



Current Affairs - September 2017 to February 2018

Month Type



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National

- ▶ Government also asked Odisha government to enhance its rural road construction target under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) from 7,000 km to 10,000 km during the current fiscal year.
- ▶ Election Commission announced that State Assembly elections will be held for 3 North East states in Feb 2018 - Meghalaya and Nagaland (Feb 27) and Tripura (Feb 18).
- ▶ Maharashtra government signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth Approx 35000 Crores Thrust Aircraft Pvt Ltd, company led by Amol Yadav who built six-seater aircraft. Under the MoU signed at *Magnetic Maharashtra* investors' summit, state will give Yadav's firm 157 acres of land in Palghar district.
 - ▶ During the summit, Reliance Industries announced to invest over 60000 crore in Maharashtra in 10 years for establishing an integrated digital industrial area.
 - ▶ Indian Railways signed MOU with Maharashtra government to set up a coach factory in Latur with an investment of INR 600 crores.
- ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government in association with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched 'DASTAK', a door to door campaign to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis (AE) Syndrome and Japanese Encephalitis (JES) disease from state, with tagline *Darwaja khatkhatao, AES aur JE ko bhagao*.
- ▶ 1.5-mw small hydropower plant in Biaras Drass of Kargil became first project to be commissioned under *Prime Minister's Ladakh Renewable Energy Initiative (LREI)*, developed at cost of approx INR 17 crores.
- ▶ 10 Days long Traditional festival of Losar celebrated in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir to mark beginning of New Year in this Himalayan region.
- ▶ 10th Global Forum for Food & Agriculture was held in Berlin (Germany) with theme *Shaping the future of livestock – sustainably, responsibly, efficiently*. India was represented by Minister of State (MoS) for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- ▶ 11 days Dhanu Yatra festival held in Bargarh district of Odisha.
- ▶ 12th International Film Festival on Art and Artist began in Bhubaneswar, organised by Bhubaneswar-based Jatin Das Centre of Art (JDCA).
- ▶ 15th Mumbai International Film Festival (MIFF) for Documentary, Short and Animation films will be held in January – February 2018, to be organized by Films Division of Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (I&B).
- ▶ 171st Araadhanai Music Festival started in Thiruvaiyaru (Tamil Nadu). Thyagaraja is one of Trinities of Carnatic music.
- ▶ 2 day *International Conference on Yoga for Wellness* held in New Delhi. It is 3rd International Conference on Yoga.
- ▶ 2 day Korea festival showcasing Korea's rich art, culture and heritage held by Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO) in Gurugram (Haryana).
- ▶ 20th International Children's Film Festival (ICFFI) will be held in Hyderabad (Telangana) in November 2017. It will be hosted by Telangana government jointly with CFSI (Children's Film Society of India) and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- ▶ 23 Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) will get largest portion of loans on offer under Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) scheme.
 - ▶ RISE Scheme was in Budget 2018-19, with a corpus of INR 100000 crores. Under this, all centrally-funded institutes (CFIs) can borrow funds over next 4 years to expand and build new infrastructure.
 - ▶ Out of allotted funds, INR 25000 crores will be set aside exclusively for 23 IITs.
 - ▶ Central Universities can borrow upto 20000 crores, National Institutes of Technology (NITs) can borrow INR 11300 crores.

- ✎ All financing will be done through the Higher Education Funding Agency (HEFA).
- 16. ▶ 2nd India International Cherry Blossom Festival will be organized in November 2017 in Shillong (Meghalaya).
- 17. ▶ 2nd Iranshah Udvada Utsav, a Parsi cultural festival organized in Gujarat.
- 18. ▶ 2nd edition of 'Nobel Prize Series India 2018' started in Panaji (Goa). It's a month-long Nobel Science Exhibition in which Nobel laureates interact with school children and teachers. Theme of Nobel Prize Series India 2018' is *Science Impacts Life*.
- 19. ▶ 3 Government PSUs - *National Aluminium Company (NALCO)*, *Hindustan Copper (HCL)* and *Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL)* signed MoU to form a joint venture *Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (Kabil)* -
 - ✎ *KABIL* will identify, explore, acquire, develop and process minerals overseas for commercial use and to meet domestic supply needs. It will deal with 12 strategic minerals that are not available in India or available in a very low quantity.
- 20. ▶ 3 Municipal Corporations of Delhi jointly brought out mobile application named *311*, to enhance engagement of citizens in the resolution of grievances and improvement of civic services in city. It aims to empower users by giving them locations of nearby police / metro stations / petrol pumps / toilets / parking / hospitals and other public places.
- 21. ▶ 3 day annual Flamingo Festival held at Pulicat lake and Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary in Sullurpet mandal (Andhra Pradesh). Somewhere between 9,000 to 12,000 Migratory birds from Siberia visit this place during winter season for breeding.
- 22. ▶ 3-Day World Food India 2017 Organized in New Delhi with Theme *Transforming the Food Economy*, Inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi -
 - ✎ Purpose is to transform food economy and double farmers' income by establishing India as a preferred investment destination for global food processing industry. This is first such grand event hosted by India in Food processing sector.
 - ✎ PM Modi launched "Nivesh Bandhu", an Investor Facilitation Portal in Food Sector.
 - ✎ Germany, Japan and Denmark are partner countries to World Food India, while Italy and the Netherlands are the focus countries.
 - ✎ Team of 50 chefs created a world record by cooking 918 kg "khichdi" live at the World Food India 2017 event, led by Noted Chef Sanjeev Kapoor.
 - ✎ MoU worth INR 10, 000 Crore signed between Government and Patanjali Ayurved Limited.
 - ✎ Telangana Government launched its 'Food Processing Policy'
- 23. ▶ 3rd India International Science Festival (IISF-2017) held in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) in October 2017, organised by Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA).
 - ✎ During IISF 2017, New Guinness World Record for Largest Biology Lesson has been created with 1049 students participating.
- 24. ▶ 3rd India International Science Festival (IISF-2017) will be held in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) in October 2017, organised by Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA).
- 25. ▶ 3rd Science Film Festival of India will held in Goa, titled *SCI-FFI Goa*.
- 26. ▶ 3rd Women of India Organic Festival held at Dilli Haat in New Delhi, aimed at promoting women entrepreneurs and farmers in organic sector.
- 27. ▶ 44th Indian Handicrafts and Gifts (IHGF) - Delhi Fair was held at India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida (UP), by Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).
- 28. ▶ 4th India International Science Festival will be held in Lucknow, on dates to be decided later.
- 29. ▶ 5 day annual Konark dance festival started in Odisha, near famous Sun Temple of Konark.
- 30. ▶ 5th biennial State Ranking Survey by hospitality consulting firm Hotelivate and World Travel & Tourism Council-India Initiative (WTTC-II) -
 - ✎ Delhi is the top tourist destination of India. Followed by Maharashtra, Goa, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.
- 31. ▶ 600-year-old Walled City in Gujarat's Ahmedabad has been formally accorded status of India's first World Heritage City by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
 - ✎ Walled city was founded in 15th century by Ahmed Shah of Gujarat Sultanate, on eastern bank of Sabarmati River. It presents rich architectural heritage from sultanate period.
 - ✎ It is India's first city to get World Heritage status, 3rd in Asia after Bhaktapur (Nepal) and Galle (Sri Lanka). India now has total 36 World Heritage Inscriptions 28 cultural, 7 natural and 1 mixed site.
- 32. ▶ 6th Edition of 4-day international textile and apparel fair named *VASTRA* organized in Jaipur (Rajasthan).
- 33. ▶ *Advantage Assam*, Assam's first Global Investors summit held in Guwahati. During this, Assam Government signed MoU with National Building Construction Corporation (India) Limited for setting up a twin tower trade centre in Guwahati with a project cost of INR 1950 crores.
 - ✎ During this, it was decided that Assam State Government would set up *Invest Assam*, as dedicated agency to look into all aspects of business and investment in state.

34. ▶ *Bandhan Tod* app launched by Bihar Government as a unique initiative of Gender Alliance's strategy to end child marriage and dowry in state.
35. ▶ *No helmet, no petrol* campaign came into force in Andhra Pradesh, with CM Chandrababu Naidu allocating INR 10 crores for equipment to implement it.
36. ▶ *Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav (RSM)-2017* held in Ahmadabad (Gujarat), India's 1st World Heritage City.
37. ▶ *Sammakka Saaralamma Maha Jathara* tribal festival began in Eturunagaram (Telangana). Tribal people from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh would participate in this festival.
38. ▶ *TrackChild* and *Khoya-Paya* portals launched by Ministry of Women and Child Development to track missing and found children. Ministry also provides support for children in trouble through the dedicated toll free number - 1098.
39. ▶ MSME Minister of State (Independent Charge) Giriraj Singh launched MSME Delayed Payment Portal *MSME Samadhaan* at URL <http://msefc.msme.gov.in>. It will enable MSME entrepreneurs to directly register their cases relating to delayed payments by Concerned Government Departments.
40. ▶ Thaawarchand Gehlot, Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment launched *Divyang Sarathi* mobile app for easy dissemination of information to 'Divyangjans'.
41. ▶ A MoU was signed between National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation (NHIDCL) and *IL&FS Transportation Networks* for construction of over 14 km long 2-lane bi-directional Zojila Tunnel in Jammu & Kashmir.
 - ▶ This would be India's longest road tunnel and longest bi-directional tunnel in Asia. It will provide all-weather connectivity between Srinagar, Kargil and Leh.
 - ▶ Cost of project is INR 6808 crores and will completed in 7 years.
42. ▶ According to report by green energy market tracker Mercom Capital, India has achieved 20 GW (Giga watt) cumulative solar power capacity, Out of which, utility-scale cumulative installations is 18.4 GW and rooftop solar is 1.6 GW.
 - ▶ By 2022, India is targeting installation of 175GW of renewable energy capacity. It Includes 60GW of large and medium-scale gridconnected solar power projects, 60GW wind, 40GW solar rooftop projects, 10GW of bio-power and 5GW of small hydro.
43. ▶ According to state-wise analysis of state of women entrepreneurship in India by Sheatwork -
 - ▶ Tamil Nadu has highest number of women entrepreneurs in India, followed by Kerala and West Bengal.
44. ▶ Actor Kamal Haasan launched his political party Makkal Needhi Maiam (*People Justice Centre*) in Madurai (Tamil Nadu).
45. ▶ Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) developed *Hortinet* mobile app for farmers to facilitate registration, testing and certification of certain fruits and vegetables.
46. ▶ Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh launched 6 new features in National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform to make it more user-friendly -
 - ▶ MIS dashboard for better analysis
 - ▶ BHIM payment facility by traders
 - ▶ Mobile payment facility by traders
 - ▶ Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile
 - ▶ Integration of farmer's database
 - ▶ e-Learning module.
47. ▶ Airports Authority of India (AAI) allocated Rs 3400 crore for upgradation of airports in North East region.
 - ▶ Assam - INR 1720 crores
 - ▶ Tripura - INR 525 crores
 - ▶ Manipur - INR 800 crores
 - ▶ Arunachal Pradesh - INR 211 crores
 - ▶ Mizoram - INR 60 crores
 - ▶ Nagaland - INR 42 crores
48. ▶ All India Institute of Ayurveda has been set up on a budget of Rs 157 crore as first medical institute under AYUSH ministry to hold National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH) accreditation. Oct 17 also marks 2nd Ayurveda Day of 2017.
 - ▶ Kerala Government will organise an international seminar and Global Ayurveda meet in Kochi in February 2018.
49. ▶ American e-commerce company Amazon opened its largest fulfillment center (FC) in India at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad (Telangana).
50. ▶ An MoU signed by Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya under 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat' programme, to boost cultural ties.

51. ▶ An Olive workshop on *Olive Research and Development in India* organized by Department of Agriculture and Corporation & Farmers Welfare at ICAR-Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture Srinagar.
52. ▶ An important heritage attraction at National Rail Museum (New Delhi) - a 108 years old monorail became operational, that was used by Maharaja of Patiala *Bhupinder Singh*. The Museum takes visitors on an exciting journey into Railway history and heritage and depict their contribution to industrial and economic progress of country.
53. ▶ Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu declared Friday as *Day of Helping Hand*, when he will meet with poor and underprivileged people and hear their grievances and try to resolve them.
54. ▶ Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu laid foundation for *Universal Peace Retreat Center of Prajapita Brahmakumari Eswariya University* in Amravati. It will propagate and teach Raja yoga, Dhyana, Youth development, women empowerment, stress relief activities, child care, positive attitude, life skills and moral values.
55. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government along with the UNESCO Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development (MGIEP) is planning to set up a gaming and e-learning hub, as first of its kind in Asia-Pacific region.
56. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government announced new programme *Jala Siriki Haarati*, aimed at offering prayers to water bodies and to create awareness among public regarding water preservation.
57. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government released *People First* mobile grievance redressal app, to enable people to register complaints about government services and schemes by dialing 1100.
58. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government signed MoU with NITI Aayog to create an online dashboard for the 115 most backward districts of India, under *Transformation of Most Aspirational Districts* Scheme.
 - ▶ Backward districts were selected based on education, health, nutrition, rural road connectivity, rural household electrification, access to potable water, individual toilets, etc.
 - ▶ Jharkhand has the highest number of the listed backward districts.
 - ▶ Note that West Bengal, Kerala and Odisha recently opted out of Central Government's *Transformation of Aspirational Districts* scheme. Bringing down number of districts to 102 (from 115).
59. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Government announced that transgender community can avail government schemes and Andhra Pradesh will be declared ODF by March 2018.
60. ▶ Andhra Pradesh Govt. providing pension of INR 1500 to transgenders (above 18 years age) in state. Among other states, Kerala and Odisha have already introduced pension schemes for transgenders.
61. ▶ Andhra Pradesh assembly passed Kapu reservation bill that will provide Kapu community with 5 % quota in education and employment in state. Kapu community has 27 % population in state. Now total Reservation in AP has passed 50%, triggering need for central govt nod.
62. ▶ Andhra Pradesh government signed MoU with Alphabet Inc's X (Google X) to bring Free Space Optical Communication (FSOC) technology to India, to provide high quality & affordable digital services through internet under state government's Fiber grid project.
 - ▶ This association with X labs to implement FSOC in Andhra Pradesh is first in world to provide wireless internet connection at higher speed of up to 20 Gbps and to a distance of up to 20kms.
63. ▶ Andhra Pradesh government signed MoU with USA-based Hyperloop Transportation Technologies (HTT) to build India's first Hyperloop system, aimed at connecting Amaravati and Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh by covering 35 km in just 5 minutes.
64. ▶ Andhra Pradesh state Government will build 5.4 lakh affordable houses in urban areas of State under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in next 15 months.
65. ▶ Annual Tribal cultural Festival Odisha - Parab-2017, held in Koraput.
66. ▶ Annual multicultural festival *Kala Ghoda Arts Festival* held in South Mumbai (Maharashtra). This year's theme is 'Hara Ghoda' (Green Horse), focusing on sustainability and environment-friendliness.
67. ▶ Annual 'Balijatra' festival held in Odisha on banks of river Mahanadi.
68. ▶ Archaeologists discovered an ancient Buddhist site dating back to 1st century AD, in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh.
69. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh Assembly approved creation of a new district - *Kamle*, as 23rd district of state.
70. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu inaugurated World War II Memorial Museum in Changlang district. It is located adjacent to historic Stilwell Road and is expected to boost tourist inflow especially from Southeast Asian countries.
71. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh became 2nd Northeast state (after sikkim) to be officially declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). Overall, it is 5th to be declared ODF State, after Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Haryana.
72. ▶ Arunachal Pradesh would get its first (and India's 2nd) Film and Television Institute (FTII). First Film and Television Institute of India of India was set up in Pune in 1960.
73. ▶ As per *Rise of the Millennials: India's Most Valuable Celebrity Brands* report by Duff & Phelps -

- ▶ Cricketer Virat Kohli named as India's top-ranking celebrity brand in 2017, with brand value of \$144 million. He replaced actor Shah Rukh Khan.
- 74. ▶ As per Airpocalypse II report by environmental Non-governmental organization (NGO) Greenpeace India -
 - ▶ Airpocalypse II analysed PM10 (*inhalable particles, with diameters that are generally 10 micrometers and smaller*) annual averages for 280 cities monitored by Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) under its national air quality monitoring programme. Highlights of Airpocalypse II -
 - ▶ 47% of population in India is living in areas where there is no air quality monitoring.
 - ▶ Out of 63 crore million people living in 280 cities where air quality is monitored by CPCB, 55 crore live in areas exceeding national safe standards for PM10. CPCB has set 60 micrograms per cubic metres PM10 as safe standard.
 - ▶ Top 5 Polluted Cities
 - ▶ Delhi - 290
 - ▶ Faridabad (Haryana) - 272
 - ▶ Bhiwadi (Rajasthan) - 262
 - ▶ Patna (Bihar) - 261
 - ▶ Dehradun, (Uttarakhand) - 238
 - ▶ Least Polluted Cities
 - ▶ Hassan (Karnataka) - 26
 - ▶ Pathanamthitta (Kerala) - 26
 - ▶ Nongstoin (Meghalaya) - 26
 - ▶ Darjeeling (West Bengal) - 29
 - ▶ Tura (Meghalaya) - 30
- 75. ▶ As per Central Government's draft on Central Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Rules 2017, only BS-VI compliant vehicles will be registered after 30th June, 2020. It is in line with earlier order by Central Government for implementation of Bharat Standard-VI compliant cleaner transport fuels across India by April 2020 and in Delhi by April 2018.
- 76. ▶ As per Data by Census Directorate, 42 Indian languages are heading towards extinction as only few thousand people speak them.
 - ▶ There are total 22 scheduled languages and 100 non-scheduled languages in India, spoken by one lakh or more people.
 - ▶ Andaman and Nicobar Islands has most Number of Languages headed towards Extinction (11 Languages), followed by Manipur (11).
- 77. ▶ As per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Uttar Pradesh is at top in number of cyber crimes in India, followed by Maharashtra. 12,317 cases of cybercrimes were reported in India in 2016, annual increase of over 6 %.
- 78. ▶ As per an agreement between Uttar Pradesh and South Korea Government, *Ayodhya Mahotsav* would be held in Seoul and Gimhe cities of South Korea in 2018, depicting Its cultural heritage. In return, a 'Korea Festival' will be held in Lucknow and Ayodhya in 2018.
- 79. ▶ As per data from Central Pollution Control Board -
 - ▶ Varanasi (UP) is most polluted Indian city among 42 cities, with Air Quality Index (AQI) of 491 on 500-point scale.
 - ▶ Gurugram (Haryana) is 2nd most polluted with an AQI of 480. Delhi at 468, Lucknow at 462 and Kanpur at 461.
- 80. ▶ As per report by Coeus Age Consulting -
 - ▶ Madhya Pradesh emerged as top state in terms of digital initiatives with score of 100.1, followed by Maharashtra (99.9) and Andhra Pradesh (99.8).
- 81. ▶ As per reports, Parali I island (Lakshadweep) has disappeared due to coastal erosion and another four such islands in Lakshadweep sea are shrinking fast.
- 82. ▶ Assam Assembly will introduce digital budget in its upcoming session, instead of conventional printed booklet. Apart from digital budget, new features to be introduced will be *Members Hour (tuesday)*, *a year-long calendar*, *Best Legislator Award*, *formation of Pay Commission for MLAs' salary and fellowships for research work on history of Assembly*.
- 83. ▶ Assam Government extended term of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) and declared entire state a Disturbed Area for six more months. This is first time that a state government has extended AFSPA and Disturbed Area provision on its own. Previously, AFSPA provisions were always extended by Central Government.
- 84. ▶ Assam Government released a postage stamp in memory of eminent football player Talimeren Ao.
- 85. ▶ Assam Government rolled out 647 schemes entailing an investment of Rs 24.57 crore for development of world's largest river island Majuli.
 - ▶ Assam Government also launched a web portal *Assam Darpan* where details of government schemes and projects would be available to the people. URL - <https://as.cmdashboard.nic.in>

86. ▶ Assam Govt. launched *Chah Bagichar Dhan Puraskar Mela 2017-18*, that enables INR 2500 to be credited to accounts of people belonging to tea community, who opened bank accounts during demonetisation.
87. ▶ Assam Govt. launched skill development training centres across state, to carry forward central Govt.'s vision for skilling the youth of nation through 'Skill India' programme.
88. ▶ Assam State Government and Isha Foundation signed MOU for rejuvenation and conservation of rivers. Isha Foundation is led by spiritual leader Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev.
89. ▶ Assam Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) launched Majuli Sustainable Tourism Development Project (MSTDP) to encourage carbon-free tourism experience in the country's largest river island, Majuli. Objective is to create an environmental protocol for tourism industry in the island.
 - ▶ Assam government also recently announced Majuli as *first carbon neutral district* in India.
90. ▶ Assam become 4th state (1st in North East) to issue Right of Way (RoW) guidelines for telecom service providers.
 - ▶ A legal right, established by usage or grant is referred to as Right of Way (RoW).
 - ▶ These guidelines will regulate establishment of underground and overground telecom infrastructure in Assam.
91. ▶ Assam government has set up a Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Cell for implementation of DBT across various schemes, to coordinate efforts at the state level in taking DBT initiative forward.
92. ▶ Assam government signed MoU with Google India to take Internet connectivity to remote areas. Google will provide Internet connection to 26,000 villages and 1,500 tea garden areas to increase digital literacy. Gujarat government also signed MoU with Google for 'Digital Gujarat' movement.
93. ▶ Assam government will observe September 22 as Rhino Day (*On World Rhino Day*) to generate public awareness on protection of one-horned rhinoceros (pachyderm).
94. ▶ Assam government will provide skill development training to around 30,000 surrendered militants and over 24000 Assamese youth under Prime Minister Kaushal Vikas Yojna.
95. ▶ Assam government would celebrate 'Lachit Divas' at various state capitals in India from 2018, to promote ideals of Lachit Borphukan – the legendary general of Assam's history.
 - ▶ Lachit Borphukan was a commander and Borphukan in Ahom kingdom known for his leadership in the 1671 Battle of Saraighat that thwarted a drawn-out attempt by Mughal forces under the command of Ramsingh I to take back Kamrup.
96. ▶ Assam passed Industrial Disputes (Assam Amendment) Bill 2017 regarding lay off of employees. It enables employers to lay off up to 300 employees without prior permission from government. Government also increased compensation of a labourer from 15 days salary to up to 60 days salary, in case of lay off.
97. ▶ Assam state Assembly passed PRANAM(Parental Responsibility And Norms for Accountability and Monitoring) bill, making it mandatory for state government employees to take care of their parents and needy siblings. Assam is the first state to approve such a legislation. Government will deduct 10-15 % of salary of employee and give it to the parents for their survival, if not taken care by employee.
98. ▶ Assam state government will set up a well-equipped skill city with a capacity of 10000 training seats in state, to give skill development training to 30000 former militants as announced earlier. Assam government will upgrade employment exchanges to Modern Career Centres.
99. ▶ Assam will host its first Global Investors Summit in Guwahati in February 2018, to attract more investments.
 - ▶ State government of Assam has also launched a new Tourism policy, to increase tourist inflow in state, effective from January 2018 to December 2022.
 - ▶ Assam Government also launched a new Information Technology (IT) Policy under which IT Startups will be provided financial support ranging 1.2 Lakh to 2.5 Lakh Per employee depending on type of operations and headcount.
100. ▶ BSE Institute Limited (subsidiary of BSE) signed MOU with DLT Labs to set up the India's first state-of-the-art Block Chain Lab in Mumbai. It aims to provide knowledge driven, in class education and training in the field of financial technology, with a special emphasis on Block Chain.
101. ▶ Bangalore International Airport (Kempegowda International Airport) will be India's first airport to have complete Aadhaar-enabled entry and biometric boarding system by December 2018.
102. ▶ Bengal Global Business Summit 2018 held in Kolkata with *Japan, Italy, Poland, Germany, Republic of Korea, Czech Republic, Great Britain, France and UAE* as Partner countries and theme *Bengal Means Business*.
103. ▶ Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) bagged order worth INR 560 crores from National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) for setting up flue gas desulphurisation (FGD) system at National Capital Power Station (capacity 2×490 MW) at Dadri in Uttar Pradesh, aimed at controlling various harmful emissions.

104. ▶ Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) completed work on 4000 MW Yadadri supercritical thermal power project of Telangana State Power Generation Corporation, valued at approx INR 20,400 crores. It is highest value order ever placed in power sector in India.
105. ▶ Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) signed MoU with Chinese gear maker ZTE to work on Pre5G and 5G wireless systems to make a virtual network architecture of a 5G ecosystem for research and commercialization in India.
 - ▶ BSNL also signed MOU with Aeris Communications to provide packaged Internet of Things (IoT) solutions and services to small, medium businesses and public sector undertakings (PSUs) in India.
106. ▶ Bhogali Bihu harvest festival, also called as *Magh Bihu* festival began in Assam.
107. ▶ Bihar Government approved *Safe City Surveillance* scheme for curbing eve-teasing, harassment and other crimes against women at public places.
108. ▶ Bihar Government approved reservation for persons with disabilities in government jobs and educational institutions. Cabinet also approved establishment of a state advisory board for empowerment of 'Divyangjan' as envisaged in Act.
109. ▶ Bihar Government banned sale of loose cigarettes, to be deterrent to kids and youngsters who start smoking by buying loose cigarettes.
110. ▶ Bihar Government will set up *State Ayush Society* to promote usage of alternative medicine in state.
111. ▶ Bikaner camel festival celebrated in Rajasthan to honour camels.
112. ▶ Border Roads Organisation (BRO) constructed world's highest motorable road in cold desert of Ladakh, at over 19000 Feet and 54 KM Length, under *Project Himank*. It will boost troop movement along Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern sector.
113. ▶ Brand Trust Report India Study 2017 ranked Patanjali as India's most trusted Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brand and most attractive brand.
114. ▶ Business Info Provider *Dun & Bradstreet* released *Port Logistics: Issues & Challenges in India* report, looking into various roadblocks and suggests policy recommendations to resolve challenges across ports in India.
 - ▶ Report proposes 60 policy measures to strengthen ports sector, that represents bulk of India's merchandise trade.
 - ▶ Report introduces a 'Port Performance Index' to benchmark performance of various ports by combining qualitative perception of stakeholders with quantitative outcome based data. It covers 13 ports that handle around 67 % of India's maritime trade.
 - ▶ Out of 13 major ports, 3 ports (*Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT)*, *Kamarajar Port*, *Visakhapatnam Port*) received 'Good' score.
115. ▶ Cab Aggregator Ola and Assam Government signed MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service in Guwahati. River taxis will be machine-operated boats and users will be able to book rides through Ola app.
116. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ Establishment of National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) under GST, to ensure that benefits of the reduction in GST rates on goods or services are passed on to the ultimate consumers by way of a reduction in prices. It has been done soon after recent sharp reduction in the GST rates of a large number of items of mass consumption.
 - ▶ Agreement with Belarus on Scientific and Technological Cooperation.
 - ▶ MOU with Poland for promotion of Civil Aviation Cooperation.
 - ▶ CCEA approved continuation of sub schemes Under ICDS (Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) till Nov 30, 2018 with outlay of over INR 41,000 crores. Approved Schemes include -
 - ▶ Anganwadi Services
 - ▶ Scheme for Adolescent Girls
 - ▶ Child Protection Services
 - ▶ National Crèche Scheme
 - ▶ Cabinet approved increase in carpet area of houses eligible for interest subsidy under Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) for Middle Income Group (MIG) under Pradhan Mantri AwasYojana (Urban).
 - ▶ Increasing carpet area in MIG I category of CLSS from existing 90 sq.m. to up to 120 sq.m. Under MIG-I, 4% interest subsidy is provided to beneficiaries with annual income between 6 - 12 lakh on loan of up to Rs 9 lakh.
 - ▶ Increasing carpet area in MIG II category of CLSS from 110 sq.m. to 150 sq.m. Under MIG-II, beneficiaries with annual income 12 - 18 lakh get an interest subsidy of 3% on loan of up to Rs 12 lakh.
117. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -
 - ▶ MoU with Philippines on agriculture and related fields.
 - ▶ MOU with Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and Kyrgyzstan for Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income.
 - ▶ Joint Interpretative Declaration with Colombia regarding Agreement for Promotion and Protection of Investments.
 - ▶ Appointment of Second National Judicial Pay Commission (SNJPC) for Subordinate Judiciary in country, under J.P.Venkatrama Reddi.

- Following proposals of Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion are approved -
 - Development of Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre at Dwarka (Delhi) at an estimated cost of INR 25703 crore by 2025.
 - Incorporation of a new Government company as a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for implementation of project with 100% equity from Government through Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion.
 - Creation of National Testing Agency (NTA) as a Society registered under *Indian Societies Registration Act 1860* as a premier testing organization to conduct entrance examinations for higher educational institutions. NTA will be given a one-time grant of 25 crores from Government and will be financially self-sustainable after 1st year.
 - Continuation of National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) with Outlay INR 23050 crores approved for programme for 14th Finance Commission (FFC) period 2017-18 to 2019-20.
 - 14th Finance Commission is headed by Y V Reddy.
 - Government revised House Building Advance (HBA) rules for Central Government Employees -
 - Total amount of advance that a central government employee can borrow has been revised up to 34 months of basic pay (max 25 lakhs), compared to earlier limit of INR 7.50 lakhs.
 - Amount for expansion of house is revised to max INR 10 lakhs or 34 months of basic pay (whichever is least), compared to earlier limit of INR 1.80 lakhs.

118. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- Philippines on co-operation and mutual assistance in customs matters.
- India's Membership for European Bank for Reconstruction & Development.
- India - Russia Agreement on cooperation in combating terrorism and organized crime.
- Continuation of the scheme on Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) for another 3 years (FYs 2017-18 to 2019-20), providing aid of INR 18 crore to Institute to make it self-sustainable by end of 2019-20.
- Govt approved setting up of 15th Finance Commission Under Article 280 (1) of Constitution, to be enacted from 01-04-2020. Currently, 14th finance commission (headed by Y V Reddy) is active.
- Schemes Expansion (Total Outlay of 3636.85 Crores) -
 - Expansion of schemes of Ministry of Women and Child Development under Umbrella Scheme *Mission for Protection and Empowerment for Women*, with outlay of Over 3500 Crores between 2017-18 to 2019-20.
 - New Scheme *Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra* has been approved, which will empower rural women through community participation to create an environment in which they realize their full potential, through Mahila shakti kendras in 115 backward districts.
 - Expansion under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao to all 640 Districts, based on successful implementation in 161 districts, for a pan India coverage from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

119. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- MoU with Cuba and Italy for cooperation in field of Health and Medicine.
- Establishing India's First National Rail and Transportation University at Vadodara, to skill its human resources and build capability.
- New skill development scheme named *Scheme for Capacity Building in Textile Sector (SCBTS)*, covering entire value chain of the textile sector excluding Spinning & Weaving in organized Sector. It has outlay of INR 1300 crores from 2017-18 to 2019-20. It aims to provide demand driven, placement oriented skilling programme to incentivize the efforts of industry in creating jobs in organized textile and related sectors.
- MoU with Myanmar for developing Myanmar's Rakhine state. India will take up building prefabricated housing in Rakhine State, to meet immediate needs of returning people. India has pledged \$25 Million for this purpose.
- Railways Ministry planned to make all stations 100% LED lit by March 2018.
- Extension of term of Commission to examine issue of sub-categorization of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) by 12 weeks (upto 2 April, 2018). Commission is headed by G. Rohini.
- Auction of 683 private FM radio frequencies in 236 cities across country under Phase III of FM radio privatization. It aims at expanding FM reach in remote cities and generate over 10,000 jobs.

120. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- MoU with Italy for cooperation in Agriculture and Phytosanitary issues.
- Investment cooperation and facilitation treaty with Brazil.

121. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

- Cooperation Agreement with Morocco to develop long-term cooperation in railways.
- Agreement with Israel on Film Co-production.

- Continuation of Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) till term of 14th Finance Commission (31-03-2020). It will entail total allocation of INR 11850 crores over 3 years, with additional annual allocation of 5 crore for monitoring through independent agency(ies) and for capacity building/training to State/District officials.

MOUs -

- With Canada for cooperation in Science & Technology.

124. ▶ Cabinet Approvals on Feb 7, 2018 -

- MoU with Tunisia for cooperation on Youth matters.
- Protocol amending Agreement between with China for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion.
- MOU with USA on Law Enforcement Training.
- MoU with UK on Cooperation in Skill Development, Vocational Education and Training.
- MoU for Secondment Programme with Australia.
- Ratification of Minamata Convention on Mercury, enabling India to become a Party of Convention. It gives flexibility for continued use of mercury-based products and processes involving mercury compound up to 2025. Minamata Convention was signed in October 2013 in Kumamoto (Japan), aimed to protect human health and environment from anthropogenic emissions and releases of mercury and mercury compounds.
- Government approved 2nd round of Discovered Small Field (DSF) auctions under Discovered Small Field Policy, to offer total 60 unmonetized discoveries with an estimated 194.65 Million Metric tonnes of oil.
 - Of these, 22 fields belong to Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), 5 to Oil India Limited (OIL), 12 are relinquished discovered fields from New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP) blocks, and 21 fields that did not receive any investor interest in first round of DSF.
- Amendment to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act 2006 for classifying MSMEs from current *investment in plant and machinery* criteria to *annual turnover* criteria. It aims at encouraging ease of doing business, make MSME classification norms growth oriented and align them to new indirect tax regime revolving around Goods & Services Tax (GST). The amendment also empowers Central Government to vary turnover limits. New Classification Criteria -
 - Micro - It will be unit with annual turnover under INR 5 crores.
 - Small - It will be unit with annual turnover Between 5 - 75 crores.
 - Medium - It will be unit with annual turnover Between 75 - 250 crores.

125. ▶ Cabinet Approvals -

National -

- Creation of one circle office of Commissioner of Metro Railway Safety (CMRS) for carrying out functions of Commission of Metro Railway Safety.












Economy -

- Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) applicable on all debit card/BHIM UPI/ Aadhaar enabled Payment System (AePS) transactions upto and including a value of 2000 will be borne by Government for 2 years starting 1st January 2018, by reimbursing it to banks.
- Continuation of *Non Lapsable Central Pool of Resources* (NLCPR) scheme with funding pattern of 90:10 till March 2020 with outlay of 5300 crores. It would enable completion of ongoing projects.
- New Central Scheme *North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme* (NESIDS) also approved from 2017-18 with 100% funding from Central Government to fill up gaps in creation of infrastructure in specified sectors till March 2020. NESIDS will strengthen health care, education facilities, tourism and employment opportunities in region.
- Approved special package for employment generation in leather and footwear sector, involving implementation of Central Scheme *Indian Footwear, Leather & Accessories Development Programme* with expenditure of INR 2600 Crores from 2017-18 to 2019-20.
- Continuation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Ayush Mission (NAM) from 01-04-2017 to 31-03-2020 with outlay of 2400 crores over 3 year period.
- Second Financial Restructuring of Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) - Conversion of Non-Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares (RPS) amounting INR 4079 crores held by President of India, into Compulsorily Convertible Non-Cumulative Preference Shares (CCPS). It will raise net worth of KRCL.
- Capital Investment Subsidy of Rs.264.67 crore to four industrial units located in North Eastern Region (NER) including Sikkim, under Central Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme (CCISS) 2007 of North East Industrial Investment and Promotion Policy (NEIIPP).

 Foreign -

 MOU with Colombia in field of agriculture and fisheries.

 Agreement with UNESCO on establishment of International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography in Hyderabad.

126. ▶ Cabinet Committee of Security (CCS) approved implementation of umbrella scheme of Modernisation of Police Forces (MPF) for 2017 - 2020 It is biggest ever internal security scheme in country and has financial outlay of INR 25,060 crore out of which Central Government share will be Rs.18,636 crore and states' share will be Rs.6,424 crores.
127. ▶ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved 2 Schemes - Skills Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) and Skill Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) to boost Skill India Mission.
-  SANKALP is INR 4455 crores central scheme (with 3300 crore loan from World Bank). SANKALP envisages setting up of over 50 Trainers and Assessors academies with self-sustainable models. It will leverage institutions for training the trainers in both long & short term VET thereby bringing about convergence. It will develop a skilling ecosystem that will support the country's rise in the Ease of Doing Business index.
-  STRIVE is a INR 2200 crore central scheme with half of outlay as World bank loan assistance. STRIVE will develop mechanism for delivering quality skill development training by strengthening institutions - State Skill Development Missions (SSDMs), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), Sector Skill Councils, ITIs and National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) etc.
-  Both these schemes are being implemented to meet need for a national architecture for promoting convergence, ensuring effective governance and regulation of skill training and catalysing industry efforts in vocational training space.
128. ▶ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved surveying 48,243 Line Kilometer (LKM) 2D seismic data for appraisal of Indian sedimentary basins where limited data is available.
-  Sedimentary basin is a low area in the Earth's crust, of tectonic origin, in which sediments accumulate. India has total 26 sedimentary basins covering area of 3.14 Million Sq Km (MSK). 48% of total sedimentary basin area (about 1.502 MSK) does not have adequate geo-scientific data.
-  project will be implemented by Oil India Limited (OIL) and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and is to be completed by 2019-20.
129. ▶ Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) extended period Special Industry Initiative for J&K" (SII J&K)- Udaan Scheme till December 2018. UDAAN Scheme is national integration scheme with goal to mainstream J&K youth with rest of country.
130. ▶ Cabinet has Introducing Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill 2018 in Parliament, to address issue of human trafficking.
-  Deals with confidentiality of victims and witnesses and complainants.
-  Time bound trial and repatriation of the victims, within 1 year from taking into cognizance.
-  Creates Rehabilitation Fund for the first time, to be used for well-being of victim including education, skill development, health care and psychological support, legal aid, accommodation etc.
-  Creates dedicated institutional mechanisms at District, State and Central level.
-  Punishment prescribed under it ranges from rigorous minimum 10 years to life and fine not less than Rs. 1 lakh.
131. ▶ Cell for IPR Promotions & Management (CIPAM) under Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) launched social media campaign to promote Indian Geographical Indications (GIs) with Has tag #LetsTalkIP, to make more people aware about importance of Intellectual Property Rights.
-  A Geographical Indication is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin., eg. Darjeeling Tea, Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Blue Pottery of Jaipur etc. GIs are important as they are an integral part of India's rich culture and collective intellectual heritage.
132. ▶ Central Government approved assistance of INR 10,000 crores to fund 107 irrigation projects in drought-hit Vidarbha and Maratha regions of Maharashtra.
133. ▶ Central Government approved combined development of phase II and phase III of Harohalli industrial zone in Ramnagara district of Karnataka at cost of INR 1,561 crores.It is expected to generate 23,500 jobs.
134. ▶ Central Government approved establishment of Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) at Raichur (Karnataka), as 2nd IIIT in Karnataka after one in Dharwad.
135. ▶ Central Government approved state Logo designed by West Bengal Government, highlighting the "Biswa Bangla" theme with Ashoka Pillars.
136. ▶ Central Government disapproved execution Karnataka Government's *Mukhya Mantri Anila Bhagya Yojane* that promises free LPG gas connections for Below Poverty Line families.

- ▶ Central Govt wants State Govt to execute it through oil marketing companies (OMCs), unlikely current practice of directly going through the distributors' network.
- 137. ▶ Central Government received 260 applications from foreign scientists for Visiting Advanced Joint Research (VAJRA) Faculty scheme. Out of these, 70 will be shortlisted for this year.
 - ▶ Visiting Advanced Joint Research (VAJRA) Faculty scheme is a project by Department of Science and Technology and intends to select 1,000 scientists every year at Public funded academic institutions and national laboratories.
 - ▶ Selected scientists will co-guide and mentor students as well as will help in developing collaborative programmes.
 - ▶ Scientists selected under VAJRA will be paid US \$15,000 in first month and US \$10,000 per month for next 2 months. They will work in India for a minimum of a month and a maximum of three months.
- 138. ▶ Central Government sanctioned INR 275 crores for establishing a Global Centre for Security and Counter-Terrorism in Jaipur (Rajasthan).
- 139. ▶ Central Government sanctioned INR 75 crore for setting up Meghalaya's First Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) bottling plant, with annual capacity of 13000 metric tonnes.
- 140. ▶ Central Government sanctioned a special package to strengthen security in 3 eastern districts of Arunachal Pradesh - Tirap, Changlang and Longding.
- 141. ▶ Central Government will set up 562 more Ekalavya Model Residential School (EMRS) in tribal areas, aimed at providing best quality education to tribal children in their own environment. Currently, 190 EMRSs are operational, with approx 56000 tribal students enrolled.
- 142. ▶ Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) signed Agreement with Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru for Development of ground water flow models and preparation of aquifer management plans for parts of Karnataka.
- 143. ▶ Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) joined hands with ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) to identify Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ), an area in sea where fishes are seen in abundance, under project *Samudra*. It is aimed at helping fishermen easily locate fish without wasting time and fuel.
- 144. ▶ Central Water Commission (CWC) has signed MoUs with IIT Roorkee and MNNIT Allahabad to support dam rehabilitation efforts of various implementing agencies and CWC.
- 145. ▶ Chandigarh Administration launched smart city cards, in collaboration with Bank of India. It can be used to make payments for various government utilities and at retail merchants, fuel stations. It will also be a valid ID Proof.
- 146. ▶ Chennai (Tamil Nadu) became Third Indian City to be Included United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO's) Creative Cities Network for Contribution in Music.
 - ▶ Now, UNESCO Creative Cities Network has gone up to 180 cities in 72 countries.
 - ▶ India's Jaipur (added as City of Music) and Varanasi (City of Crafts and Folk Art) were added in 2016.
- 147. ▶ Chennai Metro Rail Limited introduced free bicycle ride scheme for its customers to provide 100-hours of bicycle ride free of cost every month. There are 10 cycles in each of the stations and people can gain access to them at any time of the day.
- 148. ▶ Chhatrapati Shivaji International airport (Mumbai) created new world record for single-runway operations by handling 980 arrivals and take-offs in 24 hours. It has thus become world's busiest single-runway airport.
- 149. ▶ Chhattisgarh CM Raman Singh launched *Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Shram Anna Sahayata Yojna*, under which nutritious meal will be provided to laborers at price of INR 5.
- 150. ▶ Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board (CGECB) ordered closure of 1200 MW thermal power plant of Bharat Aluminium Company Limited (BALCO) in Korba district, due to ash slurry water from damaged ash dam polluting water of a Belgiri nullah passing near plant that drains into Hasdeo river.
- 151. ▶ Chhattisgarh Government flagged-off 'Cancer diagnosis Ambulance', fitted with ultra-advanced equipment to detect cancer. Patients will be treated free-of-cost.
- 152. ▶ Chhattisgarh Government imposed ban on bursting of firecrackers in six of its cities - Raipur, Bilaspur, Bhilai, Durg, Raigarh and Korba.
- 153. ▶ Chhattisgarh High Court asked all trial courts in state to obtain Aadhaar Cards of accused persons and sureties before issuing release warrant of a prisoner/accused, to curb rampant practice of obtaining bail on the basis of forged revenue papers or by impersonating real surety.
- 154. ▶ Chhattisgarh High Court ordered state government to grant books and uniform instead of cash to Below Poverty Line (BPL) students studying in private schools under Right to education, in place of current arrangement of providing INR 650 per year as cash grant.
- 155. ▶ Chhattisgarh become first state to award citizenship to Minority Hindus from Other nations, as it offered citizenship to 51 Hindu families who had migrated from Pakistan several years ago and have been living on outskirts of Raipur.
- 156. ▶ Chhattisgarh government banned use of chlorinated plastic and Polyvinyl Chloride -PVC, to conserve and improve environment.
- 157. ▶ Coffee output in India stayed at record 3.50 lakh tonnes in 2017-18, compared to 3.12 lakh tonnes in 2016-17.

158. ▶ Committee of Governors submitted report titled *Rajyapal –Vikas Ke Rajdoot: Catalytic Role of Governors as Agents for Change in Society* to President Ram Nath Kovind. Committee of Governors was Formed in October 2017 during 48th Conference of Governors in New Delhi.
159. ▶ Committee set up for technical and safety standards of India's first pod taxi project or Personal Rapid Transit (PRT) invited fresh bids for strictest safety standards on lines of those prescribed in USA. It is meant for a 12.3-km stretch from Delhi-Haryana border on NH 8.
- ▶ PRT or pod taxi is an advanced public transport using automated electric pod cars to provide taxi-like demand responsive feeder and shuttle services for small groups of travellers.
160. ▶ Competition Commission of India (CCI) penalized Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for INR 52 Crores for Anti-Competitive conduct through abusing dominant position in sport for imposing restriction that deny access to market for organization of Professional Domestic Cricket League/ Events.
161. ▶ Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) signed MoU with Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for designating Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow (CSIR-CIMAP) as Coordinating Centre on Medicinal Plants.
162. ▶ Dabur India has tied up with e-commerce Firm Amazon for online Ayurveda marketplace which will house all ayurvedic brands and products of country.
163. ▶ Delhi Government approved setting up Delhi Village Development Board (DVDB) for civic works in 300 rural and urban villages of Delhi. It will subsume Delhi Rural Development Board (DRDB) that carried related works so far.
164. ▶ Delhi Government launched a mobile application through which Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Other Backward Classes, minorities, and handicapped persons can apply for employment loans. Action will be taken against officers who fail to take action on loan requests in stipulated time.
165. ▶ Delhi Govt. launched a common card for rides on public buses and metro, becoming first Indian city to have such common mobility card.
166. ▶ Delhi government and Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) launched *Clean Air Campaign*, to focus on improvement of air quality, with 70 teams formed as a part of the campaign.
167. ▶ Delhi government launched *Mission Buniyaad* for improving learning skills of children studying in state and municipal-run schools. It will run from April to June for Class 3 to 5 in MCD schools and for Class 6 to 8 in government's schools. Children will undergo a reading level assessment based on which they will be enrolled in specialised *Mission Buniyaad* classes.
168. ▶ Delhi government will launch accident victim policy which will cover all hospital expenses of victims of road accidents, acid attacks or burns. There is no upper limit on the cost of treatment and all victims irrespective of residence, and even foreigners will get free treatment in any Delhi hospital, if accident happens in Delhi.
169. ▶ Department of Economic Affairs (Finance Ministry) signed loan agreement worth US \$ 375 million with World bank for Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP), JMVP for capacity augmentation of navigation on National Waterway-1(River Ganga) from Varanasi to Haldia.
- ▶ Total project cost is \$800 Million and is expected to be completed by March 2023. It will enable commercial navigation of vessels of capacity 1500-2,000 tons on NW-I and will lead to generation of upto 84000 jobs in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal.
170. ▶ Department of Heavy Industries (*Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises*) allowed Karnataka government to purchase electric vehicles (EVs) under FAME India scheme, at maximum of 60% subsidy.
- ▶ Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of (Hybrid &) Electric Vehicles (FAME) India was launched in 2015 under National Electric Mobility Mission (NEMM) aims at promoting eco-friendly vehicles in the country.
171. ▶ Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) signed agreement with Anna University to establish India's 2nd Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) at Centre for Intellectual Property Rights (CIPR) in Anna University, Under World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) TISC program.
- ▶ TISC aims to to stimulate a dynamic and balanced Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) system in India to foster creativity and innovation, thereby promoting entrepreneurship and enhancing social, economic and cultural development.
 - ▶ India's First Technology and Innovation Support Center (TISC) has been set up at Patent Information Centre (Punjab).
172. ▶ Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) provided quota to people with autism, mental illnesses, intellectual disability and victims of acid attacks in Central government jobs. In direct recruitment, 4% of vacancies (up from existing 3%) in groups A, B and C will be reserved for people with over 40% specified disability.
173. ▶ Department of Telecom (DoT) and IIT Chennai, will jointly set up a development centre for 5G technologies. It will help provide applications like Internet of Things and Machine-to-Machine internet. A similar tie up had already been made between Ericsson and IIT Delhi.
174. ▶ Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) allowed Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) manufactured *Dornier 228* for civilian flights, the 19-seater aircraft that was till now used only by defence forces. It became first 'Made in India' plane to be used for commercial flights.

175. ▶ Eastern Railways brought into service, the first rake of upgraded Sealdah – New Delhi ‘Swarna’ Rajdhani, under *Project ‘Swarna’* that gives a free hand to Zonal Railways to develop and create aesthetic and passenger friendly coach interiors on running rakes of Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains.
176. ▶ Energy Efficiency Services Ltd (EESL) will procure 10,000 electric vehicles (EVs) from Tata Motors, as world’s largest single electric vehicle procurement. Tata Motors quoted lowest price of Rs 10.16 lakh exclusive of GST in the competitive bidding. Procurement will be in Phases - 500 e-cars in first phase in November 2017 and remaining 9,500 EVs in second phase.
177. ▶ Environment Minister Harshvardhan launched *Mihir*, a 2.8 PetaFlops capacity high-performance computer system in Noida (UP). It will help Meteorological department to predict climate based calamities and issue warnings for fishermen.
178. ▶ Environment Ministry accorded environmental clearance for Kaleshwaram Irrigation Project in Telangana.
- ▶ Project is estimated to cost Approx INR 80499 crores and is proposed to be completed in three years.
 - ▶ Project aims to provide drinking water facility for Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Submergence area is estimated to be about 13706 hectares.
179. ▶ External Affairs Ministry announced that Passports will no longer serve as a valid proof of address as Its last page will not printed from now onwards, that includes Names of father / guardian, and address.
- ▶ Additionally, Passport holders with ECR (Emigration Check Required) status would be issued a passport with orange passport jacket and those with non-ECR status would continue to get a blue passport. As per Govt., This is meant to identify less educated (under 10th) labourers and prevent them from exploitation abroad.
 - ▶ Note that Indian passports have a blue cover, diplomatic and official passports have white and red jackets, respectively. Applicants who haven’t cleared 10th standard are given a passport with ECR category (now with orange jackets).
180. ▶ FSSAI CEO Pawan Kumar Agarwal inaugurated Nestle Food Safety Institute in Manesar (Gurugram), as first such institute in India. Nestle already runs a similar Institute each in China and Lausanne, Switzerland.
181. ▶ FY 2017 - 18 Winter Session passed Bills -
- ▶ Lok Sabha Passed Central Road Fund (Amendment) Bill 2017, that seeks to amend Central Road Fund Act 2000.
 - ▶ Under CRF Act 2000, cess levied and collected on high speed petrol and diesel is distributed for development of rural roads, national highways, railways, state roads and border area roads.
 - ▶ CRF (Amendment) Bill 2017 seeks to allocate 2.5 % of funds collected to accelerate development and maintenance of national waterways by reducing equal percentage from share of national highways. It aims at generating INR 2300 crore revenue for national waterways.
 - ▶ Parliament passed Companies (Amendment) Bill 2017 to strengthen corporate governance standards, initiate strict action against defaulting companies and help improve ease of doing business. Bill provides for over 40 amendments to Companies Act 2013.
 - ▶ Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Bill 2017, to declare IIMs as institutions of national importance and extend greater autonomy to them, by restricting government’s role in their functioning.
 - ▶ Lok Sabha passed Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Bill 2017, to make it easier for government to acquire immovable property for “national security and defence purpose”. It amends Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act 1952 and changes rules for payment of compensation.
 - ▶ Rajya Sabha passed *Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy (IIPE) Bill 2017*, to establish IIPE Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) as an institution of national importance. It aims to provide high quality education and research focussing on all aspects and themes of petroleum, hydrocarbons and energy. The bill was passed by Lok sabha Earlier.
 - ▶ Lok Sabha passed Goods and Services Tax (Compensation to States) Amendment Bill 2017, amending GST (Compensation to States) Act 2017 and replaces an Ordinance promulgated in Sep 2017. The amendment increases maximum rate at which Compensation Cess can be levied from 15 to 25% on motor vehicle for transport of not more than 13 persons (mostly luxury vehicles).
 - ▶ Parliament passed National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Amendment Bill 2017, to amend National Capital Territory of Delhi Laws (Special Provisions) Second Act 2011. It extends deadline for relocating slum dwellers and Jhuggi-Jhopri clusters, regulating street vendors, unauthorised colonies in Delhi and calls for creating policy for farm houses constructed beyond permissible limits.
 - ▶ Lok Sabha passed Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriages) Bill 2017 declaring instant triple talaq illegal and criminalises it with up to three years in jail for husband. Bill will now will be sent to Rajya Sabha for passage.
 - ▶ Lok Sabha passed Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2017 to pave way for tightening loopholes in existing code and to make resolution process more effective. It Bill amends Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016. Main Features Include -
 - ▶ It Bill prohibits certain persons from submitting a resolution plan in case of defaults.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ✎ Hiked Monthly Salaries will be (INR) -

- ✎ Chief Justice of India (CJI) - 2.80 lakh

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

- ✎ Judges of High Courts - 2.25 lakh

183. ▶ Facebook and Andhra Pradesh government signed MOU to take up innovative pilot projects in state.

184. ▶ Feb 12 - National Productivity Day. 2018 theme is *Industry 4.0 Leapfrog Opportunity for India*.

185. ▶ First Mega Food Park in Maharashtra (10th in India) has been opened as *Satara Mega Food Park Pvt. Ltd* at Village Degaon in Satara District. Aim is to boost food processing sector by adding value and reducing food wastage at each stage of supply chain with particular focus on perishables.

- ✎ Mega Food Parks create modern infrastructure facilities for food processing along the value chain from farm to market with strong forward and backward linkages through a cluster based approach.

186. ▶ First Namami Barak festival held at Silchar in Assam, to pay tribute to River Barak and to showcase its potential to emerge as hub of trade and commerce.

- ✎ Assam government also inaugurated its air ambulance services for people, equipped with emergency medical equipment to take care of patients.

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

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

189. ▶ First e-court of Jammu and Kashmir inaugurated in Srinagar, as first paperless court of Jammu and Kashmir. It will use digitised case records, thus paper usage and space requirements would be reduced to a great extent.

190. ▶ First high speed electric locomotive of Indian Railways, will be launched in March 2018, capable of running at of a maximum speed of 120 kmph.

- ✚ It will be launched during French President Emmanuel Macron's Indian visit. It has capacity of 12000 horsepower and is produced in collaboration with French Firm Alstom. It has been assembled at Madhepura plant in Bihar.
- 191. ▶ First phase of national optic fibre network Project called *Bharat Net* will be completed by December 2017, providing internet access (2 to 20 Mbps speed) to 100,000 gram panchayats. It was announced in 'i-Bharat 2017' conference organised by FICCI in New Delhi.
 - ✚ BharatNet is Government's ambitious rural internet connectivity programme which is implemented by Bharat Broadband Network Limited (BBNL). It is world's largest rural broadband connectivity programme using Optical fibre.
- 192. ▶ Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched *FoSCoRIS* as an online platform to bring in transparency in food safety inspection and sampling. It will help in verifying compliance of food safety and hygiene standards by food businesses as per government norms.
- 193. ▶ Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) has been declared as an *Institute of National Importance* under Ministry of Commerce & Industry, by virtue of Footwear Design & Development Institute Act 2017.
 - ✚ FDDI can now award degrees and will now have autonomy to design its courses as per the requirement of the industry.
 - ✚ Presently, FDDI imparts skill based graduate and post graduate courses in footwear, leather goods, retail and management to around 2500 students across eight campuses over India.
- 194. ▶ Forbes India Celebrity 100 list 2017 -
 - ✚ Actor Salman Khan topped the list, With earnings of INR 233 crores.
 - ✚ Shah Rukh Khan 2nd with earnings of 170 crores, cricketer Virat Kohli 3rd with 100.72 crore earnings.
- 195. ▶ Forbes Magazine released its India Rich List 2017. Top 10 Richest Indians are -
 - ✚ Mukesh Ambani - \$38 billion. Reliance Industries Chairman Mr Ambani topped the list for 10th Consecutive year.
 - ✚ Azim Premji - \$19 billion.
 - ✚ Hinduja brothers - \$18.4 Billion
 - ✚ Lakshmi Mittal - \$16.5 Billion
 - ✚ Pallonji Mistry - \$16 Billion
 - ✚ Godrej family - \$14.2 Billion
 - ✚ Shiv Nadar - \$13.6 Billion
 - ✚ Kumar Birla - \$12.6 Billion
 - ✚ Dilip Shanghvi - \$12.1 Billion
 - ✚ Gautam Adani - \$11 Billion
- 196. ▶ Former cricketer Sachin Tendulkar launched Mission-24, a programme to improve quality of life in Mumbai's poorest wards through collaborative efforts in next 24 months.
- 197. ▶ Foundation of Rhodendron Park laid in Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh). Tawang has 50 plus species of Rhodendron (*a genus of 1,024 species of woody plants*). More than 30 species of rhododendrons would be planted and conserved in park.
- 198. ▶ Foundation stone for India's first Industrial Training Institute exclusively for Divyangjans laid at Dibrugarh (Assam). It will have sixty seats for three different trades with 20 seats per trade.
- 199. ▶ GAIL India placed orders for 2,100 km of Jagdishpur-Haldia & Bokaro-Dhamra Natural Gas Pipeline (JHBDPL) project.
 - ✚ *Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga* project (also known as JHBDPL project) originates at Jagdishpur (Uttar Pradesh). The main trunk of pipeline ends to Haldia (West Bengal) and Dhamra (Odisha).
 - ✚ Pipeline passes through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha. Cost of project is Rs. 12,940 crore and is to be completed by 2019.
- 200. ▶ GAIL commissioned India's second largest rooftop solar power plant in Uttar Pradesh, as a 5.76 MWp (Mega Watt peak) solar plant at GAIL's petrochemical complex at Pata in UP, covering area of 65,000 square meters.
 - ✚ Largest rooftop solar plant in India was commissioned in December 2015 by Tata Power Solar in Amritsar (Punjab) with 12 MWp capacity.
- 201. ▶ GAIL will set up *coal to synthesis gas* conversion plants in Odisha, with Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) as technology partner.
 - ✚ Synthesis gas is expected to be cheaper than domestic gas as its a mixture comprising of hydrogen, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide.
- 202. ▶ GE Aviation (USA) and Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) partnered to manufacture, assemble, integrate and test aircraft components in India, Including CFM International LEAP engine (considered world's leading jet engine).
- 203. ▶ Gandhi Nagar railway station in Jaipur (Rajasthan) became railway station to be fully-managed by women, with 40 women staff at station.
- 204. ▶ Gender Vulnerability Index (GVI) by Child development NGO *Plan India* -

Goa is at top, followed by Kerala and Mizoram.

Bihar is at bottom with Uttar Pradesh as second worst.

Index is developed after analysing situation of girls and women in on the basis of Health, Education, Protection and Poverty.

205. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 1 - 10, 2017) -

11th Annual MedTech Summit of Biodesign Programme (Department of Biotechnology) today in New Delhi.

6th International Tourism Mart held in Guwahati (Assam).

22nd conference of Asian Harmonization Working Party (AHWP) held at New Delhi.

First International Conference on Sports Medicine and Sports Sciences SAICON 2017 held in Delhi. Minister of State (I/C) Youth Affairs and Sports Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore stated that -

Under *Khelo India*, national school games would be organised from January 31 to February 8 in 2018 for under 17 age group. Top 1,000 athletes from this event will be entitled to Rs 5 lakh scholarships for eight years. 1,000 more athletes will be added each year for creating a pool of young talent.

School Games will be followed by College Games for under the age group of 21 years.

Khelo India programme will be launched at cost of INR 1756 crore for 2017-18 to 2019-20.

National Conference on PDS (Public Distribution System) Reforms held in Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh).

Shared Value Summit 2017 held in New Delhi with theme *Equity and Empowerment*.

7th International Groundwater Conference held in Delhi, with theme Groundwater Vision 2030- Water Security, Challenges, and Climate Change Adaptation.

First Meet of 15th Finance Commission held in New Delhi, under Chairmanship of N.K. Singh.

India and Japan held first meeting under the newly established 'India-Japan Act East Forum' in New Delhi, aimed at identifying specific projects for economic development of the North-Eastern region of India.

New Delhi Hosted *Bodhi Parva: BIMSTEC Festival of Buddhist Heritage*, as part of celebrations of 20th anniversary of BIMSTEC.

UN Women and Facebook held an event in Mumbai named *We The Women* to empower and recognise magnificent contribution of women in our society

206. ▶ General Conferences (Dec 11 - 20, 2017)

19th International Workshop on Physics of Semiconductor Devices (IWPSD-2017) held in New Delhi.

14th Inclusive Finance India Summit held in New Delhi, aimed at building consensus on strategies and a unified vision for achieving universal financial inclusion in India.

Three day media workshop on Climate Change Reporting in Himalayas organised in Kohima (Nagaland).

54th meeting of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) programming committee held at SAARC secretariat in Kathmandu (Nepal).

CSR Summit for Pioneering Cochlear Implant Surgery held in New Delhi.

90th Annual General Meeting of FICCI held in New Delhi.

49th Annual Conference of the Society of Nuclear Medicine – India (SNMICON) held in New Delhi.

World Conference on Vedas (Vishwa Ved Sammelan) held in New Delhi.

2nd edition of Serendipity Arts festival is held in Goa, bringing together 7 art forms.

National Workshop on Role of Sakhi One Stop Centres (OSCs) in Strengthening Multi Sectoral Response to Violence held in New Delhi.

3rd World Telugu Conference held in Hyderabad (Telangana).

International Herbal Fair held in Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh).

Global Partnership Summit (GPS) 2017 held in New Delhi, organised by India Center Foundation (ICF).

1st national-level training of trainers programme to sensitise Central Ministries and Departments on utilisation of Sendai Framework for developing action plans for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) held in New Delhi, organised by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction-Global Education and Training Institute (UNISDR-GETI).

207. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 1 - 10, 2018) -

Lalit Kala Akademi organized First International Kala Mela in New Delhi.

International Conference on 'Demetrios Galanos and His Legacy' held in New Delhi.

17 day Surajkund International Crafts Mela (32nd) began in Faridabad (Haryana). Uttar Pradesh is theme state and Kyrgyzstan is Partner Nation this year.

7th India Energy Congress was held in New Delhi with theme *Energy 4.0: Energy Transition Towards 2030*. It is organized by World Energy Council India (WEC India).

- NITI Aayog organized Conference on Jobs and Livelihood opportunities in collaboration with Confederation of Indian Industries in Delhi.
- 2 day International conference on Unani Medicine held at New Delhi.
- 5th South Asia Region Public Procurement Conference held in New Delhi, with theme *Public Procurement and Service Delivery*.
- 3 day International Conference on Operations and Maintenance - *Indian Power Stations 2018* held in Delhi.
- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated 88th Mahamastakabhisheka of Lord Gomateshwara at Shravanabelagola in Hassan (Karnataka).
- 4th meeting of Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister (EAC-PM) held in New Delhi under chairmanship of Bibek Debroy.
- Institute Of Directors organised 12th International Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility in Bengaluru (Karnataka).
- National Informatics Centre (NIC) organized 3 day National Meet on Grassroot Informatics - *VIVID 2018* at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, with Theme *Cyber Security and Innovation*.

208. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 11 - 20, 2018) -

- International Agricultural conference *Agricon 2018* and *Agriexpo 2018* held at Chandrashekhar Azad University of Agriculture & Technology (CSAUT) at Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh).
- Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare organized a National Conference *Agriculture 2022 – Doubling Farmers' Income* at National Agriculture Science Complex (NASC) in New Delhi.
- National Banana Festival 2018 held in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala).
- India's biggest Global Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices held in Bengaluru with theme *'Driving NextGen Pharmaceuticals*.
- Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) organized Youth Exchange Programme *Watan Ko Jano*, with special focus on youth of Jammu and Kashmir.
- 3rd Global Procurement Summit in New Delhi, organized by All India Management Association (AIMA) and World Bank with Theme *New Frontiers faced in the Transformation process of Procurement Today*.
- 10th international plastics exhibition, *PlastIndia* held in Gandhinagar (Gujarat), organized by Plastindia Foundation.
- 12th International Conference on corporate social responsibility (CSR) held in Bengaluru (Karnataka).
- 3 day International Conference on Operations and Maintenance, *Indian Power Stations 2018* held in New Delhi with theme *Technological Challenges: Risks and Challenges in Power Generation*. It is hosted by NTPC to commemorate synchronization of its first Thermal plant at Singrauli Super Thermal Power Station on February 13, 1982.
- 54th annual Munich Security Conference held in Munich (Germany).
- 6th Conference of Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) of India Region held in Patna (Bihar).
- Scientists observed *Darwin Week* in Kolkata, to effectively put an end to any confusion regarding Charles Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution.
- *International R&D Conclave* 2 day conference on Emerging Opportunities and Challenges of R&D in Indian Power Sector organised by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in Delhi.
- National Seminar on *Emerging Building Materials and Construction Technologies* held in New Delhi. During This, Hardeep Puri (Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs) launched Mobile App *Bamboo Housing & Construction. Technologies*.

209. ▶ General Conferences (Feb 21 - 28, 2018) -

- 3 day India International Textiles Expo (IITExpo) held in Sri Lanka capital of Colombo.
- Regional conference of southern states on water resources held in Hyderabad (Telangana).
- 44th Khajuraho Dance Festival 2018 held at Khajuraho temple (UNESCO world heritage site) in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh.
- Central Govt.'s Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology and Government Telangana organized 21st National Conference on e-Governance in Hyderabad.
- 2 day International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels organized by Department of Biotechnology at India Habitat Centre in New Delhi.
- Ministry of Culture organized a week long diversified cultural carnival 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav' in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh).
- Economic Times Global Business Summit held in New Delhi with theme *New Economy – New Rules*.
- Andhra Pradesh Government Organized 3rd Partnership Summit 2018 in Vizag, aiming to facilitate investments, foster innovations in creating business models.
- 15th edition of BioAsia (*annual flagship event of Telangana Government*) held in Hyderabad (Telangana), with theme *Right Time, Right Now*. During it, Telangana government stated that it aims to double valuation of its life sciences ecosystem to \$100 billion in 10

years.

- 7th Youth Festival held in New Delhi organised by Sahitya Kala Parishad and Delhi Government with theme *Let Love Live*.
- 15th Vodafone Odeon Theatre Festival held in Kolkata, (West Bengal), to provide a platform for theatre artists to display their talent.
- Aadi Mahotsava*, a tribal festival organized by Assam Government held in Guwahati (Assam).

210. ▶ General Conferences (Jan 01 - 10, 2018) -

- 8 day long New Delhi World Book Fair begun in New Delhi, with theme *Environment and Climate Change* and European union as Guest of Honour country.
- 18th All India Whips' Conference held at Udaipur (Rajasthan). During this, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA) proposed rolling out of e-Sansad in Parliament and e-Vidhan in State Legislatures to digitize and make their functioning paperless.
- Annual Conference of DGPs and IGPs held at BSF (Border Security Force) Academy in Tekanpur (Madhya Pradesh). It was attended by PM Narendra Modi.
- 4th International Conference on Dharma-Dhamma held at Rajgir (Bihar), organised by Nalanda University with an aim to provide an opportunity to academics and policy makers from India and abroad to share ideas.
- Conference on Transformation of Aspirational Districts held in New Delhi, organized by NITI Aayog. During This, NITI Aayog announced to issue a ranking of 115 aspirational districts by April 2018.
- Centre for Transportation Research and Management (CTRAM) organized a National Rail Transport Seminar with theme *Railways for Sustainable Development* in New Delhi.

211. ▶ General Conferences (Jan 11 - 20, 2018) -

- Ministry of Culture organized 7th *Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav* under *Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat* matrix in Karnataka.
- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated 'Economic Democracy Conclave at Thane (Maharashtra), organised by Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini (charitable organisation in domain of training of social-political activists).
- International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (IWDRI) organized by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in Delhi.
- 65th Meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) held under Chairmanship of HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar in Delhi.
- 3rd geo-political conference *Raisina Dialogue* held in New Delhi, attended by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and jointly organised by Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and Observer Research Foundation (ORF). 2018's theme is *Managing Disruptive Transitions: Ideas, Institutions and Idiom*.
 - Raisina Dialogue is an annual conference held in New Delhi, envisioned as India's flagship conference of geopolitics and geoeconomics.
 - Indian and Israeli PM duo also launched *I4Fund Call for Proposal*, that provisions establishing a 40 million USD Fund by India's Department of Science and Technology and National Innovation Authority of Israel.
- A single day Conclave called *Nirman Samvaad*, first ever interaction between Railways Ministry and Construction Industry held in Delhi, organized by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL).
- Lalit Kala Akademi's 59th National Exhibition of Art held in New Delhi, to exhibit brilliance of works of various artists.
- 60th India International Garment Fair (IIGF) held at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi).
- National Conference on Improving Accessibility held in New Delhi. During this, 100 accessible websites for Divyangs have been launched to empower Divyang persons.

212. ▶ General Conferences (Jan 21 - 31, 2018)

- Raipur Municipal Corporation (Chhattisgarh) organized *Kachra Mahotsav 2018* as India's first Garbage Festival. It aims to increase waste usage awareness.
- Election Commission of India (ECI) hosted International Conference on 'Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Election Process' in New Delhi.
- 21st India International Seafood Show (IISS) held in Margao (Goa). IISS is a biennial meeting point for various stakeholders of marine products sector such as producers, processing machinery manufacturers, processors, and technical experts.
- First *Khadi Haat* of India launched by Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in New Delhi, to help artisans earn better.
- Axis Bank launched 4th edition of *Evolve*, its an annual multi-city knowledge series for Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) customers, titled *Transform your Family Business into your dream company*.
- 19th India International Watch and Clock Fair *Samaya Bharati 2018* held in Mumbai (Maharashtra).
- Indian Coast Guard (ICG) conducted a 'Day at Sea' event for children of fishing hamlets at Frazerganj in South 24 Parganas district (West Bengal).

213. ▶ General Conferences (Nov 11 - 20) -

- ▶ NITI Aayog in partnership with USA government organized India's first Tribal Entrepreneurship Summit at Dantewada (Chhattisgarh), To promote spirit of entrepreneurship in tribal youth.
- ▶ International Buffalo Symposium 2017 held in Nepal.
- ▶ Andhra Pradesh's first Hot Air Balloon Festival held in Araku Valley.
- ▶ 12th North East Business Summit held in New Delhi.
- ▶ Andhra Pradesh AgTech Summit 2017 held in Visakhapatnam with American Tech Firm Microsoft Co-Funder Bill Gates as Chief Guest.
- ▶ Karnataka State Government launched ambitious project to install Wi-Fi facility in 2500 gram panchayats across state by end of 2017. It was announced at Bengaluru Tech Summit 2017.
- ▶ 12th Biennial International Conference & Exposition of Society of Petroleum Geophysicists (SPG) India held at Jaipur (Rajasthan).
- ▶ Conference *Build The Ship – 2017* held in Cochin. Shipping and Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari -
 - ▶ Laid foundation for INR 970-crore International Ship Repair Facility (ISRF) for Cochin Shipyard Limited.
 - ▶ Launched Center of Excellence in Maritime and Shipbuilding (CEMS) as a start up in skill development for maritime and shipbuilding sector, to have campuses at Vishakhapatnam and Mumbai. It is being set up by Shipping Ministry with Siemens under Sagarmala programme.
- ▶ International Seminar on Indian Space Programme - *Trends and Opportunities for Industry* organized in Delhi by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Antrix Corporation and FICC.
- ▶ Indian National Bar Association (INBA) organised *Bar Leadership Summit on Reforms in the Indian Legal Sector* in New Delhi

214. ▶ General Conferences (Nov 21 - 30) -

- ▶ International Gita Mahotsava 2017 held in Kurukshetra (Haryana).
 - ▶ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas organised a consultative workshop on New National Policy on Biofuels & Pradhan Mantri Jivani Yojana (VGF for 2nd Generation Ethanol Bio Refineries) in New Delhi.
 - ▶ 12th meeting of Standing Committee of Inter-State Council held in Delhi.
 - ▶ International Ambedkar Conclave, organised by Forum of SC and ST Legislators and Parliamentarians in New Delhi.
 - ▶ 1st World Conference on Access to Medical Products and International Laws for Trade and Health held in New Delhi.
 - ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare observed Vasectomy Fortnight to raise awareness about male sterilisation and to promote the participation of men in family planning.
 - ▶ Conference of all Commanders of Eastern Air Command held at Shillong (Meghalaya).
 - ▶ Inaugural edition of Proffer Hackathon held at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) – New Delhi. Proffer is a blockchain startup founded by graduates of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard. During it, Researchers from Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management-Kerala (IIITM-K) won a special recognition prize from NITI Aayog.
 - ▶ Zurich (Switzerland) based global think-tank Horasis' first Asia Meet held in Kolkata (West Bengal).
 - ▶ Aadi Mahotsav, a celebration of the spirit of Tribal Culture, Craft, Cuisine and Commerce Organized in New Delhi, with theme *A Celebration of the Spirit of Tribal Culture, Cuisine and Commerce*.
 - ▶ 7th *Kathakar: International Storytellers Festival* held at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) in New Delhi.
 - ▶ Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister Radha Mohan Singh chaired 22nd meeting of Board of Management (BOM) of Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) in New Delhi.
 - ▶ India-Myanmar media interaction programme held in Imphal (Capital of Myanmar).
215. ▶ Geographical Indication Registry (GIR) gave Geographical Indication (GI) tag to traditional Etikoppaka toys (Etikoppaka Bommalu) from Andhra Pradesh, made by artisans in Etikoppaka village located on banks of river Varaha in Visakhapatnam district.
216. ▶ German auto major Mercedes-Benz unveiled India's first BS-VI-compliant S Class car produced at its Pune facility.
- ▶ Government's deadline for switching to new BS-VI emission norms is of April 2020.
 - ▶ BS-VI-compliant S Class can run on BS-IV fuel, which will bring down NOx emissions by 68% and PM by 82% and will lower CO2 burden by 13% and fuel demand by 10%.
217. ▶ Goa CM Manohar Parrikar launched *Jai Kisaan App* as a farmer engagement app containing features and functions to fulfill the needs of the farmer community.
218. ▶ Goa Government approved Solar Power Policy, under which State Government will look to generate 150 MW of solar power by 2021.
219. ▶ Goa government executed MoU with Central Government and Nobel Media (Sweden) to hold *Nobel Prize Series – India 2018 (Science Impacts Life)* in February 2018, along with a month-long exhibition brought from Nobel Museum, Sweden.

220. ▶ Google and Tata Trusts extended their *Internet Saathi* programme to 4,000 villages in six districts of Tamil Nadu, aimed at *Bridging the online gender divide in rural India*.
221. ▶ Government declared urban Maharashtra open defecation free (ODF) under the Swachh Bharat Mission. Maharashtra is third big state after Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh to become Open Defecation Free in urban areas.
222. ▶ Government announced completion of 1st phase of BharatNet project, after laying 254,895 km of optical fibre cables (OFC) covering 1,09,926 GPs out of which 1,01,370 GPs are service ready.
- ▶ BharatNet project forms backbone for Digital India initiative. It aims to bring high speed broadband to all 2.5 lakh gram panchayats (GPs) through optical fibre by March 2019. It approved in 2011 as National Optical Fibre Network.
223. ▶ Government announced names of 9 new cities selected under Smart Cities Mission, with proposed investment of INR 12,824 crores. After four rounds of selection, 99 cities have been selected for Smart Cities Mission so far.
224. ▶ Government announced that installation of bio-toilets in all passenger trains will be completed by March 2019.
225. ▶ Government approved 2018 as *National Year of Millets* to boost production of the nutrient-rich millets and the sunrise agri industry involved in it.
226. ▶ Government approved Highway and Shipping Projects worth over Rs 1 lakh crore for the state of Tamil Nadu.
227. ▶ Government approved INR 7,000 crores for construction of permanent campuses of six new Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) - Tirupati (Andhra Pradesh), Palakkad (Kerala), Dharwad (Karnataka), Jammu (Jammu and Kashmir), Bhubaneswar (Chhattisgarh) and Goa.
228. ▶ Government approved National Medical Commission Bill 2017, to replace Medical Council Act 1956 and bringing reforms in medical education sector. It will replace existing apex medical education regulator Medical Council of India (MCI) with 25-member National Medical Council (NMC).
229. ▶ Government approved disinvestment of 5% of its 89.32% Stake in NLC India Limited through Offer for Sale (OFS) mechanism, expecting to raise INR 750 Crores.
230. ▶ Government approved merger and modernization of 17 Government of India Press Units (GIPs) into 5 GIPs located at Rashtrapati Bhavan, Minto Road and Mayapuri in New Delhi, Nashik (Maharashtra) and Temple Street (Kolkata, West Bengal).
231. ▶ Government approved revamped Khelo India programme for period 2017-18 to 2019-20, aimed at mainstreaming sport as tool for development.
- ▶ Pan India Sports Scholarship scheme - It will cover 1,000 most talented young athletes each year, with Each athlete receiving annual scholarship of INR 5 lakh for 8 consecutive years.
 - ▶ Sports Universities - 20 universities across country will be promoted as hubs of sporting excellence.
 - ▶ National physical fitness drive - It will cover about 20 Crore children in age group of 10-18 and will support their fitness related activities.
232. ▶ Government approved setting up India's first mega coastal economic zone (CEZ) at Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) in Maharashtra. It will stretch along north Konkan region spread across Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Nashik and Raigarh.
- ▶ CEZs are spatial economic regions comprising group of coastal districts or districts with strong linkage to ports in region to tap into synergies with planned industrial corridor projects.
233. ▶ Government approved setting up National Nutrition Mission (NNM) with 3 year budget of INR 90,460 crores -
- ▶ It will monitor, supervise, fix targets and guide nutrition related interventions across Ministries.
 - ▶ All districts will be covered in a phased manner - 315 districts in 2017-18, 235 districts in 2018-19 and remaining districts in 2019-20.
 - ▶ Outlay of INR 90,460 crores will be funded by Government Budgetary Support (50%) and 50% by IBRD or other MDB. Government support would be 60:40 between Centre and States/UTs, 90:10 for NER and Himalayan States and 100% for UTs.
 - ▶ NNM targets to reduce stunting, under-nutrition, anemia and reduce low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3% and 2% per annum respectively.
 - ▶ NNM would strive to achieve reduction in Stunting from 38.4% (NFHS-4) to 25% by 2022 (Mission 25 by 2022).
 - ▶ Govt. also launched a contest inviting people to design a logo and suggest a tagline for *National Nutrition Mission*, with a prize money of INR 1 lakh to winner of contest.
234. ▶ Government decided to end Haj subsidy from this year, as a part of its policy to 'empower minorities without appeasement'.
- ▶ Note that despite withdrawal of subsidy, record number of 1.75 lakh Muslims would be Haj undertaking pilgrimage this year from India after Saudi Arabia increased India's quota by 5,000.
235. ▶ Government extended waiver of IRCTC Online ticketing service charges (INR 20 - 40 Per Ticket) till March 2018, that was announced in Sep 2016 to promote digital transactions after demonetization last year.
236. ▶ Government formulated water conservation scheme Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) to tackle ever-deepening crisis of depleting groundwater level, with allocation of INR 6,000 crores. It aims to create sufficient water storage for agricultural purposes. It will cover 78 districts, 193

blocks and more than 8,300 gram panchayats across Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

237. ▶ Government gave green clearance for a greenfield airport project at Hirasar near Rajkot in Gujarat at cost of INR 1400 crores.
238. ▶ Government has set Minimum Export Price of onion at 850 dollars per tonne to ensure its availability in domestic market.
239. ▶ Government has undertaken drive to rationalize 38 Labour Acts by framing 4 labour codes viz *Code on Wages*, *Code on Social Security*, *Code on Industrial Relations* and *Code on occupational safety, health and working conditions*. It will ease up the process by synchronizing various labour Laws.
 - ▶ Code on Wages Bill 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha recently and It repeals 4 existing Laws - Minimum Wages Act 1948, Payment of Wages Act 1936, Equal Remuneration Act 1976 and Payment of Bonus Act 1965.
240. ▶ Government inaugurated India's first Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendra (PMKK) for skilling in Smart Cities at New Delhi, aiming to bring momentum in skilling through collaborative efforts.
241. ▶ Government is developing tool named *soft power matrix*, aimed at calibrating effectiveness of India's soft power outreach. It will help in dealings with neighbouring countries and serve better as operational instrument in India's broader diplomatic doctrine.
 - ▶ Currently, articulation of India's soft power abroad is done through Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), with some 36 foreign cultural centres working to promote artistic and cultural traditions through range of activities such as Festivals of India abroad.
 - ▶ Standing Committee on External Affairs recommended that MEA should formulate comprehensive and well-structured policy delineating India's soft power resources and their articulation abroad.
242. ▶ Government launched 3rd version of its National Procurement Portal, Government e Marketplace (GeM).
 - ▶ GeM 3.0 will offer several features as standardised and enriched catalogue management, search engine, real time price comparison, template-based Bid and RA creation, demand aggregation, e-EMD, e-PBG, user rating, advanced MIS and analytics and more.
243. ▶ Government launched Diploma in Elementary Education programme for in-service untrained elementary teachers, developed by National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and specifically designed for untrained teachers working in primary and upper primary schools country.
 - ▶ It will be last opportunity for such teachers who have not done teacher training courses. Parliament earlier extended deadline to December 2019 for untrained teachers to get qualified.
244. ▶ Government launched SECURE Himalaya, a six-year project to ensure conservation of locally and globally significant biodiversity, land and forest resources in high Himalayan ecosystem spread over four states - Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Sikkim.
245. ▶ Government launched Sampoorna Bima Gram (SBG) Yojana and expanded coverage of Postal Life Insurance (PLI) in a bid to provide affordable life insurance services to people particularly those living in rural areas.
 - ▶ Under SBG Yojana, at least one village (min 100 households) will be identified in each of revenue districts of country to cover all households of identified village with minimum of one RPLI (Rural Postal Life Insurance) policy each. Coverage of all households in identified Sampoorna Bima Gram village is primary objective of this scheme.
 - ▶ Expansion of PLI will no more be confined to government and semi-government employees only, but will also be available to other professionals. Postal Life Insurance (PLI) was introduced in 1884 and is one of oldest life insurance schemes.
246. ▶ Government launched a 15 days door-to-door campaign for early diagnosis, detection and treatment of tuberculosis. Through this, health department workers, ASHAs (Accredited Social Health Activists) and TB supervisors will make door-to-door visits to find TB patients and give them free medical treatment till they are cured.
247. ▶ Government launched a ASH TRACK Web based and mobile application based Fly Ash monitoring System. It will enable better management of the ash produced by thermal power plants by providing an interface between fly ash producers (Thermal Power Plants) and potential ash users such as – road contractors, cement plants etc.
 - ▶ ASH TRACK Mobile App will manage 200 million tonnes of fly ash by tracking coal based power plants situated within 100 km and 300 km from given location and availability of fly ash, along with prospective users within same radius.
248. ▶ Government launched phase 2 of BharatNet project to connect 1.5 lakh gram panchayats with high-speed broadband by March 2019.
 - ▶ Bharat Net (formerly *National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN)*) launched by Government in October 2011, to deploy high-speed optical fibre cables across rural areas of India to provide broadband connectivity to all 2.5 Lakh Gram Panchayats in India. Project cost of BharatNet is estimated to be around 45000 crore, out of which Rs. 11200 crore have been used for the phase 1.
 - ▶ Under Phase One, 1 lakh gram panchayats will have broadband connectivity by end of 2017.
249. ▶ Government released Swachta Ranking 2017 of Higher Educational Institutions -
 - ▶ University - O. P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat (Haryana)

 Colleges - Kongu Arts and Science College, Erode (Tamilnadu)









 Technical institutions - Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore (Tamilnadu)

 Government institutions - G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar (Uttarakhand)

250. ▶ Government ruled that all mobile phones unlinked with Aadhaar numbers will be deactivated after February 2018.
251. ▶ Government sanctioned INR 1500 crore to promote organic farming in Uttarakhand, to be disbursed over 3 years.
252. ▶ Government sanctioned a new project to control pollution in River Sal at Navelim town (Goa), under National River Conservation Plan. It will be completed at cost of INR 61.74 crores (to be borne by Centre and State on 60:40 basis), scheduled for completion by January 2021.
253. ▶ Government will club phase I and phase II of Ken-Betwa inter linking river (ILR) project, upon demands raised by Madhya Pradesh Govt.
-  Cost will now be revised, which was initially 18,000 crore (Phase 1), and 8000 crore (Phase 2).
-  Ken-Betwa Inter Linking project aims to transfer surplus water from Ken River to the Betwa basin through concrete canal to irrigate India's worst drought-prone Bundelkhand region.
-  It will benefit Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh in terms of meeting irrigation, drinking water and electricity needs of people across 6 districts in the MP & UP.
254. ▶ Government will observe 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi from 2 October 2019 to 2 October 2020. For this, Government constituted a National Committee headed by PM Narendra Modi.
255. ▶ Government will provide up to Rs 60000 crore to Maharashtra in next 2 years for river-linking and irrigation projects to tackle the recurring water crisis.
256. ▶ Government will safeguard fast-eroding Majuli island in Assam (world's largest riverine island) using research carried out on floating Brahmaputra Biodiversity and Biology Boat (B4) labs along Brahmaputra River.
257. ▶ Government will set up an international educational institution for minorities in Rajasthan's Alwar city, as 1 of 5 such institutes that Government is planning to set up across India. This plan was prepared in 2016 by a committee headed by Afzal Amanullah.
258. ▶ Government's Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) issued alert on spread of new malware "Locky Ransomware" that can lock computers and demand ransom for unlocking them.
259. ▶ Govt initiated formulating comprehensive 'safe-city' plans for women in eight metropolitan cities - Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Lucknow and Hyderabad.
260. ▶ Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani announced setting up of 16 new Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) townships in Gujarat, aimed at attracting 15000 industrial units and 1 lakh jobs.
261. ▶ Gujarat Government has announced State Garments and Apparel Policy-2017 aimed at make Gujarat number 1 in textile which produces more of cotton. Women workers will get Rs 4,000 subsidy, while their male counterparts will get Rs 3,500.
262. ▶ Gujarat Government launched *Gyakunj e-class project* aimed at producing world-class students through interactive e-classes. Outlay of project is 36 Crores and 550 schools are covered In first phase.
263. ▶ Gujarat Government inaugurated Birsa Munda Tribal University in Rajpipla, a tribal-dominated town in Narmada district of Gujarat.
264. ▶ Gujarat Pradesh Legislative Assembly Elections 2017 -
-  Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won Majority by winning 99 of Gujarat's 182 seats. Rival party Congress got 77 seats. BJP got 49.1 % Votes while Congress got 41.4%.
-  BJP will form Government in Gujarat for 6th Straight Term.
265. ▶ Gujarat government announced 4 % reduction in VAT (Value Added Tax) on petrol and diesel, becoming first state to cut VAT on fuel.
-  Now, petrol and Diesel will get cheaper by Approx INR 3 / Litre across Gujarat.
-  Note that recently central government has cut central excise duty on petrol and diesel by Rs. 2 and also asked state governments to cut VAT on the fuel products by 5 % to bring down fuel prices.
266. ▶ Gujarat topped Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) index released at 3rd meeting of Council for Trade Development and Promotion.
-  LEADS Index is about mobility of goods and efficiency of logistics chain, developed by Commerce and Industry Ministry along with Deloitte.
-  Gujarat is followed by Punjab and Andhra Pradesh. Among UTs, Daman & Diu topped, followed by Delhi and Chandigarh.
267. ▶ Haryana Government renamed Amin village in Kurukshetra district to Abhimanyupur. Abhimanyu, son of Arjuna, was warrior prince in Mahabharata.
-  Amin village is believed as site on which Kauravas had resorted to 'Chakravyuh' formation as a part of war strategy. Abhimanyu was trapped in 'Chakravyuh', but fought bravely till his last breath.
268. ▶ Haryana Government will provide ration cards for nomadic tribes living in different parts of Haryana, to provide identification to them as permanent residents.

269. ▶ Haryana Government will set up *PGs (Paying Guests) for cattle* under which people in urban areas will be able to rear their own cattle and produce quality milk for their personal consumption. Under this, State Government will mark upto 100 acres of land that will have 2 types of dairies – *Traditional Dairies* and *PGs for cattle*.
270. ▶ Haryana Govt. launched *Parivartan* scheme, to address 10 issues in 46 developmental blocks of state.
271. ▶ Haryana Govt. launched *Bhavantar Bharpayee Yojana* from Karnal district. Under this, farmers will be compensated by state government, whenever market prices of the stipulated produce go below mentioned prices (applicable for tomato, onion, potato and cauliflower).
272. ▶ Haryana State Government will establish *Kisan Kalyan Pradhikaran* as farmers' welfare department which will look to make agriculture remunerative by enhancing productivity and mitigate distress of farming households.
273. ▶ Haryana became first state to launch High-Risk Pregnancy (HRP) Portal, to help in early identification of high-risk pregnant cases and ensure their timely referral to civil hospital. This portal is designed to track every high-risk pregnant woman till 42 days after delivery.
274. ▶ Haryana government announced lifetime monthly pension of Rs 10,000 for 'Hindi Satyagrahis' and those from state who were jailed during Emergency (21-month period from 1975 to 1977).
275. ▶ Haryana government mandated installation of Solar Photovoltaic Power plant in new buildings as per specified norms, aimed at conserving electricity and use it efficiently.
276. ▶ Haryana government opened subsidised canteens in 4 districts (Faridabad, Gurugram, Hisar and Yamunanagar) under *Antyodaya Aahaar Yojana* to provide hygienic food at affordable prices to poor and needy persons. These canteens will serve food to concerned people at INR 10, having 4 chapattis, rice, dal, cooked seasonal vegetables, curd or raita, green chutney and gur.
277. ▶ Haryana government signed MoU Worth INR 20000 Crores with an integrated trade facilitation services organisation - *Verbind* - to set up a logistics and trading hub in state. State will assist the organisation in obtaining necessary approvals and clearances with reference to projects from relevant departments, in line with existing rules and regulations.
278. ▶ Haryana government will establish an organ and tissue transplant organisation (SOTTO) at Bhagwat Dayal Sharma Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (PGIMS) in Rohtak.
279. ▶ Haryana government will implement integrated solar based micro irrigation scheme (ISBMI) in all districts and formed a Committee to chalk out a plan in this regard.
- ▶ ISBMI will focus on saving electricity and water, and will also be economical for farmers as they will not be required to install tubewells at their own level instead they just have to pay a nominal amount for water according the crops.
280. ▶ Haryana topped preliminary rankings of Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) for this year with score of 69 %, followed by Telangana (68.46 %). Commerce and Industry Ministry will release final rankings in January-February 2018.
281. ▶ Health Ministry approved proposal of Medical Council of India (MCI) to amend Screening Test Regulations 2002, making it mandatory to qualify National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) to pursue foreign medical course.
- ▶ A common National Entrance Exam, National Eligibility cum Entrance Test has been made mandatory for admission to all medical courses in the country.
 - ▶ Indian students can also pursue medical education abroad, however, they need to qualify *Foreign Medical Graduates Exam (FMGE)* for practicing in India after obtaining MBBS overseas.
 - ▶ Overseas Citizen of India shall have to mandatorily qualify NEET for admission to MBBS course abroad, from May 2018. Result of NEET will be treated as the Eligibility Certificate for such persons.
282. ▶ Health Ministry launched India's first digital Online Oncology Tutorial Series designed by Tata Memorial Center, to train doctors for early detection, prevention, palliation, rehabilitation and treatment of various cancers.
283. ▶ Higher Education Funding Agency (HEFA) approved projects worth INR 2,066 Crores for IITs Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Kharagpur, Kanpur and NIT Suratkal. These funds would be used to improve research infrastructure in these institutions to further improve their global standings.
284. ▶ Himachal CM Virbhadra Singh inaugurated first phase of 65 MW Kashang Hydel Project in tribal Kinnaur district. It is a 195 MW project (three units of 65 MW each).
285. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government launched women's safety app named *Shakti*. It comes with a panic button and would not require internet connectivity.
- ▶ Once triggered, app would send a message to nearest police control room and start recording audio and video after 20 seconds.
 - ▶ *GUDDIYA* helpline number 1515 and *Hoshiyar Singh* helpline number 1090 were also launched, to fight crimes against women in state.
286. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government will provide monthly honorarium of INR 2500 to 'Jal Rakshaks'. Additionally, Qualified Jal Rakshaks with ITI diplomas will be given quota for pump operators and fitters and Those with matric and 12 years of experience will be inducted against post of Chowkidar and pump attendants.

287. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government approved *Heritage Tourism Policy 2017 & Mukhya Mantri Rural Road Repair Scheme* along with other welfare initiatives.
288. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Government launched Zero Budget Natural Farming (ZBNF) project to promote organic farming, aimed at doubling income of farmers by the 2022. In ZBNF natural farming methods, cost of growing and harvesting plants is zero as no fertilizers and pesticides are added. It requires almost no monetary investment and envisages use of 'Jeevamrutha' and 'Beejamrutha'.
289. ▶ Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly Elections 2017 -
▶ Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won Majority by winning 44 of Himachal Pradesh's 68 seats. Rival party Congress got 21 seats. BJP got 48.8 % Votes while Congress got 41.7%.
290. ▶ Himachal Pradesh government implemented Senior Citizen Health Insurance Scheme (SCHIS) to provide top-up coverage of Rs 30,000 per senior citizen to all existing Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY) smart card holders, in addition to basic coverage of INR 30,000 in Trust and Society mode.
291. ▶ Himachal Pradesh government launched first-of-its-kind in Nation electric bus service in ecologically fragile 51 km – long stretch between Manali and Rohtang Pass.
292. ▶ Himachal Pradesh govt will set up 24X7 'Gudiya helpline' for reporting crimes against women. Under which, three special crime cells would be set up (one each at Mandi, Shimla and Kangra).
293. ▶ Home Minister Rajnath Singh and UP CM Yogi Adityanath flagged off commercial operations of Lucknow Metro, on 8.5-km corridor from Transport Nagar to Charbagh.
294. ▶ Home Minister Rajnath Singh launched Platform for Effective Enforcement for No Child Labour (PENCIL) Portal at National Conference on Child Labour organised in New Delhi, aiming to achieve target of child labour free society
295. ▶ Home Ministry declared Nagaland as *disturbed area* for 6 more months (till June 2018) under Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act – AFSPA.
▶ Under AFSPA, armed forces attain several overriding powers including authority to open fire and use force against any person acting against the law.
296. ▶ Home Ministry has formed two new divisions to exclusively deal with emerging security challenges such as radicalization and cyber crime - *Counter-Terrorism and Counter-Radicalization (CTCR)* and *Cyber and Information Security (CIS)*.
▶ CTCR is modified version of the Home Ministry's internal security-II division. It will focus on tracking and assessing the online reach of global terrorist outfits and devising strategies to counter their propaganda.
▶ CIS division will monitor online crimes and threats, including cyber fraud and hacking, and suggest ways to minimize and fight them.
297. ▶ Home Ministry opened two Zorinpui and Kawrpuichhuah immigration check posts along borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh respectively.
298. ▶ Home Ministry will set up Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) as an apex centre to deal with cyber crimes such as financial frauds, circulation of pornographic and communal contents. I4C will be located in Delhi. It will coordinate with state governments in matters of cyber crimes and will monitor cyber space and social media.
▶ Information and Broadcasting Ministry will also set up a social media communication (SMC) hub for keeping a tab on trending news in districts and gather feedback on Government's flagship schemes, with investment of INR 17 crores for setting up 707 SMC hubs.
299. ▶ Home Ministry will soon grant citizenship to nearly 1 lakh Chakma and Hajong refugees, who came from erstwhile East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1960s and are living in northeast. Chakmas and Hajongs were residents of Chittagong Hill Tracts in erstwhile East Pakistan and had fled after their land was submerged by Kaptai dam project in 1960s. Chakmas are Buddhists by faith and Hajongs are Hindus.
300. ▶ Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar announced that Paika rebellion (Paika Bidroha) of 1817 will be named as First War of Independence against British Rule in history books from next academic session. Earlier, 1857 Sepoy Mutiny was regarded as First War of Indian Independence.
▶ Paikas were traditional landed militia under Gajapati rulers of Odisha. Bakshi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar, military chief of King of Khurda led army of Paikas forcing East India Company (British) forces to retreat in 1817.
301. ▶ Hurun India Rich List 2017 -
▶ Mukesh Ambani retains the richest Indian title for sixth year (worth of 257,900 crores).
▶ Patanjali Ayurved CEO Acharya Balkrishna named among India's top 10 richest people for first time, with wealth of over 70000 crores.
302. ▶ Hyderabad High Court directed Telangana government not to grant licence, to establish liquor retail outlets in scheduled areas without resolution of gramsabha.
303. ▶ Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) is ranked No. 1 in Airports Council International's (ACI) service quality survey in category of 5 to 15 million passengers per annum.

-  GMR Hyderabad International Airport also recently signed MOU with Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) and Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) to promote tourism.
304. ▶ IIT-Kharagpur signed MoU with *Samsung* for setting up of a digital academy that will train students on Internet of Things (IoT) through Tizen-based operating systems, commonly used by the company for its mobile phones and home appliances.
305. ▶ India Road Assessment Programme (IndiaRAP) launched by FedEx Express to rate highways' safety levels and to eliminate most unsafe roads. It aims to make Indian roads safer and curb fatalities. It will be hosted by Asian Institute of Transport Development.
306. ▶ India missed December 2017 deadline announced for elimination of Kala Azar (black fever) in 2017-18 Budget by Government.
-  Elimination is defined as reducing annual incidence of disease to less than 1 case per 10,000 people at sub-district level.
-  Kala-azar (visceral leishmaniasis), also known as black fever and Dumdum fever is most severe form of leishmaniasis. It is slow progressing indigenous disease caused by single-celled parasite of Leishmania family.
307. ▶ India signed \$ 84 Million Loan Agreement with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for Improvement and Expansion of Water Supply in Bihar.
308. ▶ India signed Contract for lending of € 300 million for Bangalore Metro Rail Project Phase II Line R6, with European Investment Bank (EIB).
-  Bangalore Metro Phase II is to be jointly financed by European Investment Bank (€500 million) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (€300 million). Project includes total length of 72.095 km and 61 stations (12 underground).
309. ▶ India started nationwide tiger census 2018, as largest survey of wildlife anywhere in world. India will now use more technology, including mobile app *MSTrIPES*, with higher focus on northeast to determine number of tigers in India.
-  Tiger census 2018 by National Tiger Conservation Authority will be INR 10 crores exercise, which will involve 40,000 forest guards traversing 4,00,000 sq. km. of forests.
310. ▶ India started producing Civet Coffee as most expensive coffee in world in Karnataka.
-  It is made from feces of a species of cat called 'Civet Cat'.
-  One kilogram of this coffee sells for Rs.8000 in India and at Rs.20,000 to Rs.25,000 in abroad.
311. ▶ India will get its first runway on a 'sea bridge', as Airports Authority of India (AAI) will extend Lakshadweep's Agatti Airport by building an RCC platform on the beach and shallow area which will allow bigger ATRs to operate on island.
312. ▶ India will have its own automated ocean pollution observation system called *automated moorings* from April 2018, to help monitor ocean pollution levels besides offering insights on changes in marine system. It will do away with present practice of collecting water samples from the sea and studying their pollution levels thereafter.
313. ▶ India will host Its 1st (overall 8th edition) of Theatre Olympics 2018 in February - April 2018. This 51 day event will be organized by National School of Drama under Ministry of Culture, with budget of INR 51.81 crores, with theme *Flag of Friendship*.
-  It will witness performances in 30 different Indian languages, 15 foreign languages as well as in non-verbal languages. Artists from 30 nations will participate.
314. ▶ India's *Taj Mahal* is ranked 2nd best UNESCO world heritage site in world, by travel portal TripAdvisor, after Cambodia's Angkor Wat.
315. ▶ India's First Madame Tussauds Wax Museum opened in Delhi with 50 wax models of Indian and international celebrities. Delhi centre is 23rd museum for Madame Tussauds which has centres in major cities across globe.
316. ▶ India's first food testing lab in IITs opened in IIT Kharagpur campus, after National Accreditation Board for Calibration and Testing Laboratories (NABL) approved it for certifying food items based on nutritional value and perform adulteration checks.
317. ▶ India's largest floating solar power plant inaugurated at Banasura Sagar dam in Wayanad (Kerala), with capacity of 500 kilowatts (KW).
-  It consists of 1,938 solar panels with a capacity of 260 watts, a 500 kilo volt ampere (KVA) transformer and 17 inverters.
-  Unique feature of this plant is anchoring mechanism to maintain plant with alteration of water level.
318. ▶ Indian Army signed MoU with Rajasthan State Government to improve infrastructure for their posts near the India-Pakistan border.
319. ▶ Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and American pharmaceutical firm Pfizer signed MoU to establish a 'Centre to Combat Antimicrobial Resistance' in New Delhi, to help combat growing threat of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in India.
320. ▶ Indian Naval Academy (Ezhimala) conducted 4th annual *Dilli* seminar with theme *India and Southeast Asia – Maritime Trade, Expedition and Civilisation Linkages*.
321. ▶ Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) launched India's first Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station at a petrol pump in Nagpur, in collaboration with cab aggregator Ola.
322. ▶ Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (IRSDC) Launched Idea Competition called *SRIJAN* (*Station Rejuvenation through Joint Action*) at MyGov portal, under redevelopment of 635 major Railway stations across country. Last date for submission of entries in competition is 26-03-2018, with winner for logo competition to get cash prize of INR 75000.


323. ▶ Indian Railways and General Electric (GE) Jointly inducted 2 wholly designed in India Digitally Enabled Locomotives based on Insulated-gate bipolar transistor (IGBT) technology.
- ✎ IGBT Technology has 3 terminal power semiconductor device primarily used as electronic switch. It offers greater power gain than standard bipolar type transistor combined with higher voltage operation and lower input losses.
 - ✎ GE is providing locomotive technology to Indian Railway and by 2025, through JV (Indian Railways has 26% stake), it will manufacture 1000 fuel-efficient locomotives (100 per year) for freight traffic hauling. 40 fuel efficient diesel locomotives will be manufactured in GE facility at Erie in US and rest 960 diesel locomotives will be manufactured in Marhaura (Bihar).
324. ▶ Indian Railways installed Asia's largest Solid State Interlocking (SSI) system in Kharagpur (West Bengal), which will enable station masters to set 800 different routes for trains in a few minutes.
- ✎ Interlocking railway signal prevents conflicting movements of trains.
 - ✎ New technology has been set up at cost of 39 Crores and replaces pre-1989 route relay system that only allowed operators to set maximum 423 routes.
325. ▶ Indian Railways launched *Voluntary Safety Reporting* website for its employees to anonymously report internal safety issues and hazards. It allows employees to report issues anonymously OR to mention their contact details for confidential feedback.
326. ▶ Indian Railways launched Project Saksham as its largest time-bound *upskilling* exercise for its 13 lakh employees. It will start in January 2018 and go on till September 2018. Railways Ministry also advanced target for completion of installing human waste discharge free Bio-toilets in coaches to December 2018, compared to deadline of September 2019.
327. ▶ Indian Railways launched main arch of world's highest bridge on the River Chenab in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district which will provide direct connectivity to Kashmir Valley. This bridge with height 359 metres above bed of the River Chenab and will be 30 metres higher than Eiffel Tower in Paris.
328. ▶ Indian Railway's first set of solar plants with capacity of 5 megawatt peak (MWp) launched on roof tops of Hazrat Nizamuddin, New Delhi, Anand Vihar and Delhi railway stations by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, as part of National Solar Mission in which Railways plans to commission 1000 MWp solar plants across its network.
329. ▶ Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) and Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited (RUMSL) signed agreement worth 210 Crores INR for financing shared infrastructure of 2 large Solar Parks in Madhya Pradesh.
- ✎ It is under recent US\$ 100 Million agreement between Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE), World Bank & IREDA for creating common infrastructure for ultra-mega solar parks in India to achieve 100 GW solar capacity addition target by 2022.
330. ▶ Indian railways will be running steam hauled tourist train "Fairy Queen" between Delhi Cantonment and Rewari on second and fourth Saturday of every month till April 2018. Fairy Queen was built in 1855 and is the World's oldest steam locomotive as certified by Guinness Book of Records in 1998.
331. ▶ India's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education increased from 24.5% in 2015-16 to 25.2% in 2016-17, according to All India Higher Education Survey (AIHES) 2016-17. Tamil Nadu has highest GER at 46.9%, while Bihar has least with GER of 14.9%.
332. ▶ India's Zero Hunger Programme through interventions in farm sector will be launched on occasion of World Food Day (October 16, 2017). It consists of organisations of farming system for nutrition, setting up genetic gardens for biofortified plants and initiation of 'Zero Hunger' training.
- ✎ A genetic garden for biofortified plants contains germplasm of naturally biofortified crops through plant breeding. It has plants and crops that help supplement micro-nutrient deficiencies, including iron, zinc, vitamin A and iodine among others.
 - ✎ Programme will be launched in 3 districts – Gorakhpur (Uttar Pradesh), Koraput (Odisha) and Thane (Maharashtra).
333. ▶ India's first Aviation Multi Skill Development Centre (MSDC) is launched at Chandigarh Airport's old terminal, as a CSR initiative of Airports Authority of India (AAI). It will train about 2,400 youth and women in 8 aviation job roles over next 3 years.
334. ▶ India's first Centre for Animal Law has been established at NALSAR University of Law (Hyderabad), inaugurated by Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Gandhi. It will create curriculum on animal welfare laws, including developing topics for research.
335. ▶ India's first Electronic Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) will be built in Andhra Pradesh, aimed at for providing facilities and amenities for manufacturing mobiles and allied products.
336. ▶ India's first Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) under Hybrid Annuity Mode will come up in Haridwar (Uttarakhand) and Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).
- ✎ It is a step towards realizing dream of Nirmal Ganga as first ever Hybrid Annuity-based model being applied in sewerage sector under Public Private Partnership (PPP) Mode.
 - ✎ Under this, concessionaire responsible for maintenance of project will be paid based on performance in phased manner. It will ensure continued performance of sewage infrastructure assets created due to better ownership, accountability and optimal performance.

- Hybrid Annuity Model was approved in January 2016 with 100% central sector funding. Under this - development, operation and maintenance of STPs will be undertaken by Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) created by winning bidder at local level.
- Yes Bank committed Rs 156 crore to fund first Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) to be constructed at Varanasi under Hybrid Annuity-PPP Model. YES Bank signed deal with Essel Infraprojects in this regard.
337. ▶ India's first and only design university - *World University of Design* opened at Sonapat (Haryana). WUD is India's first university dedicated to education in creative domain.
338. ▶ India's first artificial intelligence (AI) research institute inaugurated in Mumbai as *Wadhvani AI*. It will focus on researching ways to harness power of AI to solve deep rooted problems in India. Indian-American tech entrepreneurs Romesh Wadhvani and Sunil Wadhvani are committing \$30 million to institute over first 10 years.
339. ▶ India's first automatic Early Warning Dissemination System (EWDS) will be launched in March 2018 in Odisha, under *National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project*.
- It will provide Odisha's entire population residing on 480 km length coastline a pre-warning siren in event of occurrence of natural disasters like tsunami or cyclone.
340. ▶ India's first-ever broad gauge air-conditioned AC EMU suburban train flagged off by western railway (from Mumbai's Borivali station).
341. ▶ India's 'first' mobile food testing laboratory enabling on-the-spot food safety tests is launched in Goa, as first ever 'Food Safety on Wheel' mobile laboratory in India. The vehicle is equipped to conduct on-the-spot tests to check food quality and curb adulteration.
342. ▶ Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) registered National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL) as first Information Utility (IU) under IBBI (Information Utilities) Regulations 2017. S. Ramann is appointed as Managing Director of NESL.
343. ▶ International Kite Festival held at Sabarmati River Front in Ahmedabad (Gujarat).
344. ▶ International NGO *Safe Water Network* partnered with Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) to launch water ATMs, providing safe water access in Hyderabad. The initiative is supported by USAID under Urban WaSH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) Alliance Partnership and funded by Honeywell India.
345. ▶ International poetry festival *Mystic Kalinga* organized in Bhubaneswar Odisha.
346. ▶ Jammu & Kashmir State Government constituted State Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (SCPUL), for promotion of Urdu.
347. ▶ Jammu & Kashmir Student Exchange programme 'Maitreyi Yatra' held in New Delhi. It is organized by Ministry of Human Resource development with an objective to acquaint youth of Jammu & Kashmir with culture, language and development of different parts of India.
348. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Government launched *Muhafiz* (meaning *Guardian* in English) scheme, for providing institutionalized socio-economic security to workers in unorganised sector. Registered workers will also be offered Micro Credit facility with a credit limit of INR 10000.
349. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir Govt Observed *Heritage Week* from November 19 to 25, 2017 to generate awareness on preservation of state's ancient culture and environment.
350. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir government formed a committee to study scope and definition of horticulture, headed by chief secretary of Jammu Kashmir Bharat Bhushan Vyas. Study will help in improving and assessing growth of horticulture in Jammu and Kashmir.
351. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir government launched central govt's SAUBHAGYA (Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojna) with an aim to provide free electricity connections to poor people in state. SAUBHAGYA initiative was launched by Central Govt in Sep 2017 to provide electricity to 4 crore families across India by December 2018.
352. ▶ Jammu and Kashmir will host its first international martial arts games event in Srinagar in October 2018, named *Asian Martial Arts Games*.
353. ▶ Jharkhand Government launched Shaheed Gram Vikas Yojana, aimed at developing villages of freedom fighters in state.
354. ▶ Jharkhand Govt. launched *Saubhagya Yojana*, aimed at providing 24*7 electricity to approx 30000 villages across state by December 2018. Under this, above poverty line (APL) families would get electricity connection by paying Rs 500 (Rs 50 each month for 10 months).
355. ▶ Kacheguda Railway Station in Hyderabad (Telangana) is named first Energy Efficient 'A1 Category' Railway Station of Indian Railways, as it achieved 100% energy efficiency by replacing conventional lights with light-emitting diode (LED) lighting and other measures.
356. ▶ Karnataka Assembly passed *Prevention and Eradication of Inhuman Evil Practices and Black Magic Bill 2017*, aimed at eradicating inhuman evil practices propagated and performed in name of black magic by conman to exploit the common people.
- Karnataka Assembly also approved Reservation for SC / ST in Promotions in State Civil Service Jobs as it passed *Karnataka Extension of Consequential Seniority to Government Servants Promoted on the Basis of Reservation Bill 2017*.
357. ▶ Karnataka Department of Information Technology (IT) and Biotechnology (BT) signed MoU with Finland, called Karnataka-Finland Innovation Corridor.
358. ▶ Karnataka Government approved a policy that seeks to provide legal protection to transgender community and thereby safeguard them from social and sexual exploitation. Aim is to remove stigma attached to transgender community and integrate them into mainstream of


society.


359. ▶ Karnataka Government launched *Mathru Purna* scheme aimed at providing nutritious meals to about 12 lakh pregnant women and lactating mothers in state. Counselling and other maternity benefits will also be provided at Anganwadi centres under scheme.
360. ▶ Karnataka Government launched *Nava Karnataka 2025 or Vision 2025* for charting out a development roadmap for next seven years, covering 13 sectors identified for rapid development.
361. ▶ Karnataka Government signed MoU with Microsoft to empower smallholder farmers with technology-oriented solutions that will help them increase income.
362. ▶ Karnataka Govt approved *Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (KESDM) Policy 2017-22* to promote electronic design and manufacturing in state.
 - ▶ State govt also passed a diluted version of law that aims to regulate pricing and certain policies at private hospitals and medical establishments in state.
363. ▶ Karnataka High Court struck down rules laid out by central govt in 2014 that mandated pictorial health warnings to cover 85% of tobacco product packaging space, holding that they violated Constitutional norms.
 - ▶ However, 40% pictorial health warning rule, which existed prior to amendment rules, will remain in force.
364. ▶ Karnataka became first state to roll out an Electric Vehicle and Energy Storage Policy that looks not only at boosting sales of Electrical Vehicles, but also setting up charging infrastructure and special manufacturing zones.
365. ▶ Karnataka government appointed K Ratna Prabha as new chief secretary of Karnataka.
366. ▶ Karnataka government banned pillion riding on two-wheelers with less than 100 cc engine, in view of safety of pillion riders that are often victims of road accidents.
367. ▶ Karnataka government merged existing 7 health schemes to launch a unified health scheme *Arogya Bhagya*, aiming at *Treatment First and Payment Next*.
368. ▶ Karnataka government partnered with Intel company *Mobileye* to launch a project for automotive safety called *Automotive Safety Innovation*, which will create a repository of road and traffic information.
369. ▶ Karnataka government will provide free education for all girls from Class 1 to graduation level in all public and aided private schools and colleges from next academic year.
370. ▶ Karnataka's capital Bengaluru has become first Indian city to have its own logo. The with red and black logo is part English and part Kannada.
371. ▶ Kerala Government formulated a trauma-care scheme, under which all emergency care and treatment will be provided to accident victims free-of-cost for first 48 hours.
372. ▶ Kerala Tourism Department launched a 3 year long Continuous Tourist Survey (CTS) 2017-2020 to improve tourism in state, in collaboration with *Datamation Consultants*.
373. ▶ Kerala Tourism department launched campaign called *Yalla Kerala* (Yalla means lets go). to target tourists from Arab Nations (Saudi Arabia, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar).
374. ▶ Kerala government approved proposal of state Startup Mission (KSUM) to accord sabbatical leave to faculty members of all colleges who intend to establish startups. An expert panel headed by Saji Gopinath will select 10 faculty members for implementation of project.
375. ▶ Kerala government made vaccination compulsory for school admissions from next academic year onwards.
376. ▶ Kerala government raised minimum age for liquor consumption from 21 to 23 years.
377. ▶ Kerala government will soon be utilising services of robots called *Bandicoot*, to clean sewer holes in state, developed by startup *Genrobotics*. Services of robots will be initially utilised in Kerala's capital Thiruvananthapuram, which has over 5000 manholes.
378. ▶ Kerala will soon open India's first transgender-exclusive clinics at government medical colleges across state.
379. ▶ Kochi (Kerala) will host 5th *Coastal Shipping and Inland Water Transportation Business Summit 2017*.
380. ▶ Kolkata (West Bengal) for first time hosted international Puppet festival named *PUN (Puppets Unite Neighbours) International Puppet Festival*.
381. ▶ Kolkata Police imposed ban on public display of weapons in Kolkata, till 1 January 2019.
382. ▶ Kolkata's Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport became 5th in India having CAT III B landing system runway, enabling flights to land even when visibility is 50 metres with decision height of 15 meters.
383. ▶ Labour commission of Karnataka certified formation of *Karnataka State IT/ITES Employees Union (KITU)* under Trade Union Act 1926, and Karnataka Trade Unions Regulations 1958.
384. ▶ Leaders of 10 ASEAN Nations will be chief guests for Republic Day 2018 of India.
 - ▶ AESAN Nations (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) - Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, Laos, Brunei.

385. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Assembly passed Dand Vidhi (Madhya Pradesh Sanshodhan) Vidheyak 2017 that will enable death sentence for rapists of girls 12 years or below. Madhya Pradesh became first state to legalise death sentence for rapists.
386. ▶ Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched *Single Click Pension Delivery* scheme where money will go directly into account of approx 35 lakh beneficiaries. He also honoured elderly who completed age of 100 years with *Shataayu* award.
387. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Government announced measures for welfare of women in State, including financial assistance of Rs. 2 lakh for remarriage of widows.
388. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Government inaugurated a community toilet for third gender, in Mangalwara area of Bhopal. This is the first community toilet for exclusive third gender usage in India.
389. ▶ Madhya Pradesh Government launched *Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojna* for farmers, to lend money to farmers at 0 % interest.
390. ▶ Madhya Pradesh State Government approved INR 7546-crore project for linking Narmada River with Parvati River, aimed at create irrigation facilities on 2 lakh hectares of agriculture land in Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh.
391. ▶ Madhya Pradesh became first state to completely implement door-to-door garbage collection in all urban areas, using measures like solid waste management at landfill sites and processing through Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode.
392. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government imposed 50 paise per litre cess on petrol and diesel, to be used for strengthening road infrastructure across state and laying metro railroad in Bhopal and Indore.
393. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government initiated *Mission One Click scheme* to distribute 30 types of scholarship in schools, through Samagra Education Portal.
394. ▶ Madhya Pradesh government launched a mobile application *pollution metre* to spread awareness against pollution in western part of state.
395. ▶ Madhya Pradesh partnered with Nagaland and Manipur, to strengthen cultural relations between them Under *Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat* scheme. It aims to bolster sentimental bonds between people of different states.
396. ▶ Madras high court (Tamilnadu) banned use of pictures of living persons on banners and hoardings in Tamil Nadu, aimed at maintaining clean environment and also ensure that there were no unnecessary drawings on buildings and residential places.
397. ▶ Maharashtra Coastal Zone Management Authority (MCZMA) approved State government's application to increase height of planned Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Statue from 192 Metres to 210 Metres, making it Highest statue in world.
🔧 Currently, Spring Temple Buddha statue (208 metres) in China is highest in world.
398. ▶ Maharashtra Government and Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetables (subsidiary of National Dairy Development Board) signed lease agreement to set up a state-of-the-art milk and milk products processing plant.
399. ▶ Maharashtra Government approved 1% reservation for orphans in government jobs and education.
🔧 It is termed as *parallel reservation* as It will be provided under general category. It means that government does not need to increase its caste reservation quota that has already reached 52%. Out of total jobs available under general category, 1% will be only for orphans.
400. ▶ Maharashtra Government approved Ghodazari in Chandrapur district as new wildlife sanctuary in state. Located in North East of Tadoba, it will include 159 sq km of Brahmapuri forest.
401. ▶ Maharashtra Government approved Industrial Policy for Women Entrepreneurs, considering a woman or a group of women who have financed 100% for project and hired minimum 50% women employees as women entrepreneurs.
🔧 Under this, a woman entrepreneur would get financial assistance from state government in the range of Rs 15 lakh up to Rs 1 crore for capital investment in project at subsidized rate of interest up to 5%.
🔧 For projects headed by women entrepreneurs, electricity will be supplied at a subsidized rate of Rs 1-2 per unit instead of Rs 7-8 per unit charges for industries.
🔧 Maharashtra is first state to have such policy exclusively for women entrepreneurs.
402. ▶ Maharashtra Government approved climate change adaptation policy that will focus on developing environment-friendly villages and cities.
403. ▶ Maharashtra Government became first state to set up a Transgender Welfare Board, to look after education, employment, housing, and health schemes for transgenders and protect their Constitutional and human rights.
404. ▶ Maharashtra Government framed helipad policy that lays down strict guidelines for helipads, their location and other procedures to be followed. Need for such policy was felt owing to a series of near-mishaps during last year.
405. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched 4 schemes aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied sectors among economically backward segments (Beneficiaries in 18 – 41 years age group) -
🔧 1st scheme is about extending loan along with interest subsidy
🔧 2nd is for promoting group farming.

 3rd scheme is for group projects related to agro-industries and small and medium scale entrepreneurs

 4th scheme relates to skill development training in agriculture under which, training will be imparted to 2.5 lakh rural youths.

 *Annasaheb Patil Arthik Backward Development Corporation (APABDC)* will be nodal entity for implementation of these schemes.

406. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched *Maharashtra Mission 1 Million* initiative under which over 10 lakh students across state will be encouraged to play football.
407. ▶ Maharashtra Government launched 'MahaLabharthi' web portal that will help people get information about all government schemes at URL <https://www.mahalabharthi.in>. It works on basis of personal, educational and professional information provided by a person while registering.
408. ▶ Maharashtra Government proposed a 100 point Performance-linked marking system for 7.5 lakh state government employees. Out of 100 marks, 60 marks will be assigned for performance on objective parameters (*speed of completion of task, punctuality, attentiveness*), while 40 marks will be given for subjective parameters (*quality of file notings, contribution in policy making, articulation of thought*).
409. ▶ Maharashtra Government will adopt Clinical establishment (Registration and Regulation) Act, to ensure minimum standards of facilities and services provided by them.
410. ▶ Maharashtra Government will form an education board for non-English medium schools, that will prepare syllabus for non-English medium schools in Maharashtra.
411. ▶ Maharashtra Health department and Johnson and Johnson signed MoU to train rural midwives and social health activists regarding tuberculosis and maternal and infant mortality. Nearly 10,000 auxiliary nurse midwives (ANMs) and 60,000 Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) in Maharashtra will be trained by Johnson and Johnson at district level.
412. ▶ Maharashtra State Government and Tata Trusts entered into a tie-up for social development initiatives in Chandrapur district, to focus on livelihood, digital literacy, data driven governance and child protection.
413. ▶ Maharashtra became first State to adopt a fintech (Financial Technology) policy for fostering an environment for fintech startups. Under this, State Government will provide infrastructure and financial support to facilitate 300 startups over 3 years, with INR 200 crores allotted for it.
414. ▶ Maharashtra became first state to unveil Public Cloud Policy that virtually mandates state government departments to shift their data storage onto cloud.
415. ▶ Maharashtra government would raise INR 25,000 crore project on 800 acres at Heti (Kundi) village in Vidarbha, in association with Ayurveda Products Brand Patanjali. Patanjali will purchase 10,000 cows to develop a breeding centre and to carry out dairy and allied activities.
416. ▶ Maharashtra government approved to provide sanitary napkins at a subsidised rate of Rs 5 to women living in rural areas.
417. ▶ Maharashtra government banned packaged water bottles in government offices, to become plastic-free state from March 2018.
418. ▶ Maharashtra government banned sale of tobacco in shops selling Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) items in state, to ensure that youngsters do not get addicted to tobacco products.
419. ▶ Maharashtra government launched *Balasaheb Thackeray Shaheed Sanmaan scheme*, under which family members of martyrs would be provided jobs with Maharashtra State road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). Apart from jobs, wives of martyrs would also be provided with lifetime free bus passes.
420. ▶ Maharashtra government will offer cash rewards to gram panchayats and urban local bodies for making their respective areas plastic-free, with First prize being INR 5 lakh.
421. ▶ Maharashtra government will roll out *Asmita Yojana* on International Women's Day (March 8, 2018) to provide affordable (subsidised) sanitary pads to school girls and women. Under this, schoolgirls studying in Zilla Parishad schools will get sanitary napkin packet at Rs 5 while rural women can avail it at subsidised rate of INR 24 and INR 29. State government appointed *Umed*, Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission, as a nodal agency for effective implementation.
422. ▶ Maharashtra govt has set up of a Gender Budget Cell for better implementation of various schemes of Women and Child Development (WCD) by other government departments. It will enable coordination between various departments for effective implementation of schemes.
423. ▶ Mahindra and Mahindra celebrated *Mahila Kisan Diwas* and launched *Prerna* programme to empower women working in agriculture sector. It is first launched in Odisha, aiming to impact lives of over 1,500 families across 30-plus villages.
424. ▶ Mankidia tribe in Odisha has been denied habitat rights in Similipal Tiger Reserve (Odisha) amid possibilities of tribals being attacked by wild animals (especially tigers). It is notified under historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006.
-  Mankidia is one of 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) and depends on making rope with siali fibre that's richly available in Similipal.

425. ▶ Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple (Madurai (TN)) adjudged best 'Swachh Iconic Place' in India, owing to high level sanitation and tourist friendly arrangements in the temple.
426. ▶ Meghalaya Election Department entered Limca Book of Records for formation of the biggest human logo comprising young voters in state. It was part of Mission Unite (U and I towards Enrolment) as part of Special drive to enroll left out voters in age group 18 - 21 years.
427. ▶ Meghalaya Governor Ganga Prasad inaugurated *Friendship Gate* for Indian and Bangladesh border guards, aimed to have a Wagah-like beating retreat ceremony for India's Border Security Force (BSF) and Border Guards Bangladesh.
428. ▶ Meghalaya became first state to operationalize a *Community Participation and Public Services Social Audit Act 2017*, a law that makes social audit of government programmes and schemes a part of government practice.
429. ▶ Minister of Communications Manoj Sinha launched DARPAN *Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for A New India* Project to improve quality of service, add value to services and achieve "financial inclusion" of un-banked rural population. It aims of financial inclusion for rural population and it is targeted to complete the project by March 2018.
430. ▶ Minister of Health and Family Welfare JP Nadda launched *Viral Load testing* for all People Living with HIV/AIDS, to provide free of cost viral load testing to 12 lakh PLHIV for treatment in India at least once a year. It will empower medical officers to detect failure on first line treatment and therefore save PLHIV from developing resistance to drugs.
431. ▶ Minister of Railways announced various decisions for Transformation of Indian Railways -
- ▶ Highest priority to passenger safety - Eliminating 5000 unmanned crossings by 2018, Shift to LHB coaches from ICF coaches, Use of MTRC (Mobile Train Radio Communication) and TPWS (Train Protection & Warning System). RPF staff will not be allowed to check tickets, which is the function of TTEs.
 - ▶ Transforming through technology - Use of mobile apps for monitoring passenger services, wi-fi connectivity and increase speed of around 700 trains, GPS based tracking of rail movement.
 - ▶ Energy efficiency - Complete electrification by 2022 to save INR 10,000 crores.
 - ▶ Faster Redevelopment of stations
 - ▶ Railway Stations with less trains to be developed as Multi-utility centres
 - ▶ Focus on welfare of field staff - Improving working conditions of Group D employees that work hard is to ensure track safety.
 - ▶ Railways will work with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to devise safety mechanisms to make travel by trains safer.
432. ▶ Minister of State (IC) for Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER), Jitendra Singh announced *North East Rural Livelihood Project* as an exclusive rural Livelihood scheme for North-eastern states. It aims at helping tribals and lower socioeconomic groups, Initially in Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. Assistance will be provided to over 10000 Self Help Groups (SHGs).
433. ▶ Minister of Women & Child Development, Maneka Gandhi launched NARI portal, aimed at providing women citizens with easy access to information on government schemes and initiatives for women.
- ▶ e-Samvad portal is also developed which will be inaugurated soon. It will be a platform for NGOs and Civil Societies to interact with Ministry of Women & Child Development.
434. ▶ Ministries of Power and Textiles partnered under SAATHI (*Sustainable and Accelerated Adoption of efficient Textile technologies to Help small Industries*) Initiative Under which Power Ministry's PSU Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) would provide energy efficient Powerlooms, motors and Rapier kits to small and medium Powerloom units at no cost. This will result in energy and cost savings to unit owner and he may repay to EESL over a 4 - 5 years.
435. ▶ Ministries of Railways, Human Resource Development and Department of Science & Technology signed an MoU for joint funding of Technology Mission for Indian Railways, worth approx 300 Crores INR. Funding percentage is - Railways (30%), Human Resource Development (25%) AND Department of Science & Technology (25%).
436. ▶ Ministry for Development of North-East Region (DoNER) will set up *NITI Forum for North-East* to recommend suitable interventions for sustainable growth in North East Region (NER). It will be co-chaired by Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog (Rajiv Kumar Currently) and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER).
437. ▶ Ministry of *Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation* signed A MOU with Bihar and Jharkhand state governments for completion of balance works of North Koel reservoir project at an estimated cost of INR 1622 crores.
- ▶ North Koel project was started in 1972 but was later halted in 1993. It is situated on North Koel river (a tributary of Sone river), that will provide irrigation to 1,11,521 hectares of land annually in most drought prone areas of Palamu and Garhwa districts in Jharkhand and Aurangabad and Gaya districts in Bihar.
 - ▶ Out of cost of balance works of INR 1622 crores, component of INR 1013 crores shall be borne by central Govt. as a grant from LTIF under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY).
438. ▶ Ministry of Civil Aviation awarded 325 air routes under 2nd phase of government's flagship UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam naagrik) regional connectivity scheme.





- ✎ Government announced that 73 underserved airports and helipads will be connected under phase 2 of UDAN Scheme. Interglobe Aviation (parent firm of IndiGo) was awarded a maximum of 20 proposals, followed by SpiceJet that won 17 proposals.
 - ✎ Around 40% or 129 of 325 air routes were awarded to newly created category of 'priority areas' that include Jammu and Kashmir, Northeastern and hill states, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands.
 - ✎ UDAN 2 will provide over 26 lakh seats per annum that will be covered with airfare cap of INR 2500 per hour of flying.
 - ✎ Funding for UDAN 2 will be INR 617 crores, significantly more than 213 crores in First Phase.
439. ▶ Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) sanctioned INR 200 crores for flood affected reconstruction works in the 4 North Eastern States - Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram.
440. ▶ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY) has set up an internal expert committee to advise government on a policy on artificial intelligence (AI).
441. ▶ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeITY) launched *Stree Swabhiman* Initiative aimed at creating sustainable model for providing adolescent girls and women an access to affordable sanitary products by leveraging Common Service Centres (CSCs). CSCs will provide access to affordable, reliable and modern (eco-friendly) sanitary napkins (menstrual pads) to adolescent girls and women in rural areas.
442. ▶ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched *Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative* to strengthen cybersecurity ecosystem in India, in association with National e-Governance Division (NeGD). It will leverage expertise of the IT industry in cybersecurity and will be operated on principles of awareness, education and enablement.
443. ▶ Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched *Wood is Good* Campaign under Partnership for Land Use Science (Forest-Plus). It was launched during conference on *Sustainable landscapes and forest ecosystems: Theory to Practice* held in New Delhi.
444. ▶ Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) refused captive breeding of Chiru (Tibetan antelope), whose underfur is used for making famous shahtoosh shawls.
- ✎ Chiru have been for long time for their underfur, which is renowned for its quality which is traditionally woven into an extremely fine fabric to make Shahtoosh shawls.
445. ▶ Ministry of Environment and Forests gave stage-I forest clearance for construction of Kaleswaram Lift Irrigation project stage-one in Telangana. Ministry approved about 3,200 hectares of forest land for project,
- ✎ Thus project aims to irrigate 7,38,851 hectares of land in upland areas of former undivided districts of Adilabad, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Warangal, Medak, Nalgonda and Rangareddy Its estimated cost is over Rs 80,500 Cr.
446. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released 15th India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2017 (by Forest Survey of India (FSI)) -
- ✎ Total forest and tree cover in India increased over 8,021 sq km (80.20 million hectare), which is 1 % increase from 2015. Forest cover increased by 6778 sq km and tree cover increased 1243 sq km. Total forest and tree cover is 24.39% of geographical area of country.
 - ✎ Globally, India is ranked 10th in terms of forest and tree cover.
 - ✎ State-wise break-up -
 - ✎ 7 States/UTs have more than 75% forest cover - Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Manipur.
 - ✎ 8 States/UTs have forest cover between 33% to 75% - Tripura, Goa, Sikkim, Kerala, Uttarakhand, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Chhattisgarh and Assam.
 - ✎ Top 5 States with maximum Forest cover - Madhya Pradesh (77,414 sq km) Arunachal Pradesh (66,964 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,547 sq km).
 - ✎ States with highest Forest cover in terms of percentage geographical area - Lakshadweep (90.33%), Mizoram (86.27%) and Andaman & Nicobar Islands (81.73%).
 - ✎ Mangrove cover is 4,921 sq km and has increased by 181 sq kms.
 - ✎ Water bodies inside forests have increased by 2,647 sq kms during last decade. Maharashtra leads with 432 sq kms, followed by Gujarat (428 sq kms).
447. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change notified Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2016, that will replace Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules 2010 to address issues related to conservation and development of wetlands in a comprehensive manner. Highlights of new rules -
- ✎ Wetlands shall be conserved in accordance with the principle of 'wise use' for maintaining their ecological integrity.
 - ✎ Rules prohibit any diversion to natural water inflows and outflows of wetland.

- Wetland Authority will be set up by State Governments or UTs (headed by State Chief Minister) to deal with wetland conservation, regulation and management.
448. ▶ Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched *Green Good Deeds* campaign to sensitise people and students about climate change and global warming.
449. ▶ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) launched SAMEEP (Students and MEA Engagement Program), as an outreach mission that aims to take Indian foreign policy and its global engagements to students across country and also to look at diplomacy as a career option. SAMEEP aims to familiarise school and college students in India about functioning of MEA.
450. ▶ Ministry of Health & Family Welfare launched daily regimen for TB patients under *The Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP)*, updating frequency of regimen for treatment of tuberculosis (TB) from 3 weekly to daily.
- ▶ Daily FDC anti-TB drugs will be made available free of cost to private pharmacy / practitioners to dispense to TB patients.
451. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) launched India Hypertension Management Initiative (IHMI), that aims to reduce disability and death related to cardiovascular disease (CVD). It also aims to strengthen CVD component of Health Ministry's National Program for Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases and Stroke (NPCDCS).
452. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare announced to increase number of AMRIT pharmacy stores by 4 times by end of 2018 from existing 111.
- ▶ So far, over 50 lakh patients bought discounted drugs (60 to 90% less than market price) from AMRIT (Affordable medicine and reliable implants for treatment) stores and saved over INR 267 crores.
453. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched 2 new free contraceptives *Antara* and *Chayya* in 10 states under Mission ParivarVikas. Antara is injectable contraceptive (effective for 3 months) where Chayya is contraceptive pill (effective for 1 week).
454. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched Allied and Health care Professional Database portal to make data repository robust to ensure better systems and frameworks for healthcare workforce in country, to help tracking number of professionals and streams of allied and health care professions.
455. ▶ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will launch *National Programme for Control of Viral Hepatitis*, as a new scheme free treatment of Hepatitis C from 2018-19, with focus on free anti-viral treatment of Hepatitis C. For this, budget of INR 600 crores is marked for 3 years.
456. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) exempted cruise tourists arriving with e-visa from the requirement of biometric enrolment for a period of three years (till 2020), to promote cruise tourism in India.
457. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) extended Anti-Narcotics Scheme for 3 more years to combat illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances, with an estimated budget of INR 21 crores. It was launched in October 2004 for 5 years and has been extended twice since then.
458. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will move a proposal before Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) for taking over Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), which is currently under Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).
- ▶ BCAS is responsible for forming policies related to security of all commercial flights. Security agencies at airports, including Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), local police and Intelligence Bureau (IB) are bound by regulations passed by BCAS.
- ▶ After BCAS is taken over by MHA, CISF will assume larger role in airport security. It will help in better coordination and monitoring, since CISF, IB and state intelligence all report to MHA.
459. ▶ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) will set up Cyber Warrior Police Force (CWPF) and Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) to tackle internet-related crimes such as cyber threats, child pornography and online stalking, under MHA's new Cyber & Information Security (CIS) Division.
460. ▶ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched *Protocol for Star Rating of Garbage-Free Cities* in Goa, under Swachh Bharat Mission – Urban. It has 7-star rating system for cities, based on multiple cleanliness indicators for solid waste management. City will be given rating of 3 star or above only after it is declared ODF (Open Defecation Free).
461. ▶ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs approved construction of 1.87 more affordable houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), that aims at building 2 Crore Houses for urban poor by 2022. This round has taken number of houses approved under PMAY to 39.25 lakh. Haryana has been sanctioned maximum number of houses in this round.
462. ▶ Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) launched Liveability index to rate 116 Indian cities, funded by World Bank.
- ▶ It aims to measure quality of life in 99 smart cities, capital cities and those with a population of over one million.
- ▶ Index will rank cities based on set of 79 parameters related to various aspects.
463. ▶ Ministry of New and Renewable Energy under *Development of Solar Cities* scheme approved 60 Cities including 13 Pilot and 5 Model Cities up to 12th Five-year Plan period.
464. ▶ Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas launched country-wide Pradhan Mantri LPG Panchayat scheme to distribute LPG connections among rural areas where conventional fuel is used for domestic purposes.

465. ▶ Ministry of Power launched Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA) in Manipur, aiming to include 1.75 lakh households of state under this scheme. Government will provide financial assistance for strengthening power infrastructure, under Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (SAUBHAGYA) that was launched in September 2017.
466. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport & Highways has released India's first ever Highway Capacity Manual named Indo-HCM, to guide road engineers and policy makers about road expansion. It lays down guidelines for when and how to expand or manage different types of roads and their intersections and level of services to be put in place.
467. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) will implement *Value Engineering Program* to promote use of new technologies, materials and equipment in highways projects executed either under Public Private Partnership (PPP) or public funding mode.
- ▶ VEP aims to ensure that roads or bridges and other assets get constructed much faster, are structurally stronger and more durable.
 - ▶ MoRTH also reconstituted nine-member National Panel of Experts (NPE) for approving proposals for use of new technologies, material and equipment in highway sector. It will be chaired by SR Tambe.
468. ▶ Ministry of Road Transport and Highways made FASTag mandatory for all new four-wheelers from December 1, 2017, amending Central Motor Vehicle (CMV) Rules 1989 as per Motor Vehicles Act 1989.
- ▶ FASTag is device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for making toll payments directly from savings account linked to it. It is affixed on windscreen of vehicle and enables commuter to drive through toll plazas, without stopping for cash transactions.
469. ▶ Ministry of Science & Technology announced 4 new schemes to promote young scientists and researchers in country - Teacher Associateship for Research Excellence (TARE), Overseas Visiting Doctoral Fellowship (OVDF), Distinguished Investigator Award (DIA) and AWSAR (Augmenting Writing Skills for Articulating Research). These schemes aim at early recognition and reward to young talent in field of science.
470. ▶ Ministry of Science & Technology launched Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Vigyan Gram Sankul Pariyojana to implement appropriate S&T interventions for sustainable development through cluster approach in Uttarakhand.
- ▶ Under This, Department of Science and Technology (DST) will adopt few clusters of villages in Uttarakhand and transform them to become self-sustainable in time bound manner.
471. ▶ Ministry of Shipping and IIT Chennai signed MoU to set up of a National Technology Centre for Ports, Waterways and Coasts (NTCPWC) at IIT Chennai, under Shipping Ministry *Sagarmala Programme*. It will act as a technology arm of Ministry of Shipping for providing technological inputs and support for Ports, Inland Waterways Authority of India and other institutions.
472. ▶ Ministry of Shipping renamed Kandla Port Trust (Gujarat) as Deendayal Port Trust, using powers conferred on it under Indian Ports Act 1908.
473. ▶ Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Maruti Suzuki India signed MoU to support Skill India Mission in automobile industry, to provide high employment potential trades related to automobile and manufacturing industry to youth under Skill India Mission.
474. ▶ Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs will introduce first ever ranking system for National Sports Federations (NSFs), to build healthy competition between sports bodies. Sports federations will be ranked on the basis of administrative capability, transparency, talent-spotting ability, and medal count of athletes etc.
475. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched Management Information System (MIS) portal for Anganwadi Services Training Programme. It enables submission of applications and estimates by NGOs for carrying out Anganwadi Services (ICDS) Training through Anganwadi Workers Training Centres (AWTC) and Middle-Level Training Centres (MLTC).
476. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched beneficiary module of Rapid Reporting System (RRS), a monitoring system for Scheme for Adolescent Girls (SAG). It will facilitate monitoring of SAG and take corrective measures by ensuring faster flow of information, accurate targeting of beneficiaries and reduction of leakages. URL for the portal is 'sag-rrs.nic.in.'
477. ▶ Ministry of Women and Child Development will establish National Women Entrepreneurship Council (NVEC) as an umbrella organization for socio-economic gender parity, financial inclusion and economic empowerment of women in India and to promote entrepreneurship among women.
478. ▶ Ministry of tourism organized tourism festival named *Paryatan Parv*, to draw focus on benefits of tourism and showcase the cultural diversity of country.
- ▶ Tourism Ministry gave Letters of Intent (LoI) to seven shortlisted companies for adopting 14 monuments under Adopt a Heritage Scheme at closing ceremony of 'Paryatan Parv' held in New Delhi.
479. ▶ Mizoram's Dampa Tiger Reserve now holds highest number of clouded leopards in Southeast Asia with population density of clouded leopards being 5.14 per 100 sq km.


480. ▶ MoU signed between Tourism and Hospitality Sector Skill Council (THSC), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) AND Airbnb (community-driven hospitality company), to promote entrepreneurship under Government's Skill India Programme.
481. ▶ Music video prepared by Telangana Jagruthi to celebrate 9 day Bathukamma festival has been released.
482. ▶ NITI Aayog launched first course on Sustainable Urban planning using remote sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS) at IIT Kanpur's outreach centre in Noida (UP). This is first course under Global Initiative on Academic Network (GIAN) Program of HRD Ministry, that aims to boost quality of higher education through international collaboration.
- ▶ Course aims to impart high level remote sensing and GIS skills to allow them managing rapidly changing urban environment, with focus on water related activities.
483. ▶ NITI Aayog released a comprehensive 'Healthy States, Progressive India' report in New Delhi.
- ▶ Health Index is a weighted composite Index, which for larger States, is based on indicators in three domains - Health Outcomes (70%), Governance and Information (12%), Key Inputs and Processes (18%).
 - ▶ Large States -
 - ▶ Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu are top 3 states in overall performance.
 - ▶ Jharkhand, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh are top 3 ranking larger States in terms of annual incremental performance.
 - ▶ Smaller States -
 - ▶ Mizoram ranked first, followed by Manipur in Overall performance.
 - ▶ Manipur and Goa are top 2 in terms of annual incremental performance.
484. ▶ NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (*government's flagship program to promote innovation and entrepreneurship nationwide in schools, universities and industry*), has selected additional 1500 Schools for establishment of Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs), taking number of schools under mission to 2441 across India.
- ▶ ATLs aims to be innovative play workspaces for students between Grade VI to Grade XII, which stimulate innovations combining science & technology.
485. ▶ Nagaland Assembly passed a resolution revoking provisions of 33 % reservation for women in urban local bodies.
486. ▶ Nagaland became first North Eastern state to launch Point of Sale (PoS) for electricity bill payment, launched at Kohima Electrical Sub-division-1.
487. ▶ Naresh Kumar Gupta has been appointed as Lokayukta (Ombudsman) of Madhya Pradesh.
488. ▶ National Centre for Combustion Research and Development (NCCRD) inaugurated at Indian Institute of Technology (Madras) in Tamil Nadu as world's largest combustion research centre to understand combustion.
- ▶ NCCRD is supported by Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) and has been established at cost of INR 90 crores.
 - ▶ It will provide impetus to research in 'Alternative Energy and Environmental Protection' by focusing on effective utilisation of combustion as means of thermo-chemical energy conversion.
489. ▶ National Green Tribunal (NGT) declared Amarnath Shrine as *silence zone* and prohibited religious offerings like chanting of hymns, and ringing bells beyond the entry point. It is aimed at protecting eco-sensitive Amarnath cave shrine.
- ▶ NGT also imposed complete ban on plastic items like carry bags, plates and cutlery in towns located on banks of the River Ganga in Haridwar and Rishikesh.
490. ▶ National Green Tribunal (NGT) directed that only 50,000 pilgrims will be allowed to visit Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu to avoid any unwanted incidents.
- ▶ NGT directed state government of Delhi to seize 10-year-old diesel taxis without any delay as they cause air pollution.
 - ▶ NGT Directed Amarnath Shrine Board to submit a status report by December 2017, about reasons for not providing proper infrastructure facilities to pilgrims travelling to Amarnath Shrine.
491. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched countrywide Free Eye Check-up Campaign and distribution of spectacles for truck drivers as their Poor vision increases risk of collisions.
- ▶ NHAI also launched its new website AND Project Monitoring Information System (PMIS) Mobile App for better monitoring of NHAI projects.
492. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched ranking system for over 300 toll plazas, on the basis of cleanliness, staff behaviour, availability of ambulance and cranes in case of any emergency on highways. Every quarter, 3 best toll plazas will be identified.
493. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will launch pilot project *Pay as you use tolling* on Delhi Mumbai national highway.
- ▶ It involves implementing a satellite based electronic toll collection system running on GPS/GSM technology for selected commercial vehicles on a national highway for 1 year.
 - ▶ This tolling system will work on combination of mobile telecommunications technology (GSM) and satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS). It will deduct money from vehicle account, credit money to concessionaire within a day and open toll gate.










494. ▶ National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will soon get powers to approve highway projects with construction cost of more than Rs 1,000 crore to ensure faster implementation of Bharatmala programme.
- ▶ Such projects are currently approved by Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) and are often delayed.
 - ▶ Bharatmala programme envisions 44 economic corridors across country at cost of at least Rs 5 lakh crore. It involves constructing 24,000km of fresh highways.
495. ▶ National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) retained its 'A' status of accreditation of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) for fourth consecutive term.
- ▶ NHRC was awarded 'A' status for first time in 1999 which it retained in 2006 and 2011 reviews.
 - ▶ The 'A' accreditation is given to those human rights institutions, which are found fully compliant with UN-mandated Paris Principles.
496. ▶ National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) New Delhi will conduct *INDIAsize* as a National Sizing Survey to develop a comprehensive size chart for ready-to-wear industry based on body measurements of 25000 Indians in age group 15 - 65 years. India will be 15th Nation to complete a national sizing survey.
- ▶ Findings of study will impact various other sectors like automotive, aerospace, fitness and sport, art and computer gaming where insights from this data can produce ergonomically designed products suited for Indian population.
497. ▶ National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) (Ministry of Women and Child Development) launched intensive training program for Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Master Trainers in New Delhi. It aims to train 20000 EWRs covering 50 EWRs from each district by March 2018.
498. ▶ National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog's SATH (Sustainable Action for Transforming Human capital) Program was launched in Assam. SATH program aims to provide structured support to Assam in identifying key health priorities and implement solutions towards transforming the health and improving the well-being of people of state.
499. ▶ National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) capped prices of 51 essential medicines, as it notified ceiling prices of 36 medicines and revised ceiling prices of 15 medicines within range 6 to 53%.
500. ▶ National Research Centre for Banana (NRCB) has signed a memorandum of cooperation with Andhra Pradesh State Government to develop technologies relating to banana production.
501. ▶ National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) signed MoU with Andhra Pradesh Innovation Society (APIS) to encourage start-up in manufacturing & technology driven sectors.
502. ▶ Nationwide health campaign to sensitise women about early screening and the preventive care for cancer has been launched with Theme *Nurturing the Nurturer*. It is launched by FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO) in partnership with Apollo Hospitals.
503. ▶ Network for Certification and Conservation of Forests (NCCF) launched India's internationally benchmarked Forest Management Certification Standard (FMCS). FMCS enlists measures to be taken for responsible utilisation of natural resources and trade of forest products.
504. ▶ Newton will be India's official entry for the Best Foreign Film category at Oscars 2018, starring Raj Kumar Rao and directed by Amit Masurkar.
- ▶ It was chosen by Film Federation of India's selection committee headed by Telugu producer C V Reddy.
505. ▶ Nine member committee constituted by Karnataka government recommended separate state flag, discounting any constitutional / legal hurdles for it.
506. ▶ Niti Aayog announced to set up a special women cell, to extend support to women start-ups and entrepreneurs.
507. ▶ Niti Aayog will set up a Methanol Economy Fund worth Rs 4,000-5,000 crore to promote production and use of clean fuel, by converting high ash content coal into methanol and such a plant is expected to be set up by Coal India. Methanol can be used as an energy producing fuel, transportation fuel and cooking fuel.
508. ▶ North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) will commission important hydro-electric projects in Arunachal Pradesh in 2018 - 600 MW Kameng Hydro Electric Project and 110 MW Pare Hydro Electric Project.
509. ▶ North Korea and South Korea will march together under a single unified Korean flag at Winter Olympics 2018 in Pyeongchang (South Korea). They agreed to field a joint women's ice hockey team after rare peace talks. These are first high-level talks between 2 Koreas in over 2 years.
510. ▶ Northeast India's first regional Centre for Agriculture with collaboration of Israel will be inaugurated in Mizoram in March 2018. It will be first such centre in North East region of India being established with Israeli collaboration.
511. ▶ Odisha Government inaugurated Purvasha Folk and Tribal Art Museum at Barkul near Chilika, to promote the cultural heritage of Odisha.
512. ▶ Odisha Government is creating 1.2 lakh acre land bank across state for allocation to industrial sector in order to avoid repeat of Posco Chaos. Companies need pay only base premium upfront for land and annual rent for rest of 90 years lease period.

-  Posco (South Korea based world's fourth-largest steelmaker) signed agreement with Odisha government to set up a 12-million-tonne-capacity steel project in Jagatsinghpur district. It was biggest FDI in India at that point with worth \$12 billion. However, POSCO surrendered the land due to its inability to start work on the project, amid land acquisition issues.
513. ▶ Odisha Government is preparing 2nd phase of State Climate Change Action Plan (SCCAP) for next five years with an outlay of Rs. 31667 crores. First phase of SCCAP was implemented from 2010-11 to 2015-16 and based on it, 102 action points in 12 major sectors have been identified.
514. ▶ Odisha Government launched *Odisha e-Hospital Management Information System (OeHMIS)* online platform that hosts all clinical parameters of patients and reporting of performance criteria of hospitals. It also enables viewing and downloading individual electronic health records.
515. ▶ Odisha Government launched *Sampurna (Sishu Abond Matru Mrityuhara Purna Nirakaran Abhijan) Yojna* for pregnant women. Under this, government will provide INR 1000 as transport cost for pregnant women to travel to hospital.
516. ▶ Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) and Singapore-based ITE Education Services (ITEES) signed a MoU for skill development in State.
517. ▶ Odisha State Government announced 'Mukshyamantri Kalakar Sahayata Jojana' (MMKSJ), under which artists from across the state will get a monthly assistance of Rs 1200, to benefit approx 50000 artists from across state.
-  Odisha government also changed eligibility criteria as compared to previous artist assistance scheme, under which only 4000 artists were being given Rs 1000 per month. As per new criteria, any male artist can avail assistance under scheme after attaining the age of 50 years (earlier 60 years), while females have relaxation of 10 years.
518. ▶ Odisha approved establishment of Handlooms and Handicrafts Development and Promotion Council in capital Bhubaneswar, to improve growth of handlooms and handicrafts sectors.
519. ▶ Odisha approved long-term bauxite linkage policy that would help Vedanta's Lanjigarh alumina refinery to source bauxite from government-owned Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). Now, 70 % of total production by OMC will now be available for long-term linkage.
520. ▶ Odisha government approved launching first Odia language university for post-graduation in literature and linguistics among other subjects. It will be established in Bhubaneswar and will also carve out ways to make Odia script more adaptable to technology.
521. ▶ Odisha government imposed 7 month ban on sea fishing, to protect Olive Ridley sea turtles, as breeding season of endangered marine animals is approaching.
522. ▶ Odisha government launched *Arpana* Portal for online processing of applications for pension revision in respect of pre-2016 pensioners.
523. ▶ Odisha government launched a scheme to boost fish production named *Fish Pond Yojana*, with provision of 96 crores. It aims to create additional 2,200 hectare of fresh water aquaculture farming with 50 per cent financial assistance to farmers.
-  Odisha government also released approx 365 crore rupees for rain-hit farmers in 19 districts of State.
524. ▶ Odisha government signed agreement with Software Technology Park of India (STPI), to set up an incubator at IIT Bhubaneswar for promoting research, named *Centre of Excellence for Virtual & Augmented Reality (VARCoE)*.
525. ▶ Odisha government will launch *Nabakrushna Choudhury Seccha Unnayan Yojana* to provide irrigation facility to about 55,000 hectare of agricultural land across Odisha, named after former CM Nabakrushna Choudhury. It will have an outlay of INR 635 crores over 3 years.
526. ▶ Odisha police will go digital from January 1 2018, as routine work in police stations will be computerised under Criminal Tracking and Networking System (CCTNS), under national e-governance initiative.
527. ▶ Odisha state Govt. splitted tourism and culture departments, renaming cultural wing as *Odia Language, Literature and Culture Department*. It was also decided to set up a 'Heritage Cabinet' to protect the monuments and ancient temples.
528. ▶ Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) discovered oil in WO-24-3 well located west of Mumbai High fields in Arabian Sea, estimated to hold reserve of 20 million tonnes. Mumbai Oil Field currently produces 205,000 barrels of oil per day (just over 10 million tonnes per annum).
529. ▶ Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated eastern India's first compressed natural gas (CNG) stations in Bhubaneswar (Odisha).
-  Mr Pradhan Also Stated that for Period of April - Oct of FY 2017-18, Iraq has overtaken Saudi Arabia to become India's top crude oil supplier. Iraq Suplied 25.8 million tonnes (MT) of oil to India in concerned Period, compared to Saudi Arabia's 21.9 MT.
530. ▶ Orange Festival of Music and Adventure held in Dambuk village of Arunachal Pradesh.
531. ▶ Oxford Dictionaries declared 'Aadhaar' as Hindi Word of the Year for 2017, during Jaipur Literature Festival 2018.
532. ▶ PM Narendra Modi Launched 60MW Tuirial Hydroelectric Power Project in Mizoram. It has been constructed by North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (Neepeco).
533. ▶ PM Narendra Modi announced investing 90000 crore for building a network of highways and roads in North Eastern region over 2 - 3 years. Out of this, 60000 crore would be spent under Special Accelerated Road Development Programme and 30000 crore will be spent under Bharatmala project.

534. ▶ PM Narendra Modi approved INR 2000 crores for setting up Aadhaar enrolment and updation facilities in around 15,000 post offices by March 31, 2018.
535. ▶ PM Narendra Modi has laid foundation stone for four sewerage projects under Namami Gange programme and four National Highway projects at Mokama in Bihar with total outlay of approx INR 3700 crores.
536. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 1st phase of Hyderabad Metro Rail project, with 30-km stretch between Miyapur and Nagole. PM Modi also launched mobile app named 'T Savari' for Metro passengers.
537. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated 4th Container Terminal (FCT) of Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) in Mumbai, as India's Largest Container Terminal. It has been developed at estimated cost of INR 7915 crores.
- ▶ New FCT will add capacity of 24 lakh containers per year in Phase-I and after completion of Phase-II in 2022, capacity of JNPT will be 100 lakh containers per year.
538. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Dr.BR Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC) in New Delhi, constructed at cost of INR 195 crores.
539. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated a unique world-class hospital at Swaminarayan Gurukul Vidyapeeth Pratisthanam in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. It is an integration of Yoga, Ayurveda, and Allopathy with world-class facilities in all the 3 streams.
540. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated newly constructed Dorjee Khandu State Convention Centre in Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh).
541. ▶ PM Narendra Modi inaugurated project commencement of Rajasthan oil refinery at Pachpadra in Barmer district, as first one to be set up in Rajasthan. It is as a joint venture of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Rajasthan government, with budget of INR 43000 crores and expected to be operational in 4 years.
542. ▶ PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of AIIMS Bilaspur and Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Una.
543. ▶ PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of four-lane cable-stayed bridge between Okha and Beyt Dwarka with length 2.32 km and to be constructed at cost of INR 962.43 crores.
- ▶ PM also announced setting up of India's first marine police training institute at Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district.
 - ▶ He inaugurated first phase of Ghogha-Dahej Roll-on Roll-off ferry service at Ghogha in Bhavnagar district. It will cut down distance between Saurashtra and South Gujarat by 10 times.
544. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched *Amma two-wheeler Scheme* meant to provide scooters at subsidised rates to working women on occasion of former Tamilnadu CM Jayalalithaa's 70th birth anniversary.
- ▶ Under this Scheme, beneficiary will be given 50% of cost of a two-wheeler or grant of INR 25000, covering 1 lakh working women annually.
545. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- ▶ PMGDISHA is expected to make 6 crore rural households digitally literate by March 2019 as it aims at imparting digital literacy to citizens in rural areas free of cost.
 - ▶ He also laid foundation stone for Bhadbhut Barrage to be built over Narmada River in Bharuch (Gujarat).
546. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched Sardar Sarovar Dam, (world's second biggest and India's Biggest Dam) on the river Narmada in Gujarat.
- ▶ It is 1.2-km-long and 163 metres deep. It will irrigate over 18 lakh hectares in state.
 - ▶ Before this, Gujarat CM Vijay Rupani had flagged off a statewide *Narmada Mahotsav Yatra* from Surendranagar district.
 - ▶ Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan will receive water and electricity supplied from dam.
 - ▶ Grand Coulee Dam in USA is world's biggest Dam.
547. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched Umang mobile application as an integrated platform for government to citizen services.
- ▶ Umang is an acronym for *unified mobile app for new age*. It currently hosts around 162 services from 33 government departments.
548. ▶ PM Narendra Modi launched development schemes worth Rs 1,000 crore for UT of Daman and Diu, Including a flight connecting Ahmedabad to coastal town of Diu. PM Modi also flagged off *Run for New India* marathon in Surat (Gujarat).
549. ▶ PM Narendra Modi released a postage stamp on different aspects of Lord Ram's life at historic Tulsi Manas Mandir Varanasi.
550. ▶ Pelican Bird Festival-2018 is held for first in Atapaka Bird Sanctuary on at Kolleru lake in Andhra Pradesh. Recently, Atapaka Bird Sanctuary was recognised as one of the largest pelicanry in the world.
551. ▶ Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) enhanced upper age limit for joining National Pension Scheme (NPS) to 65 years (from 60 currently).
552. ▶ Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated first phase of Piped Natural Gas supply system in Bhubaneswar (Odisha). As part of the City Gas Distribution project, 25000 households in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack would get PNG connection by end of 2018 with expenses around 1700 crores.
553. ▶ Petroleum Ministry preponed introduction of BS (Bharat Stage)-VI grade auto fuels in National Capital Territory, Delhi with effect from 1 April 2018 instead of 1 April 2020, Considering serious pollution levels in Delhi and adjoining areas. It is aimed at reducing vehicular emissions and improving the fuel efficiency to reduce the carbon footprints and keep a healthy environment.

554. ▶ Power Ministry extended waiver of inter-state power transmission charges and losses for solar and wind power projects commissioned till 31 March 2022, to promote clean energy sources. Waiver will be available to solar and wind projects for 25 years from date of commissioning.
- ▶ It holds significance in view of India's ambitious target of having 175GW of renewable energy capacities (100GW of solar, 60GW of wind energy, 10GW energy from Biomass and 5 GW from Hydel).
 - ▶ Earlier, waiver was available to solar and wind power projects commissioned till 31 December 2019, and 31 March 2019 respectively.
555. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind dedicated 4 Launched projects in Andhra Pradesh - Andhra Pradesh Fibregrid, Andhra Pradesh Surveillance Project, Drone Project and Free Space Optical Communication or FSOC system.
- ▶ Fibregrid - It aims at providing affordable high-speed internet service to every household in state at nominal rates, also termed as Triple Play2.
556. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Naval Maritime Aircraft Museum in Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), featuring maritime patrol aircraft Tupolev-142M.
557. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind launched 100 crore rupees Mata Amritanandamayi Math Project *Jeevamritham* to provide filtration system for cleaning drinking water to 5000 villages across India, in kollam district in kerala.
558. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind promulgated an ordinance under Article 123 of Constitution to amend Indian Forest Act 1927 to encourage bamboo plantation by farmers in private lands.
- ▶ This ordinance omits bamboo (taxonomically a grass) grown in non-forest areas from definition of trees, exempting it from requiring permits for felling or transportation of bamboo grown in non-forest areas.
559. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated Shirdi airport in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra and flagged off inaugural flight of Alliance Air from Shirdi to Mumbai.
560. ▶ President Ram Nath Kovind laid foundation stone for link-4 of Saurashtra Narmada Avatan Irrigation Scheme (SAUNI) Yojana .
- ▶ SAUNI is multipurpose project that aims to solve water problems of parched Saurashtra region of Gujarat. It was launched by PM Narendra Modi during his tenure as Gujarat CM.
 - ▶ It aims to fill up 115 major dams in Saurashtra by diverting overflow of water from Sardar Sarovar Dam on Narmada River.
 - ▶ Its unique feature is making pipe canals instead of conventional open canals which led to no acquisition of land and less loss of water.
 - ▶ It has network of canals comprising 1,125-km network of pipelines that will help to channel water into farms.
561. ▶ Puducherry Government banned use of plastic packaging materials of less than 51 microns as these were found to be injurious to health.
562. ▶ Puducherry government launched a special police force to safeguard tourists, provided with special blue colour head gears.
563. ▶ Punjab & Haryana High Court banned bursting of crackers on New Year's Eve & on Jan 1, as well as during weddings or other celebratory functions in Punjab, Haryana & Chandigarh.
564. ▶ Punjab Government approved increase in gross annual income limit for creamy layer of Other Backward Classes and Backward Classes from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh.
565. ▶ Punjab Government discontinued sale of 20 pesticides (insecticides) including Endosulfan harmful to health of humans and environment.
566. ▶ Punjab Government launched Mahatma Gandhi Sarbat Vikas Yojna (MGSVY) for welfare of downtrodden citizen across state, on lines of Antyodaya principles (means *rise of the last person*) and will be implemented in rural areas.
567. ▶ Punjab Government signed MoU with Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) to set up bio-gas and bio-CNG plants in state, to find sustainable solutions to paddy straw burning. Total 400 such plants will become operational in 3-4 years with investment of INR 5000 crores.
568. ▶ Punjab State Government notified *Punjab Goods Carriages (Regulation and Prevention of Cartelization Rules), 2017*, banning goods carriage operators from forming cartels in state, aimed at creating a favourable environment for industries and business houses in state.
569. ▶ Punjab government formed 6 member Revenue Commission with an aim to bring greater efficiency and accountability in functioning of Revenue Department. It will be headed by Justice SS Saron.
570. ▶ Punjab government will merge 800 primary schools (*with less than 20 students*) with schools nearby. It aims to improve utilisation of teaching staff in state.
571. ▶ Qaumi Ekta Week (National Integration Week) observed during November 19 - 25, 2017 -
- ▶ November 19 - National Integration Day.
 - ▶ November 20 - Welfare of Minorities Day.
 - ▶ November 21 - Linguistic Harmony Day.
 - ▶ November 22 - Weaker Sections Day.
 - ▶ November 23 - Cultural Unity Day.
 - ▶ November 24 - Women's Day.

 November 25 - Conservation Day.

572. ▶ R.K. Singh (Minister of New and Renewable Energy (IC) launched *Saubhagya* Web-Portal at URL – <http://saubhagya.gov.in>, as a platform for monitoring household electrification progress, which would disseminate information on Household Electrification Status.
573. ▶ RS Puram Police station in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) is named best in India in SMART Police Stations initiative of Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). SMART stands for *Sensitive and Strict, Modern with mobility, Alert and Accountable, Reliable and Responsive and Trained and Techno-savvy*.
574. ▶ Railways launched SFOORTI (*Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information*) App for Freight Managers which provides features for monitoring and managing freight business using Geographic Information System (GIS) Views and Dashboard. Features Include -
-  *Freight Operation Information System Map View* provides Layered views of freight trains on Railways, that can help plan traffic flows and optimize freight operations.
 -  *Forecasted Rakes Awaiting Interchange* enables Monitoring of all loads, which have been forecasted for the divisional interchange, but the same interchange has not yet reported.
 -  *Stock Specific / Commodity specific Rake Position* can be viewed. Loaded and Empty Rakes of specific Rake Types are plotted on Railways network map in Different colours.
 -  Monitoring of New Origination-Destination Added in Railways.
 -  Loading Trends for Major Commodities during a period.
 -  Performance of Freight Trains can be monitored
575. ▶ Railways will set up of a rail coach factory in Latur district (Maharashtra), to help generate employment opportunities and bring economic development in this backward Marathwada region. Plant will manufacture Electric Multiple Units for suburban trains and coaches for metros.
576. ▶ Railways will standardize trains in terms of number of coaches so that all trains can run on all routes. Soon, all trains would have 22 coaches, making them suitable for running on any route.
-  Currently, coaches are of two kinds (ICF and LHB) and number of coaches in a train could be 12, 16, 18, 22 or 26, depending on its demand, making it difficult for the railways to substitute one with the other.
577. ▶ Rajasthan Government expanded Annapurna Rasoi Yojna in all 191 urban areas of state and flagged off 50 Annapurna vans in Ajmer. 500 smart kitchen vans have been arranged for scheme.
-  Under this scheme, people can get breakfast for Rs 5 and lunch and dinner for Rs 8 each. The total estimated cost of implementation of the scheme would be around Rs 400 Cr.
578. ▶ Rajasthan Government introduced *The Code of Criminal Procedure (Rajasthan Amendment) Bill 2017* to protect both serving and former judges, magistrates and public servants in state from being investigated for on-duty action without its prior sanction, replacing Criminal Laws (Rajasthan Amendment) Ordinance 2017.
579. ▶ Rajasthan assembly became first in India to call attention and adjournment motions and proposals online from legislators to send them to state government. It will save time, labour and use of paper in functioning of assembly.
580. ▶ Rajasthan became first state to incorporate skill development programme in higher education as Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in collaboration with state's Department of College Education has prepared 16 courses for entrepreneurship and skill development for colleges in state.
581. ▶ Rajasthan become first state to launch free email addresses in Hindi (in Devanagari script) for its residents, to ensure maximum participation of people towards e-governance and that maximum facilities are available in vernacular language.
582. ▶ Rajasthan government announced 1 % reservation for Gujjars (retaining their Other Backward Classes status) and 4 other communities (Banjara, Gadia-Lohar, Rebari and Gadaria).
583. ▶ Rajasthan government announced Rs 20000 crore farm-loan waiver and waive as it agreed to waive of loans for farmers up to INR 50000.
584. ▶ Rajasthan government launched *Dishari* mobile app that provides free study materials for youths preparing for competitive examinations.
585. ▶ Rajasthan government passed *Backward Classes (reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions in State and of Appointments and Posts in Services under State) Bill* to increase reservation quota for Other Backward Classes (OBC) from 21 to 26 %.
586. ▶ Rajasthan government will digitise administrative and historical records of Rajputana's princely states (10000 Pages/day), to protect old and fragile documents.
-  Rajasthan State Archive consists of 30-40 crore administrative and historical records of 22 princely states, and will digitise 3-4 crore documents considered important.

587. ▶ Rajasthan government will introduce 'Guru-Shishya' (student-teacher dialogue) programme to address problems faced by students in various colleges in all districts. It will college students to an discuss their issues and problems related to their institutes, with their teachers.
588. ▶ Rajasthan government will recognise political prisoners held in jails during emergency period (1975 - 1977) as 'Loktantra Sainani', by changing name of Rajasthan MISA and DIR Bandi Pension Rules 2008 to Rajasthan Loktantra Sainani samman Nidhi 2008.
589. ▶ Rajasthan govt. increased age limit for applying for government jobs from 35 to 40 years.
590. ▶ Rajasthan's Chief Electoral Officer Ashwini Bhagat launched Election Commission's web-based project ERO-Net, using which voters can register their names on electoral rolls.
- ✎ It replaces Electoral Roll Management System (ERMS) software that could not identify multiple entries of a voter.
591. ▶ Ram Vilas Paswan, Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution launched Web Portal of Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) & *Electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipt (e-NWR) System*
- ✎ e-NWRs would have no chances of any tempering, mutilation, fudging, loss or damage and with no possibility of any multiple financing.
 - ✎ e-NWRs will save expenditure in logistics as stocks could be traded through multiple buyers without physical movement and can be even split for partial transfer or withdrawal.
592. ▶ Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Law & Justice AND Electronics & Information Technology inaugurated *NIC-CERT* of National Informatics Centre, aimed at checking enhancing threats and vulnerabilities that are inherent part of increasing cyberspace. It was needed as in recent years, exponential growth in cyber attacks leading to concerns of data theft has been observed by Government.
593. ▶ Reliance Energy launched digital assistance robot ELEKTRA, that provides automated responses to customers for their queries and requests.
594. ▶ Reliance Industries commissioned and achieved design throughput of world's largest refinery off-gas cracker at Jamnagar (Gujarat). Refinery will have a capacity of 1.5 million tonnes per annum along with downstream plants and utilities.
595. ▶ Restored Royal Opera House in Mumbai received Award of Merit from 2017 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.
596. ▶ Rural Development Ministry and State Governments have completed ranking of 50000 Gram Panchayats (selected under 'Mission Antyodaya') on three broad parameters of physical infrastructure, human development and economic activities.
- ✎ Mission Antyodaya aims to create 50000 poverty-free gram panchayats.
 - ✎ Gram Panchayats have been selected by State Governments on the basis of social capital and have been grouped under 5000 clusters.
597. ▶ Samsung partnered with Uttar Pradesh State Government for *Smart Healthcare Programme*, which will include setting up 20 healthcare centres to offer affordable and quality healthcare to patients from the economically and socially weaker sections of society.
598. ▶ Sep 25, 2017 - Birth Anniversary of Social Reformer Deendayal Upadhyaya. Known for his role in shaping up present day Bharatiya Janata Party. Uttar Pradesh government released 100 inmates from various jails of state on this occasion. PM Narendra Modi launched SAUBHAGYA scheme On this occasion. With details -
- ✎ Saubhagya (Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana) aims at bringing electricity for every household in country by March 31, 2019. No price will be charged for the poor to get an electricity connection and the government will bear expected INR 16,320 crores cost of giving electricity connections to the 4 crore households in country. Electricity connections will be given to APL (Above Poverty Line) families for Rs 500, which will be payable in 10 equal monthly instalments.
 - ✎ PM Narendra Modi also inaugurated *Deendayal Hastkala Sankul* trade facilitation centre and Crafts Museum for handicrafts at Varanasi. It will facilitate weavers/artisans/exporters in promotion of handlooms and handicrafts in domestic and international markets.
 - ✎ He also flagged off Varanasi-Vadodara as country's third Mahamana Express.
599. ▶ Seven North-East Indian states will launch Intensified Mission Indradhanush (IMI) to focus on select urban areas and other pockets where immunization coverage has been low. Under it, Government aims to reach every child under 2 years and pregnant women with all available vaccines under Universal Immunization Programme by 2018.
600. ▶ Shipping Minister Nitin Gadkari flagged off cargo movement on Pandu-Dhubri route (on National Waterway 2) along Brahmaputra River in Assam, reducing logistics cost and save 300 km road travel. Central Government has sanctioned Rs 1250 crore for overall development of inland water transport of Assam.
601. ▶ Shri Harmandir Sahib (Punjab, also known as *Golden Temple*) has been awarded as most visited place in world by Book of World Records (London).
602. ▶ Sikkim Government allowed people to forge fraternal ties with trees, under *Sikkim Forest Tree (Amity & Reverence) Rules 2017*. Purpose is to preserve trees by encouraging people to forge relationship of brotherhood with trees through tradition locally known as Mitini / Mith.
603. ▶ Sikkim will get its first airport by end of November 2017, located over 30 kilometres from capital Gangtok.

- ✎ Airport has been built at approx INR 300 crores and was supposed to be completed in 2012, but faced repeated delays. It is at an altitude of 4,700 feet, and will be among 5 highest Indian airports.
- 604. ▶ Social network Facebook unveiled 2 programmes designed for individuals and start-ups - Facebook Digital Training and Facebook Startup Training Hubs, aiming to train about five lakh people in India on digital skills by 2020.
- 605. ▶ South Central Railway (SCR) became first railway zone to complete 100% LED lighting at all 733 stations under its jurisdiction.
- 606. ▶ Standard & Poor's (S&P) kept its sovereign rating for India unchanged at 'BBB-', with outlook for the nation as 'stable'. BBB- rating is the lowest investment grade and just one notch above junk status.
 - ✎ Note that recently another rating agency, Moody's upgraded India's sovereign ratings to Baa2 with outlook for the nation as 'positive'.
- 607. ▶ Supreme Court (SC) directed governments of Uttar Pradesh (UP), Haryana and Rajasthan to ban use of petroleum (pet) coke and furnace oil in the industries with an aim to fight air pollution.
 - ✎ Supreme Court also fined 2 lakh on Environment Ministry for not fixing pollution emission standards of Sulphur Dioxide and Nitrogen Oxide for 34 categories of industries as per as Previous SC Order.
- 608. ▶ Supreme Court stayed Karnataka High Court's order to reduce size of pictorial warnings on packages of tobacco products to 40% of package space from earlier 85%.
 - ✎ Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) in 2014 prescribed mandatory 85% statutory warnings space on both sides of tobacco packaging telling consumers that cigarette smoking and tobacco chewing were harmful to health.
 - ✎ In December 2017, Karnataka HC quashed MoHFW rules related to 85% statutory warnings on packaging of tobacco products, holding that they violated Constitutional norms. This order is now stayed by Supreme Court.
 - ✎ Supreme Court also ruled that playing national anthem before screening movies in cinema halls is not mandatory. Government has formed a committee to finalize on the same and committee will submit report in 6 months. Committee is headed by B.R. Sharma (Additional Secretary in MHA).
- 609. ▶ Supreme Court's Verdict on Cauvery Water Dispute -
 - ✎ SC stated that Karnataka government will release 177.25 tmcft of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu from its inter-state Biligundlu dam, down from state's earlier allocation of 192 TMC water. Karnataka will now have an enhanced share of 14.75 tmcft water per year.
 - ✎ Earlier, Cauvery Water Tribunal's order in 2007 stated Karnataka to have share of 270 tmcft of Cauvery water. Now it will go up to 284.75 tmcft.
 - ✎ Verdict stayed 30 tmcft water to Kerala and 7 tmcft water to Puducherry as per Tribunal's 2007 Order. SC also allowed Tamil Nadu to draw an additional 10 tmcft 'groundwater' from a total of 20 tmcft beneath Cauvery basin.
 - ✎ SC order on Cauvery water allocation will continue to hold for next 15 years.
 - ✎ Cauvery Water Dispute -
 - ✎ Water sharing of Cauvery River has been a major source of conflict between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Its origin is traced back to two agreements in 1892 and 1924, which had taken place between the then Madras Presidency and Kingdom of Mysore.
 - ✎ 802 km long Cauvery River has 44,000 km² basin area in Tamil Nadu and 32,000 km² basin area in Karnataka.
 - ✎ Cauvery Water Tribunal, in its ruling in 2007, allocated 192 TMC water to Tamil Nadu, 270 TMC water to Karnataka, 30 tmcft to Kerala and 7 tmcft to Puducherry per year.
- 610. ▶ Swedish home furnishing major IKEA launched its first experiential centre *Hej HOME* in Hyderabad (Telangana), ahead of opening its first store in India in 2018 in Telangana.
- 611. ▶ Tamil Nadu Government laid foundation stone for an aerospace park at Kanchipuram district to be set up in 245 acres and at cost of Rs 198 crores.
- 612. ▶ Tamil Nadu Government launched e-governance policy to help public, government and commercial establishments avail all services through digital medium. It lets government to allocate 0.5 % of annual funds for digital initiatives and further increase it to 3 % in 5 years.
- 613. ▶ Tamil Nadu government signed an agreement with IT Major Microsoft to improve integration of technology in teaching and learning in state, to reform education sector, build tech capacity and enhance digital literacy across all levels.
- 614. ▶ Tata Power Solar Systems has commissioned India's first rooftop solar carport at 70000 sq. mtr. Unity One Mall, in Delhi. Electricity generated through this solar carport is estimated to set off 438 tons of carbon emission annually and will make the mall self sufficient in terms of energy requirement.
- 615. ▶ Tata Steel established India's largest Coke Dry Quenching (CDQ) facility, capable of handling 200 metric tonnes per hour, at its steel plant in Jajpur district of Odisha.
 - ✎ CDQ is a heat recovery system to cool hot coke from coke ovens. It is most energy-efficient and environment-friendly facility in steel production where hot coke removed from coke ovens at a temperature of 1,000 degree Celsius is cooled and kept dry with inert gas.

616. ▶ Telangana Forest Department re-introduced endangered species *mouse deer* in forests of Nallamalla in Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR) at Nehru Zoological Park (Hyderabad).
617. ▶ Telangana Government announced a health-cum-life insurance scheme worth INR 5 lakh for farmers in state, with allocation of INR 500 crores.
618. ▶ Telangana Government constituted a task force on urban mobility to study feasibility of the monorail model and other modes of transport for IT corridor in Hyderabad. Arvind Kumar is Member Convenor of task force.
619. ▶ Telangana Government has set up 'We-Hub' on the lines of T-Hub for promoting women entrepreneurs in state, funded under Atal Innovation Mission. T-Hub is partnership between Telangana govt with 3 premier academic institutes and private sector leaders.
620. ▶ Telangana Government inaugurated India's first National Park for differently abled people in Hyderabad. It has speech therapist, vocational training instructors and physiotherapist for differently-abled children.
621. ▶ Telangana State Assembly passed Several Bills -
- ▶ Prevention of Dangerous Activities (Amendment) Bill, 2017
 - ▶ Road Development Corporation (Amendment) Bill 2017
 - ▶ Shops and Establishments (Amendment) Act 2017 to give instant licenses to shops and commercial establishments.
 - ▶ State Govt also declared Urdu as state's second official language.
622. ▶ Telangana government developed a mobile application named 'Urban Genie' that will help urban citizens in finding certified technicians and workers to provide household services.
623. ▶ Telangana government signed MoU with *Clean Authority of Tokyo (Japan)*, for municipal solid waste incineration facilities.
624. ▶ Telecom Firm Bharti Airtel and Chinese telecom equipment maker Huawei successfully conducted India's first 5G (fifth generation) network trial, achieving over 3 gigabit per second (Gbps) data speed.
- ▶ 5G is wireless communication technology based on third-generation partnership project (3GPP). It is next generation mobile networks technology after 4G LTE networks. It is expected to offer enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB) through R15 repeaters that can cater to coverage requirements. India aims to roll out 5G Services by 2020.
625. ▶ Telecom Minister Manoj Sinha launched India's first locally developed 4G/LTE (*Long-Term Evolution*) telecom system, developed by telecom equipment manufacturer VNL Ltd. It ensures seamless connectivity at affordable prices and reduces import dependence for such equipments.
626. ▶ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) recommended delicensing of chunk of spectrum in few bands to facilitate smooth roll-out of machine-to-machine (M2M) communications.
- ▶ Unlike person-to-person (P2P) communication, M2M technologies involve communication between two devices. It acts as basis for automated information exchange between machines and enables wired and wireless devices to talk to each other using sensors.
 - ▶ M2M communications can be deployed in new-age infrastructure projects and various industry verticals such as smart cities, smart grids, smart homes, smart transportation and smart health sectors.
627. ▶ Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) upheld basic principles of an open and free internet in its recommendations on *Net Neutrality*.
- ▶ Net neutrality means that telecom service providers must treat all internet traffic equally, without any regard to the type, origin or destination of the content or the means of its transmission.
 - ▶ Proponents of net neutrality hold that all traffic on internet should be treated equally i.e. service providers should allow access to all content without favouring any particular product or website.
628. ▶ Telecom equipment provider Vihaan Networks Limited (VNL) signed MoU with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) to launch Relief 123 service to provide disaster management in India. Relief 123 service is an integrated disaster response solution for first responders and public safety agencies.
629. ▶ Telangana Government will Implement Telugu as a compulsory subject from 1 - 12th, from next academic year.
630. ▶ Tendu Leaf Bonus Festival organized in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh. During it, approx 247 crores of bonus has been distributed to tendu leaf collectors of Bastar and Bijapur.
631. ▶ To Address Privacy Concerns, Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) introduced a new concept of Virtual ID which Aadhaar-card holder can generate from its website and give for various purposes, wherever Aadhaar number is necessary to provide.
- ▶ Virtual would be a random 16-digit number and a user can generate as many Virtual IDs (Older ones will be cancelled when generating new).
 - ▶ It will give limited details (like name, address and photograph), which are sufficient for verification by any authorised agency .
 - ▶ Aadhaar-issuing body will start accepting virtual ID from March 1, 2018 and From June 1, it will be obligatory for all agencies that undertake authentication to accept Virtual ID from their users.

632. ▶ To save environment from air pollution caused by stubble burning, Punjab government made attachment of super straw management system with harvester machines mandatory for harvesting paddy (rice) crop.
633. ▶ Traditional *Mera Houchongba* festival celebrated in Manipur, symbolizing brotherhood and unity among indigenous communities in State. A Regional conference of north east labour ministers and officials also held in Imphal (Manipur).
634. ▶ Traditional Bonderam festival held in Divar Island of Goa.
635. ▶ Traditional Indian Sweet Rasgulla got Geographical Indications (GI) Tag, credited to West Bengal. This ended a 3 year long rift among Odisha and West Bengal and originator of Rasgulla.
636. ▶ Traditional International *Lavi fair* held in Rampur (Himachal Pradesh).
▶ Lavi Fair has been an important point of trade between India and Tibet for centuries.
637. ▶ Traditional festival Mera Houchongba celebrated in Manipur, promotes brotherhood and unity among indigenous communities. It was celebrated at Manipur Royal palace (Sana Konung) in Imphal.
638. ▶ Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (TRIFED) signed MoU with e-commerce firm Amazon for selling tribal products online, to promote various tribal products. TRIFED already has tied-up with Snapdeal.
639. ▶ Tribal Sports Meet 2017 held in Odisha as a first-of-its kind event in country to promote sports among tribals in Odisha, with *Olly* as official mascot.
640. ▶ Tropical Cyclone OCKHI Hits South Indian States Kerala and Tamilnadu, causing heavy rains and tides.
641. ▶ Tripura Government has introduced Child Care Leave (CCL) for women employees with minor children for 730 days in their entire service life.
642. ▶ Tripura became first state to set up family welfare district committees, to deal with fake and biased complaints by women against their husbands and in-laws.
643. ▶ UNESCO inscribed India's *Kumbh Mela* on its List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, as 14th intangible cultural heritage from India to be listed in UNESCO's list.
644. ▶ UP Investors Summit 2018 Lucknow -
▶ Government will establish India's 2nd defence industrial production corridor in Uttar Pradesh, at approx INR 20000 crores and will generate about 250000 jobs. It will link Agra, Aligarh, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi and Chitrakoot. 1st of 2 defense industrial production corridors proposed in Budget 2018 will link Chennai & Bengaluru.
▶ UP's Khadi and Village Industries Board signed pact with Amazon India to facilitate online selling of Khadi products.
▶ Uttar Pradesh (UP) became first state to clear business and investment projects digitally, without any human interface. This became possible with launch of 'Nivesh Mitra' digital platform. It will serve as a single-window clearance system.
▶ UP government signed 1045 Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) worth INR 4.28 lakh crores at UP Investors Summit 2018.
645. ▶ US-based fintech company Mastercard launched its global research and development arm Mastercard Labs in Pune (India), as second Mastercard Labs in Asia-Pacific After Singapore (9th in world).
646. ▶ Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) launched online campaign #IamThatWoman in an attempt to end Gender bias in women against women.
647. ▶ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDA) introduced face authentication as an additional means of Aadhaar authentication along with fingerprint and iris scan, to enable easy authentication for those who face difficulties in other biometric authentication such as fingerprint and iris scan. It will be available by 1 July, 2018.
648. ▶ Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) rolled Under 5 years age version of Aadhaar Card, named *Bal Aadhaar*. It will have blue colour and will be linked with one of parent's Aadhaar card. No biometric details (Iris scan / fingerprint scans) will be captured as Biometrics are not developed for children before 5 years of age.
649. ▶ University Grants Commission (UGC) launched 90 days application process for higher education institutes (public / private) seeking *institutions of eminence* status, aiming to bring more Indian higher education institutions to get into top 100 global rankings in coming years. Shortlisting will be completed by March-April 2018.
▶ Eligible Institutions will be Top 50 of National Institute Ranking Framework (NIRF) rankings, those securing ranks among Times Higher Education World University Rankings, Shanghai Ranking Academic Ranking of World Universities or QS University Rankings.
▶ 20 Institutions of eminence will be selected (10 public and 10 private, will get provision of INR 10,000 crore over 10 years and will be free from usual regulatory mechanism to choose their autonomous path to become institutions of global repute.
650. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government approved creating India's first Blackbuck Conservation Reserve in trans-Yamuna belt near Allahabad, on over 126 hectares in Meja forest division. Approx 350 blackbucks are estimated to be inhabiting the region.

651. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Government approved draft of Uttar Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Act (UPCOCA) to fight land mafia, mining mafia and organised crime in state, on lines of Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA).
652. ▶ Uttar Pradesh Govt. will Set up a Research Institute on *Shrimad Bhagvat Gita* in Mathura.
653. ▶ Uttar Pradesh State Government inaugurated state's first ever butterfly park in Kanpur, as pollution-free spaces which do not have chemicals/pesticides and play an important role in conserving endangered butterfly species.
✎ Further, Madhya Pradesh's first butterfly park opened in Raisen district.
654. ▶ Uttar Pradesh State Government launched a mass marriage scheme called 'Mukhyamantri Samoohik Vivaah Yojana'. Under this, social welfare department will conduct mass marriages and will authorize Urban local bodies to organize programmes in this regard. State government also launched Sankalp Seva bus service of 50 buses to connect 6,000 villages.
655. ▶ Uttar Pradesh State Government scrapped *Shravan Yatra* scheme under which elderly citizens could undertake pilgrimage free of cost, started in 2015 by Samajwadi Party government.
✎ State government also announced setting up of Cow Protection Committees (Gau Sanrakshan Samitis) in all districts of Uttar Pradesh, to make sure that cow sheds (gaushalas) are operated efficiently.
656. ▶ Uttar Pradesh assembly passed UP Excise (Amendment) Bill 2017, to award death penalty and life imprisonment for spurious liquor dealers.
657. ▶ Uttar Pradesh became first State to endorse Central government's draft bill that makes instant triple talaq a cognisable and non-bailable offence. The draft law provides for 3 year imprisonment and a fine to a man trying to divorce his wife by uttering "talaq" three times.
658. ▶ Uttar Pradesh government launched a mass marriage policy for poor girls, under which financial assistance worth INR 35000 will be provided. It aims to discourage practice of dowry.
659. ▶ Uttar Pradesh government notified Vrindavan and Barsana towns in Mathura district as *Sacred pilgrimage sites*, making them first 2 places to be notified as teerth sthal in government records.
✎ Now, No meat and liquor shops will be allowed in these towns anymore. Aim is to honour sentiments of devotees that who are hurt by operations of liquor and meat shops.
660. ▶ Uttar Pradesh government signed an MoU with South Korea to enhance cooperation in the field of tourism, skill development, culture and farming.
661. ▶ Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district has been included in National Capital Region (NCR), taking total number of districts in the NCR to 23.
✎ NCR Cities get funds at attractive interest rates from National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) for infrastructure development.
662. ▶ Uttarakhand Government signed MoU with HP (Hewlett Packard) to provide tele-medicine facilities in remote areas of state.
✎ Usage of telecommunication and information technology to provide clinical health care from a distance is referred to as tele-medicine.
663. ▶ Uttarakhand State Government and Swan Cultural Center and Foundation launched 'Solar Briefcase' in Kedarnath Dham, to provide electricity to far-flung areas.
664. ▶ Uttarakhand government made it compulsory for all government offices to install LED bulbs, to reduce consumption of electricity.
665. ▶ Vanlalawmpuii Chawngthu became first woman minister in Mizoram in 30 years (since 1987 state assembly elections).
666. ▶ Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu laid foundation stone for Ranchi Smart City, tagged as country's first 'green-field' smart city. It is coming up on 656 acres of Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) land which would be equipped with severa advance tech features..
667. ▶ Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu laid foundation stone to develop Muktyal to Vijayawada waterway stretch on River Krishna as part of National Waterway 4 at Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh. The 82-km inland waterway stretch is Phase-1 of National Waterway-4 developed under Sagar Mala project.
668. ▶ Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu launched New Delhi Edition of Marathi daily 'Lokmat'.
669. ▶ Virgin Group (USA) signed agreement with Maharashtra Government to build world's first hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune, during Magnetic Maharashtra investor summit in Mumbai. It aims to reduce travel time between two mega cities to 20 minutes from three hours at present, with capability of travelling up to 1000 km per hour.
✎ Hyperloop Technology is dubbed as fifth mode of transportation. It is system of magnetically levitating capsules (pods) that are sent at high speeds through low-pressure tubes. It uses linear Induction motors in it to control speed of pods.
✎ Hyperloop is two-to-three times faster than fastest high-speed rail and has speeds even greater than commercial air travel.
✎ Hyperloop departures could happen with a low frequency of a pod every 20 seconds which is not possible in railways.
670. ▶ WWF-India and Capgemini launched *One Planet Academy* as first environment education portal for students and teachers in India. It is a digital network for schools, teachers and students.

671. ▶ Waste management system in Kerala's Alappuzha has been recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as one of best 5 models across the world for fighting pollution menace, as per UNEP report *Solid approach to waste: how five cities are beating pollution*.
672. ▶ West Bengal Assembly passed *Green University Bill 2017*, to set up an environmental studies university at Hooghly district, making West Bengal the first state to have a university dedicated to environmental studies.
673. ▶ West Bengal Government will set up a Scheduled Caste advisory council to look into development of the Scheduled Caste population in state. It will be first such scheduled caste advisory council in an Indian state.
674. ▶ West Bengal State Government announced life insurance cover amounting to Rs 5 lakh for each of pilgrims coming to upcoming Gangasagar fair, which is held annually on the occasion of Makar Sankranti at confluence of Ganges at Sagra Islands in South 24 Parganas district.
675. ▶ West Bengal became first state to opt out of Central Govt's proposed NHPS (National Health Protection Scheme, informally called *Modicare*), Claiming that Bengal government had already enrolled 50 lakh people under its own Swasthya Sathi programme.
676. ▶ West Bengal government cleared a proposal to rename state as *Bangla* and sent a proposal to Centre for approval. Note that WB government had earlier too sent a proposal for change of name, but it was rejected by central government.
677. ▶ West Bengal will receive Subsidy from world bank to buy 130 electric buses, at a rate of INR 7 Lakh/ Unit.
678. ▶ West Bengal, Kerala and Odisha opted out of Central Government's *Transformation of Aspirational Districts* scheme.
- ▶ Aspirational districts refer to selected 115 backward districts that are lagging on specific development parameters. Central Government undertook a major policy initiative for rapid transformation of these districts. With exit of 3 states, total districts under this scheme is now reduced to 102.
 - ▶ These states objected that criteria for identifying backward districts was fixed without taking respective State Governments into confidence.
 - ▶ Transformation of Aspirational Districts' conference was held in New Delhi in recently, in which NITI Aayog said it will come out with a ranking of 115 aspirational districts by April 2018.
679. ▶ Western Railways introduced modern Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Kiosk Machines for fast and easy printing of tickets booked through UTS App, in Mumbai. Additionally, Bhopal became first railway station to have Sanitary napkin Vending Machine.
680. ▶ Women and Child Welfare Minister Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched SHE-Box online complaint Management System for women working in both public and private organizations to lodge complaints of sexual harassment at workplace.
- ▶ It aims at effective implementation of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (SH Act), 2013.
 - ▶ Once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will be directly sent to the Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) or Local Complaint Committee (LCC) of concerned employer. WCD will monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICC/LCC.
 - ▶ URL to Portal is - shebox.nic.in
681. ▶ World Quality Congress (WQC) ranked Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) security at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport (CSIA) in Mumbai has been recognised as best service in this domain.
682. ▶ Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) published first ever exhaustive compendium of animal species in Indian Sundarban and threats it faces, titled *Fauna of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve*. As per publication, ZSI estimates that there are 2626 of animal species in Sunderbans.
- ▶ Sunderbans is a vast forest in coastal region of Bay of Bengal. It was recognised in 1997 as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is located in delta region of Padma, Meghna and Brahmaputra river basins.

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