



Current Affairs - December 2016

Month Type



- [130 Current Affairs were found in Month - December 2016 for Type - All](#)

Appointments

- ▶ Anil Bajjal has been appointed as 21st Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, by Prez Pranab Mukherjee.
- ▶ Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has appointed Suresh Kalmadi and Abhay Singh Chautala as its life presidents.
- ▶ Indian-origin Saudi-based entrepreneur *Shaikh Rafik Mohammed* Major General of Kyrgyzstan.
- ▶ Mian Saqib Nisar appointed as 25th Chief Justice of Pakistan.
- ▶ Navy Chief Sunil Lanba is appointed as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff committee (COSC).
- ▶ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will issue new Rs 500 denomination banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (new) series with inset letter 'R'. Earlier, Notes were issued with inset letter 'E' after demonetisation.
- ▶ SP Vaid is appointed as Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police.
- ▶ Soli J Sorabjee re-elected as President of cultural institution India International Centre (IIC).
- ▶ Sorin Grindeanu is appointed as new Prime Minister of Romania.
- ▶ Takam Paro elected as the new Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ▶ US President elect Donald Trump named Thomas Bossert as His Advisor for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism.
- ▶ V.K. Sasikala appointed general secretary of Tamilnadu's Political Party AIDMK (All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam).
- ▶ Viral V Acharya is appointed as new Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
 - ▶ He will fill post that fell vacant after Urjit Patel being made RBI Governor.
 - ▶ Other 3 Deputy Governors of RBI are - S S Mundra, R Gandhi and N S Vishwanathan.

[Top](#)

Awards

- ▶ Actor Shahrukh Khan conferred honorary doctorate (honorary PhD) at 6th convocation of Maulana Azad National Urdu University in Hyderabad.
- ▶ Hindi writers Shradha and Ghyansham Kumar Devansh chosen for Bharatiya Jnanpith Navlekhan Award for 2016. Shradha was chosen for her short story *Hawa Mein Phadphadati Chitthi* and Devansh for his poem *Akash Mein Deh*. Bharatiya Jananpith Navlekhan award is given by Bharatiya Jnanpith trust to young authors in Hindi for their first creations.
- ▶ Indian origin British chemistry professor and DNA expert at Cambridge University Shankar Balasubramanian received Knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II for their contributions.
- ▶ Rajasthani litterateur Satya Narayan chosen for 26th Bihari Puraskar 2016 by K K Birla Foundation, for his Hindi book *Yeh Ek Dunia*.

[Top](#)

Books

- ▶ Book *Emperor Chandragupta*, authored by Adity Kay has been released.
- ▶ Book *I am a troll*, authored by Swati Chaturvedi has been released.
- ▶ Book *India-US Relations in the Age of Uncertainty: An uneasy courtship*, authored by BM Jain has been launched.
- ▶ Book *Watership Sown* has been authored by Richard Adams.

Committees

1. ▶ Ministry of Law and Justice constituted Committee to review institutionalisation of arbitration mechanism in India, under B N Srikrishna.

[Top](#)

Defence

1. ▶ Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) delivered 20th Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV) - ICGS AYUSH to Indian Coast Guard.

[Top](#)

Economy

1. ▶ AU Financiers (India) became 7th Entity (and only non-banking finance company (NBFC)) to receive final licence from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to start a small finance bank.
2. ▶ Bank of Baroda and Heritage Foods Ltd signed MOU to provide dairy loans to Farmers through BOB branches across country.
3. ▶ Bank of Baroda launched agricultural investment credit scheme for farmers of Rajasthan.
4. ▶ Bank of Maharashtra adopted Malangaon Village in Sangli district of Maharashtra, to make it completely cashless.
5. ▶ Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) extended last date for availing the Direct Tax Dispute Resolution Scheme to January 31, 2017.
 - ✎ Direct Tax Dispute Resolution Scheme provides for waiving interest and penalties if the principal amount involved in retrospective tax cases is paid. It aims at releasing about Rs. 5.16 lakh crore, which is locked in about 2.6 lakh pending direct tax cases.
 - ✎ Under it, a disputed tax amount of up to Rs 10 lakh and the penalty will be forgone. However, in cases where the disputed tax amount is above Rs 10 lakh, a penalty of 25% will be levied.
6. ▶ Government approved Ordinance to penalise persons holding banned 500 and 1,000 rupee notes. Possession of demonetised notes will attract a monetary fine of 10,000 rupees or five times the cash held, whichever is higher.
7. ▶ Government launched Integrated Voice Response System (IVRS) system in a bid to tackle the call drop menace, with short code 1955 being allotted for same.
8. ▶ Government proposed setting up Financial Data Management Centre (FDMC) based on recommendation of a committee set up under *Ajay Tyagi*. FDMC will Standardise data from all financial sector regulators in a single database and provide analytical insights based on the data to ensure stability in economy.
9. ▶ Government removed minimum export price (MEP) USD 360 per tonne on potato.
 - ✎ Minimum Export Rate (MEP) is rate below which no trader is allowed to export, meant to restrict exports and improve domestic supply.
10. ▶ Home Ministry cancelled licences of 20 thousand NGOs for violating various provisions of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) banning these NGOs from receiving foreign funds.
11. ▶ Mobile wallet firm MobiKwik received approval from RBI to set up a Bharat Bill Payments Operating Unit (BBPOU). MobiKwik will be integrated in Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), to offer interoperable and accessible bill payment service to customers through a network of agents.
12. ▶ PM Modi announced key welfare measures -
 - ✎ **Housing** - Under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), poor and middle class in cities will get 4% exemption on interest for home loans up to Rs 9 lakh and 3% exemption for home loans up to Rs 12 lakh. 33% more houses will be built in villages.
 - ✎ **Farmers** - 3 crore Kisan credit cards will be converted into RuPay cards in 3 months. 20,000 crores will be added to fund under NABARD, meant for giving loans to cooperative banks and societies at low interest rate.
 - ✎ **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)** - Credit guarantee for small businesses is doubled to Rs 2 crore. Banks will raise cash credit limit for small business to 25% from 20%. Banks will also increase working capital loans from 20% of turnover to 30% for digitally transactions.
 - ✎ **Women and elderly** - Pregnant women in above 650 rural districts will get Rs 6,000 in bank accounts to meet medical expenses and reduce child, woman mortality. Senior citizens will get guarantee of 8% interest rate on deposits up to Rs 7.5 lakh for 10 years.

13. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched UPI based mobile payment application called BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) at Digi Dhan Mela in New Delhi, BHIM is rebranded version of UPI (Unified Payment Interface) and USSD (Unstructured Supplementary Service Data) for simpler digital payments without cash.
14. ▶ Private sector's Lakshmi Vilas Bank launched QIP (Qualified institutional placement) to raise over Rs 600 crore by issuing 4.25 crore shares in domestic or international markets.
15. ▶ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) provided borrowers 90 days for repayment of housing, car, farm and other loans worth up to 1 crore rupees, for dues payable between 1st November and 31st December 2016.
16. ▶ South Indian Bank introduced NRI-focused mobile banking application *SIB Mirror+*.
17. ▶ Special Assistance Amount released to states (from Demand No.32 of Union Budget) -
 - ✍ Bihar - 200 Crores
 - ✍ Odisha - 368 Crores
 - ✍ J & K - 314 Crores
 - ✍ Tamilnadu - 200 Crores (Tirupur Dyeing Industry)
18. ▶ State Bank of India and real estate portal magicbricks.com tied-up to provide SBI's online home loan-approval solutions easily to potential property buyers.
19. ▶ e-commerce Firm Paytm launched 100-member 'merchant helpdesk', aimed at educating merchants on digital payments across country.

Top

International

1. ▶ According to report Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations 2008-2015 by Congressional Research Service (CRS) - India is second largest purchaser of arms among developing nations after Saudi Arabia. Between 2008 and 2015, India purchased defence equipments worth 34 billion USD, second after Saudi Arabia's 93.5 billion USD.
2. ▶ American e-commerce Firm Amazon got US patent for a flying warehouse that will enable Amazon's drones to deliver products to customers' doorsteps, known as *Airborne fulfillment center (AFC)*.
3. ▶ China Launched latest version of its fifth-generation stealth fighter jet J-31 (renamed as FC-31 Gyr Falcon).
4. ▶ China announced ban on all ivory trade and processing activities by end of 2017. The move follows a resolution at the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in South Africa in October 2016 that was backed by China.
5. ▶ China launched two high-resolution remote sensing satellites SuperView-1 01 and 02 to get commercial images at 0.5-meter resolution. . it It is part of China's plans to form a BeiDou network consisting of constellation of 35 satellites for global navigation services by 2020.
6. ▶ China opened *Beipanjiang towering bridge* hanging 565 metres (1,854 feet) above a gorge in southwestern China to traffic. It is claimed to be the world's highest bridge.
7. ▶ China operationalized world's longest bullet train line - 2252 km Shanghai-Kunming line. It links country's prosperous eastern coast to the less-developed southwestern part of the country.
8. ▶ China will build a \$1.5-billion power line across Pakistan to enable transmission of 4,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity from north to south Pakistan.
9. ▶ Chinese e-retail Firm Alibaba opened its first office in India in Mumbai.
10. ▶ Colombia's Congress passed law granting amnesty (*excusing*) to Marxist FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) rebels as part of historic peace deal reached between rebels and Government.
11. ▶ Facebook's virtual reality-focused division Oculus acquired eye-tracking technology startup Denmark based *The Eye Tribe*.
12. ▶ French Government will levy *terror tax* on property insurance policies of French citizens to help finance a fund for victims of the extremist attacks that have recently hit France.
13. ▶ Government ratified International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement, that was opened for signature during 22nd Conference of Parties (CoP) meeting United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Marrakesh (Morocco).
 - ✍ ISA was jointly by Indian PM Narendra Modi and French President François Hollande in November 2015 in Paris, during 21st CoP meet. of UNFCCC. Till now, 25 nations have signed Framework Agreement.
14. ▶ India eased Visa Procurement Process for Bangladeshi visitors to India.
15. ▶ India signed MoU with Bhutan for providing technical cooperation in infrastructure engineering in green and sustainable construction in Bhutan.

16. ▶ India's largest LNG importer Petronet signed MoU with Bangladesh's Petrobangla to set up \$950 million liquefied natural gas import project of 7.5 million tonnes a year in Bangladesh.
17. ▶ Nepal rejected India's 'open sky' proposal, meant to allow unlimited flights between two countries. Nepal stated that it was not ready for agreement as of now. Currently, airlines of both nations are allowed to operate only 30000 seats from each side.
18. ▶ Pakistan inaugurated China-backed 340 MW Chashma-III Nuclear power plant in Punjab Province.
19. ▶ Russia expelled 35 American diplomats from country, in answer to USA earlier expelling 35 Russian Diplomats.




[Top](#)

Meetings

1. ▶ 2016 World Bhojpuri Conference held in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).
2. ▶ 27th meeting of Southern Zonal Council held at Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), chaired by Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

[Top](#)

National

1. ▶ 24th National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) held in Pune (Maharashtra).
2. ▶ 8th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit will be held in Gandhinagar from January 10th - 13th 2017 with theme Sustainable Economic and Social Development.
3. ▶ Apple's Taiwanese partner Wistron will set up manufacturing unit in Bengaluru for manufacturing Apple iPhones, from April 2017.
4. ▶ As per Data by Delhi Government, New Delhi has highest increase in per capita income among all states and Union territories. Per capita income of New Delhi is Rs 2,80,142 during 2015-16, Followed by Chandigarh (2,42,386) and Sikkim (Rs 2,27,465). Note that National Average stands at Rs 93,293.
5. ▶ Assam Government launched a health insurance scheme - 'Atal-Amrit Abhiyan', to provide coverage against several critical illnesses. Families with annual income under Rs 5 lakh are eligible to avail benefit.
6. ▶ Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) commissioned second 600 MW unit of Singareni Thermal Power Project in Adilabad District of Telangana.
7. ▶ Bihar Government approved 50% reservation in all judicial services for aspirants belonging to Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs).
8. ▶ Delhi government reduced fares of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) and cluster buses by 75%, to encourage more people to opt for public transport. Further, DTC bus travel is made completely free for students till age 21 years.
9. ▶ First Digi Dhan mela in country held in Gurugram (Haryana), to promote digital and cashless transactions.
10. ▶ Government approved re-designation of Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Project Implementation Trust Fund (DMICPTF) as National Industrial Corridor Development & Implementation Trust (NICDIT). NICDIT will be apex body to oversee integrated development of all industrial corridors across India. It will implement all 5 proposed industrial corridors, covering 15 States.
11. ▶ Government launched Swachh Swasth Sarvatra initiative to strengthen health centres in 708 open defecation-free (ODF) blocks across country.
12. ▶ Government met 1.5-crore target for LPG connections that were to be added under Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in FY 2016-17.
 -  Since launch of PMUY, LPG coverage across the country increased to 70% from 61% earlier.
 -  Top five States - Uttar Pradesh (46 lakh), West Bengal (19 lakh), Bihar (19 lakh), Madhya Pradesh (17 lakh) and Rajasthan (14 lakh).
13. ▶ Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani launched India's first laser technology-based advanced AVMS RTO check-post at Shamlaji of Aravalli district in Gujarat.
14. ▶ Gujarat Government announced *Biotechnology Policy 2016* to establish Gujarat as a preferred destination for manufacturing of biotechnology products. It aims to take annual turnover of biotechnology products to Rs 15,000 crore from current f Rs 4,500 crore turn over within 3 years.
15. ▶ Gurugram (Haryana) Government will get India's First Caterpillar Train (C-Train).
 -  C-Train is a new concept for urban mass-transit solution. It has been designed by an Indian Railway officer Ashwani Upadhyaya which had won a global award at the MIT in USA.

16. ▶ Haryana Government connected 100 villages in state with Wi-Fi services. It also renamed all common service centres (CSC) and E-disha centres as 'Atal Seva Kendras'.
17. ▶ Haryana Government inaugurated State's First Digital Investigation, Training and Analysis Centre (DIATC) at Gurugram. It is set up in collaboration with National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO).
18. ▶ Haryana Govt signed MoU with Andhra Pradesh to assist it in creating a centralized data base of population to ensure effective implementation of welfare programmes.
19. ▶ Haryana government launched scheme to promote solar water pumping systems among farmers for irrigation purposes. Under this, 90 % cost of installation would be borne by State and Centre government as subsidy. Government will install 3050 solar water pumps of 2 and 5 horse power in state.
20. ▶ Health Ministry and All India Institute Of Medical Science (AIIMS) will set up a National Death Registry encompassing data about deaths and their causes in all hospitals across country. It will help in having better understanding of disease outbreaks and optimizing healthcare facilities.
21. ▶ Indian Air Force (IAF's) Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) at Tuting in Arunachal Pradesh become functional. It will facilitate air connectivity with rest of the country and give a fillip to tourism in state.
22. ▶ Indian Army partnered with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar to set up a research and development (R&D) cell at IIT Gandhinagar campus.
23. ▶ Indian Railways announced 10% rebate for vacant berths after finalisation of reservation charts. Discount will be based on basic fare of last ticket sold.
24. ▶ J& K CM Mehbooba Mufti launched School Management Information System (SMIS), to provide a complete database of all government schools across state.
25. ▶ Karnataka state Road Transport corporation (KSRTC) launched 25 bio-diesel buses, To reduce pollution caused by diesel buses. These eco-friendly buses eject 60-70% less emissions than diesel buses.
26. ▶ Kerala Government approached Central Government for allowing use of antlers (extensions of deer's skull) of spotted deer and sambar of Ayurveda medicines.
27. ▶ Kurukshetra University (Haryan) signed MoU with 3 foreign Universities in field of higher education - Renmin University of China, S. Toraihiro Pavlodar State University Kazakhstan and Pavlodar State Pedagogical Institute Kazakhstan.
28. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Government launched *Nagar Uday Abhiyan* in 378 urban bodies across state, aiming to improve services provided to citizens.
29. ▶ Madhya Pradesh will develop 1100 'climate-smart' villages with an aim to prepare farmers to manage the climate change risks timely and ensure good productivity.
30. ▶ Maharashtra government sanctioned 2 crore rupees for district-level sports complexes, to be disbursed by Sports training department of every district.
31. ▶ Ministry of Water Resources announced roadmap for early completion of 99 identified projects under Prime Minister Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) and Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP).
 - ▶ Prime Minister Krishi Sinchayee Yojana was approved in July 2015 with outlay of 50000 crores, with aim of improving water usage efficiency. It is now aimed to be completed by Dec 2019 (Compared to April 2020 earlier).
 - ▶ Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme was launched in 1996-97 to provide Central Loan Assistance (CLA) to states for executing irrigation projects.
32. ▶ Mori village under in East Godavari district named First Digital Village of Andhra Pradesh.
33. ▶ National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) approved Ken-Betwa inter-linking of rivers (ILR) project.
 - ▶ It received clearance of Cabinet in July 2014 but work could not begin as mandatory clearance from NBWL was stuck due to objections from environmentalists.
34. ▶ Nedumkayam colony in Karulazhi panchayat in Malapuram District of Kerala became first fully-digital tribal colony in country.
35. ▶ Odisha Government named Rs 7600 crore Mega Lift Irrigation Scheme after freedom fighter Parbati Giri.
36. ▶ President Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated 77th session of Indian History Congress (IHC) at University of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram.
37. ▶ Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Sagarmala Development Company's (SDC) office in New Delhi. SDC will identify port-led development projects under Sagarmala programme.
38. ▶ Sikkim Named India's first fully organic state by converting around 75,000 hectares of agricultural land into sustainable cultivation.

39. ▶ Social Networking Service Twitter and ICICI Bank partnered to enable customers with direct online response to their queries and feedback in real-time @ICICIBank_Care.
40. ▶ Uttar Pradesh CM Akhilesh Yadav inaugurated power projects worth over 52,000 crore across, Including 3 thermal power plants with capacity of 33,000 MW were also inaugurated.
41. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav laid foundation stone of Film, Television and Liberal Arts Institute in state capital Lucknow.
42. ▶ World Bank approved nearly Rs 1,560 crores (235 Million USD) for Bihar Rural Roads Project. Project consists constructing 2,500 km of rural roads in Bihar under Mukhya Mantri Gram Sampark Yojana (MMGSY).

[Top](#)

Persons

1. ▶ Actor Salman Khan launched his mobile app - *Being in Touch*.
2. ▶ Coca-Cola India signed Actor Ranveer Singh as brand ambassador for Beverage Brand - *Thums Up*.
3. ▶ Former Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and BJP leader Sunderlal Patwa passed away.
4. ▶ Former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Ratnasiri Wickremanayake passed away.
5. ▶ Hollywood actress Carrie Fisher passed away, known for her role in Star Wars and her autobiography *The Princess Diarist*.
6. ▶ Indian former international table tennis player Prafulla Haldankar passed away.
7. ▶ Tata Motors appointed Actor Akshay Kumar as brand ambassador for commercial vehicle Business Unit.
8. ▶ US Astronomer Vera Rubin passed away. She was known for her pioneering work on galaxy rotation, that led to theory of dark matter.





[Top](#)

Science

1. ▶ A team of international astronomers discovered *Vela super cluster*, biggest super galaxy cluster discovered so far.

[Top](#)

Sports

1. ▶ 2008 French Open champion Ana Ivanovic of Serbia announced retirement from tennis.
2. ▶ 16-year-old shooter From Gujarat, claimed gold medal in junior men's 50M Rifle Prone event at National Shooting Championship in Pune. Notable point is that he equalled score (209.5) of H Junghaenel of Germany who won gold medal in men's 50m Rifle Prone event at Rio Olympics 2016.
3. ▶ Azhar Ali became first Pakistan batsman to score a double century in a Test in Australia.
4. ▶ Cricket Australia (CA) named Indian Cricketer Virat Kohli as captain of board's One-Day International (ODI) Team of Year. Jasprit Bumrah is another Indian named in team.
5. ▶ Cricketer Virat Kohli named India's Sportsperson of the Year 2016 in a poll conducted by India Today. He was followed by Badminton Player PV Sindhu.
6. ▶ Gujarat's Samit Gohel broke 117-year-old record of Highest score in first-class cricket by scoring 359 not out during Ranji Trophy match against Odisha.
7. ▶ Indian Olympic Association Approved Meghalaya as host of 2022 National Games. Upcoming National Games -
 -  2017 - Goa (36th)
 -  2018 - Uttarakhand
 -  2019 - Andhra Pradesh
 -  2022 - Meghalaya
8. ▶ Indian tennis player Somdev Kishore Devvarman announced his retirement.
9. ▶ Kush Bhagat won 3 gold medals in 1st Western Asia Youth Chess Championships in UAE.
10. ▶ Lionel Messi (Argentina) voted as World's Best Playmaker for second consecutive year, as announced by International Federation of Football History & Statistics (IFFHS).
11. ▶ Noted British road and track racing cyclist Bradley Wiggins announced retirement. He has won several international tours including 8 Olympic medals.

12. ▶ Portugese Footballer Cristiano Ronaldo won Best Player of the Year and Goodwill Award at 7th Globe Soccer Awards in Dubai. Besides, Real Madrid Club's president Florentino Pérez, coach Fernando Santos and the Club Itself, won awards in their respective categories.
13. ▶ Rio Olympian Sathish Sivalingam won gold for 6th consecutive year in men's 77 kg category in 69th men's and 32nd women's Senior National Weightlifting Championship in Tamilnadu.
14. ▶ Spanish tennis player Rafael Nadal won 2016 Mubadala World Tennis Championship title in Abu Dhabi (UAE), Defeating David Goffin.
15. ▶ Sports Ministry derecognised Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on issue of nominating scam tainted Suresh Kalmadi and Abhay Chautala as its life presidents. As a matter of protest, Narinder Batra also earlier resigned as associate vice-president of Indian Olympic Association. Suresh Kalmadi had chosen to refuse appointment but Abhay Singh Chautala accepted the Offer.

Top

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