

General Awareness for February 2018

WWW.ANUJJINDAL.IN

www.anujjindal.in
successrbi@anujjindal.in

General Awareness for February 2018**INDIA CURRENT AFFAIRS:**

- ✦ Indian government recently cleared the proposal for granting long term visa to minorities from Afghanistan seeking refuge in India
- ✦ Residence of Bhalupani village in Balrampur district of Chhattisgarh got electricity connection for the first time after the district administration Installed solar panels for every family
- ✦ Karnataka committee headed by G S Siddaramaiya, chairman of Kannada development authority, to analyse possibility of a separate flag for the state, has submitted the report , recommends a 3 colored flag in yellow and red colour with white colour in the middle containing the state symbol to replace and an official two-coloured flag currently in use.
- ✦ Hampi monuments, Karnataka's Pride, will be one among 10 tourist destinations across India to be developed as iconic tourist site by central government
- ✦ **India has been ranked 81st in the global corruption perception index for 2017, released by Transparency International. New Zealand and Denmark were placed the highest.**

TOP 5*

Rank	Country	2017 score	2016 score
1	NZealand	89	90
2	Denmark	88	90
3	Finland	85	89
3	Norway	85	85
3	Switzerland	85	86



- ✦ **Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh** launched **six new features** in the **National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform** to make it more user-friendly. The six new features of e-NAM platform includes-

1. MIS dashboard for better analysis,
2. BHIM payment facility by traders,
3. Mobile payment facility by traders,
4. Enhanced features on mobile app such as gate entry and payment through mobile,
5. Integration of farmer's database, and
6. e-Learning module.

✧ **Flying officer Avani Chaturvedi** scripted history by becoming the **first Indian woman to fly a fighter aircraft solo.**

- She flew a MiG-21 bison in her first solo flight from Jamnagar base of Indian Air Force (IAF) in Gujarat.

✧ **Cab-hailing startup Ola** and the **Government of Assam** have signed an MoU to pilot an app-based river taxi service in Guwahati. The river taxis will be machine-operated boats and users will be able to book the rides through Ola's app.

It'll bring commute time down to 2-5 minutes from 45 minutes by road. This MoU was signed during the **Global Investors Summit: Advantage Assam.**

✧ **Mumbai Airport Becomes World's Busiest Single-Runway Airport with 980 flights in 24 hours**

✧ **MOUs worth Rs 4.28 lakh crore inked at UP investor's summit.**

✧ **Uttar Pradesh State government in association with UNICEF** has launched massive **door to door campaign DASTAK** to eradicate deadly **Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) and Japanese Encephalitis (JE) disease in the state.**

✧ **DASTAK- 'Darwaja Khatkhatao, AES aur JE ko bhagao**

✧ **The Andhra Pradesh government** has decided to hold the **first-of-its-kind, one-day Pelican Festival** at the Atapaka Bird Sanctuary on Kolleru.

- **Kolleru is one of the largest freshwater lakes in the country.** Atapaka village is located on the borders of the Krishna and the West Godavari districts.

✧ **Google and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** signed a pact to integrate a course on '**Digital Citizenship and Safety**' in information and communication technology curriculum. It was signed on the occasion of **Safer Internet Day (06th February).**

- The curriculum developed by NCERT in collaboration with Google will be used to train students from **class I - class XII across 1.4 million schools** in India. The curriculum is spread into **four themes - being smart, being safe, being a digital citizen and being future ready.**

✧ India has Ratified of the **Minamata Convention on Mercury.**

- ✦ **Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Prema Khandu** laid the foundation stone for **Rhododendron Park in Tawang**.
 - He also carried out plantation drive of different **varieties of Rhodos**. Tawang is home to 50+ different varieties of Rhodos.

- ✦ **The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited** has developed the **first flight of Hawk-i with indigenous Real Time Operating System (RTOS)**. Hawk-i is the first indigenous RTOS developed in India from scratch and certified by **Center for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC)**.
 - The RTOS is the system software which provides a standard run-time environment for real-time applications execution in a safe and reliable manner.

- ✦ **Chat-based job search mobile app 'Empzilla'**

- ✦ **Dubai International Airport** has held on to **its No 1 ranking as the world's busiest airport for international travel**, after seeing around 88.2 million passengers in 2017.

- ✦ **The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** will start a **pilot project called "pay as you use"** on the **Delhi-Mumbai Highway** to study and implement the ability of the system in the country.

- ✦ **The South Central Railway (SCR)** has become the **first railway zone in the country** to complete **100% LED lighting** at all the stations under its jurisdiction.

- ✦ **Union Minister of State (IC) for Power and New & Renewable Energy, Shri R.K Singh**, launched a Web-based monitoring System and a Fly Ash mobile application named **ASH TRACK**.

- ✦ **The Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has imposed a **fine of around Rs. 136 crores** on search engine major **Google for unfair business practices** in the Indian market for online search.

- ✦ **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** has organized a **three-day National Meet on Grassroot Informatics- VIVID 2018** at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. **The Theme for VIVID 2018 is "Cyber Security and Innovation"**.

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the **'Grand Collar of the State of Palestine'** by **President of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas**, recognising his key contribution to promote relations between India and Palestine.

- ✘ **Minister Rajnath Singh** has launched the Centre for learning **Sanskrit language in Gujarat University, Ahmedabad.**
 - The centre will offer a **six-month course** for people on how to speak the language. The coordinator of the course, Atul Unagar stated it was possibly the first such course launched in India.
- ✘ **Mumbai, India's financial capital is the 12th richest city in the world** with a total wealth of \$950 billion, according to a **report by New World Wealth.** The **list was topped by New York** as the richest city in the world.
- ✘ **ONGC (Oil and Natural Gas Corporation) Videsh Ltd** and its partners have acquired a **10%** in a large offshore oilfield **Abu Dhabi National Oil Co.'s (ADNOC) in Abu Dhabi for \$600 million.** It is the **first time any Indian company has set foot in oil-rich Emirate.**
- ✘ **Government of India has proposed merger of Government Savings Certificates Act, 1959 and Public Provident Fund Act, 1968 with the Government Savings Banks Act, 1873.**
- ✘ **India's 1st Online Radio Station 'Radio Umang'** was launched recently in India.
- ✘ **West Bengal Becomes First State To Opt Out Of 'Modicare'**
- ✘ **NHPS** stands for National Health Protection Scheme.
- ✘ In an effort to put India firmly among the top nations in the world theatre map, the country will play host to the 8th Theatre Olympics, the greatest carnival of thespianism. The theme of the festival is - "**Flag of Friendship**".
- ✘ In terms of maternal mortality rate assam is at the bottom of the list among all Indian states. The figure in Assam is 300 against National level of 167
- ✘ **Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **World Sustainable Development Summit 2018 (WSDS 2018)** at Vigyan Bhawan in **New Delhi.**
- ✘ ii. The summit is the flagship forum of **The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).** The summit's theme **this year was 'Partnerships for a Resilient Planet'.**

- ✦ National banana festival 2018 - Kerala
- ✦ World Congress on information technology, Hyderabad. Theme- amplify digital - disrupt the core
- ✦ **6th India region Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference at Patna in Bihar.** The conference focused on the objectives and role of the Parliamentary Association body.
 - The conference hold discussions mainly on two topics viz. '**Parliament's role in the development agenda**' and '**Legislature and Judiciary** - Two important Pillars of Democracy'.
- ✦ The prestigious **World Congress on Information Technology 2018** has begun in **Hyderabad**. Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural session of the **three-day IT summit through a video link**.
 - ii. The **World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)** is organising Congress while the **National Alliance of Software and Services Companies (NASSC)** and the **Telangana state Government** are jointly hosting the event.
- ✦ **the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is planning to launch **Chandrayan-2 Mission around April 2018**. Chandrayaan-2 is the country's second mission to the moon.
 - ii. Chandrayaan-2 is a challenging mission as for the first time we will carry an **orbiter, a lander and a rover to the moon**. **Chairman of ISRO K Sivan** stated that the total cost of the Chandrayaan 2 mission will be about Rs 8 billion. The window for launch is open till October 2018.
- ✦ **Assam** is at the bottom of the list with regard to **maternal mortality rate (MMR)** with a figure of 300 against the **national average of 167**, while the fund spending under National Health Mission (NHM) is just 13.58% for 2017-18.
 - MMR is the annual number of female deaths per 1,00,000 live births from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management. The Centre had allocated Rs 1,056.25 crore for Assam under National Health Mission (NHM) for 2017-18.
- ✦ **In a first in the country**, the Maharashtra government will be setting up an institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in Mumbai.
- ✦ **The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** announced area development plans worth **Rs 1,918 crore** for Punjab to supplement farmers' income.
 - Under this plan, the activities like dairy, vegetable cultivation, bee keeping, mushroom growing will be promoted in order to provide income to farmers at the sustainable basis.
- ✦ **Digital payments entity PhonePe** has partnered with **Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)** for the adoption of its **indigenously-designed Point of Sale (POS) device at IOCL retail outlets**.

- ✦ **PNB Housing Finance Ltd** has tied up with **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**, part of the World Bank Group, to raise **\$800 million for green and affordable housing in India**.
- ✦ **Amazon has become the first foreign e-commerce firm** to start its own food retail venture in India called **Amazon Retail**, piloting its services in Pune.
- ✦ **Silkyara Bend-Barkot Tunnel** in Uttarakhand as part of '**Chardham Mahamarg Pariyojana**'.- **approved by the cabinet**
- ✦ In a major reform in the coal sector since its nationalisation in 1973, **the government has allowed private companies to mine the fossil fuel for commercial use**. This move ended the monopoly of state-owned Coal India Ltd.
- ✦ **Maharashtra government will roll out 'Asmita Yojana'** on the **International Women's Day (March 8, 2018)** to provide cheap (subsidised) sanitary pads to school girls and women.
 - Under the scheme, schoolgirls studying in Zilla Parishad schools will get sanitary napkin packet at Rs 5 while rural women can avail it at the subsidised rate of Rs.24 and Rs.29
- ✦ **The Delhi government** announced the launch of "**Mission Buniyaad**" for improving learning skills of children studying in state and municipal-run schools. The announcement was made by **Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia**.
- ✦ ii. Under the programme which will run **from April to June for Class 3 to 5 in Municipal Corporation of Delhi (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.
- ✦ **India** has been ranked **12th-worst among 52 low-middle income countries** based on the number of children dying within the first month of their birth, which is 25.4 per 1,000 live births.
- ✦ **Pakistan is the worst** with 45.6 newborn deaths per 1,000 live births, **according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)**.
- ✦ iii. **Japan, with an NMR of 0.9 deaths per 1,000 live births, has been ranked the world's safest country** in which to be born **followed by Iceland (1) and Singapore (1.1)**.
- ✦ **Kerala government has made vaccination compulsory for school admissions** from next academic year onwards. Parents will have to show details of shots given to children at the time of enrolment in schools.
 - **The health minister of Kerala KK Shailaja** has released the new health policy draft. The move comes in the wake of stiff opposition from certain communities against the vaccination drive.

- ✦ **The Gandhi Nagar railway station in Jaipur, Rajasthan** became railway station to be fully-managed by women.

- ✦ **'Niti Forum for North-East'**. The forum will be co-chaired by the Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog Mr Rajiv Kumar and Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh.

- ✦ **US Marines in Thailand** for the **Cobra Gold training exercise** took part in one of the wildest parts of the drills - drinking cobra blood. **This was the 37th edition of the exercise.**
 - This year, **seven countries** are participating in Cobra Gold - **the US, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore.** Part of the drill involves jungle survival.

- ✦ **The Indian and Indonesian armies** began the **sixth edition of their annual military exercise named 'Garuda Shakti'** in Bandung, Indonesia.

- ✦ **Israeli Ambassador to India, Mr Daniel Carmon** has stated that a Centre for Agriculture, with the collaboration of Israeli expertise, is going to be **inaugurated in Mizoram in March 2018.**

- ✦ **The Haryana government** launched **Parivartan**, a scheme designed to address **10 issues**, including cleanliness and pollution

- ✦ **India** will host the **first International Solar Alliance (ISA) summit on 11th March 2018.** It will be attended by **French President Emmanuel Macron and United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.**

- ✦ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** launched the **Amma Two Wheeler Scheme (in Chennai)** of the state government coinciding with the birth anniversary of former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Jayalalithaa.

- ✦ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** flagged off the **'Run for New India'** marathon in Surat, Gujarat.

- ✦ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** laid foundation stones for projects worth **1000 crore rupees in Daman** in the union territory of Daman and Diu. PM distributed keys for scooters to differently-abled beneficiaries, **'SWABHIMAN'** cards to pregnant and Lactating Women, **'Badhai Kit'** to the **newly born girl children** under 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'.

- ✦ **The 15th edition of BioAsia**, the annual flagship event of the Government of Telangana, **was held Hyderabad**. The **theme of BioAsia 2018 was “Right Time, Right Now”**
- ✦ **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has successfully flown its **Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle RUSTOM 2** in Karnataka.
- ✦ **Palace Queen Humsafar Express train-** mysuru railway station Karnataka. the train will run from mysuru in Karnataka to Udaipur in Rajasthan.
- ✦ (UIDAI) introduced a ‘Baal Aadhaar’ card for children below the age of five years. No biometric details will be required to get this blue-coloured Baal Aadhaar card.
- ✦ Union Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Uma Bharti launched the Swajal pilot project at Village Bhikampura in Rajasthan. Under it, 90% of the project cost is borne by Government and remaining 10% cost is contributed by the community.
- ✦ India has been ranked 47th out of 86 countries on the Inclusive Internet Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), which was commissioned by Facebook. Rank 1- Sweden.
- ✦ **The Chilika lake in Odisha** has emerged as the **single largest habitat of Irrawaddy dolphins in the world** with the spotting of **155 such animals**, according to the **Chilika Development Authority (CDA)**.
- ✦ China-based Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has approved **\$1.5 billion** in loans to India for infrastructure-related projects in 2018
- ✦ India’s first **Aviation Multi Skill Development Centre (MSDC)** was launched at **Chandigarh** Airport’s old terminal. The Centre is a CSR initiative of Airports Authority of India (AAI) and will initially train 2,360 students free of cost in three years.
- ✦ The eighth edition **Lamitye 2018**, bilateral military exercise between Indian Army and Seychelles People’s Defence Force was held at **Mahe Island in Sychelles**.
- ✦ Ministry of Railways has launched SRIJAN (Station Rejuvenation through Joint Action), an idea competition for development of 635 railway stations
- ✦ The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare launched ‘**Viral Load testing**’ for all People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV).
- ✦ Funding under Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE). It will be financed via restructured Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)

INSTITUTE	Loans on offer from HEFA from FY 2018-19 to FY 2021-22 (in Crore)
IITs	25,000
Central universities	20,000
NITs	11,300
Institutions of eminence	10,000
IISERs	5,000
IIMs (6 new)	4,500
IIITs (set up in PPP mode)	3,000
IIITs (govt)	2,000
Language institutes	1,000
Other centrally funded institutes	1,700
Schools of Planning and Architecture	1,500
New institutes (unforeseen)	6,000
Research promotion	9,000
TOTAL	1,00,000

- ✧ The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has retained its 'A' status of accreditation of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions GANHRI for fourth consecutive term.
- ✧ **Kunwar Bai**, a 106-year-old woman from Chhattisgarh who was chosen as mascot for 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan', passed away after a prolonged illness.
- ✧ The Union Power Ministry has extended waiver of inter-state power transmission charges and losses for solar and wind power projects commissioned till 31 March 2022 in order to give boost to clean energy sources.
 - The waiver will be available to solar and wind projects for 25 years from date of commissioning.
- ✧ In India, 42 languages are spoken by fewer than 10,000 people. A list prepared by UNESCO has mentioned them as critically endangered languages.

- ✦ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had recently organized **Youth Exchange Programme- Watan Ko Jano programme**.
- ✦ The Virgin Group led by Richard Branson has signed an intent agreement with Maharashtra Government to build world's first hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune
- ✦ **Hyperloop Technology** is dubbed as fifth mode of transportation
- ✦ Ambitious water conservation scheme Atal Bhujal Yojana (ABY) to tackle ever-deepening crisis of depleting groundwater level. The Rs 6,000-crore will be piloted under the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation. It is awaiting cabinet's clearance
- ✦ Tri-service maritime exercise '**Paschim Lehar**' was held off India's western coast with an aim to build interoperability between Indian Navy, Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard
- ✦ Punjab government has made attachment of super straw management system to combine harvester machines mandatory for harvesting paddy (rice) crop in an attempt to check the dangerous trend of stubble burning
- ✦ The **National Productivity Day** is observed every year in India on **February 12**. Besides, February 12-18 is observed as National Productivity week throughout the country with the theme 'Industry 4.0 Leapfrog Opportunity for India'
- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone-laying ceremony for construction of first traditional Hindu temple in Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi, the capital city of United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- ✦ **Bihar Government** has banned sale of loose cigarettes in the state.
- ✦ The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) launched National Deworming Initiative on the occasion of **National Deworming Day** (observed on **10th February**).
- ✦ The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development is considering to establish National Women Entrepreneurship Council (NWEC). According to Mastercard Index of Women Entrepreneurs, India ranked 49 among 54 economies globally with overall low score of 41.7 points.
- ✦ The **India Health Fund** (IHF) launched by Tata Trusts in collaboration with Global Fund in August 2016 has come forward to financially support innovations and technologies designed to combat tuberculosis (TB) and malaria.

- ✦ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved to enhance target base of **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** from 5 crore to 8 crore. The revised target of PMUY will be achieved by 2020 with an additional allocation of Rs. 4,800 crore.
- ✦ The Union Cabinet approved signing of **Memoranda of Understanding (MoU)** for Secondment Programme between **India and Australia**.
- ✦ Under the Secondment Programme, one officer from Australian Treasury will be seconded to DEA, Ministry of Finance and one officer from IES (at Deputy Secretary/Director level) nominated by IES Cadre, DEA will be seconded to Australian Treasury, Government of Australia, for period of three months.
- ✦ Only two Indian institutes have featured in the top 50 Asian institutes in recently released TIMES Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings for educational institutes in Asia – Indian Institute of Science (29th rank) and Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (44)
- ✦ Search engine giant Google has launched **'#SecurityCheckKiya'** campaign in India to create awareness around Internet safety
- ✦ Defence industrial production corridor worth rupees 200 billion will be established in **Bundelkhand**.
- ✦ Sustainable development goal Number 11 – make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
- ✦ International Conference on Sustainable bio fuels, ICSB 2018 will be held in New Delhi in February 2018. this conference is being jointly organised by mission innovation - India unit and biofuture platform and will be hosted by department of biotechnology and the union Ministry of Science and technology.
- ✦ A Niti Aayog official has announced at Nandan Nilekani will the government in creating IT infrastructure for National Health Protection Scheme. It aims to offer medical cover for up to rupees 5 lakh to more than 10 crore poor families.
- ✦ BioAsia 2018 theme - right time right now. Focus - strategy to keep up with pace of change and innovative ways to develop new models for distribution and health care delivery.
- ✦ Union Defence Ministry has started the process to set up India's first defence industrial Quad (quadrilateral corridor) linking Chennai with 4 other cities of Tamilnadu to promote industries manufacturing weapons and military equipments. Project in Tamilnadu will connect Chennai with Hosur, Coimbatore. Salem and Tiruchirapalli.
- ✦ Haryana state cabinet approved the proposal to bring in legislation for death penalty to those found guilty of the raping girls aged 12 years or less.

- ✦ Government Run Energy Efficiency Services Limited signed Memorandum of understanding with Andhra Pradesh State government to invest rupees 3730 crore in the state. The Memorandum of Understanding envisage supply of 10000 electric vehicles and 4000 chargers to various departments of Andhra Pradesh.
- ✦ Indian Space Research Organisation has started work on building igloos (referred to as lunar habitats) on the Moon. These Lunar habitats will be built by sending robots and 3D printers to the moon.
- ✦ Central Marine fisheries Research Institute has developed a multi vendor eCommerce website and mobile app named “marinefishsales”
- ✦ According to military balance 2018 report by International Institute for strategic studies, India overtook the UK as the fifth largest defence spender in the world in 2017. india's Defence budget stood at 52.5 billion dollars.
- ✦ Kerala government will soon employ robots to clean sewer holes, instead of Involving humans.
- ✦ ISRO is planning to launch India’s second space observatory-**ASTROSAT 2**
- ✦ Arrow 3 advanced missile defence system – Israel
- ✦ Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced that DADA DADI park - for senior citizens will be set up in all cities of Jharkhand.
- ✦ 12th international conference on corporate social responsibility was held in Bengaluru, Karnataka
- ✦ Indian power stations 2018- a three day international conference on operations and maintenance.
 - **Theme of the conference - technological challenges: risks and challenges in power generation**
- ✦ Sohini Roy Chaudhary 8 year old Indian origin school girl has made it to the UK athletics Hall of Fame
- ✦ Reliance Industries announced it has been awarded to Golden Peacock Award 2017 for corporate social responsibility.
- ✦ Indian government is developing a “**soft power mix**” to foster better diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries and rest of the world . soft power is a country’s ability to persuade other countries to do what it wants without resorting to force or coercion.

WORLD CURRENT AFFAIRS:

- ✦ The Pakistani Senate declared **Mandarin** as one of the official languages of Pakistan. This has been made to improve ties between Pakistan and China.
- ✦ As per report from content delivery network services Akamai technologies, India has ranked seventh on the list of targeted countries for web application attacks.
- ✦ Singapore government announced that it would impose carbon tax from 2019 to cut its Greenhouse gas emissions. For The period 2019 to 2023, carbon tax will it imposed at the rate of 5 Singapore Dollar per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions.
- ✦ A New Shark species named “**Atlantic sixgill Shark**” was discovered in the Atlantic Ocean. This new species is different from the similar ones found in Indian and Pacific Ocean
- ✦ **Venezuela and Libya** were suspended from voting in United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2018-19 session for not paying dues to 193-member world body.
- ✦ India has secured access to key strategic Port of Duqm in Oman in Arabian sea for military use and logistical support.
- ✦ **Janadriyah** - cultural and heritage festival held in Jenadriyah (or **Janadriyah**) near Riyadh in Saudi Arabia each year, lasting for two weeks. It is organised by the National Guard, and the first was held in 1985. Activities include a camel race, performance of local music and dancing of the Ardah and the Mizmar.
- ✦ **Sweden Commits Record \$370m of Aid to UN World Food Programme**
- ✦ **Bermuda** has become the **first country to legalise and then repeal same-sex marriage**.
- ✦ **Business magazine Forbes** has released its **first-ever Crypto Rich List**, comprising 20 wealthiest people in the cryptocurrency space. The list was topped by **Ripple Co-founder Chris Larsen**, who is estimated to have a crypto net worth of \$7.5-8 billion.
- ✦ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** left for his **three-nation visit to Palestine, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman**.
 - ii. This is the first ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Palestine, and Prime Minister Modi's second visit to UAE and first to Oman.
- ✦ **Dubai witnessed 15% growth in tourist arrivals from India in 2017**, hosting 2.1 million visitors, retaining top spot as the source market.

- ✦ **The Gevora Hotel in Dubai**, developed by the Al Attar Group has now become the “**world’s tallest hotel**”. It stands 356 metres and 53 centimetres tall.
- ✦ **Dubai’s Roads and Transport Authority (RTA)** launched the first tests of the **world’s first autonomous pods at the World Government Summit**.
- ✦ **Russian space agency Roskosmos** has successfully launched **Progress MS-08**, an unmanned cargo spacecraft for the International Space Station (ISS).
- ✦ **China will host 2018 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit at Qingdao**, eastern Shandong Province in June 2018
- ✦ **Singapore will impose a 'carbon tax' from 2019 to cut its greenhouse gas emissions**
✦ Singapore ranks **26th out of 142 countries** in terms of emissions per capita based on the latest International Energy Agency data.
- ✦ **Canada’s own first franchise-based Twenty20 league “Global T20 Canada”**, was announced in New Delhi.
- ✦ **National Science Day (NSD)** is celebrated every year on **28 February**
- ✦ Saudi Arabia has allowed women to open their own businesses and benefit from government e-services without having to prove consent from husband or male guardian.
- ✦ Scientists from The Rockefeller University in New York have reported discovery of a new class of antibiotics called **malacidins**. It has been produced by microorganisms living in soil and dirt and is capable of killing off several antibiotic-resistant pathogens.
- ✦ China’s People’s Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) has commissioned its new generation J-20 fourth-generation stealth fighter into combat service. With this, China became second country in world to commissioned domestically developed stealth aircraft after United States
- ✦ **Tropical cyclone Gita- Tonga**.
- ✦ Saudi Arabia conducted the grooves Jazz festival, its first ever Jazz festival, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

✦ Andijan region of Uzbekistan and Indian government have inked an agreement for cooperation in pharmaceutical industry.

✦ Mountaineer Samina baig has been appointed national goodwill ambassador for Pakistan by the UNDP. Baig is the first Pakistani woman who had climbed Mount Everest.

✦ **Cyclone Kelvin - Australia**

BANKING AND FINANCE:

- ✦ Tata Steel and IT services provider WIPRO - featured in the list of 135 most ethical companies of the word for 2018. The list has been compiled by the US think tank Institute.
- ✦ Equitas small finance bank has rolled out “**Selfesavings**”, an interactive digital savings account.
- ✦ French banking group BNP Paribas has announced that it is acquiring the Luxembourg based Wealth Management and insurance business of ABN Amro.
- ✦ **Seamless Allianc** - Bharti Airtel has announced that it has joined a new Global collaboration to bring high speed and uninterrupted in flight data connectivity to mobile customers. Along with Bharti Airtel, oneweb, airbus, delta and sprint are the other founding members of this alliance.
- ✦ **Mahindra Aerospace and Canada’s Viking Air** have signed an MOU to form a strategic alliance for making smaller aircraft to support regional air connectivity in India.
- ✦ Global Business Summit 2018 theme - **New Economy New Rules**.
- ✦ IndusInd Bank has announced its partnership with Ripple, the blockchain solution provider to facilitate cross border remittances into and out of India.
- ✦ The Union Cabinet has approved 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.
 - Micro enterprise: It will be unit with annual turnover does not exceed Rs. 5 crore.
 - Small enterprise: It will be unit with annual turnover is more than Rs. 5 crore but does not exceed Rs. 75 crore.
 - Medium enterprise: It will be unit with annual turnover is more than Rs. 75 crore but does not exceed Rs. 250 crore.
 - The amendment empowers Central Government to vary turnover limits, provided not exceeding thrice the limits specified in Section 7 of MSMED Act by issuing notification.
- ✦ **NITI Aayog** has made strong case for setting up independent Debt Management Office for better servicing of loans that will lead to substantial reduction in India’s interest payment. At present, government debt, including market borrowing, is managed by Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Setting up independent Debt Management Office will help to resolve issues relating to conflict of interest as RBI decides on key interest rates as well as undertakes buying and selling of government bonds.
- ✦ The first sale of electoral bonds will start from March 1, 2018 for period of 10 days at four main branches of State Bank of India in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata and New Delhi. These bonds will have a life of 15 days, and citizen of India or an entity incorporated or established in the country can

purchase them. The bonds will be available in multiples of rupees 1000, Rs 10,000, Rs 10 lakh, Rs 1 crore.

- ✦ **Venezuela become first sovereign country to officially launch its own cryptocurrency called Petro** backed by oil, gas, gold and diamond reserves to circumvent US-led financial sanctions. Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has claimed that the pre-mined cryptocurrency Petro has raised US \$735 million on the first day of its pre-sale.

- ✦ The Union Finance Ministry (Department of Revenue) has imposed anti-dumping duty on import of ceramic tableware and kitchenware from China in bid to protect domestic producers. Both items will attract anti-dumping duty of \$1.04 per kg, making the imports expensive

- ✦ **SWIFT:**
 - SWIFT is global financial messaging service that enables financial institutions worldwide to send and receive information about financial transactions in secure, standardized and reliable environment. It is used to transmit messages relating to cross border financial transactions.
 - It was founded in 1973 and is headquartered in La Hulpe, Belgium. It is a cooperative society under Belgian law owned by its member financial institutions with offices around the world. Globally over 11,000 financial institutions in more than 200 countries use services of SWIFT.
 - SWIFT does not facilitate funds transfer, rather, it sends payment orders, that must be settled by correspondent accounts that institutions have with each other. On receiving this message through SWIFT, banks abroad, mostly branches of domestic banks abroad provide funds to the company.

- ✦ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised exposure limit under exchange traded currency derivatives (ETCD) trading for residents and foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to \$100 million across all currency pairs involving Indian rupee.

- ✦ **Retirement fund body Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** has made it mandatory to file online claims for provident fund withdrawals **above Rs 10 lakh**

- ✦ **The Reserve Bank of India** raised the exposure limit under **Exchange Traded Currency Derivatives (ETCD)** trading for residents and foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to **USD 100 million across all currency pairs involving the Indian rupee.**

- ✦ **Catholic Syrian Bank Ltd and Celebrus Capital Ltd** have announced a new partnership to offer CSB's customers online trading and demat services.

- ✦ **Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ltd (ABIPBL)** started operations, making it the **fifth payments bank to roll out operations.**
- ✦ **Chinese technology giant Huawei** and **telecom services provider Bharti Airtel** announced to have successfully conducted **5G network trial** under a test set-up in India. Name- Balong 5G01
- ✦ The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** decided to **keep the policy repo rate under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) unchanged at 6.0%.**
 - **ii.** Consequently, the Reverse Repo Rate (RRR) under the LAF remains at 5.75%, and the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate at 6.25%.
 - **iii.** GVA growth for 2017-18 is projected at 6.6%. GVA growth for 2018-19 is projected at 7.2% overall with risks evenly balanced.
- ✦ **The Reserve Bank of India** will **link the base rate with the MCLR** from 1st of April 2018 to ensure expeditious transmission of its policy rate to borrowers.
- ✦ **IndusInd Bank** launched its **new Sonic Identity, which is essentially a musical logo called 'MOGO'**, as part of its branding initiatives.
- ✦ **State-owned Bank of Baroda** has decided to exit by March-end **its South Africa operations after 21 years** amid a probe into alleged compliance lapses by the bank there.
- ✦ **Reserve Bank of India** has made **banks' priority sector norms lenient** by saying that all loans to **micro small and medium enterprises (MSME)** will henceforth qualify as priority sector lending. Till date, loans up to Rs 10 crore per MSME borrower was considered for priority sector calculation.
- ✦ India's Umang App was named winner of the Best M-Government Service award in the Accessible Government category while Aadhar won the best emerging technology award at the recently concluded World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai, where India had the status of 'Guest of Honour' country.
- ✦ Yes Bank has announced the listing of the Bank's debut US \$600 million bond issue under its maiden US \$1 billion medium-term note (MTN) bond on country's first international exchange BSE's IndiaINX at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) at GIFT City in Gandhinagar.
- ✦ The Union Cabinet has given approval for creation of **National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF)** for **Rs.60,000 crores.** This fund will be situated in **Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC)**, an autonomous body under the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.**
- ✦ **Fitch** placed **Punjab National Bank** on **Rating Watch Negative (RWN)**

- ✦ Retirement fund body **Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO)** has **reduced the interest rate on deposits to 8.55%** for 2017-18 from 8.65% for 2016-17 following a general decline in interest rates.
- ✦ The finance ministry had recently lowered interest rate on **General Provident Fund (GPF) and Public Provident Fund (PPF) to 7.6%**.
- ✦ **Capital First** announced that the regulator **National Housing Bank (NHB)** has **approved the merger of the company along with Capital Home Finance and Capital First Securities Limited with IDFC Bank**.
- ✦ **The Government of India and Asian Development Bank (ADB)** signed a **\$84 million loan for improvement and expansion of water supply in Bhagalpur and Gaya towns in Bihar**.
- ✦ **Digital payments startup Paytm** has launched two insurance companies, **Paytm Life Insurance and Paytm General Insurance**.
- ✦ Britain's Prince Charles has launched a new 10-million-dollar Development Impact Bond (DIB) to help improve education for over 200,000 children in India.
- ✦ TCS has been recognised as one of the world's best employers by the top employer institute for the third consecutive year.
- ✦ **Price point- a Transfer pricing in real estate by Zippserv**

APPOINTMENTS:

- ✦ **Jerome H Powell** was sworn in as the **16th Chairman** of the **Federal Reserve** for a **four-year term**.
- ✦ **PepsiCo Chairman and CEO Indra Nooyi** has been appointed as the **International Cricket Council's (ICC) first-ever independent female director**. Nooyi will join the cricket body in June 2018 for a 2-year term.
- ✦ **SBI Card**, the country's second-largest credit card issuer, has appointed **Hardayal Prasad** as new **Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of the company.
- ✦ **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** appointed **Biswamohan Mahapatra** as **non-executive chairman** for two years with immediate effect.
- ✦ **Kannada litterateur Chandrashekar Kambar** has been elected as **president of the Sahitya Akademi**
- ✦ South Africa's embattled **President Jacob Zuma has resigned**.
- ✦ **Cyril Ramaphosa**, head of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) has been sworn in as South Africa's new President
- ✦ **Ethiopia's Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn suddenly resigned** in what he described as a bid to smooth reforms, following years of violent unrest that threatened the ruling party's hold on Africa's second most populous nation.
- ✦ Japan's government has reappointed Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda for another term
- ✦ **K.P. Sharma Oli** was sworn in as **Nepal's Prime Minister** for the second time
- ✦ **Archaeologist and historian Arvind P. Jamkhedkar** will be the next **Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)**.
- ✦ Television journalist **Rahul Mahajan** has been appointed as editor-in-chief of the television channel **Rajya Sabha TV**
- ✦ China was elected as the Vice President of Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- ✦ China's election to the FATF assumes significance as Pakistan is set to be put in the FATF 'grey list' in June 2018
- ✦ **Abhilasha Kumari** was sworn in as the **Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court**

- ✦ Sachin Tendulkar has been named the brand ambassador of the upcoming T20 Mumbai League
- ✦ **Bangladesh president Abdul Hamid elected as president for another 5 years term**
- ✦ New brand ambassador of “power” Bata’s footwear brands - **Smriti mandhana**
- ✦ **Chief Justice of Kerala- Antony Dominic**
- ✦ New Ambassador of India to timor leste- **Pradeep Kumar Rawat**
- ✦ New Head of HDFC Bank – **Rakesh Singh**
- ✦ New brand ambassador of Muthoot group- **Amitabh Bachchan**

COMMITTEES:

- ✦ **Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** has constituted a **13-member advisory committee to monitor and expedite capital acquisition projects** for the modernisation of the armed forces. **The committee will be headed by Vinay Sheel Oberoi**, former secretary in the government.
- ✦ The Centre has constituted a **committee headed by the Vice Chairman of the NITI Aayog Mr Rajiv Kumar** to study the **Brahmaputra and flood control measures in Assam and neighbouring states**.
- ✦ Government has constituted **Empowered Expert Committee (EEC)** to select 20 Institutions of Eminence from among 104 institutions (public or private). The committee will be headed by former Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) **N Gopalaswami**.

IMPORTANT DAYS:

- ✦ **World Radio Day** is observed annually on **13 February**.
 - The theme for WRD 2018 is "**Radio and Sports**". The Day is organised globally by the **UNESCO**.
- ✦ **The government of India and the UN** jointly announced that **India will host the global World Environment Day celebrations on 5 June 2018**. The theme for World Environment 2018 is "**Beat Plastic Pollution**".
- ✦ **The World Day of Social Justice (WDSJ)** is observed globally on **20th February**.
 - ii. The theme for WDSJ 2018 is "**Workers on the Move: the Quest for Social Justice**".
- ✦ **UNESCO** has celebrated **International Mother Language Day on 21 February**. The 2018 theme is- "**Linguistic diversity and multilingualism count for sustainable development**".
- ✦ **The Assam government** has announced to observe **September 22 as 'Rhino Day'**
- ✦ **National Science Day (NSD)** is celebrated every year on **28 February**
- ✦ **Central Excise day - 24th February 2018**

SPORTS AND AWARDS:

- ✦ Orissa Government will sponsor the Indian National Hockey team for the next 5 years
- ✦ Cristiano Ronaldo became the first player in history to score hundred Champions League goals for the same club
- ✦ Australian tennis player Jordan Thompson won Chennai Open ATP Challenger tennis Championship
- ✦ **Shubhankar Sharma** has emerged as **the best Indian golfer in the world**, grabbing the **72nd position** in the **Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR)**. He has won the **Maybank Championship in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.
- ✦ Dustin Johnson from the USA is currently the World Number 1 in Official World Golf Ranking.
- ✦ The **first Khelo India School Games concluded in New Delhi** with sports powerhouse **Haryana topped the overall medal tally**. The state won **102 medals** which include 38 gold and 26 silver.
- ✦ **Indian women's cricket team pacer Jhulan Goswami** has become the **first woman in the world to take 200 wickets in ODI cricket**.
- ✦ **The 23rd Olympic Winter Games** officially kicked off with a colourful ceremony at **Pyeongchang in South Korea**.
- ✦ **Sharmila Nicollet** has become the **first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour**.
- ✦ **Pune-based swimmer, Rohan More** became the **first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven**. He is the youngest to complete it. He swam across the Cook Strait between North and South Islands of New Zealand in 8 hours and 37 minutes.
- ✦ With this, More becomes **only the ninth person in the world to complete it**. He has received the Tenzing Norgay Award from the Indian Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The award was presented by President Ram Nath Kovind.
- ✦ **Karnataka's Kishan Gangolli** won the **13th edition of the National 'A' Chess Championship for the blind in Mumbai**.
- ✦ **Vikas Sathaye**, a Pune-born person has been honoured with the Scientific and Engineering Academy Award at the **Oscars Scientific and Technical Awards 2018** at Beverly Hills in Los Angeles, California.

BAFTA Awards 2018:

1.	Best Film	Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
2.	Outstanding British Film	Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
3.	Best Director	Guillermo Del Toro, The Shape of Water
4.	Best Actress	Frances McDormand, Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri
5.	Best Actor	Gary Oldman, Darkest Hour
6.	British Short Film	Cowboy Dave British Short Animation: Poles Apart
7.	Best Film Not In The English Language	The Handmaiden Best Documentary: I Am Not Your Negro
8.	Best Sound	Dunkirk
9.	Best Original Music	The Shape of Water

✦ **Milkbasket, India's first and largest micro-delivery platform** has been recognised as '**Startup of the Year' 2017**

✦ Business consultancy firm **EY** has named **Bajaj Finserv's Sanjiv Bajaj** as the **entrepreneur for 2017**

✦ **Roger Federer (Switzerland)** celebrated his return to the top of the world rankings by winning the **Rotterdam Open, in the Netherlands.**

✦ **France doubles pair P. H. Herbert and N. Mahut** won the Men's Doubles Title.

✦ **Aruna Budda Reddy** has created history by becoming **the first Indian to win an individual medal at the Gymnastics World Cup in Melbourne, Australia.** She clinched a **Bronze medal** in the Women's Vault.

✦ **MC Mary Kom And Seema Poonia** Bag Silver Medals In Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament

Pyeongchang Winter Olympics 2018-

✦ The motto of Winter Olympics 2018 was "Passion.Connected". Soohorang, a white tiger, and Bandabi, an Asiatic black bear were the official mascots for this event.

✦ india's **P. Kashyap** won the men's singles title of the Austrian open International challenge in Vienna, Austria. He is a former National Badminton champion.

- ✦ India's Vikas Krishnan has won a gold medal the best boxer of the tournament honour at the 69th strandja Memorial boxing tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria.
- ✦ Indian Olympic Association announced that it has partnered with edelweiss Financial Services Limited as sponsor of the Indian team for 2018 Commonwealth games, 2018 Asian games and the 2020 Olympic games and national games 2018 and 2019.
- ✦ First Raj Kapoor award for excellence in cinema – Ramesh sippy
- ✦ Ibrahim price for achievement in African leadership - Ellen Johnson sirleaf

INDICES:

- ✦ **International Intellectual Property (IP) Index, ranking 44th among 50 nations**, according to the US Chambers of Commerce report. Last year, India ranked 43rd out of 45 countries in the Index.
- ✦ **The top 3 countries on the list are-** The USA, The United Kingdom and Sweden

MISCELLANEOUS:

- ✦ **Kathakali maestro Madavoor Vasudevan Nair**
- ✦ **Noted violinist M.S. Anantharaman**, an exponent of **Parur style** of violin playing had passed away.
- ✦ **India has successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable surface-to-surface 'Dhanush' ballistic missile** with a strike range of **350 km**
- ✦ TRS Subramanyam former Cabinet Secretary passed away recently. Books written by him: **India at turning point**” the road to good governance, Government in India: in inside view, Journeys through Babudom and Netaland: governance in India.
- ✦ Book named **“A Question of trust”** - by British novelist Penny Vincenzi.