulture, floriculture and hydroponic vegetables. An Indo-Dutch Horticulture Centre at Jhajhar would also be set up.
254. ▶ Henley & Partners – Kochenov Quality of Nationality Index (QNI) Report -
- ▶ Top 3 - Germany (1st), France and Denmark (Joint 2nd), Iceland (3rd)
 - ▶ Afghanistan is ranked at bottom of index
 - ▶ India is ranked 101 among 159 countries
255. ▶ Hinduja Group's Ashok Leyland signed MoU Russian Firm Rosoboronexport for supplying tracked vehicle solutions to armed forces.
256. ▶ Hindustan Shipyard Ltd partnered with Hyundai Heavy Industries Co Ltd of South Korea for construction of fleet support ships (FSS) for Navy in both countries.
257. ▶ Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry signed an agreement with Germany's GIZ for technical cooperation in implementation of transport projects in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu), Bhubaneswar (Odisha) and Kochi (Kerala).
258. ▶ Hurricane Nate has hit Louisiana (USA) with maximum wind speed of 137 kilometres per hour.
259. ▶ IMD Talent Rankings 2017 (63 Nations)
- ▶ India ranked 51st (as compared to 54th rank last year). Rankings based on performance in three categories — investment and development, appeal, and readiness.
 - ▶ Top 5 - Switzerland, Denmark, Belgium, Austria, Finland. Leading Asian economies in rankings are Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan.
260. ▶ In a major recognition of India's efforts to benchmark global spices trade, the International food standards-setting body *Codex Alimentarius Commission* adopted three Codex standards for black, white and green pepper, cumin and thyme, paving way for universal agreement on identifying quality spices in various countries.
- ▶ The member-countries CAC met in Geneva for its 40th session. Codex standards for spices were adopted after India's efforts for the same. Spices have now been included for the first time as commodities with such universal standards.
261. ▶ India & Sri Lanka signed MoU to upgrade Thondaman Vocational Training Centre in Srilanka. India would provide LKR 199 million to upgrade training facility.
262. ▶ India - China Current Military Standoff in Sikkim at Doko-La (called Donglong by Chinese) -
- ▶ Doko-La region lies at tri-junction of India, China and Bhutan. Tensions esclated when China started Building a strategic road in this region which is claimed by Bhutan as its territory. Both countries have deployed around 3,000 troops each in region.
 - ▶ This area has huge strategic significance for both India and China as it is in close proximity of sensitive Chicken's Neck (Siliguri Corridor), the extremely narrow stretch of land that connects north-eastern region to the rest of India.
 - ▶ India-China Border disputes-
 - ▶ India and China share approx 3,488 km border - Western sector, Middle sector, and Eastern sector. 5 Indian states - Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh share border with China.
 - ▶ Western Sector - India shares about 2152 km long border with China, between Jammu and Kashmir and Xinjiang Province of China. In this sector, there is territorial dispute over Aksai Chin region that was resason for Sino-Indian war in 1962.
 - ▶ During British Empire, 2 borders between India and China were proposed - Johnson's Line and McDonald Line. Johnson's line (proposed in 1865) shows Aksai Chin under India's control whereas McDonald Line (proposed in 1893)







places it under China's control.

- ✎ Middle sector - It is approx 625 km long boundary with states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. It does carry kuch disputes.
- ✎ Eastern Sector - It is 1,140 km long boundary that runs from eastern limit of Bhutan to a point near the Talu Pass at the trijunction of Tibet, India and Myanmar, called McMahon Line. China considers McMahon Line illegal and claims India's Arunachal Pradesh as its territory.

263. ▶ India Stated to UN General Assembly that there is no possibility of India joining Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as non-nuclear weapon state.
- ✎ As per NPT, those countries that have built and tested a nuclear explosive device before January 1, 1967 are nuclear-weapon states. Note that Pokhran I (Codenamed *Smiling Buddha*) was India's first successful nuclear test that was held on 18 May, 1974.
 - ✎ India advocates maintaining a credible minimum deterrence based on a No-First Use policy. India also committed to not using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.
264. ▶ India and Bangladesh signed pact to connect both countries by waterways, for better movement of passengers and goods.
265. ▶ India and Bangladesh will construct a bridge over Mizoram's Khawthlangtuipui river (also known as Karnaphuli river) to improve trade and communication.
266. ▶ India and China agreed to disengage 2 month old border standoff at Doklam (Bhutan), brining end to possibilities of an armed conflict Between India and China over the matter.
267. ▶ India and China jointly submitted a proposal to World Trade Organisation (WTO) calling for the elimination of the most trade-distorting form of farm subsidies, known as Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS).
- ✎ It has come ahead of upcoming 11th Ministerial Conference of WTO (to be held in Buenos Aires (Argentina)) in December 2017.
 - ✎ It counters efforts of some countries to target subsidies of developing countries while letting developed countries retain their huge farm subsidies.
 - ✎ Developed countries have more than 90 percent of the global AMS entitlements amounting to nearly US\$ 160 bn. While, Most of developing countries including India and China do not have AMS entitlements.
268. ▶ India and European Union (EU) agreed to strengthen cooperation between their security and intelligence agencies to combat threat of terrorism, during 10th India-European Union Counter Terrorism Dialogue held in New Delhi.
269. ▶ India and European Union (EU) have established Investment Facilitation Mechanism (IFM) for EU Investments in India. It will help in identifying and solving problems faced by EU companies and investors with regard to their operations in India.
270. ▶ India and Germany signed Govt-to-Govt Umbrella Agreement to formalize an amount up to Euro 200 million for Financial Cooperation in form of loan for project 'Climate Friendly Urban Mobility III' and Euro 11 million Accompanying measures in form of grant for four projects.
271. ▶ India and Germany signed agreement on technical cooperation under Indo-German Energy Programme – Green Energy Corridors (IGEN-GEC). Green Energy Corridor Project aims to synchronise electricity produced from renewable sources (solar / wind), with conventional power stations in grid.
272. ▶ India and Israel Jointly Launched a centre for excellence in floriculture, Thally in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu.
- ✎ A similar centre specialising in vegetables such as capsicum, cucumber and tomatoes will be established in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu in January 2018, as part of a 3-year Indo-Israel agricultural partnership.
 - ✎ These centres will develop agricultural practices suitable for that particular geographical region and will share the best practices with local farmers.
273. ▶ India and Pakistan will hold talks on 2 hydropower projects - Kishenganga and Ratle, under 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) at World Bank headquarters in Washington (USA). Water Resources Secretary Amarjit Singh will lead Indian delegation during talks.
274. ▶ India and Russia will implement visa free entry of crew of chartered and scheduled flights between two countries.
275. ▶ India and South Africa will jointly work for tracing evolution of galaxies as India is e participating in multi-nation Square Kilometre Array (SKA) Project. SKA is a large multi radio telescope project planned to be built in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.
276. ▶ India and Spain signed Techno-commercial agreement to provide institutional mechanism for mutual cooperation in field of urban transport and for construction of the three Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).
- ✎ 3 RRTS corridors Delhi-Meerut, Delhi – Panipat and Delhi – Alwar will be implemented in 1st phase.
 - ✎ RRTS is first of its kind project in India, with design speed of 180 kmph. It will use state-of-the-art technologies for track structure, rolling stock and signalling system. RRTS corridors will significantly reduce travel time between important NCR towns.
277. ▶ India and Sri Lanka signed MoU to develop a village in Anuradhapura District in Sri Lanka at cost of 30 crore Sri Lankan rupees. Village is in name of famous Buddhist monk Sobitha Thero.

- India also recently launched a solar project to electrify a remote village in Egypt named *Agaween*.
278. ▶ India and US established new two-by-two (2 by 2) ministerial dialogue to enhance strategic coordination maintaining peace and stability in Indo-Pacific region, replacing earlier India-US Strategic and Commercial Dialogue. It will be similar to India-Japan 2+2 dialogue format between foreign and defence secretaries of two countries.
279. ▶ India announced collaboration with Russia to build a nuclear plant in Bangladesh, as first initiative under Joint deal to undertake atomic energy projects in third-world nations. It is also India's first atomic energy venture abroad.
- ▶ Rooppur Nuclear project (capacity of 2*1200 MWs) is Bangladesh's first atomic energy project.
280. ▶ India became 80th country to ratify second commitment period (2013- 2020) of Kyoto Protocol (or Doha Amendment) that commits countries to contain emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs).
281. ▶ India became biggest importer of U.S. oil refinery by-product 'petcoke', by Importing 8 Million Tonnes of USA's total export of 20 Million Tonnes of Petcoke in 2016.
- ▶ Petroleum coke called as 'petcoke', a U.S. oil refinery by-product, is cheaper and burns hotter than coal. But it also contains more planet-warming carbon and heart and lung-damaging sulfur.
282. ▶ India contributed USD 500,000 to the UN Peacebuilding Fund, expressing hope that more funding by nations will boost efforts by world body to build and sustain peace.
283. ▶ India contributed additional \$1 million to India-UN Development Partnership Fund launched to support sustainable development projects across the developing world.
- ▶ Earlier, India contributed \$1 million when the fund was created in on 9 June 2017 (on World Oceans Day 2017) as a partnership between India and United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).
284. ▶ India donated 500 metric tonnes of rice to Kingdom of Lesotho, in Southern Africa, which is facing acute food shortage due to famine.
285. ▶ India for first time will import crude oil from USA, as agreed upon during recent visit of PM Narendra Modi to USA.
- ▶ Indian Oil Corp bought 1.6 million barrels of US Mars crude (a heavy, high-sulphur grade) and 400,000 barrels of Western Canadian Select that will be delivered onboard a Very Large Crude Carrier.
286. ▶ India granted US pharmaceutical company *Pfizer* a patent for its pneumonia vaccine *Prevnar 13*. Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine is used for prevention of pneumococcal pneumonia and invasive diseases caused by 13 *Streptococcus pneumoniae* strains. There are currently 3 types of PCV available on global market - *Prevnar, Synflorix and Prevnar 13*.
287. ▶ India granted aid of USD 500000 to Philippines for rehabilitation and relief efforts in war-torn Marawi City and confronting ISIS. It is first time that India is sending financial aid to another country affected by terrorism.
288. ▶ India handed over *Varuna* off-shore patrol vessel to Sri Lanka as a part of stepping up co-operation between coast guards of 2 nations.
289. ▶ India has been awarded with Certificate of Commendation for its efforts in combating illegal wildlife trade. Award is conferred to Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) by Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at its meeting in Geneva (Switzerland).
290. ▶ India initiated dumping probe on imports of 'Sodium Nitrite' from Russia, used in industries such as pharma and food processing.
- ▶ If it is proved that dumping has caused material injury to domestic industry, DGAD would impose anti-dumping duty on Sodium Nitrite.
291. ▶ India is planning to launch major connectivity initiative, connecting Chennai with Russian port Vladivostok via sea route with an aim to harness natural resources from Northeast Asia and Western Pacific region. It will enable to transfer cargo between Chennai and Vladivostok in 24 days in comparison to over 40 days currently taken to transport goods from India to Far East Russia via Europe.
292. ▶ India is selected as Chair of Ad Hoc Committee on Review & Reforms to look into various issues pertaining to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPSC) at KP Plenary Session in Brisbane (Australia), with Angola chosen as Vice Chair.
- ▶ India was chosen KP Vice Chair for 2018 & Chair for 2019 in last plenary of KP in Dubai in November 2016.
- ▶ Kimberley Process is joint initiative of governments, industry and civil societies to stem flow of 'conflict diamonds', rough diamonds used by rebel groups to finance wars against legitimate governments.
293. ▶ India launched *Incredible India* campaign in Cairo (Egypt Capital) to woo Egyptian travellers and make them aware of magnificent holiday options in India.
294. ▶ India opened 2nd second Indian Workers' Resource Centre (IWRC) in Sharjah (UAE), To provide support and counseling to Indians in distress. It will help overseas Indian community in any matter. Indians may call 80046342 from anywhere in UAE to get help.
295. ▶ India pledged additional US \$100 million towards UN-India Partnership Fund to significantly scale up its support to sustainable development projects across developing world, in addition to US \$10 million already contributed by India to various UN programmes.
- ▶ India-UN Development Partnership fund was set up as partnership between India and United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) on 9 June 2017 (World Oceans Day).





296. ▶ India provided medical assistance worth approx \$1 million to Yemen, in response to a request from Yemeni government amid current turbulence there.
297. ▶ India re-elected to Council of the International Maritime Organization [IMO] under Category “B” at 30th session of IMO Assembly in London.
- ✍ IMO is headquartered in London (UK) with Kitack Lim as Current Chief.
298. ▶ India received its first High Horsepower Locomotive with bodyshell of 12000 HP loco from Alstom France at Kolkata port, to be used to haul freight trains at twice the existing speed by 2018 (120 KM/H)
- ✍ It is first major FDI project in rail sector and each such locomotive costs approx INR 30 crores.
299. ▶ India refused to be a part of Bali Declaration adopted at conclusion of World Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development held in Bali (Indonesia), to show solidarity with Myanmar. It was not adopted because it carried inappropriate reference to violence in Rakhine State from where 1,25,000 Rohingya Muslims fled to Bangladesh.
300. ▶ India remained biggest importer of Ukraine's agriculture products in 2017 so far, importing 11.3 % of \$14.7 Billion worth of exports of Ukraine's Agricultural Produce.
301. ▶ India replaced China as the top retail destination in 2017 as part of global retail development index. Change in ranking was an outcome of four factors increased consumer spending beyond essentials, rising mobile and internet penetration, favorable foreign investment climate and bold action on cashless transaction and GST.
302. ▶ India will be guest of honour during 6th World Government Summit to be held in February 2018 in Dubai (UAE). The summit is first global forum for governments, countries, organizations and private sector leaders interested in industry of the future.
303. ▶ India will link its major highway corridors to international trade points to facilitate trade with Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar. About 2000 kms of highways will be constructed under this project, as part of Government's Bharatmala Project. Cost for construction of these highways is approx INR 25000 crores.
304. ▶ India will provide USD 2.87 million to Afghanistan for renovation of 350 buses that will help in strengthening the public transport system of Kabul (Afghanistan).
305. ▶ India will set up a Centre of Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) at Al Azhar University (Egypt), to high-tech education and skills to youngsters of Egypt.
306. ▶ India will soon join Global Foreign Exchange Committee (GFXC), a newly-constituted forum of central bankers and experts working towards promotion of a robust and transparent foreign exchange (Forex) market. It has been set up under guidance of the Bank for International Settlements (BIS). GFXC was established in London during a meeting in May 2017.
307. ▶ India's Numaligarh Refinery that supplies High Speed Diesel to Bangladesh, despatched first diesel consignment of 30 MT to Myanmar through NH 37. It is to enhance hydrocarbon synergy with neighbouring countries as well as promoting India's Act East Policy.
308. ▶ India's TCS (Tata Consultancy Services) ranked 30th in Fortune's annual list of Top 50 companies that are changing the world. TCS's mKRISHI® App is one of important reasons that got TCS into list, that lets farmers to access customised expert advice, market information and weather data. Top 3 - JP Morgan Chase, DSM, Apple.
309. ▶ India's exposure to US government securities increased sharply to \$135.7 billion, with China at top with \$1.166 trillion, followed by Japan with exposure worth \$1.113 trillion. India is 12th largest holder of US government securities.
310. ▶ India's first high-speed rail training center will be functional in Gandhinagar (Gujarat) by 2020. It is Being constructed over land measuring 4,400 metres at cost of approx INR 600 crores. It will enable testing of bullet trains that will run on Mumbai-Ahmedabad route by 2023.
311. ▶ India-Japan civil nuclear deal came into force, enabling Japan to export nuclear power plant technology as well as provide finance for nuclear power plants in India. It will also assist India in Other nuclear energy activities.
312. ▶ Indian Automobile Major Mahindra opened its new manufacturing plant with an investment of \$230 million in Detroit (USA), Known as world's car capital. It is Detroit's first automotive production facility in 25 years.
313. ▶ Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Ministry of Health inked MoU with International Vaccine Institute (IVI) to collaborate on vaccine research and development, committing annual contribution of US \$5,00,000 to IVI.
314. ▶ Indian Firm Mahindra & Mahindra entered into strategic alliance with US car major Ford Motor Company to explore cooperation in products, technologies, and distribution.
315. ▶ Indian IT Major HCL acquired automation driven data management platform *Datawave* (UK) to accelerate data integration and migration for clients.
316. ▶ Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) (Ministry of Earth Sciences) inaugurated Ocean Forecasting System for Indian Ocean countries *Comoros, Madagascar, and Mozambique*, during 3rd Meeting of Regional Integrated Multi-Hazard Early Warning System for Asia and Africa (RIMES) held in Papua New Guinea.

-  Ocean Forecast System will offer, high wave alerts, port warnings, forecast, oil spill advisory services along the ship routes in addition to tsunami and storm surge warnings and help in search and rescue operations.
317. ▶ Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) will set up a Centre of Excellence in Kochi (Kerala), to facilitate exchange of research findings and studies in field of fisheries and ocean studies among IORA member countries.
-  Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is an international organisation consisting of 21 coastal states bordering Indian Ocean. Coordinating Secretariat of IORA is located at Ebene, Mauritius. India's K V Bhagirath is current Secretary General of IORA.
318. ▶ Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) bought 1.9 million barrels of U.S. crude in its second import tender making it first Indian refiner to purchase Eagle Ford shale oil. IOC bought 950,000 barrels of light sweet Eagle Ford shale oil and 950,000 barrels of heavy sour Mars crude oil.
319. ▶ Indian Pharma Company *Natco Pharma* received approval from US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to market Lanthanum Carbonate chewable tablets in various strengths. These tablets are used in treatment of patients with End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD).
320. ▶ Indian Pharma Firm *Dr. Reddy's Laboratories* introduced anti cancer injection drug Melphalan Hydrochloride in USA. Melphalan hydrochloride for injection is indicated for the palliative treatment of patients with multiple myeloma for whom oral therapy is not appropriate.
321. ▶ Indian President Ram Nath Kovind visited African Nations Djibouti and Ethiopia as his first Foreign Visit.
322. ▶ Indian Software services firm Infosys acquired London-based firm Brilliant Basics for Rs 62 crores (£7.5 million).
323. ▶ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) are working to develop and launch a dual frequency synthetic aperture radar satellite in the NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission 2021.
-  It will be first radar imaging satellite to use dual frequency and it is planned to be used for remote sensing purposes, to observe and understand natural processes of the Earth.
-  NASA will be responsible for development of L-band SAR, a 12m unfurlable antenna & its deployment elements, GPS system and data recorder. ISRO will be responsible for development of S-band SAR, Spacecraft Bus, data transmission system, Spacecraft integration & testing, launch using GSLV and on-orbit operations.
324. ▶ Indian engineers launched a major project in South Sudan that would improve connectivity between two major cities of South Sudan - Malakal-Melut. It will facilitate UN humanitarian operations in area.
325. ▶ Indian software company Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) signed a pact with National University in Philippines to launch a comprehensive training programme aimed at enhancing the skills of university graduates for the job market.
326. ▶ Indian startup *Kheyti* won prestigious award in Israel for developing an affordable modular greenhouse that aims to give farmers steady & dependable income. It was chosen in MassChallenge Israel contest that saw participation from over 500 companies.
327. ▶ India's Ambani family topped Forbes list of Asia's Richest Families for first time with a net worth of \$44.8 billion, up \$19 billion from previous year. 2nd is South Korea's Lee family (\$40.8 billion) and Hong Kong's Kwok family (\$40.4 billion).
328. ▶ Indonesia banned Islamic organization Hizb-ut Tahrir under a controversial presidential decree, to safeguard existence of Its pluralist state ideology Pancasila and 1945 Constitution.
-  Hizb ut-Tahrir has been banned as it campaigns for country to adopt Islamic law and become a caliphate, that is against Indonesia's unity.
329. ▶ Indonesia named waters in its exclusive economic zone that overlap with China's expansive claim to South China Sea as *North Natuna Sea*. Part of the renamed area falls in China's *nine-dash line* waters extending to south and east of China's island province Hainan.
330. ▶ Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) signed MoU with Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal (ICAN).
331. ▶ International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) opened world's first low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank in Oskemen in Kazakhstan. It will be the first of its kind LEU bank not to be under control of any individual country.
332. ▶ International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) launched IBM Blockchain as first international payments network of its kind to Help financial institutions in cross-border payments. IBM partnered with KlickEx Group and Stellar.org, a nonprofit organization that supports an open source blockchain network for financial services.
333. ▶ International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) has released *The Paradise Papers* as global investigation that reveals offshore activities of some of most powerful people and companies.
-  Among 180 countries represented in data, India ranks 19th in terms of number of names. In all, 714 Indians have been figured in this largest ever black money data leak.
334. ▶ International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts Coal Power Production to rise in India @ 4% annually by 2022, due to growing fleet of coal power plants and strong power demand. IEA earlier also Predicted India's Renewable energy capacity to get doubled by 2022.
335. ▶ International Labour Organisation (ILO) released World Social Protection Report 2017-2019, depicting that only 45 % of global population is effectively covered by at least one social benefit, while remaining 55 per cent that is 4 billion people are left unprotected.

336. ▶ International Monetary Fund approved USD 88 billion credit line for Mexico, replacing existing line of credit.
337. ▶ International Olympic Committee (IOC) suspended its Brazilian arm and Honorary Membership of head of Brazil's Olympic committee Carlos Nuzman, amid proven corruption allegations.
338. ▶ International Seabed Authority (ISA) in its 23rd session recently held at Kingston (Jamaica) has extended India's exclusive rights to explore polymetallic nodules from seabed in Central Indian Ocean Basin (CIOB). Estimated polymetallic nodule resource potential of this area is around 380 million tonnes, containing nickel, copper, cobalt and manganese.
339. ▶ International Solar Alliance (ISA) announced target to support setting up 1000GW of solar energy capacity by 2030 across its member countries, during a ceremony in Bonn (Germany). This target does not take into account renewable energy targets or projects that countries are pursuing on their own as part of their national efforts 16 countries have ratified framework agreement of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and it will come into force on 6 December 2017.
340. ▶ International Solar Alliance (ISA) became treaty-based international intergovernmental organization, nearly a Month after Guinea became 15th country to ratify it.
- ▶ ISA is first treaty-based international government organisation to be based in India, with its secretariat in campus of National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gurgaon (Haryana).
 - ▶ So far, 46 countries have signed and 19 ratified Framework Agreement of ISA International Solar Alliance (ISA).
 - ▶ ISA was launched by India and France in November 2015 during COP-21 of UN Climate Conference in Paris (France).
 - ▶ ISA aims at addressing obstacles to deployment at scale of solar energy through better harmonization and aggregation of demand from solar rich countries by bringing standardization in solar technologies and fostering research and development.
 - ▶ Ministry of External Affairs has set aside US\$2 billion for solar projects in Africa out of India's US\$10 billion concessional Line of Credit (LOC) for Africa. France also pledged Euro 300 million soft loan for solar related projects in ISA member countries.
 - ▶ Australia also announced Joining ISA.
341. ▶ International body Financial Stability Board (FSB) has placed India in league of countries that are *compliant or largely compliant* on implementation of priority area reforms, in FSB reform report card to G20.
- ▶ Report listed India as *compliant* with regard to Basel III reforms in risk-based capital and *largely compliant* on liquidity coverage ratio.
342. ▶ Iran and Iraq signed MoU to step up military cooperation and the fight against terrorism and extremism. It is valuable as Iraq has been badly affected by terrorism over past few years and Iran has been under international scanner due to its Nuclear weapons program.
343. ▶ Iran inaugurated first phase of Chabahar port located in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province. Port will bypass Pakistan and will open new strategic transit route between Iran, India and Afghanistan. First phase is expected to increase its cargo handling capacity to 8.5 million tons annually, by over 3 times from previous 2.5 million tons.
344. ▶ Iran opened its first museum dedicated to Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, a solo female artist who has garnered widespread international attention during decades of exile. The museum displays 51 works of her, including her signature mirror mosaics.
345. ▶ Iran successfully launched its most advanced satellite-carrying rocket called 'Simorgh' into space, capable of carrying a satellite weighing 250 kilograms (550 pounds).
346. ▶ Iran's IDRO and the privately owned Negin Group signed Iran's biggest-ever car deal (\$778 million) with French automobile manufacturer Renault to produce 150,000 cars, beginning in 2018.
347. ▶ Iran's key strategic port of Chabahar became operational with First shipment of wheat from India to Afghanistan, from Kandla port in Gujarat.
- ▶ Its a major push for India's Afghan outreach as it completely bypasses Pakistan, under 2016 Indo-Afghan-Iran trilateral pact.
 - ▶ Chabahar port is strategically located in Sistan-Balochistan province on energy-rich Iran's southern coast and can be easily accessed from India's western coast.
348. ▶ Iraq PM Haider al-Abadi declared victory in a 3year war by Iraqi forces against Islamic State jihadist group. He claimed that Iraqi forces are in complete control of the Iraqi-Syrian border.
349. ▶ Israel Parliament passed a controversial law that limits police's ability to recommend charges following their investigations, after criticism that lawmakers were seeking to protect Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu The move was undertaken after widespread criticism and large protests against corruption.
350. ▶ Israel eased up visa application procedures for Indian tourists, to encourage more visitors from India.
351. ▶ Israeli Consulate in Bengaluru launched Israel Centre at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB) to mark 25 years of India-Israel partnership.
352. ▶ Italy passed a bill making torture a crime under national law, making torture punishable by 4 - 10 years in prison and 12 years for members of security forces.






353. ▶ JLL Report on Expensive Office Locations -
✍ Delhi is Ranked as 7th most expensive in world, with Mumbai at 16th position.
✍ Top 5 - Hong Kong, London (West), New York, Beijing, Tokyo.
354. ▶ Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) successfully launched Michibiki-4 satellite (QZSS-4) as 4th satellite in Michibiki series i.e. Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS), which is a satellite-based high-precision global positioning system similar to US operated GPS.
355. ▶ Japan approved Aid of Approx 73 Crores INR for Implementation of Advanced Traffic Information and Management System in Bengaluru (Karnataka).
356. ▶ Japan launched Michibiki No. 3 satellite of its new quasi-zenith satellites to improve the global positioning system (GPS) navigation services in Japan.
357. ▶ Japan will offer grant of 8.4 million Yen (Approx 48 Lakh INR) for construction of a vocational training centre for poor women and youth in Rajasthan's Baran district.
358. ▶ Japan will relax its visa rules for Indians from 1 January, 2018 and will issue multiple- entry-visa for short-term stay. It will benefit tourists, business persons and repeat visitors.
359. ▶ Japanese Emperor Akihito will abdicate on April 30, 2019, becoming the first Japanese monarch to leave the post in 200 years. Afterwards, Crown Prince Naruhito will take the post of Japanese emperor.
360. ▶ Japanese PM Shinzo Abe Visited India, arriving in Ahmedabad (Gujarat).
✍ He participated in 12th India - Japan Annual Meeting.
✍ 15 MOUs signed during Mr. Abe's Visit to India, Including -
✍ Disaster Risk Management
✍ Japanese Language Skills Development
✍ India Japan Act East Forum will be established to enhance connectivity and promote developmental projects in northeastern region of India.
✍ Arrangement between Postal departments for implementation of cool EMS service, through which fresh food can be sent from Japan to India in cool boxes for Japanese expatriates in India.
✍ India-Japan Investment Promotion Road map to facilitate Japanese investments in India.
✍ MoC between Japanese Trade Ministry and Gujarat State on *Japan-India special programme for Make In India* in Mandal Bechraj-Khoraj.
✍ Civil Aviation
✍ Science and technology
✍ Life sciences and biotechnology.
✍ Sports
✍ India and Japan signed open sky arrangement to allow airlines from both countries to operate unlimited number of flights.
✍ Foundation stone of India's first high-speed rail project (bullet train) project has been laid. This 508km-long Mumbai to Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) Project will be built at cost of Rs 1.10 lakh crore. It is expected to be completed by 2022. (It was recently advanced by year from earlier deadline of 2023). An INR 600 Crores high-speed rail training centre for first bullet train project will be set up in Vadodara (Gujarat), to become operational by December 2020.
361. ▶ Japanese postal department released postage stamps on Indian Yoga Expert Mr. Bishnu Charan Ghosh and his family members.
362. ▶ Jet Airways and Air France-KLM partnered to route more traffic through Europe and on to North America.
363. ▶ Joint Army Exercise of Pakistan and Russia, DRUZBA 2017 held in Russia.
364. ▶ Lebanon approved country's first animal welfare bill into law, to ensure that domestic and wild animals will be legally protected from abuse.
365. ▶ Lebanon's parliament approved country's first budget in 12 years, to reform fragile economy and prevent rising debt.
✍ Political crisis gripped Lebanon since the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri in 2005, thereby preventing successive government from passing the budget.
366. ▶ London Administration cancelled License of Cab Aggregator Major Uber. Affecting 40,000 drivers using Uber in London.
367. ▶ Lulu Exchange (a foreign exchange and remittance company set up Kerala based Businessman Yusuff Ali) has acquired Al Falah Exchange Company in UAE for INR 95 crores.
368. ▶ MOUs Signed -
✍ With Palestine on cooperation in field of Health and Medicine, Information Technology and Electronics.
✍ With Germany on cooperation in field of Health.
✍ With Bangladesh for cyber security cooperation.

369. ▶ Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. signed MOU with Turkey's Armagan family for acquiring 100% of Erkunt Traktor Sanay (4th largest tractor manufacturer in Turkey) for approx \$70 Million.
370. ▶ Mahindra & Mahindra and USA Based Ford Motor Company signed a MoU that ensures an alliance to explore electric vehicles, for three years.
371. ▶ Mass attacks of ransomware called Bad Rabbit were observed recently in Russia. It also flight delays at Odessa airport in Ukraine and disrupted electronic payments in Kiev metro.
372. ▶ Mastercard and Tufts University released Digital Evolution Index 2017, ranking 60 nations in terms of developing their digital economies and integrating digital connectivity among people. India has been categorised under the *break out* segment that refers to countries with relatively lower absolute levels of digital advancement, yet remain poised for growth and are attractive to investors by virtue of their potential.
373. ▶ Middle Asean Nation Kazakhstan will change its name to Qazaqstan, as part of a transition from Cyrillic to a Latin-based script. A national commission will oversee this transition and will complete it by 2025.
374. ▶ Middle Eastern Mainstream airline Qatar Airways acquired 49 % stake in Italian Airline AQA Holdings.
375. ▶ Middle asean Nation Tajikistan banned women from wearing veils and asked women to *stick to traditional national clothes and culture*.
376. ▶ Ministry of External Affairs started Operation Insaniyat to provided assistance to Bangladesh in response to humanitarian crisis being faced by it due to large influx of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar.
377. ▶ Morocco launched an earth observation satellite called 'Mohammed VI-A', aboard European consortium Arianespace's Vega rocket from French Guyana Space Centre.
378. ▶ Mount Agung, a volcano In Bali (Indonesia) erupted for the first time in over 54 years.
379. ▶ Mumbai Based Engineering conglomerate Larsen & Tourbo acquired INR 3375 crores metro order from Mauritius government to design and build an Integrated Light Rail-based Urban Transit System in Mauritius.
380. ▶ Myanmar will launch its own satellite system MyanmarSat-2 in June in 2019, with 6 C-band and 6 Ku-band transponders.
🔗 Myanmar is currently using MyanmarSat-1 on lease system, whereas MyanmarSat-2, will be used on joint ownership system with an undisclosed partner.
381. ▶ NASA launched *Tracking and Data Relay Satellite (TDRS-M)* aimed at ensuring efficient communication of astronauts at International Space Station with Earth. TDRS-M is last of 13 such satellites that have been launched since 1983.
382. ▶ NASA launched Terrier-Improved Malemute sounding rocket that created colourful artificial clouds visible in skies. Rocket during 8-minute flight had released 10 canisters about the size of a soft drink into space. Canisters deployed blue-green and red vapour that formed artificial clouds visible in the skies of USA.
383. ▶ NASA's Langley Research Centre (LRC) completed 100 years of its establishment. It has so far contributed exceptionally in the way astronauts fly, explore space and how they study Earth.
384. ▶ NASA's flying observatory Sofia will be observing celestial magnetic fields, star-forming regions, comets and Saturn's giant moon Titan, as part of observing campaign 2018. Sofia is a modified Boeing 747SP jetliner which carries a 100-inch diameter telescope.
385. ▶ NATO military exercise in Eastern Europe held in Bulgaria with 25,000 military personnel from over 20 partner countries.
386. ▶ National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) and China's Dalian Municipal People's Government signed agreement to create a platform called Sino-Indian Digital Collaboration Plaza (SIDCOP) in Dalian.
387. ▶ National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) signed MoU with Finland's Fortum Oyj for developing electric vehicle charging infrastructure in upcoming development projects in India.
388. ▶ National Highway Authority of India awarded its first international project in Myanmar to a joint venture of Punj Lloyd-Varaha, for upgradation of Yagyi-Kalewa section in Myanmar.
389. ▶ National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog and International Road Federation (Geneva) signed Statement of Intent (SoI) to cooperate in Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). ITS Policy will be covering Traffic Management, Parking Management, Electronic Enforcement of Traffic Rules and Regulations, Fleet Management and Monitoring, Innovation in field of ITS.
390. ▶ Neil Armstrong's bag containing approx 500 gm moon dust has been sold at an auction for USD 1.8 million in New york (USA), to an anonymous buyer.
391. ▶ Nepal Electricity Authority signed a joint venture agreement with China Three Gorges Corporation (CTGC) to construct 750 MW West Seti Hydropower Project, with expenses estimated at 1.8 billion USD. CTGC will have 75% stake and NEA will hold remaining 25% in JV.
392. ▶ Nepal SBI Bank, a subsidiary of State Bank of India launched its fully automatic digital banking services in Nepalese capital Kathmandu, called sbiINTOUCH. This is first time that State Bank of India has expanded paperless banking system outside India.
393. ▶ Nepal and India will conduct joint head tigers count in protected areas along border in November 2017, using a similar camera tapping method.

394. ▶ Nepal began its first-ever survey to remeasure Mount Everest to check if its height was altered by 7.8-magnitude earthquake that struck in 2015.
-  Official Height of Mt. Everest is 8,848 metres (29,029 feet), first recorded by an Indian survey in 1954.
395. ▶ Nepal cancelled a \$2.5 billion deal with China's Gezhouba Group Corporation to build Nepal's biggest hydropower plant of 1200 MW Capacity - *Budhi Gandaki hydroelectric project*. The project has been reportedly cancelled amid delays and lack of transparency in processes.
396. ▶ Nepal inaugurated a bridge built with India's financial assistance of USD 430,626 (Approx 2.4 Crore Indian Rupees) on Kaligandaki river near China border. It provides motorable connectivity to people of Mustang and also benefits pilgrims visiting famous Muktinath temple.
397. ▶ Nepal launched climate-smart snow leopard landscape management plan to safeguard endangered species of snow leopard, as first climate-smart landscape management plan for snow leopard conservation in world.
398. ▶ Nepal rejected India's offer to jointly re-measure the height of Mount Everest (world's highest peak), following massive earthquake in 2015 and will carry out the measurement exercise on its own.
399. ▶ Nepal signed USD 635 million UN assistance package for 2018-2022 to lay out country's development strategy for next 5 years. The package involves 26 individual UN agencies.
400. ▶ Nepal's Parliament passed a law that criminalises an ancient practice called Chhaupadi that banishes women from home during menstruation and after childbirth.
401. ▶ Nepal's Parliament passed a law that criminalises an ancient practice called Chhaupadi that banishes women from home during menstruation and after childbirth.
402. ▶ New York Department of Financial Services (DFS) imposed fine of USD 225 million on Pakistan's Habib Bank Limited (HBL) for failure to comply with New York laws and regulations designed illicit financial transactions.
403. ▶ Newly established Constitutional Assembly of South American Nation Venezuela announced itself superior to all other governmental institutions, including opposition-controlled congress. It prohibit opposition-held National Assembly and other government bodies from taking any action that would interfere with constituent assembly's laws.
404. ▶ North African country Tunisia abolished decades-old ban on Muslim women marrying non-Muslims.
405. ▶ North Korea successfully launched nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) *Hwasong-15*, said to be North Korea's most powerful Missile Yet. It has operational range of over 5000 KMs.
406. ▶ North Korea successfully test-fired its first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) *Hwasong-14* into Sea of Japan. It is North Korea's most successful missile test since its ballistic missile programme gathered pace in 1990s.
-  To qualify as an ICBM, a missile must have a minimum range of 5,500km.
407. ▶ North Korea successfully tested a hydrogen bomb, placable on an intercontinental ballistic missile. It triggered a 6.3 magnitude earthquake in area, marking it biggest test so far.
-  In Response, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed new sanctions against North Korea over its sixth and most powerful nuclear test. It was 9th sanctions resolution adopted by UNSC since 2006 over North Korea's missile programs.
408. ▶ Norway became world's first country to shut down national broadcasts of its FM network by completing its transition to digital radio, to allow for better sound quality, a greater number of channels and more functions, at a cost eight times lower than FM radio.
409. ▶ Norway's sovereign wealth fund (Largest in world) just reached value of \$1 trillion for the first time. It means \$189,000 for everyone of 5.3 million Norwegians. With stakes in over 9,000 companies, it owns 1.3 % of world's market capitalization and 2.3 % in Europe.
410. ▶ Noted Software Firm Microsoft launched *Project Brainwave* as a deep learning acceleration platform for real-time artificial intelligence (AI), amid AI becoming increasingly important . Project Brainwave uses massive field-programmable gate array (FPGA) infrastructure deployed by Microsoft over past few years.
411. ▶ ONGC Videsh Ltd (overseas arm of ONGC) acquired 30 % interest in Namibian Petroleum Exploration License (PEL) 37, from UK's Tullow Oil.
412. ▶ ONGC Videsh will invest \$150 million in exploration to drill more wells in Colombia, Kazakhstan and Bangladesh.
413. ▶ Oman revised tourist visa for people from India, China and Russia in order to attract more tourists from these countries. Oman granted non-sponsored tourist visa for the citizens of India, China and Russia.
414. ▶ One of biggest icebergs ever recorded has broken away from Larsen C Ice Shelf of Antarctica that covers area of roughly 6000 square kilometres.
415. ▶ Online entertainment platform Netflix made its first ever acquisition after it acquired comic book company *Millarworld*.
416. ▶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Government at a Glance 2017 report -
-  India topped The List, indicating that PM Narendra Modi led NDA coalition Government has gained highest trust in world among its people, with score of 73%.

- 🔑 Top 5 - India (73 %) Canada (62%), Turkey (58%), Russia (58 %) and Germany (55%). US government secured only 30% of peoples' confidence.
 - 🔑 Greece has been placed at bottom of list with score of 13%.
 - 🔑 Number of government jobs as share of total employment remained 18.1% in 2015, compared to 17.9% in 2007. Highest (30%) Government employment is in Denmark.
417. ▶ Oxford Dictionaries declared Youthquake as 2017's Word of the Year, reflecting what it calls a political awakening among millennial voters. Other Words of The year 2017 -
- 🔑 *Populism* - Cambridge Dictionary.
 - 🔑 *Kwaussie* - Australian National Dictionary.
 - 🔑 *Feminism* - Merriam-Webster's.
418. ▶ PM Narendra Modi Visited Israel -
- 🔑 It is First Visit of an Indian Head of State to Israel Since Indian Independence. This visit also marks 25 years of establishment of diplomatic relationship between India and Israel.
 - 🔑 7 Important MOUs Signed -
 - 🔑 To help grow business relationship between both countries, \$40 million Israel India Innovation Initiative Fund (I4F) has been launched.
 - 🔑 Conservation of water in India
 - 🔑 State Water Utility Reform in India India-Israel Development Cooperation- 3-year work program in Agriculture (2018-2020)
 - 🔑 Cooperation in atomic clocks
 - 🔑 Cooperation in GEO-LEO optical link.
 - 🔑 Cooperation in electric propulsion for small satellites.
 - 🔑 A new fast-growing Israeli Crysanthumun flower will now be called 'MODI'.
 - 🔑 Other Highlights
 - 🔑 India assured faster facilitation of OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) cards for Jewish Citizens of Indian origin in Israel.
 - 🔑 Launch of a new Air India flight connecting Delhi/Mumbai with Tel Aviv (Israel) is announced
 - 🔑 PM Modi announced establishment of an Indian Cultural Centre in Israel to enhance people-to-people contacts.
419. ▶ Pakistan allowed depreciation of its Currency (pakistani rupee), after talks with International Monetary Fund. It is believed to help shift foreign currency holdings from commercial banks back to official reserves.
420. ▶ Pakistan inaugurated It's 5th nuclear power plant (C-4 plant) in Mianwali (Punjab). This 340 MW Chasma – IV (C – 4) nuclear power plant is developed in collaboration with China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC).
421. ▶ Pakistan test-fired short-range (70 KMs) surface-to-surface ballistic missile *Nasr*.
422. ▶ Pakistan will up a new hydropower project on Jhelum River, of over 700 megawatts in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), named Azad Pattan Hydropower Project (APHP). Project cost of USD 1.51 billion will be procured from foreign entities.
423. ▶ Palestinian political parties Hamas and Fatah signed reconciliation deal to end a decade-long rift, brokered by Egypt. This was signed to implement a unity agreement that was signed in 2011 but was not put to action.
424. ▶ Passport Index developed by advisory firm Arton Capital -
- 🔑 Singapore's passport become most powerful in world with Visa-Free Score of 159.
 - 🔑 India secured 75th rank in index with Visa-Free Score of 51.
 - 🔑 Afghanistan stayed at bottom position (94th) while Pakistan sexcond worst (93rd).
425. ▶ People's Bank of China (PBC) banned raising funds through initial coin offerings (ICO), where unregulated means of crowd funding for project are used via use of cryptocurrency such as Bitcoin etc. Ownership or royalties of project is offered to investors in form of digital coins. It allows entrepreneurs create their own digital currencies and selling "coins" on web under ICO route, allowing them to raise millions of dollars quickly.
426. ▶ Peru Government authorized medicinal and therapeutic use of cannabis (marijuana) in country, becoming sixth Latin American country to legalise cannabis.
427. ▶ Philippines suspended use of a landmark vaccine for potentially deadly dengue virus after its French manufacturer Sanofi warned it could worsen the disease for people who had not previously been infected.
428. ▶ Poland will quit a precautionary Flexible Credit Line (FCL) from International Monetary Fund (IMF) worth \$9.2 billion, after Polish economy gaining strength recently. Polish budget reported a surplus for January - August 2017 amid rise in revenue from value-added tax.
429. ▶ Powerful Hurrinaces Harvey and Irma struck USA, triggering huge Financial and Human Losses.
430. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind will make his first foreign trip to African Nations Ethiopia and Djibouti in October 2017.

431. ▶ President of USA Donald Trump announced that US government will not allow transgender individuals to serve in USA Military.
432. ▶ Property consultant Cushman & Wakefield's 'Office Space Across World 2017' report -
- ✍ Delhi-NCR is 84th most expensive office location in world. Mumbai's Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC), which ranked 163rd in list is second most expensive location in India.
 - ✍ List is topped by Hong Kong, followed by London and Tokyo.
433. ▶ Qatar Airways became first in world to launch double beds in business class sections of Flights from London to Doha in Qatar, called Qsuites.
434. ▶ Qatar appointed four women to Shura Council, one of its most important consultative bodies, for the first time in Nation's history.
435. ▶ Qatar approved law for making permanent residency available to some non-citizens like children of Qatari women married to foreigners, people who offered valuable services to the country and those with special skills. This has made Qatar first Gulf Arab state to make permanent residency available to some non-citizens.
436. ▶ Qatar launched a new direct route between Qatar's Hamad Port and Pakistan's port of Karachi.
437. ▶ Qatar restored full diplomatic relations with Iran, disregarding demands of other Arab Nations.
438. ▶ Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asia University Rankings 2018 -
- ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) emerged as top-ranked Indian institute in List with rank 34th. Note that IIT Bombay was ranked 179th in QS World University Rankings. Other top 4 Indian Institutes in List are IIT Delhi (41st rank), IIT Madras (48th rank), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore (51st rank).
 - ✍ Singapore's Nanyang Technology University has topped QS Asia University Rankings 2018.
439. ▶ Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) University Rankings : BRICS 2018 () -
- ✍ Top 10 Universities in BRICS Nations -
 - ✍ Tsinghua University (China)
 - ✍ Peking University (China)
 - ✍ Fudan University (China)
 - ✍ University of Science and Technology of China (China)
 - ✍ Lomonosov Moscow State University (Russia)
 - ✍ Zhejiang University (China)
 - ✍ Shanghai Jiao Tong University (China)
 - ✍ Nanjing University (China)
 - ✍ **Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB)**
 - ✍ **Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore**
 - ✍ India Facts -
 - ✍ Top 10 Public Institutions in India
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB)
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IITD)
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM)
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK)
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (IITKGP)
 - ✍ University of Delhi
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IITR)
 - ✍ Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG)
 - ✍ University of Calcutta
 - ✍ Private Universities in India
 - ✍ BITS Pilani, Thapar University and Symbiosis International University are Top 3 private universities in India.
 - ✍ O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) entered BRICS Universities list for the first time (ranked 251 - 300).
440. ▶ Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) is world's 3rd biggest energy company behind Russian gas firm Gazprom and German utility E.ON, according to Platts Top 250 Global Energy Company Rankings.
- ✍ Indian Oil Corp (IOC) climbed to 7th position, Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) placed 11th and Coal India Ltd ranked 45.
441. ▶ Report by Cushman & Wakefield -
- ✍ Delhi's Khan Market is most expensive retail location in India and 24th most expensive retail location across the world, ranked 11th in Asia-Pacific (APAC) region.

-  Global ranking is topped by Upper 5th Avenue in New York, followed by Hong Kong's Causeway Bay and London's Bond Street.
442. ▶ Report by analyst firm Canalys -
-  India overtook USA to become world's second-largest smartphone market, trailing only China.
-  In the second quarter of 2017, India's smartphone market recovered quickly with shipments growing 23% year-on-year in third quarter to reach over 40 million units.
443. ▶ Report by professional Network LinkedIn -
-  India is second largest market for global pharmaceuticals and biotechnology workforce industry, with 13.7 % contribution.
444. ▶ Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) become first Canadian bank to be added to Financial Stability Board's (FSB's) list of 30 global systemically important banks (G-SIB) deemed 'too big to fail'.
-  Financial Stability Board (FSB) is an international financial body based in Basel (Switzerland). Apart from adding RBC, FSB also removed French bank Groupe BPCE from the list.
445. ▶ Russia and Egypt signed an agreement under which Russia's Rosatom will construct Egypt's first nuclear plant as *Daba nuclear plant*. It will be completed by 2029 with cost of \$21bn.
446. ▶ Russia and Iraq restored commercial airline services for first time since 2004.
-  Russia had suspended flights to Iraq after 2003 US-led invasion pushed Iraq into war.
447. ▶ Russia and USA space agencies (Roscosmos and NASA) will jointly build a *deep space gateway* as first astronaut-tended space station around Moon. It would help prepare for manned missions to deep space destinations including Mars.
448. ▶ Russia asked 755 US diplomats to leave after USA approved sanctions against Russia for allegedly meddling in 2016 US Presidential election and for its annexation of Crimea in 2014.
449. ▶ Russia launched Angosat-1, first national telecoms satellite for Angola, onboard Zenit-2SB rocket.
450. ▶ Russia launched world's largest and most powerful icebreaker ship, Sibir. It is designed to transport cargo via Northern Sea Route in Arctic Ocean.
451. ▶ Russia liquidated last arsenals of its chemical weapons, 3 years ahead of schedule (2020).
452. ▶ Russia signed agreement with Northern African Nation Sudan to build its first nuclear power plant, to help Sudan solve its energy security problems.
453. ▶ Russia used its veto power to block a UN Security Council resolution to extend work of International inspectors to determine who was behind deadly chemical weapons attacks in Syria that took place on 4 April 2017 in Syria.
454. ▶ Russian government will develop an 'independent internet' for BRICS Nations, that would operate separately from Domain Name System used worldwide, that would continue services in the event of a global internet infrastructure collapse. It would be totally independent of international bodies and international infrastructure, yet still remaining linked to the global internet.
455. ▶ SAP launched Asia Pacific Japan (APJ) region's first SAP Leonardo Center in Bengaluru and fourth SAP Leonardo Center globally. Its a go-to place for SAP's ecosystem for digital inspiration and co-innovation.
456. ▶ SS Athenia, first British ship to be sunk during Second World War has been found in Ireland. SS Athenia was sunk by German submarine during World War II in 1939.
-  Also, Britain-based shipwreck hunter found maritime astrolabe, a navigation tool that guided Portuguese explorers on perilous voyage to India in 16th century. It has been confirmed as world's oldest astrolabe.
457. ▶ Sarajevo Haggadah, 14th- century richly illuminated Hebrew manuscript, has been included in UNESCO's Memory of World Register. Sarajevo Haggadah has been kept at the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina since 1894, after being brought to Sarajevo through efforts of Jews fleeing persecution in Spain.
458. ▶ Saudi Arabia Government announced that women will now be able to attend sports events in stadiums starting from 2018. It is aimed at empowering and engaging women in society as an integral part of development process.
459. ▶ Saudi Arabia and Britain signed framework deal for military cooperation, as Britain seeks to explore lucrative trade deals outside Europe after leaving European Union.
460. ▶ Saudi Arabia approved physical education program at girl's schools. Program will be complaint with stringent Islamic rules and will be implemented in 2017-2018 school year.
461. ▶ Saudi Arabia became first country to give citizenship to a robot, after it named a robot *Sophia* as its Citizen during a business event named Future Investment Initiative in Riyadh.
462. ▶ Saudi Arabia hosted world chess tournament for the first time, named named as the King Salman World Rapid and Blitz Chess Championships, nearly two years after It's top cleric issued a religious edict against Chess.
-  India's Viswanathan Anand won bronze in this Championship in Riyadh. Magnus Carlsen (Norway) won the tournament and Russia's Sergey Karjakin secured second spot.

463. ▶ Saudi Arabia issued a decree that allows women to drive cars. Women are now also allowed to enter national stadiums in national sports events.
464. ▶ Saudi Arabia lifted 35 year old ban on providing licenses to commercial movie theatres, aimed at economic growth and diversification.
465. ▶ Saudi Arabia lifted ban on voice and video calling apps such as WhatsApp and Skype and will make them widely available to users, to improve business confidence as reduce dependence on oil revenues.
466. ▶ Saudi Arabian Oil Firm *Saudi Aramcos* (Known as Aramco) Opened Its India Office named ARAMCO ASIA INDIA in Gurugram (Haryana).
- ✍ In 2016 Saudi Aramco established its formal business in India through its subsidiary ARAMCO Asia India (AAI). It will focus on crude oil and LPG marketing, engineering & technical services, and other business development activities.
467. ▶ Saudi Arabian government approved practice of yoga as a sports activity. Yoga can now be freely practiced as a sport in Saudi Arabia.
468. ▶ Scientists developed new military watch for Russian army kit, which is capable of resisting high impact and can even survive a nuclear explosion.
469. ▶ Scientists from New Zealand have developed world's first artificial intelligence politician named *SAM*, that can answer queries regarding local issues such as policies around housing, education and immigration.
470. ▶ Scimago Institutions ranking World Report 2017 -
- ✍ India's Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is ranked 9th best government organisation in world and overall ranked 75th institution globally.
 - ✍ Ranking of Government Institutions was topped by Chinese Academy of Sciences, followed by Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (France) and Helmholtz Gemeinschaft (Germany).
 - ✍ Overall global ranking was topped by Chinese Academy of Sciences, followed by Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (France) and Harvard University (USA).
471. ▶ Second Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) by UN telecommunications agency International Telecommunication Union (ITU) -
- ✍ This Report measures commitment of nations to cyber security.
 - ✍ India has been ranked well at 23rd position out of 165 nations.
 - ✍ Top 5 - Singapore (1st), USA (2nd), Malaysia (3rd), Oman (4th), Estonia (5th).
 - ✍ Equatorial Guinea is the worst performer among all nations with a score of zero.
472. ▶ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) signed MoU with European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) for exchange of information concerning Central Counterparties (CCPs) under European Markets Infrastructure Regulation (EMIR).
473. ▶ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) signed agreement with its Iran's counterpart Securities & Exchange Organization (SEO), to promote technical assistance and facilitate cross-border co-operation in area of securities regulations.
474. ▶ Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister of Nepal Visited India. 8 MOUs were signed during his visit -
- ✍ MoU on Modalities for Utilization of India's Housing Grant Component to support Reconstruction of 50,000 Houses.
 - ✍ MoU on Implementation of India's Post-Earthquake Reconstruction Package in Education, Cultural Heritage and Health Sectors in Nepal
 - ✍ MoU for Implementation Arrangement on Cost Sharing, Schedules and Safeguard Issues for Construction of Mechi Bridge under ADB's SASEC Road Connectivity Programme.
 - ✍ MoU on Drug Demand Reduction and Prevention of Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances and Precursor Chemical and Related Matters
 - ✍ Agreement on Cooperation in Field of Standardization and Conformity Assessment
 - ✍ MoU between Institute of Chartered Accountants of India and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nepal.
475. ▶ Singapore launched its first large-scale electric car-sharing programme to provide commuters with more transport options and steer them away from need to buy their own cars, to be run for a decade by BlueSG.
476. ▶ Somalia Government and United Nations (UN) signed UN Strategic Framework for Somalia (UNSF), under which United Nations will support Somalia's development in priority areas over the next four years.
477. ▶ South American Nation Bolivia's President Eva Morales declared that his nation has achieved *total independence* from IMF and World Bank.
478. ▶ South Korea banned its financial institutions from dealing in virtual currencies including Bitcoin, in wake of recent surge in Bitcoin price.
479. ▶ South Korean and USA air forces held *Vigilant Ace* joint exercises.
480. ▶ Spanish Colony Catalonia declared independence from Spain, following a parliamentary referendum. After this declaration, Spanish government dismissed Catalan President, allowing Spain to directly administer the region.

481. ▶ Sri Lanka became 163rd nation to accede to anti-personnel mine ban convention, as it agreed for Prohibition of use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction.
- ✎ Convention on Prohibition of Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, commonly referred to as the Mine Ban Treaty or Ottawa Treaty, was adopted on September 18, 1997.
482. ▶ Sri Lanka formally handed over its southern strategic port of Hambantota to Chinese firm *China Merchants Port Holdings Company (CM Port)* on a 99-year lease. Hambantota port is strategically located right in the middle of vital energy supply lines in the Indian Ocean, connecting the Middle East and East Asia.
483. ▶ Sri Lanka signed MoU with India to build 1,200 houses in strategically located southern port city of Hambantota. 600 will be constructed in Southern Province while remaining will be built across Sri Lanka, through one model village in each of country's 25 districts.
- ✎ Hambantota port is located right in middle of vital energy supply lines in Indian Ocean, connecting Middle East and East Asia. Hambantota gained significance recently after Sri Lanka decided to build deep-sea port and airport with huge Chinese loans.
 - ✎ India also provided equipment and vehicles worth USD 585,000 to University of Jaffna in Sri Lanka.
484. ▶ Sri Lanka signed a US \$1.1 billion deal to sell a 70% stake of Hambantota port (*A deep-water port in the southern tip of Sri Lanka*) to China's China Merchants Port Holding Co. (CMPort) Under a 99-year lease agreement. CMPort will be only responsible for commercial operations, while SLPA will handle port's operations, security and services.
485. ▶ Sri Lankan Coast Guard commissioned Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) SURAKSHA gifted by India at Colombo port, as first OPV of Sri Lankan Coast Guard.
486. ▶ Sri Lankan Navy commissioned SLNS Sayurala, an India-built state-of-the-art Advanced Offshore Patrol Vessel (AOPV), first-ever purchase from a foreign ship builder, to boost its search and rescue capabilities.
487. ▶ Standard Chartered Bank launched a Multi-currency Forex Card for overseas travelers. The card will allow customers to load up to 20 widely used currencies on 1 card with an online reload facility during overseas travel.
488. ▶ Sweden hosted large scale war exercise named *Aurora*, with NATO.
489. ▶ Swedish defence firm SAAB and Indian conglomerate Adani group signed collaboration agreement, mainly aiming at a contract for single-engine fighter jets for Indian Air Force.
490. ▶ Switzerland unveiled world's steepest funicular railway link to alpine resort of Stoos. It rises 743 metres along gradients as steep as 110% and has a track length of 1720 metres. It has been built at cost of INR 333 crores.
491. ▶ Tata Steel and Thyssenkrupp of Germany signed MoU for creating 50:50 Joint Venture as one of Europe's largest steel companies.
492. ▶ Tech Firm Apple acquired music recognition app Shazam, for approx \$400 million.
493. ▶ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) signed letter of intent (LoI) with Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) deepen cooperation. It was signed during ITU-TRAI Asia-Pacific Regulators' Roundtable jointly organised by International Telecom Union (ITU) and TRAI in New Delhi.
494. ▶ Telecom services provider Bharti Airtel and SK Telecom of Korea partnered for leveraging the SK Telecom's expertise to build advanced telecom network in India.
495. ▶ Tencent became first Chinese company to be valued at more than \$500 billion in Asia. Alibaba is Asia's second-highest-valued firm at \$474 billion.
496. ▶ Term *Fake news* has been named the word of the year by Collins dictionary due to its widespread use around the world. Note that it has been heavily used and popularised by USA President Donald Trump.
497. ▶ Three Indian entrepreneurs - Ratan Tata, Lakshmi Mittal and Vinod Khosla have been included in Forbes's special list of world's '100 Greatest Living Business Minds.
498. ▶ Times World University Rankings 2018 -
- ✎ Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru retained top position among Indian Universities, although its global position fell to IISc 251-300 band. IIT Delhi and IIT Kanpur are in 501-600 band, IIT Bombay in 351-400 club and IIT Kharagpur and IIT Roorkee retained their positions in 501-600 bracket.
 - ✎ Top 10 - Oxford University (UK), Cambridge University (UK), California institute of Technology (USA), Stanford University (USA), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (USA), Harvard University (USA), Princeton University (USA), Imperial College London (UK), University of Chicago (USA), ETH-Zurich (Switzerland).
499. ▶ To expedite skill development in North East region of India, Singapore will set up a Skill Development Centre in the region.
500. ▶ Top 150 universities on Global University Employability Ranking 2017 published by Times Higher Education -

1	California Institute of Technology	United States
2	Harvard University	United States
3	Columbia University	United States




4	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	United States
5	University of Cambridge	United Kingdom
6	Boston University	United States
7	Stanford University	United States
8	Technical University of Munich	Germany
9	University of Tokyo	Japan
10	Yale University	United States






























Indian Universities in List -










 Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru (29th)

 Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (145th)




 Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (148th)














501. ▶ Travel guide company Lonely Planet ranked Chile as Most worth visiting country in 2018, followed by South Korea and Portugal. Seville of Spain was ranked as number one city in most visit worthy cities.
502. ▶ Travel publication *Travel+Leisure* named Canada as *destination of the year*, based on data from polls conducted on travel agents, arrival statistics and cultural relevance for 2017.
503. ▶ Turkey Approved a controversial legislation to let state - approved clerics (Muftis / Civil Servants) to conduct and register marriage ceremonies. It will pave way for child marriages.
504. ▶ Turkey opened its largest military base in Africa, in Mogadishu (capital of Somalia) to train Somali Soldiers.
505. ▶ Turkey signed a deal with Russia to buy Advanced S-400 missile defence systems.
506. ▶ Twitter announced test project allowing tweets to be expanded to 280 characters, double existing limit (140 Chars) in the latest effort to boost flagging growth at the social network.
507. ▶ Twitter officially increased number of characters in tweets from 140 to 280, except tweets in Japanese, Chinese and Korean languages that can convey more information in a single character.
508. ▶ Typhoon Damrey hits Vietnam as strongest cyclone in Vietnam in 16 years.
509. ▶ Typhoon Haitang struck China's eastern Fujian Province with continual rain blows on different parts of the region.
510. ▶ Typhoon Tembin struck Philippines, causing huge human and financial losses.
511. ▶ UAE begun collecting new *sin* taxes on tobacco products, energy drinks and soft drinks, with tobacco and energy drinks taxed at 100 % and soft drinks at 50 %.
-  All six members of Gulf Cooperation Council have agreed to begin collecting so-called VAT taxes. GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE.
512. ▶ UAE, UK, US and French armies participated in joint exercises in Abu Dhabi (UAE), named as *Flag4*.
513. ▶ UK government extended a pilot student visa scheme to 23 more universities under which Indian and other non-EU students will get six months time to find a job after finishing their course (upto 13 months duation). Scheme was introduced last year on a pilot basis in four British universities - Oxford, Bath, Cambridge and Imperial College London.
514. ▶ UN announced end of 13 year old military peacekeeping mission in Haiti, that helped maintain order in Haiti through 13 years of political turmoil and disaster.
515. ▶ UN will mark 100th Birth anniversary of South African Social Reformer Nelson Mandela (July 18, 2018) with a high-level meeting on world peace, named as *Nelson Mandela Peace summit*.
516. ▶ UNESCO recognized artisans of Panama Hats for their distinctive woven hats. Panam hats are a traditional brimmed straw hat of Ecuadorian origin.
517. ▶ UNICEF released its report *The State of the World's Children*, with theme *Children in a digital world*. Report states that India's girls and women are at risk of becoming further marginalised in society and at home if they remain digitally illiterate.
518. ▶ US Agency for International Development (USAID) announced USD 1 million support for Ending Tuberculosis (TB) Epidemic in India and to raise TB awareness to help India in its fight against TB.
-  USAID also announced its first impact bond across globe by launching 'Rajasthan Development Impact Bond (Utkrisht Impact Bond) aiming to reduce number of mother and baby deaths by improving quality of maternal care in Rajasthan's health infrastructure.
519. ▶ US Consulate General, Kolkata launched *Youth for Business-Y4BIZ*, a support programme for young entrepreneurs in eastern region of India.
520. ▶ US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved first gene therapy treatment that uses patient's own immune cells to fight acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, that may bring new approach to treatment of cancer and serious and life-threatening diseases.
-  Gene therapy was identified as CAR-T cell therapy (CTLO19) or tisagenlecleucel and now is called Kymriah, completely different as compared to present immunotherapy drugs called *checkpoint inhibitors* that treat variety of cancers by helping body's natural T cells better spot tumors.


-  CAR-T treatment is not a pill or chemotherapy. It uses gene therapy techniques not to fix disease-causing genes (cells) but to turbocharge T cells, immune system cells that cancer can evade.
521.  US Navy commissioned world's largest aircraft carrier - *USS Gerald R Ford*.
-  USS Gerald R. Ford is named after 38th President of USA Gerald Ford and is built by Newport News Ship Building Company.
-  This massive 1,106-foot-long carrier displaces 100,000 tons fully loaded and is powered by 2 new generation nuclear reactors.
522.  US Trade and Development Agency signed MOU with Airports Authority of India, to support a 20-year master plan aimed at expansion of operational capacities of Kolkata and Lucknow international airports.
523.  US and South Korea began 10-day-long annual military exercise - *Ulchi Freedom Guardian drill*.
524.  US and UAE Armies begun joint military exercise in Abu Dhabi, with name *Iron Union 5*.
525.  US media company Meredith Corporation acquired US Based Publishing Brand *Time Inc.* for USD 2.8 billion. Time Inc. is a multinational mass media corporation owns over 100 magazine brands including *Time, Sports Illustrated, Travel + Leisure, Food & Wine, Fortune, People, InStyle, Life, Golf Magazine, Southern Living, Essence, Real Simple, and Entertainment Weekly*.
526.  US-India Business Council (USIBC) launched a collaborative initiative for Women Entrepreneurs titled 'Women for Women Innovators, Social Leaders & Entrepreneurs' (WISE), launched during USIBC's Road to GES event 'Creating the Foundations of Innovation'.
-  WISE will be led by Country Head of Intel, Nivruti Rai and will comprise prominent female business person like Kiran Mazumdar Shaw, Vanitha Narayanan and Amita Vyas.
527.  US-backed Iraqi forces reclaimed town of Rawa from terrorist organization Islamic State (ISIS).
528.  USA Army Opened Its First permanent base in Middle Eastern Nation Israel.
529.  USA Congress authorised \$700 million in Coalition Support Fund (CSF) to reimburse Pakistan for activities carried out in support of US operations in Afghanistan.
530.  USA Navy tested world's first-ever active Laser Weapons System (LaWS), aboard USS Ponce amphibious transport ship. LaWS operates within an invisible part of electromagnetic spectrum and absolutely silent and incredibly effective.
531.  USA President Donald Trump announced to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital despite intense Arab, Muslim and European opposition. USA became 1st country to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital, since foundation of Israel in 1948. USA will also move its Israel Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.
-  Israel has always regarded Jerusalem as its capital, while Palestinians claim East Jerusalem as capital of a future Palestinian state.
-  Later, United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution that stated this US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital as 'null and void'. The resolution was moved by Turkey and Yemen.
532.  USA President Donald Trump scrapped an amnesty programme introduced during Obama's term that granted work permits to immigrants who arrived in the country illegally as Children. It is likely to impact over 800,000 undocumented workers including more than 7000 Indian-Americans.
533.  USA President Donald Trump signed into law a sweeping 1.5 trillion dollars overhaul of US tax code, set to impact USA economy through dramatic tax cuts for corporations and temporary reductions for individuals.
534.  USA Space Exploration Firm Space X successfully launched Hewlett Packard Enterprises (HPE) Spaceborne Computer towards International Space Station using Falcon 9 rocket, as part of HPE's joint experiment with NASA.
535.  USA Supreme Court ruled that travel ban imposed on six Muslim countries (*Chad, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria and Yemen*) by Prez Donald Trump can now go fully into effect. New ban also bars travellers from North Korea and Venezuela.
536.  USA and Australia jointly test-fired a hypersonic missile capable of moving at a speed 8 times faster than sound as part of a \$54-million research project - *Hypersonic International Flight Research Experimentation Program (HIFiRE)*.
537.  USA and Israel withdrew from UNESCO, accusing UNESCO of "anti-Israel bias".
538.  USA announced grant of nearly USD 500,000 for organisations that work to promote religious freedom in India and Sri Lanka.
539.  USA approved sale of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) anti-missile defence system to Saudi Arabia at an estimated cost of \$15 billion (Rs. 98,000 crore). It includes 44 THAAD launchers and 360 missiles along with fire control stations and radars.
540.  USA as approved \$1.1 billion contract to service Qatar's F-15 fighter jets despite diplomatic stand-off between Gulf emirate and its neighbours.
541.  USA central bank fined global banking giant HSBC \$175 million for failing to oversee foreign exchange traders who misused confidential client information and colluded with traders at competing banks. This action comes 2 months after Fed also fined BNP Paribas USD 246 million over similar violations.
542.  USA imposed new economic sanctions against Iran over its ballistic missile programme and for contributing to regional tensions. NOW, USA targeted 16 entities and individuals from Iran citing them as illicit Iranian actors or transnational criminal activity.
543.  USA initiated placing antidumping duty investigations against import of polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) resin from India and China.

-  Anti-dumping measures are taken to ensure fair trade and provide a level-playing field to domestic industry.
544. ▶ USA lifted economic and trade sanctions against Sudan that were put in 1997, in response to Sudanese Govt's efforts to end hostilities in conflict areas, improve humanitarian access and maintain cooperation with USA in regional conflicts to tackle terrorism.
545. ▶ USA named Pakistan based Kashmiri terrorist outfit Hizbul Mujahideen as a "Foreign Terrorist Organisation (FTO)", the list that has Other organizations like Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).
546. ▶ USA resumed normal visa services for Turkish citizens, saying Turkish authorities fulfilled assurances no local staff would be detained or arrested for performing their duties.
547. ▶ USA rolled out pre-approved expedited entry clearance for low-risk Indian travellers under its Global Entry programme (GEP).
 India became 11th country whose citizens are now eligible to enroll in Customs and Border Protection (CBP) initiative.
 Under this, International GEP member traveller can enter in US through automatic kiosks, rather than queueing up to clear immigration check by meeting an immigration officer at selected airports.
548. ▶ USA successfully tested Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system in Alaska by launching a ballistic missile over Pacific Ocean, after North Korea conducted an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) test that could possibly hit USA.
549. ▶ USA urged other members of Nuclear Suppliers Group to support India's membership bid to NSG that controls international nuclear trade.
550. ▶ USA will install radar systems in independent nation *Palau*. It is located in south-west of Guam, the US territory that North Korea has threatened to target.
551. ▶ USA will issue a 4 level travel advisory to its citizens from January 2018, based on a four- level classification system with clearly recommended actions. Four levels will be -
 Level one – exercise normal precautions
 Level two – exercise increased caution
 Level three – reconsider travel
 Level four – do not travel
552. ▶ USA withdrawn itself from a United Nations pact to improve handling of migrant and refugee situations deeming it 'inconsistent' with policies.
553. ▶ USA's National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will launch Wide Field Infrared Survey Telescope (WFIRST) in Mid-2020, as a next-generation space telescope to provide largest picture of universe ever seen, with same depth and clarity as Hubble Space Telescope.
554. ▶ Uber partnered with NASA to work on Project *UberAir*, aimed at launching flying taxis by 2023. Los Angeles will join previous Cities Including Dallas Fort-Worth, Texas, and Dubai.
555. ▶ Unicity International (USA) launched world's first ever Genomeceutical (gene controlling) range of products to India. DNA contains DNA undergoes a process called transcription or gene expression that creates a "messenger" molecule, telling body to make a specific protein.
556. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia formed new economic and partnership group named *Joint Cooperation Committee*, separate from Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).
 JCC will coordinate between UAE and Saudi Arabia in all military, political, economic, trade, cultural and other interest of 2 countries.
 It will be headed by *Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan*, crown prince of Abu Dhabi.
557. ▶ United Arab Emirates (UAE) launched its first space programme aimed at sending four Emirati astronauts to International Space Station within 5 years.
558. ▶ United Nations (UN) General Assembly passed a Pakistan-sponsored resolution that considers right of peoples to self-determination as a fundamental condition for the effective guarantee and observance of human rights.
559. ▶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released Global Education Monitoring Report 2017-18, expressing concern over school textbooks in many countries glorifying war and military heroes rather than teaching peace and non-violence. As per the report, just 10% of the textbooks across the world explicitly teach the need for conflict prevention and resolution.
560. ▶ United Nations General Assembly approved regular budget of \$5.397 billion for 2018-2019, marking 5% cut (286 million dollar) as compared to budget for 2016- 2017.
561. ▶ United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) released report *State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World*. UNICEF pointed out that despite massive online presence of children, very little is done to protect them from digital threats.
562. ▶ United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) launched 2017 State of World Population report in London (UK) with name *Worlds Apart: Reproductive Health and Rights in an Age of Inequality*. As per report, economic inequality goes hand in hand with inequality in reproductive health.

563. ▶ United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted a resolution to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons. It came after witnessing a continuous flow of weapons, unmanned aircraft systems and improvised explosive device (IED) components between terrorist organizations.
564. ▶ United Nations selected Dubai (UAE) as data hub for Middle East North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) region, due to city's integrated initiatives to mine and manage its data.
565. ▶ United States House of Representatives passed an amendment to National Defense Authorisation Act (NDAA), 2018, a \$621.5 billion defence expenditure bill to advance defence cooperation with India.
566. ▶ Vanuatu (South Pacific island nation) became first nation to accept bitcoin in exchange for citizenship. Vanuatu's citizenship program costs \$200,000 USD, meaning that at current prices the residency program costs less than 42 bitcoins.
567. ▶ Venezuela will launch a new virtual currency to ease country's economic crisis, triggered by falling oil revenue and plummeting value of bolivar, its existing currency. New crypto-currency *Petro* will allow country to advance in issues of monetary sovereignty, to make financial transactions and overcome the financial blockade.
568. ▶ Victoria became first Australian state to legalise assisted dying (euthanasia), as lawmakers voted to allow terminally ill patients the right to request a lethal drug to end their lives from June 2019.
569. ▶ Vietnam granted India's ONGC Videsh a 2 year extension to explore oil block 128 in South China Sea.
▶ Part of the oil block 128 is in U-shaped 'nine-dash line,' which is claimed by China. This area is also route for over \$5 trillion in trade every year and is also claimed by Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan.
570. ▶ WHO released first tranche of emergency funding of \$175,000 to provide lifesaving healthcare to vulnerable Rohingya muslims population in Bangladesh.
571. ▶ Women Entrepreneur (WE) Cities Index 2017 study released by Dell -
▶ India's Bengaluru ranked 40th out of 50 cities and Delhi ranked 49th.
▶ Top 5 - New York (USA), Bay Area (US), London (UK), Boston (US) and Stockholm (Sweden).
572. ▶ Word 'populism' is announced as Cambridge Dictionary's Word of the Year 2017. It is defined as *political ideas and activities that are intended to get the support of ordinary people by giving them what they want.*
573. ▶ World Bank allocated \$8 billion for infrastructure projects under China's Silk Road initiative.
▶ Purpose of Silk Road initiative is to create an economic corridor connecting China with Asia, Europe and the rest of world.
▶ Silk Road project has two components - Silk Road Economic Belt (land-based connectivity) and Maritime Silk Road (ocean based connectivity).
574. ▶ World Bank allowed India to construct hydroelectric power facilities on tributaries of Jhelum and Chenab rivers with certain restrictions under 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).
575. ▶ World Bank announced \$1.15 billion development policy loan for Egypt to support its economic reform programme, with \$500 million from World Bank Group, \$150 million from Britain and \$500 million from African Development Bank.
▶ Additionally, International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved \$ 44.5 million credit for Madagascar, to support the country's economic recovery.
576. ▶ World Bank stated that India is emerging as a frontrunner in fight against climate change, replacing coal energy with solar power as a source of energy. World Bank observed that India has made sweeping commitment to solar power and energy efficient innovative solutions to provide round the clock electricity to its people by 2030.
577. ▶ World Bank will end its financial support for oil and gas exploration after 2019, in response to growing threat posed to climate change.
578. ▶ World Bank's 'Ease of Doing Business index' 2017 (190 Nations) -
▶ India - India Improved 30 positions to rank 100th amongst 190 countries, Ranking India among top 10 improvers in 2017.
▶ Top 5 - New Zealand (1), Singapore (2), Denmark (3), South Korea (4), Hong Kong (5)
▶ Bottom 5 - Somalia (190th), Eritrea (189th), Venezuela (188th), South Sudan (187th), Yemen (186th)
▶ Neighbours - Bangladesh (177), Nepal (105), Pakistan (147), Sri Lanka (111)
▶ BRICS - Brazil (125), Russia (35), China (78), South Africa (82)
579. ▶ World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) 2017-18 (137 Nations) -
▶ Top 5 - Switzerland (1st), United States (2nd), Singapore (3rd), Netherlands (4th) and Germany (5th)
▶ Bottom 5 - Mauritania (133), Liberia (134), Chad (135), Mozambique (136) Yemen (137)
▶ BRICS - China (27th), Russia (38th), **India (40th)**, South Africa (61st) and Brazil (80th).
▶ Neighbours - Bangladesh (99), Nepal (88), Pakistan (115), Sri Lanka (85)
580. ▶ World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap index 2017 (144 Nations) -
▶ India - India came down 21 places to ranked **108** in 2017 List, due to less participation of women in economy and low wages.

-  Top 5 - Iceland (1), Norway(2), Finland (3), Rwanda (4), Sweden (5)
-  Bottom 5 - Iran (140), Chad (141), Syria (142), Pakistan (143), Yemen (144)
-  BRICS - Brazil (90), Russia (71), India (108), China (100), South Africa (19)
-  Neighbours - Bangladesh (47), Sri Lanka (109), Nepal (111), Pakistan (143)

581. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) for first time has formulated clinical guidelines on responding to children and adolescents who have been sexually abused. These guidelines provide first line support to child or adolescent in response to the disclosure of sexual abuse.
582. ▶ World Health Organisation (WHO) released report *Non-communicable Disease Progress Monitor 2017*, as a measure of status of implementation of 19 indicators of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in WHO's 194 Member States.
-  Costa Rica and Iran are best performing countries, with each achieving 15 of 19 indicators. They are followed by Brazil, Bulgaria, Turkey and UK.
583. ▶ World Health Organisation Central African Nation Gabon as *Polio-free*.
584. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) declared Somalia free of polio as it had not recorded any case of polio disease in last 3 years.
585. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) declared end of most recent outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in African Nation Congo.
586. ▶ World Health Organization (WHO) released Global Tobacco Epidemic Report 2017, stating that 63% of world's population are covered by at least one comprehensive tobacco control measure.
587. ▶ World Inequality Report 2018 by World Inequality Lab based at the Paris School of Economics (France) -
-  Deregulation and related economic reforms in India since 1980s have led to significant increase in inequality. Inequality is increased to such an extent that In 2014, India's top 1% of earners grabbed 22% share of national income, while bottom 50% managed to get only 15% share.
 -  Globally, since 1980, richest 1% earners have captured twice as much as the poorest 50% of world population.
588. ▶ World Migration Report 2018 by *UN International Organisation for Migration* -
-  Indian diaspora is the largest in world, with 1.5 crore Indians living abroad India also receives highest amount in remittances (\$68.91 billion last year).
 -  Largest migration corridor is from India to UAE, where 3.5 million Indians were residing in 2015.
 -  USA is top destination for migrants, with 46.6 million migrants moving to USA in 2015.
589. ▶ World Nuclear Industry Status Report 2017 -
-  India is third in world in number of nuclear reactors being installed with 6 reactors. China is leading at 20. Total operational units across the world are 53 currently.
590. ▶ World Payments Report 2017 by Capgemini and BNP Paribas -
-  China is ahead of India in digital payments space with 38 Billion Transactions in 2015, as compared to 4.5 Billion Digital Transactions in India in 2015. India had 25 billion non-cash transactions for 2017-18..
 -  China will have growth of 36 % in digital transactions during 2016-20 while India will grow at average 26.2 % during the period.
 -  Globally, Debit cards account for 46 percent of non-cash transactions followed by credit cards with 19.5 percent in 2015.
591. ▶ World Trade Organization (WTO) formed a panel to look into Qatar's complaint against measures imposed on it by UAE for Qatar's alleged financial support for militant groups.
592. ▶ World breastfeeding week 2017 is being celebrated from 1st - 7th August 2017 with theme *Sustaining Breastfeeding Together*.
593. ▶ World skills competition 2017 held in Abu Dhabi (UAE) -
-  Indian team consisting of 28 competitors won 2 medals and 9 Medallions of Excellence in key skills. Mohit Dudeja won a silver for Patisserie and Confectionery and Kiran won a bronze for Prototype Modelling.
594. ▶ World trade in goods is estimated to grow at a higher 3.6 % in 2017, compared to earlier estimate of 2.4 %. This change was mainly due to intra-regional shipments picking up and a recovery in import demand in North America.
595. ▶ World's 3rd Largest Book Fair, Sharjah International Book Fair opened in UAE with theme *A World in My Book*. It has over 1.5 million book titles and 1,650 publishing houses from 60 countries.
596. ▶ World's first camel hospital opened in Dubai (UAE).
597. ▶ World's 100 Most Powerful Women list 2017 by Forbes -
-  CEO of ICICI Bank Chanda Kochhar is most powerful woman in India, 32nd globally.
 -  List is topped by German Chancellor Angela Merkel, making it her 7th consecutive year at top and 12th overall. She is followed by UK Prime Minister Theresa May (rank 2).
598. ▶ World's deepest lake - Lake Baikal (Russia) is reportedly undergoing its gravest crisis in recent history.
-  It Holds 23 % of world's unfrozen fresh water. It is as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and includes over 3,600 plant and animal species.

 Since past few years, it has been crippled by a series of damaging phenomena such as disappearance of the omul fish, rapid growth of putrid algae and death of endemic species of sponges across its vast 3.2 million-hectare area.

- 599. ▶ World's first Saola breeding centre is being built in Vietnam. 's central region for . Saola, a critically endangered hoofed mammal is identified by two parallel horns with sharp ends, which can reach 51 centimetres in length and are found on both males and females.
- 600. ▶ World's first floating windfarm has been put on trial in Scotland, to unlock ocean's potential for generating renewable power. The project is called *Hywind*, costing approx £200m. It will bring power to 20,000 homes.
- 601. ▶ World's highest sandcastle (16.68 meters tall) built in German city of Duisburg, getting 14.84-metre sandcastle built in early 2017 by Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik.
- 602. ▶ World's largest airplane (by wingspan) Stratolaunch successfully completed its initial engine tests in USA, designed for launching for sending satellite-carrying rockets into low-Earth orbit. Its wingspan measures 118 m betwen ends. It weighs about 227,000 kg and can carry nearly 250,000 kg between two fuselages. It has operational range of approximately 2,000 nautical miles.
- 603. ▶ World's largest data center - *Kolos facility* is being developed by a US-Norwegian partnership in Ballangen, a small town in Northern Norway. It will draw on a record-setting 1000 megawatts of power.
- 604. ▶ World's longest glass bridge opened in Shijiazhuang (China). It lies 218 meters above hanging between the two cliffs in Hongyagu Scenic Area in Pingshan county, with 488 Meters length and capacity to hold 2000 people.
- 605. ▶ World's longest pedestrian suspension bridge (*Europe Bridge*) opened in Randa (Switzerland). It measures 1,620 feet (494 Metres) long and rises as high as 278 feet above Grabengufer ravine.
- 606. ▶ World's oldest emergency helpline number 999 completed 80 years of its services in United Kingdom.
- 607. ▶ World's oldest emoji discovered on 3700-year-old pot in Turkey by archaeologists working on a site in Southern Turkey. The site depicts era of *Hittities*, an ancient civilisation that existed in north-central Anatolian region.
- 608. ▶ Writer Preeti Shenoy has been honoured with Indian of the Year Award by Brands Academy, a reputed branding company in India.
- 609. ▶ Zimbabwe's military seized control of nation by placing longtime leader Robert Mugabe under house arrest.

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