NATIONAL

India, Morocco launches Chamber of Commerce

- The India-Morocco Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IMCCI) was inaugurated by Vice President Mohammad Hamid Ansari and Moroccan Prime Minister Abdelilah Benkirane in Rabat.

AIR band to compose for Swachh Bharat

- The government has roped in India's first national orchestra band - All India Radio's Vaadya Vrind - to prepare a musical composition for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- Vaadya Vrind, which has seen maestros like Pandit Ravi Shankar, Pannalal Ghosh and other greats playing in the orchestra, would prepare the composition under violinist Johar Ali Khan.
- The musical composition for PM Narendra Modi’s pet initiative would be played on radio channels to spread awareness about the cleanliness initiative would be played on radio channels to spread awareness about the cleanliness initiative.
- Khan had also composed the music for Festival of India in Indonesia held in Jakarta last year.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s address ‘Mann Ki Baat’ to be broadcast in Bangladesh

- Although Mann Ki Baat is aired in English and several regional languages, this is the first time the address, broadcast about once a month will be tailored to a foreign audience. This will also mark the first time the citizens of a neighbouring country get to speak their mind and ask questions to the Indian prime minister.
- Mann Ki Baat will be broadcast in Bangladesh on All India Radio’s upcoming Bangla language service channel Akashvani Maitree, for which AIR has made arrangements to receive comments and voice messages from Bangladeshi citizens.
- The PM’s speech is likely to be about Indo-Bangladesh "relationship and friendship".
- The purpose behind this soft diplomacy is to strengthen bilateral ties and break the stranglehold of Pakistani and Chinese radio channels in the neighbouring country.
- Akashvani Maitree has initiated the process to tie up with local Bangladeshi FM channels as well.

Indigenous Tejas joins IAF’s fighter squadron

- The first two contemporary or fourth generation Light Combat Aircraft ‘Tejas,’ designed and built in India, joined the Indian Air Force’s squadron called Flying Daggers.
- The induction marked the fruition of a 33-year, nearly Rs. 8000-crore national dream to have an Indian fighter in the country’s air defence fleet.
- The current IAF fighters are the French-origin Mirage-2000s and the Russian origin Sukhoi-30s and the aged MiGs.
Tejas has been developed for the IAF and the Navy by the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) starting 1985 and produced by the public sector aircraft manufacturer, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, both based in Bengaluru.

**Kerala government to ban e-cigarettes**

- Kerala government has decided to ban ‘electronic cigarette’ in view of studies claiming that its use can cause various health issues, including cancer and heart ailments.
- E-cigarettes are handy devices that emit doses of vapourised nicotine.
- A series of studies conducted in the US and Japan has proved that the usage of e-cigarette would cause cancer and heart ailments.
- The e-cigarettes are being marketed in Kerala through unauthorised courier services and online sites.

**Javadekar elevated, gets HRD as Smriti moved out**

- Prakash Javadekar, promoted to Cabinet rank, was one of the biggest gainers in the reshuffle, bagging the prestigious Human Resource Development portfolio.
- He replaces Smriti Irani, who has been handed the Textiles portfolio.
- Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, opted out of handling the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, with the charge now being handled by Urban Development Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu. Mr. Jaitley will handle Corporate Affairs as well, as before.
- It was also promotion time for Information and Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, who got back the Law portfolio after losing it in November 2015. His Communications portfolio has been given to Manoj Sinha, who has been promoted to Minister of State with independent charge.
- D.V. Sadananda Gowda has been given Statistics and Programme Implementation, which could be a disappointment to him. Another big gainer was Minister of State for Power Piyush Goel, who gets Coal and Mines as well. This major rejig, with the induction of 19 new faces, is significant with regard to the upcoming Parliament session, with Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister Ananth Kumar, known for networking across party lines, being given additional charge of Parliamentary Affairs.
- Minister of State Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, who retains Minority Affairs, will assist him in Parliamentary Affairs, as will newly inducted Minister of State S.S. Ahluwalia.
- Mr. Ahluwalia will also be Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.
- Another Cabinet Minister Narendra Tomar, who was handling Mines, will now look after Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Sanitation, while the Minister handling this earlier, Chaudhary Birender Singh, has been allocated the Steel Ministry.
- Another big surprise is several Ministers of State being given independent charge of Ministries. According to a list of portfolio allocations released by the government late in the evening, Anil Madhav Dave, sworn in as Minister of State, has been given independent charge of Environment and Forests and Climate Change, while Vijay Goel has been allocated the portfolio of Sports and Youth Affairs, again as independent charge.
Centre okays Rs 250 crore for Ramayan circuit in Ayodhya

- Centre has put Ayodhya on its development agenda by okaying Rs 250 crore for Ramayan Circuit comprising the temple town. Having already announced mapping and building of three famous holy circuits in Uttar Pradesh, Prime Minister Narendra Modi might take part in World Ramayan Conclave likely to be held there in December.

- Selection of venue for the Ramayan conclave in Ayodhya in Faizabad of and its timing around year-end when assembly election in the state would be close is something the cultural ministry is not confirming or issuing official word on, though preparations have begun.

- The world Ramayan conclave is held almost every year in different places and last year it was in Jabalpur.

Cabinet nod to change names of High Courts

- The Cabinet approved a change in the names of the Madras, Bombay and Calcutta High Courts to reflect the changes in the official nomenclature of these cities to Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata, respectively.

- “The names of these cities have been changed for a few years now. (So) it is appropriate to change the names of their high courts as well and the Cabinet has approved the introduction of the ‘The High Courts (Alteration of Names) Bill, 2016’ in Parliament.”

- The High Courts (Alteration of Names) Bill, 2016 will facilitate the changing of the names of ‘Bombay High Court as Mumbai High Court’ and ‘Madras High Court as Chennai High Court’ respectively.

Bandaru Dattatreya to attend G-20 Labour Ministers meeting in China

- Union Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya would leave for China on July 9 to participate in a meeting of labour ministers.

- It would be a part of the G-20 Summit, to be held from July 11-13.

- "He will participate in G-20 Labour and Employment Ministers’ conference.

- A meeting of the working group of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) on employment generation and other issues would be held in Hyderabad on July 27 and 28.

Naidu launches ‘Smart Pulse’ survey

- Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the State government’s prestigious ‘Smart Pulse’ socio-economic survey at his residence at Undavalli in Guntur district.

- The enumerators collected particulars from the Chief Minister and his family members. They also captured the iris of Mr. Naidu, and his son and TDP national general secretary Lokesh.

- “This survey is based on latest IT tools and would be the most comprehensive survey ever. Just by a touch of button, we can get all details of the socio-economic status of families and we will ensure that all cash benefits to genuine beneficiaries are directly credited into their bank accounts,” Mr. Naidu said.
Wani’s death triggers fury, 11 killed, 200 hurt in Kashmir

- Eleven protesters were killed and over 120 persons, including 96 security personnel, were injured, as violent street protests erupted across the Kashmir valley after militant commander Burhan Wani was killed in a joint operation by security forces.

- The Government clamped curfew in large parts of Kashmir and the Amarnath yatra has been suspended.

Andhra Pradesh’s attitude inhuman, Telangana tells water tribunal.

- The Telangana government complained to the Krishna water disputes tribunal of the alleged inhuman attitude of Andhra Pradesh in setting up obstacles to the Palamuru – Ranga Reddy lift-irrigation scheme by filing court cases and taking it up with the Central government.

- When the tribunal heard the arguments of both the governments in New Delhi, the lawyer for Telangana C.S. Vaidyanathan said that the Palamuru – Ranga Reddy project was, among others, intended to meet the drinking water requirements of fluoride-affected areas of Nalgonda. Lift irrigation was the only means to take water in Telangana as the region was at a higher altitude.

- Against its allocated share of 299 tmc ft in the river, Telangana used only 261 tmc ft while AP exceeded its entitlement of 512 tmc ft. Moreover, AP used 351 tmc ft beyond Krishna basin for Pothireddypadu, Galeru – Nagari and Handri Neeva Srujala Sravanti schemes. Besides, additional 200 tmc ft surplus water and an equal quantum from Pennar, a sub-basin of Krishna, was also available to that State.

- Mr. Vaidyanathan said the injustice of AP was so glaring that Telangana was deprived of 90 tmc ft in K 12 block spread over Khammam. The Krishna basin was divided into 12 blocks in combined Andhra Pradesh.

- Only 50 tmc ft out of 140 tmc ft allotted to K 12 was used by Telangana while the remaining water was carried by gravity to Prakasam barrage.

Kudankulam power plant reaches another milestone

- The second reactor of Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project (KKNPP) attained criticality.

- The event was greeted with thunderous applause from the employees, technocrats and members of the Russian specialist group.

- As the top brass of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited, including its Chairman and Managing Director S.K. Sharma, witnessed the milestone event from the control room, the nuclear fission started in the second reactor at the scheduled time.

- Once the reactor starts generating 400 MWe of power, possibly within 45 days from the date of criticality, it is likely to be connected to the grid. Generation of power will be raised to 500 MWe, 750 MWe, 900 MWe and 1,000 MWe in stages.

- At every stage, various tests will be conducted and the technical parameters verified as mandated by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). Based on the results of the tests at each stage and with AERB clearance, which will take two to three weeks, subsequent stages will be reached to take the VVER reactor, constructed with Russian technical assistance, to its maximum capacity of 1,000 MWe.
300 Indians stranded in Juba as civil war reignites

- At least 300 Indians have been left stranded as one of Africa’s oldest civil wars reignites in Juba, the capital of South Sudan.
- Fleeing the fight between the heavily armed rival factions divided on ethnic lines, Indians have taken refuge at various locations, including the Embassy of India.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said on Twitter that India planned to evacuate its nationals trapped in Juba. “I am aware of the developments in South Sudan. Please register yourself with the Indian embassy and do not panic,” she said, even as the Indian embassy created a WhatsApp group to stay in touch with all Indian citizens and to monitor the situation.

SC quashes Arunachal Governor’s order, Tuki takes charge as CM

- A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously quashed Arunachal Pradesh Governor J.P. Rajkhowa’s order to advance the Assembly session from January 14, 2016 to December 16, 2015, a gubernatorial move which triggered a political crisis in the sensitive border State and culminated in the declaration of President’s rule on January 26.
- A five-judge Bench, led by Justice J.S. Khehar, directed status quo ante as on December 15, 2015. This means that the Supreme Court has in unequivocal terms shown the door to the BJP-propped government of Kalikho Pul.
- Separate rulings
- The Bench, in three judgments separately authored by Justices Khehar, Dipak Misra and Madan B. Lokur, paved the way for the return of the Congress-led Nabam Tuki government to power.
- Hours after the verdict, Mr. Tuki took charge as Chief Minister at Arunachal Bhavan here, Though there are several judicial precedents, led by the nine-judge Bench in the historic S.R. Bommai judgment, which condemned the arbitrary use of Article 356 invoking President’s rule, none have gone so far as to restore a government ousted by emergency.

A.P. gears up for confluence of two mighty rivers

- The Godavari water is all set to enter Krishna district and reach the Prakasam barrage through the Pattiseema project.
- Krishna pushkaram
- It will make up a confluence of the two mighty rivers at Ferry near Ibrahimpatnam where the Krishna Pushkaram is planned to be celebrated on an unprecedented scale along with other river fronts.
- The Pattiseema project was designed to lift 80 TMCFT of surplus water from Godavari between July and October from the ongoing Polavaram multi-purpose irrigation project as per the permission accorded by Godavari Water Disputes Tribunal (GWDT).
- Pattiseema project
- Mr. Naidu had inaugurated the Pattiseema project by switching on the first motor on last Independence Day (August 15, 2015).
The Minister said nearly 1461822 cusecs of Godavari river water had flowed down into the sea as of and only 12000 cusecs could be tapped since June.

The Polavaram project would impound and curb wastage of Godavari river and eventually benefit the Krishna deltas through Pattiseema.

**Governor sets July 16 for floor test; Tuki seeks time**

Acting Governor of Arunachal Pradesh Tathagata Roy has asked Chief Minister Nabam Tuki to prove his majority on the floor of the Assembly by July 16. Mr Tuki however, said the order would be difficult to implement as the time was too short.

The Governor’s directive came a day after the Supreme Court, in a historic verdict restored Mr Tuki as Chief Minister, a position he lost last December when Congress rebels, backed by the BJP, staged a coup.

Mr Tuki, who returned to Itanagar and attended office told the media that he would request the acting Governor to defer the proposed floor test.

**Census 2011 records rise in literacy among disabled**

More than half of the total disabled populations in India are now literate, new numbers released from Census 2011 show. The literacy rate among the disabled has increased from 49.3 per cent in 2001 to 54.5 per cent in 2011. However, this is significantly lower than the overall literacy level of India which stands at 74 per cent.

Both rural and urban areas saw an increase of around four percentage points in literacy rate of the disabled.

Wider in rural areas

Among the urban disabled, 68 per cent are literate while the number stands at 49 per cent for disabled in the rural areas.

The difference between literacy rate of males and females is wider in rural areas — 72 per cent of disabled males and 61 per cent of disabled females in urban areas are literate, a difference of nine percentage points.

But in rural areas, the difference stands at 20 percentage points, as 58 per cent of disabled males and only 38 per cent of disabled females are literate.

**Ancient Nalanda University Declared World Heritage Site by UNESCO**

The ruins of the ancient Nalanda University dating back to the third century BC have been declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO.

UNESCO's World Heritage Committee met in Istanbul to inscribe four new sites in China, Iran and Micronesia besides the archaeological site of the Nalanda Mahavihara University in Bihar on the World Heritage List.

The Nalanda site comprises of the archaeological remains of a monastic and scholastic institution dating from the 3rd century BC to the 13th century AD.
Madhya Pradesh becomes first state to have 'Happiness Department'

- Madhya Pradesh became the first state in the country to set up 'Happiness Department', with Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan saying it will work to ensure "happiness in the lives of common people" on the lines of Bhutan.

- The concept of happiness was already there in Bhutan which has "Happiness Index" to measure happiness of its people.

Amitabh Bachchan to be face of ‘city compost’ campaign under Swachh Bharat Mission

- Megastar Amitabh Bachchan will be the face of the “city compost campaign” under Swachh Bharat Mission to encourage citizens to use compost produced from municipal solid waste.

- Urban development minister M Venkaiah Naidu spoke to Bachchan and thanked him for agreeing to be the face of the ministry’s new communication campaign, encouraging citizens to use City Compost produced from municipal solid waste.

All eyes on fate of GST Bill as Modi calls for consensus

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a strong pitch for multi-party support for the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill that the government wants to pass in the monsoon session of Parliament.

- Addressing an all-party meeting called by the government, Mr. Modi said, “GST is of national importance; the issue here is not which government gets credit for its passage. All of us represent both the people and parties and let's keep national interests above everything else.”

- He also thanked all political parties for the stand taken by them on the recent incidents in Jammu and Kashmir. “Various parties have given statements on Kashmir events which benefited the country. This has sent a right message and I thank all the parties for the same,” he said, while complimenting them for speaking in “one voice.”

WHO report sounds alarm on ‘doctors’ in India

- Almost one-third (31 per cent) of those who claimed to be allopathic doctors in 2001 were educated only up to the secondary school level and 57 per cent did not have any medical qualification, a recent WHO report found, ringing the alarm bells on India’s healthcare workforce.

- The situation was far worse in rural India, where just 18.8 per cent of allopathic doctors had a medical qualification, the study titled The Health Workforce in India, published in June 2016, revealed.

India basks in glow of UNESCO honours

- Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) in Sikkim has been named a world heritage site by the World Heritage Committee (WHC) of UNESCO.

- The listing was announced at the 40{+t}{+h}session of the WHC, currently under way at Istanbul in Turkey. The KNP is the first ‘mixed’ heritage site from India to make it to the list. A ‘mixed site’ exhibits qualities of both natural and cultural significance.
Earlier, the archaeological site of Nalanda Mahavihara (Nalanda University) in Bihar was also marked as a heritage site. The Capitol Complex in Chandigarh also made it to the list, thus bringing all three nominations this session into the heritage roll of honour.

This is the first time that any country got three sites inscribed in the World Heritage List at a single session of the committee meeting, a Culture Ministry official said.

India now has 35 sites, including 27 cultural properties, seven natural sites and one mixed site, notified as World Heritage Sites.

The KNP became India’s first mixed World Heritage Site after fulfilling the nomination criteria under both natural and cultural heritages, V.B. Mathur, director, Wildlife Institute of India, told The Hindu in a communication from Istanbul.

Wide altitudinal range

The park exhibits one of the widest altitudinal ranges of any protected area worldwide. It boasts of a unique diversity of lowlands, steep valleys and snow-clad mountains, including the world’s third highest peak, Mt. Khangchendzonga, besides numerous lakes and glaciers, the communication said.

The KNP, which covers 25 per cent of Sikkim, is home to a significant number of endemic, rare and threatened plant and animal species. A large number of bird and mammal species has also been recorded from here, said Dr. Mathur, who is also the director of the UNESCO centre at the Institute.

The park combines the religious and cultural practices of Buddhism as well as the ecological significance of the region, and stands out as an outstanding example of traditional knowledge and environmental preservation. It is also a unique example of coexistence and exchange between different religious traditions and people, he said.

The park qualified as a mixed site under the Operational Guidelines of WHC for its “exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilisation which is living or which has disappeared.”

Capitol marvel

Chandigarh’s famed Capitol Complex, which includes the Legislative Assembly, Secretariat and High Court, was designed by French architect Le Corbusier.

“It is a moment of pride for our city. The [Chandigarh] administration ensures all the residents that we will conserve and preserve this Heritage Site and make the city a major international tourism destination,” adviser to the Union Territory’s administration, Parimal Rai, said.

The complex was designed by Le Corbusier in the 1950s when the city was constructed as a symbol of independent, modern India.

First e-court inaugurated in Hyderabad HC

Giving a kick-start to digital judicature, the first paperless e-court in the Hyderabad High Court got inaugurated. The court, which will start functioning within a couple of days and will use digitised case records thereby bringing down the human resource required to maintain these on paper.
New Chief Minister vows to instil ‘Team Arunachal’ spirit

- Pema Khandu was sworn in as Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh at the head of a Congress government, a day after the party won back all its rebels by choosing a new leader.
- Chowna Mein was sworn in as Deputy Chief Minister.
- Pema, 37, son of the late Chief Minister Dorjee Khandu, is the youngest Chief Minister in the country.
- Cabinet expansion
- After the swearing-in ceremony, Mr. Khandu said his Cabinet would be expanded after the Governor returned to the State.
- Tripura Governor Tathagata Roy, who is looking after Arunachal Pradesh, administered the oath of office and secrecy at the Raj Bhavan here.

Country’s First E-Court Opened At Hyderabad High Court

- India’s first e-court was opened at High Court of Judicature at Hyderabad, which is the common high court for the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- Inaugurating the e-court, Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B Lokur said Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were first two states in the country to be chosen for Integrated Criminal Justice System (ICJS) project.
- While noting that the two states made lot of progress in technology, he said it was one of the reasons for the decision to launch the ICJS, a “system which is going to integrate police stations with the courts, with jails, with the prosecution and with the forensic science laboratories”.
- Justice Lokur, who heads the e-Committee of the Supreme Court, said modalities of the system will be worked out at a meeting scheduled on July 28, and he was impressed with the e-court at Hyderabad High Court.

SC stands by Lodha panel report to revamp cricket

- The Supreme Court ruled in favour of cricket and the game’s millions of viewers by upholding almost all the recommendations of the R.M. Lodha Committee to overhaul the cricket administration at the end of a long hearing spanning over two years during which the high priests of BCCI and State associations fought tooth-and-nail to protect their turf.
- The apex court found no reason to interfere with the recommendations.

Seven Dalits attempt suicide in Gujarat

- Seven Dalits in Gujarat attempted suicide during protests against the incident in which four members of the community were stripped and beaten for skinning a dead cow.
- The community held protest rallies in major towns such as Gondal where five people consumed pesticide. Two consumed the poison in Jamkandorana town. All seven are undergoing treatment in a government hospital. Among those who attempted suicide include a local Congress leader from Gondal, Anil Madhad.
During the protest march in Rajkot, one State transport bus was torched, forcing the state authorities to beef up security.

The State government announced a probe by the CID (Crime) into the public thrashing of Dalits and offered compensation to the victims. The police have arrested nine persons, while four policemen, including an inspector, have been suspended for dereliction of duty. The authorities paid Rs. 1 lakh each to the victims.

Chief Minister Anandiben Patel announced that a “designated court would be set up to expedite the trial and a charge sheet will be submitted within 60 days.”

De-register 10-year-old diesel vehicles in Delhi, says NGT

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered Road Transport Offices (RTO) in Delhi to de-register all diesel vehicles that are over 10 years old and directed it to share data of the vehicles that will be de-registered.

The tribunal’s chairperson, Justice Swatanter Kumar, ordered the RTOs of the Transport Department that after de-registration, it should issue a public notice and submit the list of such vehicles to the Delhi Traffic Police.

CAG audit nails Centre’s claim on LPG subsidy saving

The Centre claims it would end up saving almost Rs. 22,000 crore in the financial years of 2014-15 and 2015-16 since launching its two-pronged approach on cooking gas subsidy — introducing direct bank transfers of the subsidy and asking better off consumers to voluntarily give up theirs.

However, a CAG report to be tabled in Parliament during the ongoing session could seriously puncture the claim, according to reliable sources. The audit has found that the saving from people voluntarily giving up LPG subsidy and direct bank transfers adds up to less than Rs. 2,000 crore. The remaining saving is actually thanks to the dramatic fall in the prices of LPG that India annually imports.

The audit has also found substantial systemic problems with the Direct Benefit Transfer in LPG scheme which is called Pahal by the government. Among them are diversion of domestic subsidy for commercial use and commercial consumption LPG being diverted to domestic use.

The Modi government has been carrying out a high decibel campaign ‘GiveItUp’, calling upon consumers to give up their LPG subsidies. Coupled with the direct bank transfers, the saving has been almost Rs. 22,000 crore, the government claims.

Congress seeks support to private member Bill

The Congress leadership has intensified its efforts to mobilise support from other political parties for the private member bill seeking grant of special category status to Andhra Pradesh even as the ruling Telugu Desam Party appears to be sceptical about the purpose the bill would serve.

Congress MP K.V.P. Ramachandra Rao moved the private member bill claiming that the State was eagerly awaiting the grant of special category status as it would ensure accelerated development of the newly formed State and provide it a level-playing field with neighbouring States like Karnataka, Telangana and Tamil Nadu.
Life term means imprisonment till death, says Constitution Bench

- A Constitution bench of the Supreme Court, pronounced its verdict rejecting multiple life terms for a convict guilty of heinous crimes, on a reference from a three-judge Bench of the apex court.


Rohit Khandelwal is Mr World 2016; first Indian to win the title!

- For the first time ever, an Indian has won the coveted title of Mr World. Rohit Khandelwal of Hyderabad has won the prestigious title of Mr World 2016 amidst much pomp and aplomb in Southport Theatre, Floral Hall, The Promenade, and Southport. The event took place on July 19, 2016.

- The official Twitter handle of Mr. World 2016 posted the pictures from the grand ceremony.

LS nod for NEET; State’s quotas to stay

- The Lok Sabha, passed the landmark bill awarding statutory status to the controversial National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) from the next academic session, aimed at ensuring a uniform medical and dental entrance exam.

- The bills — The Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill, 2016 and The Dentists (Amendment) Bill, 2016 — will replace the ordinances promulgated by the President in May this year, to circumvent the Supreme Court order for implementation of NEET examination this session itself, and amend the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 and the Dentists Act, 1948.

Una issue rocks Parliament, Opposition stages walkout

- The issue of attacks on some Dalit men in Una, Gujarat, for allegedly skinning a dead cow rocked Parliament, with the Rajya Sabha being adjourned five times and Home Minister Rajnath Singh issuing a statement defending the actions of the Gujarat government in the Lok Sabha. His reply saw the Opposition stage a walkout in protest.

- The issue was flagged by both the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), with K. Suresh of the former raising the issue during zero hour. The MP demanded the constitution of a joint parliamentary committee to investigate the incident, terming it an “emergency-like” situation. He strongly attacked the BJP in his speech for the atrocity, a charge that was refuted just as strongly by Mr. Rajnath Singh.

Ban diesel vehicles in two phases, says NGT

- The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered de-registration of diesel vehicles in the Capital in two phases, with those older than 15 years going first.

- The order comes days after the green court directed the Delhi Regional Transport Office to de-register all diesel vehicles that are over 10 years old.

- “All diesel vehicles which are more than 15 years old and are BS-I, BS-II shall be scrapped and no NOC for transfer of such vehicles will be issued,” said the NGT Bench.
The Mumbai Railway Police till 20 July has successfully traced as many as 4,804 'missing' children and reunited 4,386 of them with their family under 'Operation Muskan'.

The rest of the 418 children were handed over to the state's Child Welfare Committee (CWC), according to figures obtained from the Railway Police.

Three rounds of 'Operation Muskan' were launched separately and each round lasted for a month.

The Haryana government banned 15-year-old petrol and 10-year-old diesel vehicles from roads within National Capital Region (NCR) limits.

This will apply to vehicles registered in cities falling under the territorial jurisdiction of NCR such as Gurgaon, Faridabad, Sonipat and Jhajjar which cause significant air pollution, said state Transport Minister Krishan Lal Panwar.

According to the latest World Health Organisation (WHO) reports, Delhi occupies the 11th position on the list of most polluted cities in the world.

The situation is particularly bad in NCR where recent pollution levels have been reported to be much higher than the acceptable limits on most days of the year, sometimes as high as 35 times the normal level.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina jointly inaugurated the Petrapole Integrated Check Post (ICP) through video-conferencing. Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamata Banerjee also participated from Kolkata in the video-conference.

In a statement on the occasion, Modi said the inauguration of Petrapole checkpost will not only promote bilateral trade but also help in economic growth of both countries. “Eight such integrated .

The Supreme Court allowed a rape victim based in Mumbai to abort her 24-week-old abnormal foetus after the Centre clarified that a 20-week cap on termination of pregnancy is not applicable if the woman’s life is found to be in grave danger.

Medical report

At the hearing, a Bench of Justices J.S. Khehar and Arun Mishra perused a confidential medical report on the condition of the woman, identified as only 'Ms. X', filed by a team of doctors at the K.E.M. Hospital.

Justice Khehar read out the findings in the report to Attorney-General Mukul Rohatgi, who was summoned to assist the court in the case. The doctors had concluded that the pregnancy was 23 to 24 weeks old.

It said that continuance of the pregnancy would involve “grave danger” to the life of the pregnant woman.
Mr. Rohatgi clarified that though The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 mandates against abortion after pregnancy crosses the 20-week threshold, there are exceptions.

“If the mother is in danger, there is no time limit for conducting an abortion. If you have to save life, you need to cross the limit of 20 weeks,” Mr. Rohatgi submitted.

Lok Sabha passes bill providing for opening of 6 new IITs

THE Lok Sabha unanimously passed amendments to the Institutes of Technology Act to establish six new IITs, with MPs cutting across party lines urging the government to focus on quality and inclusive education in the premier institutes.

While assuring free education for weaker sections in IITs, the government rejected a demand to review its decision to increase the annual fee in the institutes to Rs 2 lakh.

“The government spends Rs 6 lakh per year on every student, and we have fixed the maximum fee as Rs 2 lakh. SC/ST students will get a complete fee waiver. The handicapped and those who belong to below Rs 1 lakh annual income category will also study for free. Those whose annual income is less than Rs 5 lakh will have to pay Rs 60,000, and those with below Rs 9 lakh as annual income will get interest-free loans,” HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar said while replying to a debate on the Bill that lasted more than three hours.

“The poor section is covered. We charge Rs 2 lakh only from the rich. Those who can afford it must pay,” he said.

The new IITs which the Bill promises are IIT Tirupati, IIT Palakkad, IIT Goa, IIT Dharwar, IIT Bhilai and IIT Jammu. It also aims to declare ISM Dhanbad as an institute of national importance, and to integrate it with the IIT system.

Don’t send children to school in Islamabad: MEA to envoys

Amid strain in the relationship between India and Pakistan, South Block has classified the Indian mission in Islamabad as a “non-school-going mission”. This means that diplomatic staff can no longer make their school going children stay with them. However, their spouses are allowed to stay in Islamabad.

About 60 school going children of Indian diplomats will now have to discontinue their studies in Islamabad. The decision could compel many staffers at the mission to return to India.

Sources said that in Islamabad, a ‘no kids policy’ is followed by a number of missions, including Germany, France, Australia, UN organisations, UK (under 12), US, Canada and the European Union. “India’s approach is in consonance with the policy adopted by several nations,” a source said.

While it is not clear if there has been a specific security threat, concerns about the safety of children of Indian diplomats were raised after an attack on Peshawar’s Army Public School in December 2014, which claimed 144 lives.

Blow to India as arbitration tribunal rules against Antrix

A Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) tribunal in The Hague has ruled against Antrix Corporation, the commercial arm of India’s space organisation, ISRO, in the ongoing case with Devas Corporation over sharing of spectrum on satellites. Following the ruling, India may have to fork out $1 billion as
compensation to Devas. The government said the award is being “examined” and legal recourse, as deemed fit, would be taken.

- Second ruling

- The ruling, issued was the second by an international tribunal in favour of Devas on the cancellation of the Devas-Antrix contract.

**India's parliament passes controversial child labor bill**

- India's parliament approved a controversial law that would allow children to work for family businesses, despite widespread concern by the United Nations and other rights advocates that it will push more children into labor.

- A week after the bill was passed by the upper house of parliament; India's lower house approved the measure that brings a raft of changes to a three-decade-old child labor prohibition law. The bill now goes for the President's assent before becoming law.

- The U.N. Children's Agency (UNICEF) as well as many others have raised alarm over two particular amendments - permitting children to work for their families and reducing the number of banned professions for adolescents.

- A 2015 report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) put the number of child workers in India ages 5 to 17 at 5.7 million, out of 168 million globally.

- More than half of India's child workers are employed in agriculture and more than a quarter in manufacturing - embroidering clothes, weaving carpets or making match sticks. Children also work in restaurants, shops and hotels and as domestic workers.

- The new legislation extends a ban on child labor under 14 to all sectors. Previously, only 18 hazardous occupations and 65 processes such as mining, gem cutting and cement manufacturing were outlawed.

- It also stiffens penalties for those employing children, doubling jail terms to two years and increasing fines to 50,000 rupees ($740) from 20,000 rupees ($300).

- For example, children will be allowed to work in family businesses, outside of school hours and during holidays, and in entertainment and sports if it does not affect their education.

- Also, children 15 to 18 will be permitted to work, except in mines and industries where they would be exposed to inflammable substances and hazardous processes.

- The government says the exemptions aim to strike a balance between education and India’s economic reality, in which parents rely on children to help with farming or artisanal work to fight poverty or pass on a family trade.

**Irom Sharmila to end fast, contest Manipur elections**

- Sixteen years after starting her hunger strike demanding the repeal of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, Irom Chanu Sharmila has decided to end her fast on August 9 and contest the Manipur Assembly elections as an Independent candidate.
The 44-year-old rights activist said she would join politics as she no longer believes her fast would lead to the repeal of the “draconian” Act. “I will end my fast on August 9 and contest the elections as an Independent,” she told journalists, emerging from a court here where she is facing trial for attempting suicide. “I will join politics and my fight will continue,” said Ms. Sharmila, who has refused to eat or drink anything since November 2000, and is force-fed through a nasal tube in Imphal’s Jawahar Lal Nehru Hospital. She is in a special ward which serves as her prison.

Mahadayi: tribunal rejects Karnataka’s petition

The Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal (MWDT) rejected Karnataka’s petition seeking 7 tmcft of water for the Kalasa-Banduri Nala project. Karnataka said it needed the water to provide for drinking water and irrigation in the Malaprabha basin. It is an interim order and part of a larger dispute around the sharing of waters in the Mahadayi river between Karnataka and Goa.

The tribunal rejected Karnataka’s plea on various grounds, including that allowing water to be transferred for the project would be ecologically damaging and upset the “natural equilibrium” of Mahadayi river. Moreover, Karnataka hadn’t shown what would be the downstream effects at 3 km and 5 km of lifting the river and so “relief couldn’t be granted.”

Given the enormous amount of water being transferred, the tribunal reasoned, there would be huge submersible pumps and specialised equipment that would be required. The tribunal said it “didn’t have confidence” that Karnataka would rely on temporary structures and equipment — as it has claimed — to effect this transfer of water into the Malaprabha basin.

What was also of concern was that the Karnataka government had also not obtained environmental and wildlife clearances to execute the project. Also, Karnataka’s contention that 108.72 tmcft of water is available at 75 per cent dependability in the Mahadayi basin wasn’t cogent. It has relied on the data from the Central Water Commission that is seriously contested by Goa.

The tribunal, headed by J.N. Panchal, after hearing Karnataka and Goa, had concluded the hearing and reserved the order.

‘Tribunal has got it wrong’

Karnataka had sought 7 tmcft of water for the Kalasa-Banduri Nala project, which was opposed by Goa.

Chinese troops are active on Uttarakhand border: Rawat

Stating that Chinese troops were “active” in the Bara Hoti area of Chamoli district, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat confirmed that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) had transgressed the area earlier this month.

The transgression came to light when Chamoli district officials had gone to Bara Hoti on July 19 to collect data on land holdings. They noticed Chinese troops on the ground while an attack helicopter even hovered over the area for five minutes before returning to their side.

According to a Home Ministry official, the PLA troops told the Indian officials to go back as the area belonged to them. They told the Indian team that they recognise the area as ‘Wu-Je.’
Magsaysay for Bezwada Wilson, T.M. Krishna

- Bezwada Wilson, a renowned campaigner against manual scavenging, and Carnatic singer T.M. Krishna from Chennai, received the prestigious Magsaysay Award.

- Born into a Dalit family in Karnataka, Mr. Wilson, 50, is the national convener of the Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA).

- The award committee was impressed with his work which focussed on “asserting the inalienable right to a life of human dignity.” “Manual scavenging is blight on humanity in India. Consigned by structural inequality to the dalits, India’s ‘untouchables’, manual scavenging is the work of removing by hand human excrement from dry latrines and carrying on the head the baskets of excrement to designated disposal sites,” states Mr. Wilson’s citation.

- “A hereditary occupation, manual scavenging involves 180,000 Dalit households cleaning the 790,000 public and private dry latrines across India; 98 per cent of scavengers are meagerly paid women and girls. While the Constitution and other laws prohibit dry latrines and the employment of manual scavengers, these have not been strictly enforced since the government itself is the biggest violator,” the citation said.

- Under the category ‘Emergent Leadership,’ Mr. Krishna received the award for bringing “social inclusiveness in culture.”

- The award committee hailed him for “showing that music can indeed be a deeply transformative force in personal lives and society itself.”

Cabinet nod for law to help big infra funding

- Taking forward its budget announcement to create a Rs.24,000-50,000-crore fund over five years to execute massive infrastructure development projects, the Pinarayi Vijayan approved key amendments to the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Act of 2000, primarily aimed at instilling greater confidence in the prospective investors in the fund.

Lok Sabha gives nod for Lokpal Act’s amendment

- The Lok Sabha approved an amendment to the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, 2013, to allow extension of the time given to public servants and trustees and board members of NGOs receiving government funds of more than Rs. 1 crore or foreign funding of more than Rs. 10 lakh to declare their assets and those of their spouses.

- The amendment to Section 44 of the Act was moved by Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State handling the Department of Personnel and Training, under whose jurisdiction the Bill falls. Senior Ministers made it clear that the amendment was for providing immediate relief to public servants facing the July 31 deadline.

Violence continues in NK; ban orders in Navalgund

- Violence continued in parts of North Karnataka during the bandh over Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal’s rejection of Karnataka’s plea for an interim order.

- Navalgund town, near Dharwad, witnessed arson and ransacking of government offices, resulting in imposition of prohibitory orders, while two youths attempted suicide in the neighbouring Nargund.
The bandh call received overwhelming response in Dharwad, Gadag, and parts of Belagavi and Bagalkot districts. In and around Hubballi and Dharwad, the road blocked by farmers and Kannada organisations resulted in severe disruption to traffic on the arterial National Highway 4, that connects Pune and Bengaluru.

Eminent writer, social activist Mahasweta Devi passes away

Mahasweta Devi, a colossal figure in Bengali literature and a respected social activist who lent her voice to the poor, passed away at a private hospital. The litterateur, who was honoured with the Sahitya Akademi, Jnanpith and the Magsaysay awards, was 90.

Give development vision for 15 years, PM tells NITI Aayog

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the time for incremental change was over and the requirement was for transformational change. The niyat (intentions) of policymakers is even more important than the niti (policies) itself, he said, addressing the NITI Aayog.

The Prime Minister asked the Aayog to create a vision document and road map for India’s development for the next 15 years. Interacting with the Aayog’s members, Mr. Modi said the Union Government had the “courage and the ability” to deliver transformational change for bettering the lives of the people. This was his second visit to the Aayog since it was set up to replace the erstwhile Planning Commission.

Pointing out that historically, Indian policymakers had tended to lament the country’s constraints rather than play to its strengths, he said judicious and intelligent application of India’s natural resources and human resources would be at the heart of this change.

Untapped areas

He mentioned land, the country’s mineral wealth, and vast untapped solar energy potential and said India had made sub-optimal use so far of its vast coastline. Talking about human resource development, Mr. Modi said: “Focussed skill development is vital, as India has the potential to fulfil the global requirement of human resources in the future.”

He also stressed on the need to develop India’s tourism potential. Partnerships with States for promoting development and boosting exports were need of the hour, he said.

Funds meant for SCs underutilised, finds panel

Figures submitted by State governments to the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) have led the monitoring body to observe that while “many States have generally allocated funds to the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) on a par with the Scheduled Castes (SC) population of the States, the actual expenditures under SCSP is between 2% and 8% of allocation in most States except West Bengal, Karnataka and Telangana.”

“The unspent SCSP fund is often re-appropriated,” the Commission says.

The data submitted by the States covered the years 2012-13 to 2015-16.
Apex court refuses plea for Governor’s rule in J&K

- The Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea for Governor’s rule in the strife-ridden State of Jammu and Kashmir, observing that “these are difficult situations which change every few hours and cannot be judicially managed.”

- A Bench of Chief Justice of India T.S. Thakur and Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud, however, asked Solicitor-General Ranjit Kumar, acting on behalf of the Centre, to file a status report on the difficulties faced by people due to the violence and imposition of curfew in the State. “We will ask the Solicitor-General to file a status report detailing the ground reality in the State... What is happening there and what are the difficulties of the people... We will do whatever we can to help the people there,” Mr. Justice Thakur said.

- The Bench was hearing a petition by Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party leader and senior advocate Bhim Singh, seeking a direction to the Governor to impose gubernatorial rule under Section 92 of the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir owing to the “failure” of the constitutional machinery in the State.

- “It has been 21 days of curfew. Article 21 of the Indian Constitution [right to life] has been murdered...” Mr. Singh submitted.

- “Don’t make this court a stage for your political speech... We cannot impose Governor’s rule in J&K,” Mr. Justice Thakur reacted sternly to Mr. Singh’s plea.

India seeks U.S. help to locate An-32

- India has sought the assistance of U.S. satellites to augment its search efforts for the missing Indian Air Force An-32 transport aircraft, Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar said, ruling out the possibility of sabotage. The An-32, with 29 personnel, went missing over the Bay of Bengal, when flying from Chennai to Port Blair.
International

European Union extends Russia’s sanctions to Jan 2017

- The European Union formally extended damaging economic sanctions against Russia by six months due to a lack of progress in resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine.
- The measures target the oil, financial and defence sectors of the Russian economy and were first imposed after the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in July 2014, blamed on pro-Moscow rebels in eastern Ukraine.
- "On 1 July 2016, the (European) Council prolonged the economic sanctions targeting specific sectors of the Russian economy until 31 January 2017," the EU said in a statement.
- EU ambassadors agreed on the extension in principle on June 21.

‘Record EU migration to Germany

- Immigration to Germany from other European Union countries hit a new record of over 6,85,000 people last year, led by Romanians, Poles and Bulgarians.
- A total of 6,85,485 EU citizens arrived in Germany in 2015 while 303,036 left for a net increase of 382,449, access to data from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF).
- Germany’s economic success and relatively low unemployment has drawn people from the EU's poorer members in search of work. Romanians topped the list of new arrivals with nearly 1,75,000, followed by Poles with almost 1,50,000 and Bulgarians with just over 70,000.

4-nation Africa tour: PM Narendra Modi arrives in Mozambique

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Mozambique as part of his four-nation Africa tour aimed at enhancing ties with that continent, particularly in the economic sphere and people-to-people contacts.
- Modi begins his five-day tour with Mozambique and will then travel to South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya.
- The focus of the African tour will be on deepening cooperation in areas of hydrocarbons, maritime security, trade and investment, agriculture and food.

Britain to get its first woman Prime Minister since Thatcher

- The Prime Minister to lead Britain out of the EU will be either Cabinet veteran Theresa May or political newcomer Andrea Leadsom after Conservative MPs voted for a two-woman shortlist, as the IMF urged a swift exit to limit damaging uncertainty.
- Interior minister May won 199 votes from the 329 ruling Conservative Party lawmakers who cast their ballots. Junior Minister Leadsom, who was only elected to Parliament in 2010, garnered 84 votes. One of the two will become Britain’s second woman Prime Minister after Margaret Thatcher.
The third challenger, Justice Minister Michael Gove, who announced his surprise bid last week after initially supporting former mayor of London Boris Johnson for the post, was rejected after winning just 46 votes following accusations of treachery.

“We need proven leadership to negotiate the best deals for leaving the European Union,” Ms. May said outside the Parliament after the announcement.

The party’s 150,000 members will now choose between Ms. May and Ms. Leadsom in a postal ballot and the winner, who becomes Prime Minister without need for a general election, is due to be announced on September 9.

Speculation ahead of South China Sea award

Diplomatic speculation is heightening, barely hours before the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague issues a crucial order on the South China Sea dispute between Philippines and China. The order, expected to be announced, is likely to be a catalyst for diplomatic manoeuvres in South and Southeast Asia, experts said.

Tribunal rejects Beijing’s claims on South China Sea

A tribunal ruled that China has no legal basis for its vast claims in the South China Sea and had aggravated the seething regional dispute with its extensive construction of artificial islands that destroyed coral reefs and infringed on the Philippines’ exclusive economic zone.

China immediately rejected the arbitration findings. While the ruling cannot reverse China’s actions, it still constitutes a rebuke, carrying with it the force of the international community’s opinion. China and the Philippines are among the six governments that have overlapping territorial claims in the South China Sea, waters through which an estimated $5 trillion in global trade passes through each year.

The Philippines, under a U.N. treaty governing the seas, asked in 2013 for arbitration. The five-member panel from the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, Netherlands, unanimously concluded that China had violated its obligations to refrain from aggravating the dispute while the settlement process was under way.

Cameron exits, May takes charge

On a day Britain got its second ever woman Prime Minister, David Cameron bowed out of Parliament as PM with a poignant echo on his own career, leaving with the line: “I was the future once.”

In his final appearance at Prime Minister’s questions in the House of Commons, Mr. Cameron recalled his own famous line from his first appearance in the theatrical weekly sparring session 11 years ago. Then the newly elected Conservative Opposition leader, he taunted embattled Labour Prime Minister Tony Blair: “I want to talk about the future. He was the future once.”

That vision of change launched Mr. Cameron on his way to becoming Prime Minister in 2010 — the youngest in 200 years. Six years later, he is leaving office under the shadow of Britain’s impending exit from the European Union.

Meanwhile, Ms. May’s first task will be to put in place a frontline team that can help her through the challenges of negotiating it
China warns of air defence zone in South China Sea

- China said it could establish a military air defence zone in the South China Sea, but combined its hardening position with a fresh offer for dialogue with the Philippines.
- China's offer for diplomatic engagement with the new government in Manila followed a firm rejection by President Xi Jinping of ruling by the permanent court of arbitration in The Hague that Beijing’s claims in the South China Sea had no legal basis.
- “China will not accept any proposition or action based on the decision by the South China Sea arbitral tribunal”, Mr. Xi said, according to Xinhua news agency. He made these observations during a meeting with the visiting European Council President Donald Tusk. The contentious mood spilled into a crowded media conference morning.

Japan’s Emperor planning to abdicate: Media

- Japan’s ageing Emperor Akihito plans to step down in favour of his eldest son within a few years, Japanese media reported, in what would be the first such royal abdication in two centuries.
- The 82-year-old monarch has told those close to him that his role should be occupied by someone who can fulfil the Emperor’s duties as stipulated in the constitution, public broadcaster NHK reported, without citing a source for the information.
- Under Japan’s current Imperial Household Law, which governs the status of the Emperor, there is no legal mechanism for abdication. Any move to step down would therefore require a revision of that law. No one was immediately available at the Imperial Household Agency, which manages Akihito’s affairs, or the Prime Minister’s office for comment.

Euro critics is focus in May’s Cabinet

- British Prime Minister Theresa May completed a major overhaul of the government, promoting leading Brexit campaigners and stunning observers by picking gaffe-prone Boris Johnson as her top diplomat.
- After six years as Interior Minister under David Cameron, Ms. May took office signalling her intention to start with a clean slate — before ruthlessly ejecting some of her former colleagues. Finance Minister George Osborne was replaced by Foreign Minister Philip Hammond, while two eurosceptics were brought in to take control of Britain’s exit from the EU.
- Stability is back

- EU leaders have lined up to congratulate Ms. May, whose appointment brings some stability three tumultuous weeks after the June 23 referendum, but urged her to move quickly in implementing the vote to leave.
- The result has sparked turmoil on financial markets and sent shockwaves throughout British and European politics, including by forcing Mr. Cameron to step down as Prime Minister.
- In a bid to reassure markets, Ms. May appointed a safe pair of hands as Finance Minister. Mr. Hammond was due to meet Bank of England Governor Mark Carney, as well as visiting U.S. Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew.
‘Race relations in the U.S. at the lowest point since 1992’

- Sixty-nine per cent of Americans say race relations are generally bad, one of the highest levels of discord since the 1992 riots in Los Angeles during the Rodney King case, according to the latest poll, conducted the day after the killing of five Dallas police officers, found that 6 in 10 Americans say race relations were growing worse, up from 38 per cent a year ago.

- Racial discontent is at its highest point in the Obama presidency and at the same level as after the riots touched off by the 1992 acquittal of Los Angeles police officers charged in King’s beating.

- Relations between black Americans and the police have become so brittle that more than half of black people say they were not surprised by the attack that killed five police officers and wounded nine others in Dallas last week.

Evidence of war crimes in Ukraine: UN

- The United Nations said Ukraine’s forces had indiscriminately shelled residents while pro-Russian insurgents and Kiev battalions had summarily killed civilians in what may have constituted “war crimes”.

- It particularly pointed the finger of blame at rebel groups within the self-proclaimed “people's republics” of Lugansk and Donetsk — a separatist region in Ukraine’s eastern rustbelt that Kiev says is backed up by Russia.

- The UN report estimated that about 2,000 civilians have died in one of Europe’s bloodiest conflicts since the 1990s Balkans wars.

Nine culturally-rich sites on this year’s honour roll

- UNESCO has placed nine new sites on its World Heritage List, including a mediaeval Armenian city located in northeast Turkey.

- UNESCO added the old city of Ani, in the Turkish province of Kars to its prestigious list during a meeting in Istanbul. Ani, near Turkey’s now closed border with Armenia, once served as the capital of the Armenian kingdom in the 10th century. Mostly abandoned after a devastating earthquake in the 14th century, the ruins include a relatively well-preserved cathedral and hold major significance for Armenians.

- Other sites announced include China’s Zuojiang Huashan rock art cultural landscape, Iran’s ancient aqueducts known as Qanat, and India’s archaeological site of Nalanda Mahavihara. A transboundary site located in Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia, and heritage sites in Greece, Spain and Gibraltar also made the list.

- The World Heritage Committee also selected Micronesia’s artificial islets of Nan Madol and simultaneously placed it on the List of World Heritage in Danger.

- Made of basalt and coral boulders, the 99 artificial islets of Nan Madol are home to ruins ranging from temples to tombs dating between 1200 CE and 1500 CE.

- Dating back to the 5th century, Zuojiang Huashon rock art cultural landscape straddles steep cliffs in southwest China and represents the only trace left of the Luoyue people.
Iran’s Qanat system tapped into alluvial aquifer and transported water underground across vast valleys helping sustain agricultural life and settlements in arid areas.

Over 250 die in failed Turkey coup

Turkey’s government rounded up thousands of military personnel, who were said to have taken part in an attempted coup, moving swiftly to re-establish control after a night of chaos that left hundreds dead.

Prime Minister Binali Yildirim called the insurrection “a stain in the history of democracy” at a news conference in Ankara, the capital. He raised the death toll in the clashes to 265, with 1,440 people wounded, and said 2,839 military personnel had been detained.

World leaders appealed for calm, with U.S. President Barack Obama and other Western nations urging support for the government which they said had been democratically elected.

As the coup unfolded beginning with the seizure of two bridges in Istanbul by military forces, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was not heard from for hours.

He finally addressed the nation from an undisclosed location, speaking on his cellphone’s FaceTime app. In the early hours of, he landed in Istanbul.

Erdogan blames cleric

He blamed the intrigue on the followers of Fethullah Gulen, a Muslim cleric living in exile in Pennsylvania, who was the President’s ally until a bitter falling out three years ago. Mr. Erdogan said, referring to Mr. Gulen: “I have a message for Pennsylvania: You have engaged in enough treason against this nation. If you dare, come back to your country.” In a statement released on the website of his group, Alliance for Shared Values, Mr. Gulen supported the country’s democratic process.

“As someone who suffered under multiple military coups during the past five decades, it is especially insulting to be accused of having any link to such an attempt,” Mr. Gulen wrote.

Mr. Erdogan also said Turkish fighter jets had bombed tanks on the streets of Ankara, and that a military helicopter being used by the coup plotters had been shot down.

As Turkey woke from a long and surreal evening, the elected government appeared to have re-established control. But many questions remained unanswered, including who was behind the plot and what the longer-term fallout would be to the political system of Turkey, a NATO ally and important partner to the U.S. in the fight against the Islamic State.

China deepens S. China Sea presence

China has flown a long-range bomber over the disputed Spratly Islands and commissioned two naval supply ships, reinforcing its intent to deepen its anchorage in the South China Sea, in defiance of ruling by an international arbitration tribunal in The Hague.

The Chinese website mil.huanqui.com reported that that two large supply ships, Honghi and Luomahu, of 20,000 tonnes each, were commissioned at an unnamed naval port in the Guangdong Province.

Typically, supply ships replenish warships, far away from the coast. This signals China’s intent to maintain a durable naval presence in the high seas.
The same website reported that the Chinese air force has published a picture of its modern H-6K strategic bomber overflying the Scarborough Shoal in the Spratly Islands, which is in the cross-hairs of a dispute between China and the Philippines. The H-6K is a long-range bomber, with a nuclear capability, which has been designed to target U.S. aircraft carrier groups.

1,23,000 Venezuelans cross Colombia border for food

More than 1,00,000 Venezuelans, some of whom drove through the night in caravans, crossed into Colombia over the weekend to hunt for food and medicine that are in short supply at home. It was the second weekend in a row that Venezuela’s government opened the long-closed border with Colombia, and, by 6 a.m., a line of would-be shoppers snaked through the entire town of San Antonio del Tachira.

But shortages have continued to mount in Venezuela amid triple-digit inflation, currency controls that have restricted imports and investment and the world oil price slump that has caused a collapse in the oil revenues.

South China Sea dispute spills into KFC protests

China’s government is engaged in a difficult balancing act of emotively rejecting an international tribunal’s award on the South China Sea, and yet restraining rising nationalistic sentiments among its people, who have targeted KFC, the American fast-food chain, in several Chinese cities.

The Chinese news website Sohu News is reporting that protesters gathered outside KFC outlets in several cities, including Hangzhou — the city that will host the G-20 summit in September. Protesters also gathered in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, as well as other cities. The call for a boycott of the outlet by protesters follows Washington’s support for the ruling by an international tribunal that implied rejection of China’s claims in the South China Sea.

The agitators carried extended red banners, with emblazoned slogans such as: “Boycott U.S., Japan, South Korea and the Philippines, love the Chinese nation.” Another said: “You are eating KFC from the U.S., and losing the face of our ancestors”.

Calls for inquiry into Jaffna clash

Northern Province Chief Minister C.V. Wigneswaran and Leader of Opposition in the Northern Provincial Council S. Thavarasa came together to demand a “full-fledged Commission of Inquiry” into the recent clash between two groups of students at the University of Jaffna.

In a statement, the two leaders called for finding out first the “underlying causes”. They said the incident should not be viewed from “a purely criminal law standpoint”.

One-third of Nice victims were Muslims

When a Tunisian man drove a truck down a crowded street in Nice last week in an attack claimed by the Islamic State (IS), more than one-third of the people he killed were Muslim, the head of a regional Islamic association said.

Kawthar Ben Salem, a spokeswoman for the Union of Muslims of the Alpes-Maritimes, said that Muslim funerals were being held for at least 30 of those who died during the Bastille Day attack, including women and children. The Paris prosecutor’s office, which handles terrorism investigations, said that all 84 people killed in the attack had been formally identified. The number of people who were wounded was also raised, to 308 people.
Erdogan Declares 3-Month State of Emergency in Turkey

- Turkey’s president, Recap Tayyip Erdogan, declared a three-month state of emergency that gave the state extra powers to pass laws as the authorities pursue individuals suspected of attempting to topple his government.

- The declaration followed the firing and suspension of tens thousands of soldiers, educators and civil servants in recent days on suspicion of complicity in the failed coup last week.

- In a televised address, Mr. Erdogan said the extra powers were needed to protect Turkey’s democracy, and he criticized Western nations who have accused his government of overreaching in its efforts to root out opponents.

- “The aim is to rapidly and effectively take all steps needed to eliminate the threat against democracy, the rule of law and the people’s rights and freedoms,” Mr. Erdogan said.

- “This measure is in no way against democracy, the law and freedoms,” he added. “On the contrary, it aims to protect and strengthen them.”

China, Pak. conduct joint patrol along PoK border

- Chinese and Pakistan border troops have for the first time launched joint patrolling of the border connecting Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) with Xinjiang Province amid reports that over 100 Uighurs have fled the restive region to join the Islamic State (IS).

- Chinese state media reported about the joint patrol even as President Xi Jinping asked the Chinese Muslims to practice their religion “as part of Chinese society and direction”. The People’s Daily Online published a dozen photos, showing teams of armed troops from both sides conducting foot patrols in a number of areas.

- First joint exercise

- This is the first time China-Pakistan began joint patrols in recent years though Chinese troops have been conducting patrols in the area since 2014.

- Though there was no write-up to provide details of the joint patrolling and what prompted both the countries to launch it, it coincided with reports of over 100 Uighur Muslims sneaking out of Xinjiang to join the IS.

300 Indians stranded in Juba as civil war reignites

- At least 300 Indians have been left stranded as one of Africa’s oldest civil wars reignited in Juba, the capital of South Sudan.

- Fleeing the fight between the heavily armed rival factions divided on ethnic lines, Indians have taken refuge at various locations, including the Embassy of India.

- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said on Twitter that India planned to evacuate its nationals trapped in Juba. “I am aware of the developments in South Sudan. Please register yourself with the Indian embassy and do not panic,” she said, even as the Indian embassy created a WhatsApp group to stay in touch with all Indian citizens and to monitor the situation.
Armenia to have the world’s largest Yazidi temple

- A huge Yazidi temple is under construction in a small Armenian village, intended as a symbol of resilience for a persecuted religious tradition. The temple is being built in Aknalich, about 35km from Yerevan, the Armenian capital. Seven domes will surround a central arched roof, crowned with a gold-plated sun. At 25m high, it will be built from Armenian granite and Iranian marble and house a 200 sq. m prayer hall.

- Named Quba Mere Diwane, this will be the largest Yazidi temple in the world, although there are relatively few contenders. The project is being funded by Mirza Sloian, a Yazidi businessman based in Moscow, according to EurasiaNet, and is scheduled to be completed next year.

- “This temple is important for us because our community is facing extinction. Our community is displaced around the world, and we need temples in each place for our children to keep their culture and identity,” said Ahmed Burjus of the U.K. branch of Yazda, a global Yazidi organisation.

E-mail hacking claims absurd, says Russia

- The Kremlin dismissed allegations that Russia was behind a hack of the Democratic National Committee’s e-mails as absurd, mocking what it called obsessive references to Russia in the U.S. presidential campaign. “This absurd news was immediately refuted by the family of the well-known presidential candidate,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists, referring to Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump’s eldest son, Donald Trump Jr.

- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov earlier shrugged off the accusations by the Hillary Clinton campaign that Russia was involved in the embarrassing leak of e-mails.

- Ahead of meeting U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry in Laos, Mr. Lavrov said: “I don’t want to use four-letter words.”

- Mr. Peskov also rubbished a report that Mr. Trump’s foreign policy adviser Carter Page had met Kremlin chief of staff Sergei Ivanov in Russia this month to speak at the graduation ceremony of the New Economic School in Moscow.

Democrats make Hillary Clinton historic nominee

- Madam President,” chanted supporters, as Hillary Clinton sealed the Democratic Party nomination for the President of the U.S. The 68-year-old former First Lady and former Secretary of State will be the first woman to run for the most powerful office in the world on the ticket of either of the two major parties in the country.

Indian-American to be called ‘emerging leader’

- Indian-American Raja Krishnamoorthi, a Democratic Congressional candidate from Illinois endorsed by President Barack Obama, will be introduced as one of the party’s emerging leaders during the ongoing Democratic National Convention.

- Mr. Krishnamoorthi (42), is among the only two congressional candidates to have been invited on to the DNC stage as the party’s rising star. Stephanie Murphy from Florida is the other candidate.

- Having won the Democratic Party’s Congressional primary in Illinois on March 16, Mr. Krishnamoorthi faces Peter DiCianni of the Republican party who ran unopposed.
South Africa to host BRICS office

- South Africa is set to reinforce its position as a regional economic hub as it prepares to open a regional office that would channel funding drawn from the New Development Bank (NDB) of the Brazil-Russia-China-India-South Africa (BRICS) grouping.

- The Africa Regional Office (ARO) is expected to open in Johannesburg by the end of this year, Pravin Gordhan, South Africa’s Finance Minister, was quoted as saying.

Pro-Rajapaksa coalition launches march to Colombo

- The Joint Opposition (JO), a coalition of political groups and parties supporting former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, launched its five-day ‘March to Colombo’ near Kandy.

- Led by Mr. Rajapaksa, members of the JO started the march near Getambe temple in Peradeniya on the outskirts of the Kandy town. On the inaugural day, they covered about 23 km out of a total of around 120 km. They are expected to reach Colombo on August 1.

Turkey shakes up military

- Turkey’s Premier met top military commanders over one of the most radical shake-ups in the armed forces’ history after a failed coup, which has already seen 149 generals dishonourably discharged.

- The hastily convened meeting of the Supreme Military Council (YAS) in Ankara will bring together Prime Minister Binali Yildirim and the land, sea and air force commanders, along with other top figures untarnished by the attempted power grab.

- The gathering comes a day after the government dramatically stepped up its post-coup crackdown, announcing mass military dismissals and closing down dozens of media outlets.

- Eighty-seven land army generals, 30 air force generals, and 32 admirals were dishonourably discharged over their complicity in the July 15 putsch bid, a Turkish official said. In addition, 1,099 officers and 436 junior officers have also received a dishonourable discharge.

In Istanbul, a ‘graveyard for traitors’

- It’s a barren plot on the outskirts of Istanbul, its stony ground baking under the merciless summer sun. A single sign gives a macabre clue as to the intended use of the arid patch.

- “Traitors’ graveyard,” say the white capital letters on the black sign, planted on two stakes into the ground.

- The cemetery was created to bury Turkish rebel soldiers whose failed July 15 putsch claimed a total of 270 lives but did not manage to unseat the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

- The location has been chosen with the apparent intention to offer the minimum glory in burial—just near a construction site where a project to build a shelter for street animals is under way. The Turkish authorities say 24 plotters were killed in the coup. Only one soldier has been buried in the graveyard so far.
Beijing, Moscow to hold joint drills in South China Sea

- China and Russia are underscoring their military partnership by holding a joint naval exercise in the South China Sea (SCS), following a ruling by an international tribunal at The Hague, which did not go in Beijing’s favour.

- The drill will “enhance the capabilities of the two navies to jointly deal with maritime security threats”, China’s Defence Ministry spokesman, Senior Colonel Yang Yujun, announced. Some analysts say the exercise is a confirmation of the growing strategic partnership between Beijing and Moscow. “The strategic relationship between the two countries is already an established reality,” says Shen Dingli, Vice-Dean of the Institute of International Affairs at Shanghai’s Fudan University.
Contemporary Economic Developments

IRDA issues first Indian private sector reinsurance licence

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has given its first phase of licence to ITI Reinsurance, thus clearing the first ever Indian private sector reinsurance company in the country.

- The IRDA board in a meeting in Hyderabad approved the initial license — known as R1 in regulatory parlance to ITI Reinsurance, promoted by a firm controlled by Sun Pharma co-promoter Sudhir Valia.

- State-owned GIC Re has been the country’s sole reinsurance company so far. Four global players Munich Re, Hannover from Germany, Swiss Re from Switzerland and French major SCOR have also received R1 licences and they are awaiting final clearance from the regulator. Lloyd’s of London has also got the initial clearance from the IRDA.

World Bank funding for India’s solar projects

- The World Bank Group president signed an agreement to be the financial partner for the International Solar Alliance that aims to collaborate on increasing solar energy use around the world, with the goal of mobilising $1 trillion in investments by 2030.

- The Alliance, consisting of 121 countries, is led by India.

- Prime Minister Modi expressed happiness at the World Bank’s continued support to India, especially in priority areas like Smart Cities, Ganga Rejuvenation, Skill Development, Swachh Bharat and Power for All.

Google reveals Android N’s name

- Google has finally revealed the name of its next Android version. And as widely speculated, Android N is Nougat.

- At this year’s Google I/O developer conference in May, the search giant announced a contest to name the upcoming Android version, dubbed as Android N.

- Android versions are named after popular desserts. The latest version Android Nougat is based after a popular dessert which originated in Europe.

State Bank of India launches 3 new digital offerings

- The country’s largest lender State Bank of India launched 3 new digital offerings on the occasion of 61st State Bank Day.

- SBI has partnered with Flipkart to offer its consumers the facility of pre-approved EMI Facility on purchases. Under this partnership SBI will provide overdraft facility to pre-qualified set of customers for transacting on Flipkart for a minimum purchase of Rs. 5000.

- The EMI facility will be available in 3 tenures - 6, 9 and 12 months. The bank will not charge any fees to process the facility.
Equitas gets final nod to start small finance bank

- Equitas Holdings Ltd said it has received final licence from Reserve Bank to launch a Small Finance Bank (SFB) and will commence operations in a few months with a network of around 400 branches.
- "The SFB, to be named Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd (Equitas Bank), will start banking operations after receiving few other approvals from various departments of RBI and other agencies.
- Equitas to be a first Private Bank from Tamil Nadu and the city of Chennai

SBI to offer banking services on Facebook, Twitter

- State Bank of India (SBI) launched 'SBI Mingle', allowing its customers access various banking services via these social platforms.
- "Using SBI Mingle, the bank's customers can do a host of banking services on their Facebook or Twitter accounts at their own convenience," the bank said in a press release.
- The new initiative was launched by SBI Chairperson Arundhati Bhattacharya on the occasion of 61st State Bank Day.

Banks will not exchange pre-2005 notes, only 20 RBI offices will swap them

- Banks will no longer exchange notes introduced prior to 2005. If anyone has such notes he would need to approach one of the 20 offices of the Reserve Bank of India directly to get such notes exchanged.
- However, there's a way out: If one has such notes, the person can deposit those notes in his bank account and the bank will send those notes to RBI.

RBI’s steps on FCNR get FSDC nod

- The Reserve Bank of India has taken the right steps to address the issue of concessional swaps against Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposits.
- According to RBI data, banks had raised about $34 billion through FCNR (B) deposits in 2013, most of which are due this year.
- In 2013 the rupee was at an all-time low of 68.85 against the dollar and the central bank had asked commercial banks to raise the foreign currency deposits to shore up reserves. The RBI estimates that the immediate effect of the maturity of these deposits would be an outflow of about $20 billion.

- "The major challenges before the Government include a strategy to improve the overall performance of public sector banks, to make stalled projects functional and economically viable and to increase private sector investment,” Mr. Jaitley said during the 15th meeting of the FSDC, which included Minister of State for Finance Jayant Sinha, RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan, Finance Secretary Ashok Lavasa, Economic Affairs Secretary Shaktikanta Das, Financial Services Secretary Anjuly Chib Duggal, Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian, SEBI Chairman U.K. Sinha, IRDA Chairman T.S. Vijayan, and PFRDA Chairman Hemant Contractor.
- A better spread of the monsoon meant that the government could expect higher production of pulses this year, which should ease their prices in the market.
The Council noted that uncertainty in the global economy and high volatility in the financial markets are prominent risks confronting the emerging market economies.

“India, however, appears to be much better placed on the back of an improvement in its macroeconomic fundamentals, recent financial sector reforms by the Government and large forex reserves, which provide a cushion against financial market volatility.

**India keeps lead over China in pharma exports**

- India’s pharmaceutical exports have maintained their lead over China’s in 2015, according to a commerce ministry statement.
- While India’s pharma exports grew year-on-year by 7.55 per cent to $12.54 billion in 2015 from $11.66 billion in the year-earlier period, China recorded only a 5.3 per cent growth in the same period to $6.94 billion from $6.59 billion.
- India overtook China in important markets such as the U.S., EU and Africa, according to the ministry. India’s pharmaceutical exports to the U.S. rose from $3.84 billion in 2014 to $4.74 billion (23.4 per cent growth) in 2015 as against China’s marginal rise from $1.16 billion to $1.34 billion (15 per cent growth) in the same period.

**Banks need $90 bn to meet Basel-III norms**

- Domestic banks will need a whopping $90 billion capital to meet the Basel-III norms which will be fully implemented by the March 2016, according to rating agency Fitch.
- Public sector banks will need 80 per cent of the estimated capital, Fitch said.
- “The capital needs have come down due to weak loan growth, but they are onerous for the banks, given weak asset quality and internal capital generation,”.
- Out of the total capital requirement, more than 50 per cent has to be met via core equity and the rest largely via Additional Tier-1 (AT1) debt capital instruments.
- “The sharp rise in their NPLs and resultant losses has weakened the banks’ core capital buffers, which will be further stretched when adjusted for a higher 70 per cent provision cover on problem loans,“.
- Public sector banks have seen sharp rise in bad loans in the second half of 2015-16 and many of them reported heavy losses.

**Nasscom unveils first IoT-focused centre**

- National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) unveiled India’s first centre of excellence focused on Internet of Things (CoE- IoT).
- The centre of excellence is set up at the Nasscom Start-ups Warehouse in the city. The CoE is a joint initiative between the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY), education and research network (ERNET) and the IT industry body.
- Speaking at the inauguration of the centre Mr. Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister for Electronics, IT, Law & Justice, said: “The new centre should aspire to develop products which are truly of global standards and are used by people elsewhere.
U.S. lawmakers propose restrictions on H-1B, L1

- Two U.S lawmakers have introduced a new piece of legislation in the House of Representatives in another move to recast the H-1B and L1 visa programmes that allow thousands of Indian skilled workers to move to the U.S.

- The new bill proposes to bar companies that have more than 50 employees and fifty percent of them on H1-B, L1 visas, from hiring more such workers. It would, instead, encourage companies to recruit American workers. It proposes new wage requirements for H-1B visa-holders and establishment of wage requirements for L1 workers.

- It would also provide more authority to the Departments of Homeland Security and Labour to investigate fraud and abuse in the H-1B and L-1 programs. Visa-holders will be given a list of rights to protect them from exploitation, according to the proposed bill, Representatives Bill Pascrell and Dana Rohrabacher said in a statement.

- The bill echoes concerns that critics of the H-1B, L1 visas have been raising for years – which companies are using the programmes to undercut American workers; that they are replacing American workers, a practice the existing guidelines prohibit. Companies are also accused of exploiting workers on visas. The same members had moved a similar bill in 2010 also, but such proposals have not gained enough momentum yet, to be passed into law.

- India impact

- If the bill is signed into law, it would have a bearing on the U.S. operations of Indian companies. For instance, Google or Microsoft can continue to hire workers on visas until 50 percent of their employees are visa-holders. But Indian companies, such as Infosys, Wipro or TCS that already have more than 50 percent of their employees on visas, could be prevented from hiring more visa-holders.

- Last year, when additional visa fees were introduced for H-1B and L1 categories, the ‘50-50’ provision made it applicable primarily to Indian companies. Therefore, this year, on each H-1B visa, an Indian company paid nearly $ 5000 more than an American company would have. “Foreign outsourcing companies are the top users of the H-1B and L-1 visa programs. Over the years a number of concerns have been raised about how certain companies have been using these visa programs,” Mr. Pascrell said.

India, U.S. will weather trade disputes: Farrell

- The Indo-U.S. relationship is unlikely to be affected by disputes the two countries are having at the World Trade Organization (WTO), according to a senior U.S. Department of Commerce official, Diane Farrell.

TCS non-executive director Vandrevala steps down

- Country’s largest IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) said its Non-Executive Director Phiroz Vandrevala resigned from the company. “Phiroz Vandrevala has relinquished office of Non-Executive Director of the company, due to personal reasons, with effect from July 8, 2016,” TCS said in a filing to BSE. He had been a director on the TCS board since September 2007.

- “The TCS board thanks him for his contribution during his tenure on the board,” a TCS spokesperson said. However, Mr. Vandrevala, also the Vice-Chairman and MD of Diligenta, a TCS subsidiary, will continue in this role.
At Diligenta, he is responsible for driving the business strategy and operations of the organisation and opportunities globally. With over 25 years of consulting and leadership experience with TCS, Vandrevala had been involved in TCS’ foray into the life and pension industry.

**Bitcoin ‘miners’ face fight for survival**

Marco Streng is a miner, though he does not carry a pick around his base in south-western Iceland. Instead, he keeps tens of thousands of computers running 24 hours a day in fierce competition with others across the globe to earn bitcoins.

In the world of the web-based digital currency, it is not central banks that add new money to the system, but rather computers like Streng’s which are awarded fresh bitcoins in return for processing blocks of the latest bitcoin transactions.

Bitcoin can be used to send money instantly around the world, using individual bitcoin addresses, free of charge with no need for third party checks, and is accepted by several major online retailers.

**Govt. to announce recapitalisation of public sector banks**

As early as Centre is likely to announce the first tranche of the Rs 25,000 crore capital infusion for public sector banks (PSBs), planned for this financial year (2016-17). The first tranches could add up to about Rs.10,000 crore.

The recapitalisation is aimed at shoring up the PSBs lending capacities that are restricted by poor asset quality and weak capitalisation.

Gross bad loans, as a proportion of the total advances by these banks, rose to 7.6 per cent, a 12-year high in March 2016, according to the Reserve Bank of India’s latest financial stability report released on June 28.

Impaired assets

On the rise since 2012, impaired assets in the banking system are negatively affecting credit supply and are a factor dampening India’s growth outlook, global rating agency Moody’s Investors Service recently said.

PSBs account for about 70 per cent of the total banking system assets.

The banks requisitioned infusions after the finalisation of their fourth quarter results, in which, cumulatively, they had reported losses of Rs 18,000 crore in 2015-16.

**Sun Pharma rolls out anti-cancer ‘bag’ in Europe**

Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. has announced the roll-out of Gemcitabine InfuSMART, the world’s first licensed, ready-to-administer bag for oncology treatment in Europe.

This is part of the company’s plans to build a presence in the global oncology therapy market. Sun Pharma is the world’s fifth largest specialty generic pharmaceutical company and India’s largest. The company said Gemcitabine InfuSMART has been developed by its R&D team in India.

“InfuSMART is a technology in which oncology products are developed in a Ready-To-Administer (RTA) bag.
Cairn slaps $5.6bn claim on govt. for ‘loss of value’

- British oil and gas explorer Cairn Energy has raised a $5.6 billion compensation demand from the Indian government for a breach in an investment treaty arising out of the retrospective tax demand of Rs. 29,047 crore on an internal reorganisation of Cairn’s India unit.

- Cairn Energy wanted the I-T Department’s demand raised in January 2014 withdrawn, and it be paid $1.05 billion for the loss of value in its 9.8 per cent shareholding in its erstwhile subsidiary, Cairn India, following the tax demand and the subsequent freezing of the shares.

IDFC Bank buys micro lender Grama Vidiyal

- IDFC Bank has decided to acquire micro-lender Grama Vidiyal in an all-cash deal as it seeks to expand its customer base and gain access to loan portfolios that enjoy priority sector status.

- The value of the transaction was not disclosed by the companies. IDFC Bank, a former infrastructure financier, converted itself to a bank in October last year.

- Headquartered in Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu, Grama Vidiyal Micro Finance, which started operations in 1997, has a loan book of about Rs.1,502 crore and 1.2 million customers primarily in its home State, Puducherry and Kerala and in parts of Karnataka and Maharashtra.

DGCA opts for balancing act on air ticket cancellation fee

- Domestic airlines will be allowed to keep fuel charge component of a cancelled ticket and the Centre has mandated them to refund all the other statutory taxes and dues paid by passengers.

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), in its final rules published on July 12, has fixed a cap on cancellation fee. As per the earlier proposal the cancellation charges included the base fare alone. Now, with the final rule, airlines will not have to refund the fuel charges of a cancelled ticket to the passenger. The rules will take effect on August 1.

- Cancellation charges

- The move will give airlines some room to charge up to Rs.400-Rs.500 extra for a cancelled ticket. However, the cancellation charges will still be considerably reduced from the present fee levied by both airlines and travel agents.

- For instance, the cheapest airfare for travel on July 31 on the Delhi-Mumbai route would cost Rs.2,847 if booked from a travel portal. Passengers will get a refund of Rs.297 if the ticket is cancelled. However, when the new rules set in, the passengers may get up to Rs.881 as refund for the cancelled ticket. The airlines will have to refund passenger service fee, service tax, user development fee and other taxes even for promotional or special fares.

Cabinet nod for 15 % stake sale in NBCC

- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the disinvestment of 15 per cent paid up equity of National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited (NBCC) out of its 90 per cent shareholding, Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.
“It would result in estimated receipts of Rs.1,706 crore approximately to the government,” according to an official statement. “However, the actual realisation amount will depend upon the market conditions and the investor interest prevailing at the time of actual disinvestment.”

The Centre expects to earn Rs.56,000 crore through the sale of its stake in PSUs this year.

- Reliance Jio 4G users to get free local, STD calls
- Reliance Jio plans to start offering its fourth generation (4G) voice and data services on August 15, by offering “freedom from call charges” where users won’t be charged for local and STD voice calls.
- “The company is working out plans to offer free voice to get a large numbers of consumers to migrate,” a source familiar with the development said. “All local and STD calls will be free. However, the consumer will have to pay for international calls and international roaming.”
- Billionaire Mukesh Ambani initially started Reliance Jio services for his employees on December 28, 2015 and then extended the offer to their friends and families by offering 5 Jio sim cards. Now it is offering free Jio simcards with Reliance Lyf handsets for a price of Rs.2,999. The offer comes with free unlimited data for three months, another source said.
- The company already has 6 million consumers using Jio network, about 1.5 million of its own and 4.5 million of Reliance Communications consumers who migrated from CDMA to 4G (RCom has a network sharing pact with RJio).
- Reliance officials are tight-lipped about the introduction of the service and the offerings to be made by Jio during its rollout.
- A company spokesperson declined to comment and an e-mail sent to Jio seeking comments failed to elicit a response.
- The company now plans to offer free Jio sim cards to all 4G-enabled smartphone users in India, currently at less than 10 million, and expected to reach 50 million by the end of this fiscal.
- “Most of the 4G-enabled handsets in India have dual sim slots. The idea is to give free simcards to all the users with 4G-enabled smart phones. The user may use our high-speed voice and data services and am confident that with unmatched service experience, he will be a Jio consumer,” a third source said.

Taj Group sells Boston hotel for $125 mn

- Indian Hotels Company Ltd. (IHCL) which owns and operates the Taj Group of hotels, has announced the sale of its Taj Boston Hotel to AS Holdings LLC, Boston for an aggregate consideration of $125 million.
- “The net proceeds will be utilised largely to retire the outstanding debt,” according to a statement from IHCL announcing the completion of the sale. The property was owned by United Overseas Holdings Inc., an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of IHCL. Despite the ownership change, the property will continue to be operated under the Taj brand name, it said. After the sale, the hotel will be operated by IHMS (USA) LCC.

India, EU officials to meet on stalled FTA talks

- Chief negotiators of India and the European Union (EU) will meet to discuss ways to carry forward the long-stalled negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement. “India and EU chief negotiators to meet
on July 15 to discuss way forward in India-EU Broad-based Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement,” the Department of Commerce said in a tweet. From the Indian side, 10 members will take part in the meeting, while six members from the European Union would be present.

- India has already stated that it is keen on resuming long-stalled talks for the trade pact. This would be the first meeting of both the sides after U.K.’s vote to exit the bloc.

Singh ignored FM on Subbarao term

- At a time when the country is waiting to know who will succeed Raghuram Rajan as the Reserve Bank of India Governor, his predecessor Duvvuri Subbarao’s memoirs, revealing a turbulent relationship with two Finance Ministers of the time — P. Chidambaram and Pranab Mukherjee — is slated to hit the stands today.

- In the biography titled “Who moved my interest rate?” Mr. Subbarao writes about his five years at the country’s central bank, between 2008 and 2013. His account may cause some embarrassment to a few prominent leaders in the previous UPA government.

- The former Governor indicates that the then Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee seemed reluctant to grant him an extension in 2011. However, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was keen that he serve a five-year term.

RBI forms group on financial tech framework

- Mindful of the growing importance of financial technology innovations, the Reserve Bank has set up a working group to work out a regulatory framework to bolster financial technology and digital banking. “RBI has set up an inter-regulatory working group to study the entire gamut of regulatory issues relating to financial technology and digital banking in India.

India slips on business optimism index: survey

- India slipped to the third position on the scale of global business optimism, during April-June, after remaining on top globally for the two preceding quarters.

- According to the Grant Thornton International Business Report (IBR), companies were concerned about the delays in key reforms like the goods and services tax, non-resolution of tax disputes and the banking sector’s performance.

- However, India continues to top the chart on expectations of revenue increases with 96 per cent of the respondents having voted in favour of increasing revenue as prices are seen witnessing an upsurge.

- Employment expectations

- “Growth in employment expectations dropped to the second position during this period from top rank in the previous quarter (Q1 2016). The rank on optimism further slipped to fourth in terms of profitability expectations,” according to the survey of 2,500 businesses across 36 economies.

- While the business confidence in India has weakened, there is a rise in optimism on the export front. According to the survey report, 35 per cent of the respondents expect a rise in exports compared with 13 per cent in the previous quarter. Respondents said red tape continued to hamper growth and ranked India as number two on the issue.
“This is a clear signal that while there is optimism in the market and great business opportunity in India, the issue that is bothering investors is the slow progress on key reforms, simplification of tedious government processes and regulatory uncertainties which are impacting India’s ranking,” said Harish H.V., Partner – India Leadership team, Grant Thornton India LLP.

“The passing of GST bill, which we hope will happen in the current parliament session, should reverse this trend.”

Exports return to growth after 18 months

India’s merchandise exports rose 1.27 per cent year-on-year in June to $22.57 billion, reversing a trend that started in December 2014 due to weak global demand and a fall in commodity prices, government data showed.

In value terms, this was the highest since March when shipments were worth $22.7 billion, but it had in that month shrunk 5.5 per cent. The low-base effect has helped this June as exports in June 2015 had shrunk 16 per cent over June 2014. In absolute terms, neither the $22.57 billion worth of exports in June 2016 nor the $22.28 billion in June 2015 was near the $26.47 billion in June 2014.

Meanwhile, imports during June 2016 slid 7.33 per cent to $30.69 billion. Gold imports fell 38.5 per cent to $1.2 billion, while oil imports contracted 16.4 per cent to $7.2 billion. A growth in exports combined with a contraction in imports helped narrow the trade deficit in June to $8.1 billion from $10.8 billion in June 2015. However, on a month-on-month basis, trade deficit has widened in June from $5.8 billion in May.

NHB in talks to raise $200 million for refinancing banks

The National Housing Bank (NHB) is in discussions with multilateral agencies for borrowing funds to refinance banks, according to a top official. The bank expects to raise $200 million from them shortly, Sriram Kalyanaraman, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, NHB told The Hindu.

The money will be used to refinance banks and housing finance companies for their green housing and low-cost housing portfolios.

The NHB had so far refinanced banks and housing finance companies to the tune of Rs.300 crore under a World Bank initiative for low-income housing.

Under the credit-linked subsidy scheme (Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana), for which the NHB is one of the nodal agencies, it had disbursed Rs.121 crore in the last nine to ten months and is looking at doubling it in the next 12 months.

‘Incubator hubs soon to spur Start-up India’

With its Start-up Policy having drawn only lukewarm response so far, the government is planning a twin-pronged approach to spur the initiative.

Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman told that in places having no leading centres such as the IITs, the IIMs, or other renowned institutes, colleges would be clubbed to form an incubator hub. “Though the existing, big centres like IITs and major science and technology centres have all been given ‘incubator’ status, there is demand for more,” she said.

The second aspect was to ensure that incubators did not reject applications from entrepreneurs, and instead provided them all the hand-holding they needed. Incubators plagued by staff-shortage that
impacted their ability to handle numerous applications would be asked to co-opt outside experts quickly so that no applicant was denied the expertise required to develop and commercialise their ventures, the Minister said.

➢ To avail of benefits under the start-up policy, entities have to apply to the government to be recognised as a start-up. One of the accepted supporting documents for this is a recommendation letter from a government-recognised incubator.

➢ External experts

➢ “Incubators have a limited capacity. So, if thousands approach them, incubators obviously have their limitations and they might say ‘we can’t deal with it’. That is not to say your idea is not worth it. So, we have also asked incubators to co-opt experts from outside,” Ms. Sitharaman said

➢ The ‘Start-up India’ initiative along with an ‘action plan’ was launched on January 16. On February 17, the government notified the definition of start-up. On March 31, it unveiled a Start-up India portal, a Start-up India Hub and a mobile app, besides setting up a panel to verify the eligibility of start-ups to avail of benefits.

➢ Poor response

➢ According to the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), the nodal government body for the start-up policy, 571 applications were received as on June 30. Of these, only 106 had the required documents. DIPP said only 12 applications could be considered for tax benefits as only these start-ups were incorporated after April 1, 2016. The policy benefits include income tax exemption for three years in a block of five years for start-ups incorporated between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2019.

➢ Only seven applicants had furnished all the required documents. The remaining applicants would be given guidance and support by the Start-up India Hub.

➢ The DIPP said it had also urged States and Union Territories to set up start-up hubs and incubators. The department said it would ask top companies to set up new incubators or scale up existing incubators in collaboration with educational institutions. Ms. Sitharaman said the government had been trying to provide as much help needed. “But eventually the market will determine whose innovation can be scaled up for commercial use. We are not going to play a role in that,” she added.

Bandhan reduces interest rate for micro loans

➢ Bandhan Bank Ltd., announced that it would reduce the lending rate for micro loans by 0.6 per cent or 60 basis points (bps).

➢ Currently, Bandhan Bank operates across 29 States and Union Territories through a network of 688 branches, 2,022 Doorstep Service Centres (DSCs) and 237 ATMs. It has over 87.7 lakh customers, 21,000 employees and a deposit-base of around Rs.15,000 crore deposits.

➢ Bandhan is the first bank to be set up in the eastern part of India post-Independence. This is also the first instance of a micro-finance entity being transformed into a universal bank.

➢ The Kolkata-headquartered bank has two divisions — micro banking and general banking — offering a suite of retail financial solutions, including a variety of savings and loan products. Currently, the savings bank account interest rate is 6 per cent for balance above Rs.1 lakh and 4.25 per cent balance up to Rs.1 lakh.
For term deposits, the maximum interest rate offered is 8.25 per cent for one to three years, with an additional 0.5 per cent for senior citizens.

Bandhan received RBI’s ‘in-principle’ approval in April 2014 and the final nod on June 17, 2015.

The bank has micro banking and general banking offering a suite of retail financial solutions.

Gold imports down 48 per cent in April-June

Gold imports fell by about 48 per cent to $3.90 billion in the first quarter of the current fiscal, which is expected to keep a lid on the current account deficit.

The sliding prices of the precious metal in both global and domestic markets are seen as a contributory factor for the plunge.

Fourth tranche of sovereign gold bond scheme opens for subscription

The fourth tranche of Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) scheme opened for subscription, through which the government aims to attract a large number of investors to curb the demand for physical gold that is imported in large quantities draining the country’s foreign exchange.

The SGB issue price has been fixed at Rs. 3,119 per gram.

An investor can invest for a minimum unit of one gram and a maximum of 500 grams. The subscription is open till July 22.

The first three tranches had attracted an investment of Rs. 1,318 crore, equivalent to 4.9 tonnes of gold at the prices prevailing at those times. With the added features, it is expected that the fourth tranche of SGB would garner much higher investment.

SGBs can be purchased from stock exchanges NSE and BSE, all bank branches, select post offices and Stock Holding Corporation of India Ltd.

SGB — government securities denominated in grams of gold — offer an alternative to holding gold in physical form. The scheme was announced by the Government on October 30, 2015.

SGB gives an interest of 2.75 per cent per annum, payable every six months on initial investment minus the risk of theft/loss or impurities associated with physical gold.

The bond can be converted into demat form and used as collateral for availing loans. It will be repayable after eight years from the date of issue and premature redemption is permitted after 5th, 6th and 7th years from the date of issue.

Funds raised through the bonds will form part of the government’s market borrowing programme.

Redemption of sovereign gold bonds by an individual is exempt from capital gains tax. It also provides that long-term capital gains arising to any person on transfer of sovereign gold bonds shall be eligible for indexation benefits.

India imports about 1,000 tonnes of gold every year and it is the second-biggest constituent of the import bill after crude oil.
Centre injects Rs.22,915 cr into 13 public sector banks

- In a bid to boost credit growth in the economy, the Centre announced a sum of Rs.22,915 crore for recapitalisation of 13 public sector banks.

- Largest allocation

- State Bank of India (SBI) is to receive the largest allocation of Rs.7,575 crore. Indian Overseas Bank and Punjab National Bank are to get Rs.3,191 crore and Rs.2,816 crore respectively.

- The banks’ lending capacities are restricted by poor asset quality and weak capitalisation.

- The infusions required in the current year were assessed from the CAGR of credit growth for the last five years and the banks’ projections of credit growth. The potential for growth of each these banks were also factored in.

- “…Seventy-five per cent of the amount collected for each bank is being released now to provide liquidity support for lending operations as also to enable banks to raise funds from the market,” according to a statement by the Union Finance Ministry.

- The remaining amount, to be released later, will be linked to performance, according to the statement. Efficiency improvements, growth in both credit and deposits, and reduction in the cost of operations will be assessed for the purpose.

- Budget provision

- In the Union Budget, the Centre had allocated a total of Rs.25,000 crore for the capitalisation of public sector banks in the current financial year 2016-17, in line with the infusion plans announced under the umbrella scheme “Indradhanush” introduced last year. The plan proposes infusions adding up to Rs.25,000 crore in 2015-16 as well as in 2016-17, followed by Rs.10,000 crore each in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Tata is most valuable brand despite 11% decline in value

- Tata remained India’s most valuable brand in 2015-16 with a brand valuation of $13.7 billion despite 11 per cent value erosion during the year due to troubles concerning its steel business in the U.K, according to Brand Finance India.

- There has been a sharp decline in value this year. The current state of vulnerability the steel industry faces has created instability and Tatas were prey to the volatility

- The top 10 brands of 2015-16 include Tata, LIC ($6.6 billion), Airtel ($5.7 billion), SBI ($5.7 billion), Infosys ($4.7 billion), Reliance ($3.5 billion), ONGC ($3.4 billion), L&T ($3.3 billion), Indian Oil ($3.2 billion) and HCL ($3.2 billion).

Spice Jet tops aviation list

- spiceJet has topped the list among domestic private airlines in a study titled ‘India’s Most Reputed Aviation Brands 2016’, followed by Jet Airways with a 34 per cent lower Brand Reputation Score. The study was conducted by media analytics firm BlueBytes in association with TRA Research.
IndiGo has trailed Jet Airways with a Brand Reputation Score 9 per cent lower. Air India is the only contender and winner in the category of Government Airline Reputation.

“Reputation is a measure of the effectiveness of transmitted belief about attitudes showcasing respect,” said Pooja Kaura, Chief Spokesperson for India’s Most Reputed Brands.

Cabinet nod for changes to Benami Transactions Bill

The Union Cabinet approved amendments to the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) (Amendment) Bill, 2015, to be introduced in Parliament.

“The amendments aim to strengthen the Bill in terms of legal and administrative procedure so as to overcome the practical difficulties which may arise in the implementation of the provisions of the Bill when it becomes an Act,” according to a government statement. The legislation empowers the government to confiscate benami property by following due procedure. “However, those who declare their benami properties under income declaration scheme will get immunity under the Benami Act,” it added.

The Cabinet also approved the installation of the 1980 MW Ghatampur Thermal Power Project (GTPC) through a joint venture between Neyveli Lignite Corporation and Uttar Pradesh Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Limited (UPRVUNL). The JV is to be named Neyveli Uttar Pradesh Power Limited (NUPPL).

“The project will be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs.17,237.8 crore, a statement said.

Union Cabinet Okays Setting Up Of AIIMS in UP’s Gorakhpur

The government gave its nod to the establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, a move which aims at providing super-specialty health care to people of the state and creating a large pool of doctors.

The Union Cabinet approved the setting up of AIIMS under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,011 crore.

Under this scheme, similar health facilities have been established in Bhubaneshwar, Bhopal, Raipur, Jodhpur, Rishikesh and Patna while work on AIIMS, Rae Bareli is in progress.

Three new AIIMS at Nagpur (Maharashtra), Kalyani (West Bengal) and Mangalagiri (Andhra Pradesh) have been sanctioned last year.

Residents of 14 districts of Eastern UP and five districts of Western Bihar will be benefited by the establishment of new AIIMS.

7 Indian companies on Fortune’s list

Seven Indian companies have made it to the latest Fortune 500 list of the world’s biggest corporations in terms of revenue, with the retail giant Walmart topping the global rankings.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is ranked highest at 161st among Indian firms, while another state-run firm Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has moved out of the rankings for 2016. Private gems and jewellery major Rajesh Exports has made its debut at 423rd position.

Among the seven Indian companies, four are from the public sector while Reliance Industries (RIL) is the top-ranked among private sector firms, followed by Tata Motors and Rajesh Exports.
Among state-run majors, IOC is followed by banking behemoth State Bank of India, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum. IOC is ranked 161st with revenue of $54.7 billion (down from 119th last year), while RIL is now at 215th (down from 158th). Bharat Petroleum slipped from 280th to 358th this year and Hindustan Petroleum is at 367th, down from 327th.

However, Tata Motors and SBI have improved their position. While Tata Motors has taken the 226th position, up from 254th last year, SBI is ranked 232nd, up from 260th last year. The overall list was topped by Walmart with revenue of $482,130 million, followed by State Grid (revenue of $329,601 million) and China National Petroleum ($299,271 million) at the second and third place respectively.

Others in the global top 10 companies include Sinopec Group (4th, $294,344 million), Royal Dutch Shell (5th, $272,156 million), Exxon Mobil (6th, $246,204 million), Volkswagen (7th, $236,600 million), Toyota Motor (8th, $236,592 million), Apple (9th, $233,715 million) and BP (10th, $225,982 million). The world’s 500 largest companies generated $27.6 trillion in revenues and $1.5 trillion in profits in 2015, Fortune said.

Together, this year’s Fortune Global 500 companies employ 67 million people worldwide and are represented by 33 countries, Fortune added.

Govt appoints Ajay Bhushan Pandey UIDAI CEO

Government promoted DG and Mission Director of Unique Identification Authority of India Ajay Bhushan Pandey its chief executive officer.

"The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved appointment of Dr A B Pandey, IAS, Director General and Mission Director, Unique Identification Authority of India, as Chief Executive Officer, UIDAI, with effect from July 12, 2016," an official notice said.

A doctorate in computer science from University of Minnesota Minneapolis of US, Pandey is a Maharashtra cadre IAS officer of 1984 batch.

He has been involved with UIDAI established under the Aadhaar Act and implementation of Aadhaar since September 2010.

Nasscom paints gloomy hiring picture for the year

The Indian IT-BPM industry may continue to see a dip in hiring this year, attributable largely to automation of routine processes in the industry, according to a top official at Nasscom, though he declined to dwell on specific numbers. Further, the industry, which now employs 3.7 million people, would need to re-skill 60-70 per cent of its employees by 2025 to keep pace with the technological changes happening across all industries, said R. Chandrashekhar, President, Nasscom, the trade association of the Indian IT sector.

Slower pace

According to him, “Fresh hiring is static or is generally declining. Due to automation, we are not hiring at same pace,” he said. In 2015-16, the industry recruited about two lakh people as against 2.2 lakh the previous year. Though hiring is currently sluggish, Mr. Chandrashekhar indicated that the IT-BPM industry would require about 1.2 -2 million additional employees to meet the industry’s stated revenue goal of $100 billion by 2025.
“While technology will displace some jobs, it will also lead to creation of some new jobs – biotech, nanotech, smart technologies… to name a few”, he said at the 13th edition of the Nasscom HR Summit 2016.

Due to changing technology and in the required skill-sets, there will be a gradual shift of the industry towards automation and about 5 to 10 per cent of existing jobs may be automated in the next 10 years, he said.

According to Mr. Chandrashekhar, “The future is man-plus- machine.” Talking about the existing workforce that needs to be re-skilled in technology, expertise in domains and in (structured) thinking, he said that there would be growth of digital technology from 5 per cent of the workforce being skilled in digital technology currently, to about 38 per cent in the next decade. “Employees in this sector need to adapt to these changes and learn new skills,” he added.

Remain competitive

To remain competitive, employees should focus on newer technologies such as data science, robotics, artificial intelligence and Internet of Things, he said. To keep pace with the new skills requirements, companies are making significant investments in heavily investing on training via e-learning including digital skills. and just-in-time training, Mr.Chandrashekahar said.

Industry urges Centre to speed up PPP revamp

Private sector infrastructure developers have urged the government to fast-track its stated plan of rebooting the public-private partnerships (PPPs) framework and facilitate the payment of dues in the range of Rs.75,000 crore to Rs.1.25 lakh crore owed to developers by various state and central government departments, in order to revive private investments in the sector.

“The key challenge is to get private sector sentiment up again about investing in infrastructure projects, even as we have rightly relied on public investments in the short to medium term due to the decline of interest in PPPs,” said Vinayak Chatterjee, chairman of Feedback Infra and head of the Confederation of Indian Industry or CII’s National Committee on Infrastructure.

Stressed assets

The committee, with representatives from investors in core sectors, noted that the problem of stressed assets in the infrastructure sector remains grave, particularly in the power, roads and construction sectors.

“The government’s intent on bringing PPPs back on track was clear from its first Budget, when it allocated Rs.500 crore for creating a new institution called PPP India to reframe the approach to such partnerships, including mechanisms to renegotiate contracts and resolve disputes,” Mr Chatterjee said.

A high-level committee led by former finance secretary Vijay Kelkar had also submitted a report to the Centre on reviving the PPP model in December last year, and CII has urged the government to expeditiously act on its recommendations and introduce a new public dispute resolution law that has been drafted to resolve differences between project partners in a transparent manner.

Several government agencies haven’t settled bills with developers on public works contracts.
Verizon is winner in Yahoo sale with $4.8B bid

- Verizon is making a major bet that it can put together two fading giants — Yahoo and AOL — to create a new mobile and online powerhouse.
- The telecommunications giant announced that it will spend $4.8 billion to acquire Yahoo’s operating business, which includes advertising technology and popular online content such as Yahoo Sports, Yahoo Finance and micro-blogging site Tumblr. Also included in the deal: the Yahoo brand and real estate attached to the core business including Yahoo’s headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif.

Telecom panel fixes minimum spectrum usage charge at 3%

- The Telecom Commission stuck to its position in favour of using a weighted average formula to calculate the annual fee that telecom companies pay for using airwaves.
- However, it has decided to fix a minimum rate of three per cent of a company’s adjusted gross revenue as spectrum usage charge (SUC), in a bid to move towards a uniform rate for all players.
- Cabinet approval
- The Cabinet approval on the decision will be sought next week, a senior telecom ministry official said post the meeting.
- The Telecom Commission had earlier approved the use of the weighted average formula for calculating the SUC based on total spectrum holding of the operator. To protect government revenues, of about Rs.7,500 crore from SUC, it was also decided the operators will have to pay as SUC a minimum floor price, which would be the latest charges paid by the company.
- It was also decided that for the auctions to be held later this year, the SUC will be imposed at three per cent.

Essar Ports to expand Hazira terminal capacity

- Essar Ports has announced plans to expand the capacity of its bulk terminal at Hazira, Gujarat, with an investment of Rs.750 crore.
- The berth at this terminal is being expanded by a further 1,100 metres to accommodate the steady growth in cargo throughput at the port, the company said.
- With the expansion, the capacity of the Hazira terminal will increase from the existing 30 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) to 50 MTPA.
- After the expansion, the port will be able to simultaneously handle 7 vessels.
- Capt. S. Das, Chief Executive Officer, Essar Bulk Terminal, said: “The expanded terminal, besides meeting the enhanced requirements of Essar Steel will also cater to our growing volumes of third-party cargo.”

Cairn-Vedanta merger to happen by 2016-end, says Anil Agarwal

- The sweetened offer from Vedanta Ltd to Cairn India Ltd shareholders is still a negative for them; believe analysts, but enough to help the merger sail through.
As of the first quarter of this fiscal, Cairn India held a net cash position of $3.5 billion, while Vedanta and Twin Start Mauritius Holding (a wholly-owned unit of Vedanta Ltd) had a net debt position of $10.5 billion, which also includes the $1.2 billion intercompany loan given by Cairn India to Vedanta.

The merger has been stuck due to opposition from minority investors such as Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC). On revised terms, the firms expect to close the merger by March 2017. On earlier terms, the merger was to close in June 2016.

Indo-U.S. expedition discovers natural gas in Indian Ocean

A large natural gas discovery has been made in the Indian Ocean following a joint expedition by India and the U.S., opening up a new resource to meet energy needs.

India's Oil Ministry and the U.S. Geological Survey made the discovery of large, highly enriched accumulations of natural gas hydrate — an icy form of the fuel — in the Bay of Bengal.

“This is the first discovery of its kind in the Indian Ocean that has the potential to be producible,” the U.S. agency said in a statement.

Gas hydrates

Natural gas hydrates are a naturally occurring, ice-like combination of natural gas and water found in oceans and Polar Regions. The amount of gas within the world’s gas hydrate accumulations is estimated to greatly exceed the volume of all known conventional gas resources. India had in September 2014 agreed to collaborate to explore gas hydrate potential in the country and identify sites for pilot production testing.

Gas hydrates are considered as vast resources of natural gas and are known to occur in marine sediments on continental shelf margins. Gas hydrate resources in India are estimated at 1,894 trillion cubic meters and these deposits occur in Western, Eastern and Andaman offshore areas. By nature this gas is mostly methane. Methane gas hydrate is stable at the seafloor at water depths beneath about 500 meters.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration gas hydrate deposits along ocean margins are estimated to exceed known petroleum reserves by about a factor of three.

Myntra buys Jabong for $70 mn

India’s biggest online retailer Flipkart is buying a smaller rival Jabong for $70 million (Rs.470 crore) in cash, according to Jabong's parent company Global Fashion Group (GFG).

The acquisition will help Flipkart to compete with its bigger rivals Amazon and Snapdeal, according to analysts.

GFG which is backed by Germany's highest-profile startup investor Rocket Internet SE and Sweden-based investment AB Kinnevik said the transaction is a decisive step in GFG’s strategy to refocus its business on core markets and further accelerate its path to profitability.

Fashion retailing

Flipkart's unit Myntra, an online fashion retailer which is buying Jabong said it aims to create India’s biggest online fashion retailing business.
‘Independent RBI, a must for growth’

- An independent central bank is essential for ensuring stable and sustainable growth in any economy, said Raghuram Rajan, Governor Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- “The best way central banks can support growth over the medium term is by keeping inflation low and stable,” Mr. Rajan said in a speech at the 10th Statistics Day Conference held at the RBI headquarters in the city.

- “Without any political push back as inflation rises, it is necessary to build institutions to ensure macroeconomic stability. Perhaps this is why successive governments, in their wisdom, have given the RBI a measure of independence,” he said. “Such concerns would also support the current government’s decision to enshrine its commitment to low inflation through a formal inflation target and the formation of a monetary policy committee.”

- Inflation targeting

- The Centre and the RBI have entered into an agreement to bring down inflation to 4 per cent over the medium term. Mr. Rajan, who was appointed at the central bank’s helm for a three-year period in September 2013, has said he will not seek a second term. Some politicians from the ruling BJP-led coalition had criticised the central bank for not doing enough to support growth, including making timely interest rate reductions. “Criticism of the central bank using arguments unsupported by evidence is widespread,” Mr. Rajan said.

States reject GST rate cap in Constitution

- The empowered committee of state finance ministers on the Goods & Services Tax (GST) rejected by consensus two of the three demands raised by the Congress party for supporting the Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill. The bill is meant to introduce the new tax.

- The states agreed, in line with the Congress demand, to recommend that the proposal for 1 per cent additional tax -- introduced to compensate manufacturing states for potential losses from the shift to the new tax to be levied on consumption rather than production -- be dropped.

- The opposition party’s other demands — a Constitutional provision for capping at 18 per cent the GST rate and an independent dispute resolution mechanism headed by a retired high court judge — did not find favour with the empowered committee. The wording of the Bill it finalised effectively rejects these demands, even as the finance ministers from the Congress-rulled states failed to speak up. The Bill, which was passed in the Lok Sabha, is pending in the Rajya Sabha where the BJP-led ruling coalition does not have a majority.

Government notifies revised pay grades for employees

- Government has notified revised pay grades for the implementation of the 7th Pay Commission recommendations, giving nearly 10 lakh government employees 2.57 times hike in basic pay.

- The minimum pay in central government with effect from January 1, 2016 will now be Rs 18,000 per month; at the highest level, it will be Rs 2.5 lakh.

- "With regard to fixation of pay of the employees in the new Pay Matrix as on January 1, 2016, the existing pay (Pay in Pay Band plus Grade Pay) in the pre-revised structure as on December 31, 2015, shall be multiplied by a factor of 2.57," the notification said.
There shall be two dates for grant of increment - January 1 and July 1 every year - instead of the existing July 1 only. Employees will be entitled to only one annual increment on either of these two dates depending on the date of appointment, promotion or grant of financial upgradation, it said.

The Cabinet had last month decided on pay increase for central government employees and pensioners, that is estimated to cost the exchequer Rs 1.02 lakh crore annually.

Sebi likely to scrap crowdfunding norms

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has decided not to proceed with the final regulations on crowdfunding, according to people in the know. In a discussion paper floated two years ago, Sebi had proposed a framework to enable domestic start-ups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to raise capital from multiple investors through crowdfunding.

Divergent views from the market and lack of interest for its recently launched start-up platform have discouraged Sebi from issuing final guidelines on crowdfunding, said a source. Also, the market feedback given to Sebi was that there might not be enough takers for the regulator’s proposed framework as it was ‘too restrictive’, the source added.

Sebi’s discussion paper had defined crowdfunding as “solicitation of funds (small amount) from multiple investors through a web-based platform or social networking site for a specific project, business venture or social cause”.

Typically, crowdfunding involves a large group of individuals coming together to fund a business venture. However, to avoid systemic risks, Sebi had proposed to set minimum eligibility criteria for entities to be allowed to raise funds, to invest and to set up crowdfunding platforms. Interestingly, the proposed regulations would have kept out the ‘crowd’ as they allowed only ‘accredited investors’ — institutional investors or high net worth individuals with a net worth of at least Rs 2 crore to invest.

Sebi’s idea was to protect small investors. “Since the crowdfunding phenomenon is gaining popularity, its importance cannot be ignored. To regulate crowdfunding, it is very important to take note of that while it is necessary to ensure that start-ups, SMEs could raise funds at ease, it is equally important to ensure that no systemic risks are created wherein retail investors are lured by some unscrupulous players...”, the market regulator had said in its discussion paper floated in July 2014.

“There are severe consequences of fraud, which needed to be regulated. However, overregulation, too, may have killed the product,” said Sandeep Parekh, founder of Finsec Law Advisor.

GDP growth for FY17 may accelerate to 7.9 per cent’

India’s GDP growth could rise to 7.9 per cent because of good monsoon so far, with agriculture expected to grow by 4 per cent and consumer price inflation likely to be restricted to 5 per cent in 2016-2017, rating agency Crisil said.

Although the rainfall levels this year have been better than normal, the rainfall has not been well-distributed, leaving some places with surplus rainfall and others deficient, according to the report.

“Going ahead, assuming rainfall is evenly distributed across time and regions, we expect GDP growth to rise to 7.9 per cent, agricultural growth to come in above trend at 4 per cent and CPI inflation to remain contained at 5 per cent in fiscal 2017,” according to the report.
“Excess rainfall in 89 districts across eight States could impact sowing and, therefore, the agricultural output for the kharif season. Therefore, spatial and temporal distribution of rainfall in the second half of the season, especially in August, will be crucial.”

**Pay Re. 1, get insurance cover for train travel**

- Train passengers booking their tickets online through the IRCTC website will be able to opt for travel insurance cover from September for a premium of just one rupee.
- The scheme offers travellers or their families compensation of up to Rs. 10 lakh in the event of death or permanent total disability, Rs. 7.5 lakh for permanent partial disability, up to Rs. 2 lakh for hospitalisation expenses, said a senior IRCTC official.
- The new facility will be available for all passengers of Railways who book the e-ticket, excluding suburban trains, through its website, irrespective of the class of the ticket, on a trial basis.
- The scheme is being implemented by IRCTC in partnership with ICICI Lombard General Insurance, Royal Sundaram and Shriram General. A total of 19 companies participated in the bidding process out of which these three were selected, he said.

**Sri Lanka Cabinet approves $318 mn Indian credit for railway projects**

- Sri Lanka’s railway sector is to receive a fillip with the Cabinet approving a $318-million line of credit from the Indian government for the procurement of rolling stock and upgrading two major railway lines in the country. With this, the total amount of assistance from India for the development of the sector in Sri Lanka goes up to $1,284 million.
- When Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was here in March 2015, he made an announcement regarding the line of credit, which would be provided through Export-Import Bank of India. An agreement to this effect is expected to be signed soon.

‘**RERA to redefine the future of realty sector’**

- The Real Estate Regulation Act (RERA) passed by Central Government recently, will bring in the much-needed transparency in the real estate sector and this will ultimately lead to flow of funds from foreign and domestic investors, according to experts at the CII Realty and Infrastructure Conclave
- It will also provide confidence to home buyers, they said. Anuj Puri, Chairman, CII Realty and Infrastructure Conclave and Chairman and Country Head, JLL India, said that Indian real estate faces a very different scenario in the near future, given the proposed changes in the regulatory environment as a result of RERA, among other aspects. “How will these new challenges be faced? This will define the future of the real estate industry,” he said.

**Centre carefully monitoring Jammu and Kashmir package**

- The Centre has directed 18 ministries overseeing various projects, which are part of a Rs.80,000 crore package for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), to set a timeline for implementing them.
- The package was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last November. At a review meeting with these ministries and officials from the state government, the Union Finance Secretary Ashok Lavasa approved a matrix for the timeline.
NDDB chief resigns

- T. Nanda Kumar, Chairman of Gujarat-based National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), has resigned. The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has accepted the resignation of Kumar with effect from August 1, 2016, an order issued by Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) said, without citing any reason. The senior most whole-time director of the board has been given additional charge of the post of NDDB until the appointment of a regular incumbent, it said. Mr. Kumar, a former IAS officer, has been working as NDDB chief since March 3, 2014. He is the third chairman of the board based in Anand, Gujarat, after V. Kurien and Amrita Patel.

Centre mulling import of pulses from Africa

- India is looking to import pulses from Myanmar and African nations to counter a domestic shortfall of 7.6 million tonnes that has driven local prices of key pulses like chickpea to a record high, Food Minister Ram Vilas Paswan said.
- More purchases by India, the world's top consumer of pulses, could help the country rein in its headline inflation, which hit a near two-year high in June on double-digit annual increases in prices of sugar, vegetables and pulses.
- “The challenge of demand-supply gap of about 7.6 million tonnes (in pulses) is being addressed via public and private imports,” Paswan tweeted. India had said it would help Mozambique cultivate pulses and then import them through government-to-government deals.
- India consumes nearly 22 million tonnes of pulses annually, but relies heavily on imports to meet demand as output has been hit by uncertain monsoons.

Short route to Green Card

- For the rich who want to be American citizens, here is the quickest way to have a Green Card.
- What one needs to do is to invest $500,000 to $1 million, depending on the U.S. government rules, in an employment-generating Regional Centre Program or have a direct investment to get a permanent residence Visa within 15 months under the EB-5 program.
- This is as compared to 7 to 10 years taken in employment-based and 15 to 20 years in family-based Green Cards.

India can ratify ILO protocol on child labour: Dattatreya

- India will be able to ratify two International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions, 182 and 138, on the abolition of all forms of child labour, after the Parliament passed a Bill banning employment of children below 14 years of age, Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya said.
- “Since the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2016 has been passed by Parliament and prohibits employment of children up to 14 years of age, the ILO conventions 138 and 182 will be ratified,” Mr. Dattatreya said. Labour Secretary Shankar Aggarwal said the ministry will go to the Parliament informing them about the ratification. “We were not able to ratify these ILO conventions primarily because we had not banned all kinds of occupations for kids below 14 years of age. On the basis of this enactment, we will go to the Parliament informing them that the conditions have been fulfilled and conventions will be ratified,” Mr. Aggarwal said.
ILO Convention 138 says that the minimum age for employment should not be less than the age of completion of compulsory schooling (14 years of age in India's case). The ILO Convention 182 calls for the need to formulate legislation for prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour.

Centre to slap demand notices on telcos over Rs.12,400 cr. Loss

The Centre is in the process of serving demand notices to telecom companies based on the CAG report alleging a loss of more than Rs.12,400 crore to the ex-chequer due to under-reporting of revenue, Parliament was informed.

The CAG report, tabled in Parliament in March, had indicated that six telecom operators, including Airtel, Idea and Vodafone, under-reported revenue by Rs.46,045.75 crore. It had a corresponding impact of Rs.3,752.37 crore on licence fee (LF) and Rs.1,460.23 crore on spectrum usage charge (SUC) paid to the government.

The interest on this short/non-payment of LF and SUC, the CAG said, worked out to Rs.7,276.33 crore. The audit was for the four-year period from 2006-07 to 2009-10.

“The demands on the basis of CAG report are being issued taking into account license agreement and pronouncements of judicial fora,” Minister for Communications Manoj Sinha said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

SBI’s merger with associate banks by March 2017

The Centre is in the process of serving demand notices to telecom companies based on the CAG report alleging a loss of more than Rs.12,400 crore to the ex-chequer due to under-reporting of revenue,
**Science & Technology**

**Journey to Jupiter**

- Jupiter takes center stage with the arrival of a NASA spacecraft. Built to peek through its thick, swirling clouds and map the planet from the inside out, the solar-powered Juno spacecraft was on the final leg of a five-year, 1.8 billion-mile (2.8 billion-kilometer) voyage to the biggest planet in the solar system.

- Juno promises to send back the best close-up views as it circles the planet for a year. Jupiter is a gas giant made up mostly of hydrogen and helium unlike rocky Earth and its neighbour Mars. The fifth planet from the sun likely formed first and it could hold clues to how the solar system developed.

**Juno sends first image while orbiting Jupiter**

- JunoCam, the electronic photographer affixed to the NASA spacecraft that locked into orbit around Jupiter on July 4, has now met the bar set in the Instagram age. The images transmitted back to Earth after Juno began orbiting Jupiter confirm the beginning of the space probe’s 20-month mission around the solar system’s largest planet.

**ISRO soon to test-fly scramjet engine model**

- The Indian Space research Organisation (ISRO) is slated to test fly this month a small model of what is called a ‘scramjet’ engine that could one day help to put satellites and other systems to space.

- Scientists are quietly keeping their fingers crossed about it. This half-metre, 45-kg model could later grow to power a future dream Indian rocket of two stages (compared to three and four stages at present); a rocket that launches satellites and systems super efficiently at much lower costs than now.

**40th Anniversary of Apollo 17 Celebrated at Gala**

- NASA celebrated a historical milestone, the 40th anniversary of the first U.S. spacecraft to land on Mars.

- On July 20, 1976, NASA successfully reached the Martian surface with their Viking Lander 1.

- The Viking project - comprised of two separate spacecraft - together took more than 65,000 images of the planet and collected overwhelming amounts of data.

- The primary goal of the Viking mission was to search for evidence of life on Mars. While none was found, the mission did give scientists analysis of chemical activities in the Martian soil, atmospheric measurements, meteorology studies, and a detailed map of the red planet's surface.

- The two Viking crafts were designed to work for 90 days, but ended up functioning for 6 and half years.

**INS Viraat to sail for last time**

- It fought the Falklands war on behalf of the British in the early 1980s. In 1987, it resurfaced as INS Viraat and became the flagship of the Indian Navy. The aircraft carrier will sail for the last time as a Navy ship after nearly six decades in service. However, its post-retirement status still remains unclear.

- INS Viraat will undertake the last operational sortie, firing its boilers, from Mumbai on July 23 and reach Kochi on July 27 after which it is scheduled to be decommissioned.
Sports

Delhi will host the ISSF World Cup finals in 2017.

- The International Shooting Sport Federation Executive Committee, which met in Moscow, made the decision to award the 2017 edition of the ISSF World Cup finals (Rifle/Pistol/Shotgun combined) to the Indian capital.
- The event will be hosted in October. This is in addition to the ISSF World Cup series scheduled to be held in the capital in February 2017.

Women’s 4x100m relay team rewrites National record

- The Indian women’s 4x100m relay team broke the National record, its second in about 50 days, at the Kazakhstan National Championship in Almaty and moved closer to the Rio Olympic qualification range.
- The team, which broke an 18-year-old record, clocking 44.03s at the IAAF World Challenge meet in Beijing in mid-May, bettered it with a 43.42s finish while taking the second spot, behind host Kazakhstan.
- Merlin Joseph, H.M. Jyothi, Srabani Nanda and Dutee Chand, in that order, ran the relay. This performance helped India climb two rungs, from the 21st spot to 19th in the Rio Olympics world ranking list with the average of its two fastest times now being 43.72.

Murray gives Britain something to cheer about

- The nation’s politics is in an unholy mess. Nobody is sure what the nature of the country’s future relationship with the European Union is going to be.
- One leading Conservative Member of Parliament has almost berated her rival for not having children, infuriating civilised sections of the society.
- Their currency, the pound, is taking a beating. And their football team did worse than tiny Wales in the European Cup, coming back home in a tearing hurry and once again offering the beleaguered nation cause for mourning.
- And to say that a nation that once ruled the waves, building an Empire, is desperately short on pride and has so far had little reason for some kind of summer celebration is to state the obvious.
- Little wonder that many brands of royalty were present in the Royal Box. From the Duke (Prince William) and Duchess of Cambridge to David Cameron, from Bjorn Borg to Boris Becker and Stefan Edberg, it was filled with heavyweight celebrities and achievers.
- All this was in anticipation of one event — something to toast, something to glorify in. And they knew that the only man who could deliver the summer solace was Andy Murray, no matter that he is a Scot, Beg, borrow or steal, the English needed somebody to relieve them of the gloom. And Murray did this in style in the men’s singles final of the 130th Wimbledon tennis championships as he outplayed a strangely wilted Milos Raonic 6-4, 7-6(3), 7-6(2).
- It was Murray’s third Grand Slam victory. The first had come at the 2012 US Open and he followed that up with a triumph here in 2013.
Vijender scales new peak

- A packed Thyagraj Stadium got more than it had bargained for as Vijender Singh became the WBO Asia Pacific Super Middleweight champion with a convincing win over Australian Kerry Hope even as pro boxing made a rousing start in the country.

- Vijender remained unbeaten, this time by unanimous decision, even though his reputation as the ‘Knockout King’ took a backseat.

Reliance Jio is principal partner of Rio contingent

- Reliance Jio, the digital platform of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), has announced its partnership with India’s Olympic contingent as its principal partner.

- “Reliance Jio is honoured to be part of India’s largest ever contingent for the Olympic Games 2016.

- “Our association with Indian Olympic contingent is a natural progression stemming from our corporate philosophy of unwavering faith and belief in today’s young generation, and empowering them through sports,” said a spokesperson.

Mohammed Shahid, the master dribbler who played hockey with a painter’s brush

- The Dribbler’ is gone and Benares mourns. Someone noticed that the Ganges suddenly calmed down; the angry waters bowing their head. The city's favourite son Mohammed Shahid has left to display his wares elsewhere.

- From Benares to Delhi to Mumbai, onwards to Karachi, Lahore, Kuala Lumpur and even across the continents in the city of Los Angeles, they all mourn. In Seoul, the venue of his last Olympics, the stadium shifts, its shoulders slightly bowed in homage — to a man who gave immense joy; his flair, skills and dribbles lifting a nation. He made every fan sit on the edge as they watched him dribble past one, two, three and even four till he was the last man standing.

Russian athletes can’t go to Rio

- The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) rejected Russia’s appeal against a doping ban on its athletics team from the Rio Olympics starting in 15 days, drawing an angry condemnation from Moscow.

- “CAS rejects the claims/appeal of the Russian Olympic Committee and 68 athletes,” it said, backing the right of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) to suspend the Russian athletics federation.

- The decision increases the possibility that the International Olympic Committee will now exclude Russia from all sports, not just track and field, in Rio de Janeiro.

- That would mark the deepest crisis in the Olympic movement since the U.S. and Soviet boycotts of the 1980s, and would be a grave blow to a nation that prides itself as a sporting superpower.

Lodha clarifies on nine-year tenure

- The Supreme Court-appointed Lodha Committee clarified to the State associations that office-bearers, who have cumulatively or separately completed nine years in office before July 18, were not exempt from the order.
They, too, are barred from contesting elections.

The committee has sent a mail to BCCI president Anurag Thakur and secretary Ajay Shirke, asking them to intimate the associations in this regard.

Parveen Rana ‘replaces’ Narsingh Yadav

United World Wrestling (UWW), the governing body for wrestling, has announced that Parveen Rana will replace Narsingh Yadav in the 74kg freestyle category in the Rio Olympics.

Acting on a National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) report, the UWW took the decision of replacing Narsingh, who tested positive for a banned steroid.

“A report filed by the NADA last week states that 74kg freestyle wrestler Narsingh has failed an out-of-competition anti-doping test.

“Narsingh, who qualified his nation for the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro at the 2015 World championship in Las Vegas, has been provisionally suspended by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) and is restricted from competing at the Rio Games,” said UWW.

Ashwin makes a big leap with his feat

R. Ashwin’s seven for 83, a fabulous fourth-innings effort in the first Test of the ongoing four-Test series against West Indies at Antigua’s North Sound, made him only the second Indian bowler to claim seven wickets in an innings in the Caribbean Islands.

The first Indian bowler was the famous leg-spinner Subhash Gupte who took seven for 162 in India’s first Test played in Port of Spain in January 1953.

The tall Indian off-spinner’s feat came after 63 years.

It was Gupte’s first Test in the West Indies in 1953 and so also Ashwin’s first in the West Indies in 2016; the difference though is Ashwin’s endeavour resulted in his team’s resounding triumph, while Gupte’s performance forced a draw.

With this performance, Ashwin has filled up one lacuna that showed up in his excellent Test career.

He took five wickets in an innings for the first time outside of Asia and marched into the seven-for club in the West Indies.

There are only 24 instances of bowlers taking seven wickets in a Test innings in the West Indies and England seamer Angus Fraser has done it twice (eight for 75, Bridgetown, 1993-94 & eight for 53 at Port of Spain, 1997-98).

The West Indies’s Corey Collymore has also done it twice (seven for 57 against Sri Lanka in 2003 at Kingston and seven for 78 against Pakistan in 2005 at Kingston).

Other Indians who have registered excellent figures are Ishant Sharma (six for 55, Bridgetown, 2011), Anil Kumble (six for 78, Kingston, 2006), Kapil Dev (six for 84, Kingston, 1989) and Bhagwat Chandrasekhar (six for 120, Port of Spain, 1975-76).
There are 19 more instances of Indians taking five wickets in an innings, with off-spinner Harbhajan Singh doing it thrice.

No ‘halo’ in 2017

Formula One bosses voted against the introduction of the ‘halo’ cockpit head protection device next season. A meeting of the sport’s Strategy Group held in Geneva agreed to delay plans for its use until further evaluation and testing had taken place, FIA said in a statement.

“It was decided that owing to the relatively short time-frame until the commencement of the 2017 season, it would be prudent to use the remainder of this year and early next to further evaluate the full potential of all options,” said the statement.

“While the Halo is currently the preferred option, as it provides the broadest solution to date, the consensus among the Strategy Group was that another year of development could result in an even more complete solution.

When Sambadrome, the venue for archery at the Rio Olympics, opened for the competitors, the Indians were the first to reach there and get acclimatised. “The current form of the three women archers [Deepika, Bombayla Devi and Laxmirani Majhi] is heartening, and they are shooting confidently. All three are of the same standard. The experience of Bombayla who is taking part in her third Olympics will also play a crucial role,” said Ravi Shankar.

For debutant Atanu Das, the Rio Games will be an exposure trip and a learning curve. Though Atanu is in fine nick, he may not last long as the field is strong.

Moreover, he is yet to pull off a win against world-class archers. The coaches feel that Atanu has to perform really well to justify his inclusion.

However, history reminds us that at major events the Indian recurve team hasn’t lived up to expectations when compared to the men’s compound squad.

Rio presents a big opportunity to change that.
Question Bank

1. Recently Sulur has been chosen as the Light Combat Aircraft base for induction of Tejas aircraft in Air Force. Sulur is in:
   (a) Kerala  (b) Telangana  (c) Tamil Nadu  (d) Puducherry

2. Recently, the government has roped in India's first national orchestra band ........ to prepare a musical composition for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
   (a) Vaadya Vrind  (b) Vaadya Vrindavan  (c) Vaadya Vyakyaan  (d) Vaadya Aarohi

3. Recently which state/UT government has drawn up a massive Rs 120 crore plan to build toilets for 55,000 households?
   (a) Puducherry  (b) Haryana  (c) Goa  (d) Delhi

4. Which is the first foreign country in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s address ‘Mann Ki Baat’ will be broadcast?
   (a) Nepal  (b) Tibet  (c) Sri Lanka  (d) Bangladesh

5. Which legendary Indian actress is among Indian and Indian-origin film personalities invited by the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to be its members in 2016?
   (a) Asha Parekh  (b) Saira Bano  (c) Jeenat Amaan  (d) Sharmila Tagore

6. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has given its first phase of licence to……………….. clearing the first ever Indian private sector reinsurance company in the country?
   (a) ITI Reinsurance  (b) GIC Re  (c) Munich Re  (d) Swiss Re

7. Recently which private sector bank has launched an SME Bank which will provide full-fledged digital banking service to small and medium sector enterprises?
   (a) HDFC Bank  (b) ICICI Bank  (c) Axis Bank  (d) Kotak Mahindra

8. Who is to be the financial partner for the International Solar Alliance that aims to collaborate on increasing solar energy use around the world?
   (a) IMF  (b) AIIB  (c) ADB  (d) World Bank

9. What is the name of Google’s next upcoming Android version in 2016?
   (a) Nougat  (b) Nought  (c) New  (d) Nostalgia

10. The ISSF World Cup finals in 2017 is to be held in:
    (a) Dhaka  (b) Helsinki  (c) London  (d) Delhi

11. Recently the first two fourth generation Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas,' designed and built in India, joined the Indian Air Force's squadron named:
    (a) Flying Daggers  (b) Flying Desire  (c) Aristocrats  (d) Flying Stars

12. In July Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, Ratan Tata, inaugurated the newly-created peacock conservation project at Raj Bhavan of which Indian state?
    (a) Uttar Pradesh  (b) Bihar  (c) Maharashtra  (d) West Bengal
13. Which Indian state government has decided to ban ‘electronic cigarette’ in view of studies claiming that its use can cause various health issues, including cancer and heart ailments?
(a) Tamil Nadu  (b) Kerala  (c) Karnataka  (d) Goa

14. How many species new to science has been identified in India in 2015?
(a) 225  (b) 345  (c) 360  (d) 445

15. Recently on which country the European Union formally extended sanctions by six months due to a lack of progress in resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine?
(a) Australia  (b) Spain  (c) Austria  (d) Russia

16. Every year in India, State Bank Day is celebrated on:
(a) 1 May  (b) 1 June  (c) 1 July  (d) 1 December

17. Which is to be first Private Bank from Tamil Nadu and the city of Chennai?
(a) Equinox  (b) Equitas  (c) Approximate  (d) Eminoc

18. In July 2016, State Bank of India (SBI) launched ………….allowing its customers access various banking services via these social platforms.
(a) SBI Twinkle  (b) SBI in one click  (c) SBI Mingle  (d) SBI Star

19. Which state to set up Vita milk booths at 1,500 petrol pumps of IOC for sale of milk and milk products?
(a) Punjab  (b) Haryana  (c) Rajasthan  (d) Gujarat

20. According to direction by RBI Banks will no longer exchange notes introduced before year:
(a) 2000  (b) 2002  (c) 2005  (d) 2009

21. Recently which Indian city went for ‘Green fee’ for vehicles?
(a) Bengaluru  (b) Patna  (c) Kanpur  (d) Shimla

22. In July which state government has decided to regularise thousands of unauthorised structures falling outside the core area of its Airport project?
(a) Rajasthan  (b) Maharashtra  (c) Gujarat  (d) Karnataka

23. The upcoming IT Park of Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC) is in:
(a) Bhopal  (b) Chhindwara  (c) Raisen  (d) Indore

24. According to data from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF), largest Immigration to ………from other European Union countries hit a new record?
(a) Belgium  (b) Italy  (c) Britain  (d) Germany

25. Recently Colosseum unveiled after three year clean up, Colosseum is in:
(a) London  (b) Rome  (c) Venice  (d) Madrid

26. Recently a study warned that Continued warming of Antarctica could wipe out 60 per cent of …………by the end of the century.
(a) Whales  (b) Seals  (c) Albatrosses  (d) Krill

27. Recently Sri Lanka named Coomaraswamy as central bank governor. The tenure of central bank governor of Sri Lanka is:
(a) Three Years  (b) Four Years  (c) Five Years  (d) Six Years
28. In terms of start ups India has ..... Largest number of start-ups globally.
   (a) First
   (b) Second
   (c) Third
   (d) Fourth

29. Startup India is an initiative of the:
   (a) Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion
   (b) Department of Economic Affairs
   (c) Department of Financial services
   (d) Department of Investment and Public Asset

30. Recently which port introduced online tracking of containers to help track movement of containers on a real-time basis, becoming the first Indian port to install such a technology?
   (a) Kolkata Port Trust
   (b) Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust
   (c) Kandla Port Trust
   (d) New Mangalore Port Trust

31. Currently a suicide car bomb killed more than 100 persons in Iraq. The capital of Iraq is:
   (a) Jeddah
   (b) Tehran
   (c) Beirut
   (d) Baghdad

32. Currently Australia is facing Parliamentary election. Acting Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is related to which of the following political Party?
   (a) Liberal party
   (b) Democrat party
   (c) Conservative Party
   (d) None of the above

33. Who among the following became first Indigenous woman elected to Australia’s lower house?
   (a) Astro Rooney
   (b) Linda Burney
   (c) Selena Jyoff
   (d) None of the above

34. The Paracel Islands is currently in news. This Islands is located in which of the following sea/ ocean?
   (a) Caspian Sea
   (b) South China sea
   (c) Black sea
   (d) Indian Ocean

35. The central government has proposed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) to determine monetary policy in India. The chairperson of MPC will be:
   (a) Prime Minister
   (b) Finance Minister
   (c) RBI Governor
   (d) Finance Secretary

36. India's biggest oil refinery will be set on which of the following places of India?
   (a) East coast
   (b) Central India
   (c) West coast
   (d) Jammu and Kashmir

37. Apparel industry body AEPC Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) is expecting around Rs.5,000 crore fresh investments into the sector during the current fiscal. Who among the following is the chairman of APEC?
   (a) Vijay Tiwari
   (b) Prashant Jha
   (c) Ashok G Rajani
   (d) Ashok Singh

38. Serena Williams belongs to which of the following sport?
   (a) Basketball
   (b) Tennis
   (c) High Jump
   (d) Discus through

39. B. Sai Praneeth is a legend player of India. He belongs to which of the following sports?
   (a) Cricket
   (b) Hockey
   (c) Tennis
   (d) Badminton

40. Solar-powered Juno spacecraft of NASA belongs to which of the following Planet?
   (a) Mars
   (b) Jupiter
   (c) Venus
   (d) Saturn

41. Prime Minister Narendra Modi expanded the size of council of minister. By which constitutional amendment act the size of council of minister has been fixed?
   (a) 89th
   (b) 91st
   (c) 93rd
   (d) 74th
42. Arvind Kejriwal's close aide (Principal Secretary of Delhi) held on graft charges. The name of Principal Secretary is:
   (a) Rajendra Kumar    (b) Sunil Jain
   (c) Purusottam Agrawal  (d) None of the above

43. Ahead of the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath, a noted sand artist completed carving 103 sand chariots on the Puri beach in an attempt to create a world record. The name of this sand artist is:
   (a) Madhkar Goswami    (b) Arun Singh
   (c) Sudarsan Pattnaik   (d) None of the above

44. Which of the following banned groups are behind currently Dhaka attacks?
   (a) Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB)    (b) Ansarullah Bangla
   (c) Both (a) and (b)                        (d) None of the above

45. Iraqis mourned more than 200 people killed in a Baghdad suicide bombing claimed by the Islamic State (IS) group and accused the government of not doing enough to protect them. The Prime minister of Iraq is:
   (a) Noor - al- Maliki    (b) Yousuf Raza Gilani
   (c) Haider al-Abadi     (d) Rahman Khan

46. Who among the following is the Leader of the United Kingdom Independence Party?
   (a) Nigel Farage    (b) David Cameron
   (c) Tony Blair      (d) None of the above

47. OPPO Electronics Corp. has sought the Centre's approval to expand its operations in India by opening wholesale and single-brand retail stores. OPPO is related with which of the following country?
   (a) Japan    (b) South Korea
   (c) China    (d) Thailand

48. France swept emphatically into the Euro 2016 semifinals and brought Iceland's fairytale run to a crushing halt as Olivier Giroud scored twice in a 5-2 win to set up a mouth-watering last-four clash with Germany. In which of the following country EURO 2016 has been hosted?
   (a) Ireland    (b) Iceland
   (c) France    (d) England

49. The Indian women's 4×100m relay team broke the National record, at the Kazakhstan National Championship in Almaty and moved closer to the Rio Olympic qualification range. Who among the following player is associated with relay team?
   (a) Merlin Joseph    (b) H.M. Jyothi
   (c) Srabani Nanda   (d) All of the above

50. Koneru Humpy and D. Harika currently in news. These two players are related to which of the following sports?
   (a) Tennis    (b) Chess
   (c) Football   (d) Badminton

51. Who is the new Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister of India?
   (a) Ravishankar Prasad    (b) Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi
   (c) Prakash Javadekar    (d) Venkaih Naidu

52. World Ramayan Conclave which is likely to be held in December 2016, is going to be organized in:
   (a) Varanasi    (b) Ayodhya
   (c) Jabalpur    (d) Bhopal

53. Recently the Cabinet approved a change in the names of three High Courts of India. Which among the following is not among these high courts?
   (a) Calcutta High Court    (b) Shimla High Court
   (c) Madras High Court    (d) Bombay High Court
54. In July 2016, G-20 Labour Ministers meeting is to be organized in:
   (a) Italy       (b) France       (c) USA       (d) China

55. A meeting of the working group of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa on employment generation and other issues would be held in:
   (a) New Delhi   (b) Jaipur       (c) Hyderabad (d) Bengaluru

56. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi went to Mozambique as part of his four-nation Africa tour. Capital of Mozambique is:
   (a) Maputo       (b) Windhoek     (c) Freetown  (d) Malabo

57. What is full form of FCNR?
   (a) Foreign Currency Non-Resident       (b) Fixed Currency Non-Resident
   (c) Foreign Count Non Registered        (d) Favorable Currency Non Recount

58. Which bank has the largest credit card holders in India?
   (a) ICICI Bank     (b) SBI         (c) HDFC Bank (d) Axis Bank

59. According to rating agency Fitch, How much money is required by domestic banks to meet the Basel-III norms?
   (a) $ 45 Billion   (b) $ 58 Billion (c) $ 75 Billion (d) $ 90 Billion

60. According to World Economic Forum (WEF) what is position of India in the recently released 2016 Networked Readiness Index (NRI)?
   (a) 74th          (b) 81st        (c) 91st     (d) 99th

61. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has effected a massive restructuring of his Council of Ministers. Who among the following has been given Human Resource Development Ministry (HRD)?
   (a) Smriti Irani  (b) Prakash Javadekar (c) Mohan Sharma (d) M.J. Akbar

62. Work to convert NH 75 into four lanes will start by year-end (2016). NH 75 will connect which of the following places?
   (a) New Delhi - Chennai  (b) Chennai -Kolkata
   (c) Mangaluru-Bangaluru  (d) Varanasi - Kanyakumari

63. Who among the following chaired the U.K’s Iraq War Inquiry?
   (a) Sir John Wilson  (b) Sir John Chilcot (c) Tony Blair  (d) George Bush

64. African Paralympian Oscar Pistorius was sent back to prison after being given a six-year jail term for murdering his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp at his home three years ago. Oscar Pistorius was related with which of the following country?
   (a) Brazil         (b) South Africa (c) Mexico    (d) England

65. African Development Bank's annual meeting in 2017 will be held at:
   (a) Durban         (b) Cairo        (c) Gujarat  (d) Nairobi

66. India's biggest gas importer is:
   (a) IOC (Indian Oil Corporation) (b) GAIL
   (c) HPCL           (d) Petronet LNG Ltd.
67. Which among the following gymnast of India has been awarded as world class gymnast?
   (a) Dipa Karmakar    (b) Ashish Yadav    (c) Madhu Gupta    (d) Swati Ghoshwal

68. Which of the following countries court has handed jail term to Lionel Messi?
   (a) Argentina    (b) Spain    (c) France    (d) Italy

69. The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has signed a two-year memorandum of understanding (MoU)
    with which of the following Anti-Doping Agency?
   (a) Australian Anti-Doping Agency (ASADA)    (b) World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)
   (c) Both (A) and (B)    (d) None of the above

70. Wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt will fight in Rio Olympic in which weight category?
   (a) 66 kg    (b) 65 kg    (c) 102kg    (d) 120 kg

71. The 7th Strategic Electronics Summit 2016 in India held at:
   (a) Bengaluru    (b) Hyderabad    (c) New Delhi    (d) Mumbai

72. Who among the following is the general secretary of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah)
   (a) Isak Chishi Swu    (b) Kiren Rijiju
   (c) Thuingaleng Muivah    (d) General Chang Kai Shek

73. Which of the following areas have not been covered in the agreement between India and Mozambique, during Prime Minister Modi’s Visit to Mozambique?
   (a) Pulses    (b) Sports    (c) Drug Trafficking    (d) Sugar

74. Which of the following countries Parliament passed a landmark "no means no" rape law broadening the definition of sex crimes.
   (a) France    (b) India    (c) Germany    (d) Poland

75. Namami Gange Programme has been launched from which of the following states?
   (a) Uttar Pradesh    (b) Uttarakhand    (c) West Bengal    (d) Jharkhand

76. India’s first centre of excellence focused on Internet of Things (CoE-IoT) was unveiled in July 2016 by:
   (a) C-DAC    (b) Nasscom    (c) ISRO    (d) DRDO

77. The headquarter of ILO is situated at:
   (a) Washington D.C    (b) New York    (c) Geneva    (d) Vienna

78. Who among the following is the Director general of ILO?
   (a) Guy Ryder    (b) Christen Laggard    (c) Jim Yong Kim    (d) Margaret Chan

79. Who among the following is not a deputy Governor of RBI as on July 2016?
   (a) R Gandhi    (b) S S Mundra    (c) N S Vishwanathan    (d) Nachiket Mor

80. The venue of the South Asian Basketball Association tournament 2016 is/was:
   (a) Islamabad    (b) Dhaka    (c) Bengaluru    (d) Male

81. SC ends impunity for armed forces in disturbed areas. In which year Armed Forces (Special Powers) act
    enacted by Parliament of India?
   (a) 1948    (b) 1958    (c) 1980    (d) 1991
82. Which state of India launched 'Smart Pulse' socio-economic survey in 2016?
   (a) Andhra Pradesh  (b) Telangana  (c) Tamil Nadu  (d) Kerala

83. In which country an exhibition took place on Dalai Lama? This exhibition is also a cause for controversy for Dalai Lama?
   (a) Nepal  (b) India  (c) Sri Lanka  (d) Myanmar

84. In which city of Saudi Arabia suicide attack took place during month of Ramzan in 2016?
   (a) Mecca  (b) Riyadh  (c) Medina  (d) Al- Mishra

85. Recently Dallas shooting is in news. This incident is related to which of the following country?
   (a) USA  (b) Japan  (c) Saudi Arabia  (d) Iraq

86. Until which year The Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) market in India is expected to triple to about $1 billion according to a research report by Nasscom?
   (a) 2018  (b) 2017  (c) 2019  (d) 2020

87. The Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) comes in the ambit of which of the following ministry?
   (a) Finance Ministry  (b) Labor Ministry  (c) Ministry of Personnel  (d) Ministry of Human Resource Development

88. Sugar output may drop by over 7 per cent in 2016-17 according to ISMA (Indian Sugar Mills Associations) assessment. Largest producer of sugar in India is:
   (a) Uttar Pradesh  (b) Maharashtra  (c) Andhra Pradesh  (d) Karnataka

89. Relentless Milos Raonic brings Federer's campaign to an end in the men's singles semifinals of the 130th Wimbledon tennis championship. Milos Raonic is related with;
   (a) USA  (b) Spain  (c) France  (d) Canada

90. Ritu Rani has been dropped from Rio Olympic 2016. Ritu Rani was captain of which of the following sports?
   (a) Cricket  (b) Hockey  (c) Badminton  (d) Basketball

91. 'Bharatmala project 'is related with:
   (a) Connecting eastern and western India through National Highways
   (b) Connecting Northern and Southern India through National Highways
   (c) A project of Government of India to increase connectivity in north eastern states
   (d) A project in Bay of Bengal to connect India to Sri Lanka

92. Who among the following proposed the idea of ring- fencing of Goods and Services Tax rate?
   (a) Arvind Subramanian  (b) Raghuram Rajan  (c) Anand Sharma  (d) Arun Jaitley

93. Bombay stock Exchange will celebrate 2016 as the ______ year of existence.
   (a) 130th  (b) 140th  (c) 150th  (d) 120th

94. The Chairman of BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange) is:
   (a) Sudhakar Rao  (b) Ashish Kumar  (c) U.K. Sinha  (d) Bimal Jalan
95. Which of the following railway stations was where Mahatma Gandhi was thrown out of the train in South Africa?
(a) Durban (b) Pretoria (c) Pietermaritzburg (d) Johannesburg

96. Nepartak is a ______ that created havoc in Southeast Asia in July 2016.
(a) A Typhoon (b) A Cyclone (c) A Tornado (d) A Tsunami

97. NATO's alliance summit in 2016 held at:
(a) Washington D.C (b) London (c) Warsaw (d) Paris

98. Secretary-General of NATO is:
(a) Barak Obama (b) Angela Merkel (c) Jens Stoltenberg (d) Tony Blair

99. The Winner of the Women's Singles Title in the 130th Wimbledon title in 2016 is
(a) Venus Williams (b) Serena Williams (c) Angelique Kerber (d) Dayana Yastremka

100. How many Grand slam singles titles has Serena Williams won with her Wimbledon title in 2016?
(a) 21 (b) 22 (c) 23 (d) 17

101. Vedanta group is planning to tie up with South African companies for gold mining. Who among the following is the head of the Vedanta group?
(a) Sunil Bharti (b) Mukesh Ambani (c) Anil Agrawal (d) Lalit Modi

102. Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a visit to the 'Solar Mamas' during his trip to Tanzania. Who are / what is 'Solar Mamas'?
(a) A Solar Energy project (b) A company that makes low cost solar lanterns (c) A government of Rajasthan's Initiative on solar energy in Africa (d) A group of barefoot, rural women engineers from six African countries

103. The President of Tanzania is:
(a) John Pombe Magufuli (b) Zacob Zuma (c) Uhuru Kenyatta (d) Dilma Rousseph

104. Bitcoins is:
(a) A virtual currency (b) A Stock market (c) A Currency (d) Equity fund

105. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling coalition won the parliamentary elections to Upper house in Japan. Shinzo Abe belongs to which of the following political parties?
(a) Democratic Party (b) Liberal Democratic party (c) Komeito (d) Communist Party

106. Aditya Puri was named the best banking CEO in Asia. Aditya Puri is the Chief Executive and Managing Director of:
(a) ICICI Bank (b) HDFC bank (c) IDBI Bank (d) Axis Bank

107. The second reactor of Kudankulam Nuclear power Project (KKNPP) attained criticality. This power project of India has been established with the cooperation of
(a) France (b) USA (c) Russia (d) Canada
108. Who won the Men’s singles title of the 130th Wimbledon tennis championship?
   (a) Andy Murray  (b) Milos Raonic  (c) Roger Federer  (d) Novak Djokovic

109. Celebrated coach Amul Dutta passes away. Amul Dutta was related with:
   (a) Cricket  (b) Football  (c) Tennis  (d) Basketball

110. Which Indian Pharma company announced its rollout of the world’s first ready-to-administer versions of anti-cancer drug, Gemcitabine InfuSMART, in six European countries in July 2006?
   (a) Ranbaxy  (b) Bayer  (c) Cipla  (d) Sun Pharma

111. Which among the following company has agreed to acquire Lafarge India’s cement assets?
   (a) JSW Cement  (b) Piramal Enterprise  (c) Nirma Ltd.  (d) JP Cements

112. Who among the following is the Director of movie Sultan?
   (a) Ali Abbaz Zafar  (b) Anurag Kashyap  (c) Ram Gopal Varma  (d) Puneet Sira

113. India’s first smart grid will be set up at:
   (a) Delhi  (b) Chennai  (c) Gurgaon  (d) Bengaluru

114. HDFC will be the first Indian firm that will issue ‘Masala Bonds’. ”Masala Bonds” are:
   (a) Bonds for masala sale and purchase  (b) Rupee-Denominated bonds
   (c) Dollar-Denominated bonds  (d) Euro-Denominated bonds

115. Who among the following has been confirmed for the position of UK Prime Minister and will replace David Cameron?
   (a) Andrea Leadsom  (b) Theresa May  (c) Ben Rothwell  (d) David Nicolas

116. Who among the following is the President of South Sudan?
   (a) Riek Machar  (b) Salva Kiir  (c) Adut Mayardit  (d) John Garang

117. Henry Delaunay Cup 2016 is won by:
   (a) France  (b) Britain  (c) Portugal  (d) Germany

118. In EURO 2016 final match only one goal has been scored. Who among the following scored that goal?
   (a) Cristiano Ronaldo  (b) Nani volley  (c) Antoine Griezmann  (d) Eder

119. Ranjith Maheshwari made national record and qualified for Rio Olympics too. Ranjit Maheshwari belongs to which of the following sports?
   (a) High Jump  (b) Racing  (c) Triple Jump  (d) Tennis

120. Data for car sales are released by SIAM. SIAM stands for:
   (a) Society of Indian Automobiles Manufacturers  (b) Society of International Automobiles Manufacturers
   (c) Services for Indian Automobiles Manufacturers  (d) Services for International Automobiles Manufacturers

121. Who among the following Indians was not included in the Forbes Asia’s Heroes of Philanthropy list Published in July 2016?
   (a) Vineet Nayar  (b) Adar Poonawalla  (c) Amit Chandra  (d) Azim Premji
122. Who has been appointed as the captain of the Indian Men’s and Women’s Hockey teams for the Rio Olympic 2016?
(a) P.R. Sreejesh, Shushila Chanu  
(b) P.R. Sreejesh, Ritu Rani  
(c) Sardar Singh, Shushila Chanu  
(d) Sardar Singh, Ritu Rani

123. The World’s Largest sesame seeds producer is
(a) USA  
(b) Japan  
(c) India  
(d) China

124. International Airshow organized at:
(a) London  
(b) New York  
(c) Farnborough  
(d) Mumbai

125. Who was the CBI Director who has been accused of influencing the coal scam probe?
(a) Vinod Rai  
(b) Ashwani Kumar  
(c) Ranjit Sinha  
(d) Anil Kumar Sinha

126. Central government has recently announced 6000 Cr. Package for Textile industry under Tufs. Tufs stands for:
(a) The Textile upgradation fund Scheme  
(b) The Textile upliftment fund Scheme  
(c) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme  
(d) The Technology upgradation for Urban Sector

127. IDFC Bank has taken over which of the following MFIs (Micro finance Institution)?
(a) Ujjavan  
(b) Janlakshmi  
(c) Grama Vidiyal  
(d) Baxis

128. By which year NABARD has targeted to double Farmer’s income?
(a) 2020  
(b) 2022  
(c) 2025  
(d) 2040

129. Who gave the verdict that China’s claim to sovereignty in the South China Sea is not valid following the case filed against it by Phillipines?
(a) International Court of Justice  
(b) UN Security Council  
(c) Permanent Court of Arbitration  
(d) US Supreme Court

130. What is nine - dash - line ?
(a) It is a line that China uses to define its claims over East China Sea  
(b) It is a line that China uses to define its claims over South China Sea  
(c) It is the line that divides Argentine and Falklands  
(d) It is the disputed border between Bahrain and Qatar

131. Operation Sankat Mochan has been launched for:
(a) To evacuate Indian Nationals from Syria  
(b) To evacuate Indian Nationals from Yemen  
(c) To evacuate Indian Nationals from South Sudan  
(d) To evacuate Pilgrims from Amarnath Yatra

132. The main objective of Udaan Scheme, that was launched in 2012-13 in India is:
(a) To address the needs of the educated unemployed in J&K  
(b) To address the needs of the educated women of India  
(c) To promote skill development in Minority Youths  
(d) To accelerate overall economic growth and development of nation
133. A five-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously restored the Congress government in Arunachal Pradesh. Who among the following took charge as Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh?
(a) Kalikho Pul  (b) Nabam Tuki  (c) J.P. Rajkhowa  (d) Dipak Mishra

134. Who among the following has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NATGRID?
(a) Ashok Patnaik  (b) Naveen Jha  (c) J N Singh  (d) R Krishna Das

135. Ashok Lahiri committee has been constituted for:
(a) Industry Interaction on tax laws  (b) Administrative Reforms  
(c) Centre- State Relations  (d) ST rate Rationalization

136. World's largest radio telescope (FAST) has been built in:
(a) India  (b) China  (c) USA  (d) Canada

137. In recently published ICC Test ranking, who among the following players topped the All-Rounders list?
(a) Steve Smith  (b) Ravichandran Ashwin  (c) Kane Williamson  (d) Shane Watson

138. The Union government is selling a part of its stake in which of the State run real estate companies
(a) National Real Estate Development Council  (b) HUDC  
(c) National Building Construction Company Limited  (d) Indiana Real Estate Commission

139. Under which article of Indian Constitution President Rule is imposed in States?
(a) 352  (b) 356  (c) 360  (d) 365

140. Recently UNCLOS is in news. UNCLOS stands for:
(a) UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea  (b) UN Centre on the law of Sea  
(c) UN Confederation on the Law of Sea  (d) Unified Nuclear Clause on Sea

141. Recently published book "Who moved my interest rate?" is authored by:
(a) Raghuram Rajan  (b) D. Subbarao  (c) P. Chidambaram  (d) Pranab Mukharji

142. Revised base year of CPI (Consumer Price Index) is:
(a) 2010  (b) 2011  (c) 2012  (d) 2004

143. The CPI (Consumer Price Index) and WPI (Whole Sale Price Index) are indices to measure Inflation in India. These Indices are prepared by ________ respectively
(a) Ministry of Commerce and Industry, CSO (Central Statistical Organization)  
(b) CSO (Central Statistical Organization), Ministry of Commerce and Industry  
(c) Finance Ministry, CSO (Central Statistical Organization)  (d) Finance Ministry, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

144. Which among the following countries has been acknowledged as the first country in the world to become YAWS-free?
(a) USA  (b) France  (c) India  (d) China
145. Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq became the oldest player to score a Test century in 82 years. Where did he score this century?
(a) In Melbourne against Australia  (b) In Lords against England
(c) In Abu Dhabi against South Africa  (d) In Galle against Sri Lanka

146. Who among the following is the Head of Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Black Money in India?
(a) Justice Mudgal  (b) MB Shah  (c) AK Mittal  (d) Justice Dipak Singh

147. Which among the following Indian company is willing to merge with Nasdaq listed American company Terrapin 3 Acquisition Corporation (TRTL)?
(a) Yatra  (b) Snapdeal  (c) Flip cart  (d) Tata Motors

148. Who among the following is the Head of Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Black Money in India?
(a) Justice Mudgal  (b) MB Shah  (c) AK Mittal  (d) Justice Dipak Singh

149. Who among the following has been appointed as the Chairman of CBSE (Central Board for Secondary Education)?
(a) Vijay Kumar Dev  (b) Syed Akbaruddin  (c) Rakesh Kumar Chaturvedi  (d) Nirupama Singh

150. Central Government of India has extended Income Declaration Scheme till:
(a) September 2016  (b) September 2017  (c) September 2018  (d) September 2019

151. Which among the following states of India created country's first happiness department?
(a) Uttar Pradesh  (b) Andhra Pradesh  (c) Madhya Pradesh  (d) Rajasthan

152. Davis Cup is played in which of the following Sports?
(a) Tennis  (b) Cricket  (c) Football  (d) Badminton

153. Who among the following has been named as the face of "city compost" campaign of Swachh Bharat Mission?
(a) Amir Khan  (b) Salman Khan  (c) Amitabh Bachchan  (d) Baba Ramdev

154. According to the census 2011 what percentage of disabled population is graduate or above?
(a) 50  (b) 8.5  (c) 10  (d) 15

155. India is negotiating with US under Montreal Protocol to change new refrigeration technology. Montreal Protocol dealt with:
(a) Gases and substances that damage the Ozone layer  
(b) To lower down the global warming  
(c) To ban Hazardous Chemicals  
(d) To ban Diesel / Petrol based vehicles

156. India's rank in business optimism Index is:
(a) First  (b) Second  (c) Third  (d) Fourth

157. Posco (a steel major) belongs to which of the following country?
(a) Japan  (b) South Korea  (c) Malaysia  (d) USA
158. Mullaperiyar Dam is located in which states of India?
   (a) Tamil Nadu  (b) Kerala  (c) Karnataka  (d) Andhra Pradesh

159. Which among the following University has been declared as World Heritage site by UNESCO? Aligarh Muslim University
   (a) Nalanda University  (b) Jawahar Lal Nehru University  (c) Delhi University  (d) Aligarh Muslim University

160. Who among the following players of India participated in the WBO Asia Pacific super middleweight boxing championship title?
   (a) Akhil Singh  (b) Devendro Singh  (c) Mary Kom  (d) Vijendra Singh

161. Who among the following is the Chairman of Inter-state Council in India?
   (a) President of India  (b) Prime Minister of India  (c) Minister of Home affairs at Union level  (d) Minister of Personnel at Union Level

162. Under which article of Indian Constitution Inter-state Council is set up?
   (a) Article 262  (b) Article 263  (c) Article 265  (d) Article 280

163. The Indus Waters Treaty is a water-distribution treaty between/among;
   (a) India and China  (b) India and Pakistan  (c) India , Pakistan and China  (d) India, China and Bangladesh

164. Samurai Bond is:
   (a) Rupee -denominated bond  (b) Yen- Denominated bond  (c) Yuan -denominated bond  (d) Dollar -Denominated bond

165. UNESCO has place new sites on its World heritage list. Which among the following site is not included in it?
   (a) Old City Of Ani  (b) Nalanda Mahavira  (c) The Persian Qanat (Islamic Republic of Iran)  (d) Nanga Peak

166. National Skill Development Corporation comes in the ambit of :
   (a) Ministry of Heavy Industry  (b) Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship  (c) Ministry of Human Resource Development  (d) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

167. GAAR stands for:
   (a) General Anti Avoidance Rules  (b) Gross Anti Avoidance Rules  (c) Gross and Aggregate ratio  (d) General and Aggregate ratio

168. Bird atlas project is launched in which state of India?
   (a) Uttar Pradesh  (b) Tamil Nadu  (c) Kerala  (d) Andhra Pradesh

169. Which among the following has been announced as principal partner of India’s Olympic contingent for Rio Olympic?
   (a) Micromax  (b) Samsung  (c) Reliance Jio  (d) Airtel
170. First paperless e-court in which court of India?
   (a) Hyderabad High Court  (b) Allahabad High Court
   (c) Calcutta High Court  (d) Delhi High Court

171. Who among the following will succeed Kaushik Basu as the World bank chief economist?
   (a) Raghuram Rajan  (b) Arvind Subramanian  (c) Paul Romer  (d) David Davis

172. The Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2012 has to be passed by the Parliament. Under which article of the Indian Constitution is child Labor prohibited?
   (a) Article 22  (b) Article 23  (c) Article 24  (d) Article 25

173. Recently ‘Pokemon Go’ is in news. It is:
   (a) A television Programme  (b) A virtual reality
   (c) A location-based augmented reality mobile game  (d) a name of City

174. Which among the following Indian sites is not listed in UNESCO's World Heritage List?
   (a) Chandigarh's capitol Complex  (b) Sikkim's National Park Mount Khangchendzonga
   (c) Ruins of Nalanda University in Bihar  (d) BHU( Benaras Hindu University) in Uttar Pradesh

175. The youngest Chief Minister in India till date is
   (a) Akhilesh Yadav  (b) Pema Khandu
   (c) Sarbanand Sonowal  (d) N. Chandrababu Naidu

176. Who is the 2016 WBO Asia Pacific super middleweight champion?
   (a) Kerry Hope  (b) Vijendra Singh  (c) Devendro Singh  (d) Manoj Singh

177. Who is the winner of the women's title in the 73rd Senior National Squash Championship?
   (a) Joshna Chinappa  (b) Shreya Rastogi  (c) Dipika Pallikal  (d) Ritu Yadav

178. What percentage of its investable income is EPFO planning to invest in equity markets?
   (a) 10%  (b) 15%  (c) 12%  (d) 20%

179. In Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme, the minimum and maximum investment in gold are respectively:
   (a) 10gm, 100 gm  (b) 1 gm, 100 gm  (c) 1 gm, 200 gm  (d) 1 gm, 500 gm

180. Which of the following is not a feature of Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme?
   (a) Tradable through Stock exchanges-NSE & BSE  (b) Available in DMAT and Paper form both
   (c) Can not be used as collateral for loans  (d) Zero risk from handling physical gold

181. At least eight CRPF commandos belonging to its elite COBRA battalion were killed in a Naxal IED blast in the jungles of Bihar's Aurangabad district. CoBRA stands for:
   (a) Commando Battalion for Resolute Action  (b) Combat Battalion for Resolute Action
   (c) Commando Battalion for Rapid Action  (d) Combat Battalion for Rapid Action
182. Which among the following is not a recommendation of R.M. Lodha Committee constituted on the reforms in BCCI?
(a) Lodha panel wants BCCI to come under RTI Act
(b) Lodha panel recommends legalisation of betting
(c) Lodha panel proposes one person one post.
(d) A BCCI office-bearer can have more than two consecutive terms

183. The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered Road Transport Offices (RTO) in Delhi to de-register all diesel vehicles that are over ................. Old.
(a) 5 years (b) 10 years (c) 12 years (d) 15 years

184. Who among the following is the Chairperson of NGT (National Green Tribunal)?
(a) Justice Lokesh Singh (b) Justice Rahul Kumar
(c) Justice Swatantra Kumar (d) Justice Dipak Singh

185. Some Turkish military officers fled in which country after the failed coup in Turkey?
(a) Iran (b) Greece (c) Iraq (d) Britain

186. Who among the following won the men's title in the 73rd Senior National Squash Championship?
(a) Harmindar Pal Singh Sandhu (b) Saurav Ghosal
(c) R. K. Narpat Singh (d) Vikram Yadav

187. Glamorgan teenager Aneurin Donald equalled ..................the record of fastest double-century in first-class cricket with a brilliant innings against Derbyshire.
(a) Sachin Tendulkar (b) Adam Gilchrist (c) Ravi Shastri (d) Virendra Sehwag

188. Which among the following Statements is/are incorrect regarding Bandhan Bank?
(a) Bandhan is the first bank to be set up in the eastern part of India post-Independence
(b) This is also the first instance of a micro-finance entity being transformed into a universal bank
(c) The Kolkata-headquartered bank has two divisions - micro banking and general banking
(d) Bandhan received RBI's 'in-principle' approval in April 2015 and the final nod on June 17, 2016

189. The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Second Amendment) Bill, 2014, proposes:
(a) Relation between Centre and States (b) A new bill in MSME
(c) A national Value added Tax (d) A unified national e- Market

190. Recently SEBI has issued a draft paper on REITs to attract investors and Real estate players. REITs stands for:
(a) Real Estate Investment Trusts (b) Real Economic Investment Trusts
(c) Real Estate Improvement Technology (d) Real Economic Improvement Technology

191. The Central Government of India has allocated 22,915 Cr to recapitalize 13 Public Sector Banks. Which among the following PSBs is not included in this recapitalization?
(a) State Bank of India (b) Indian Overseas Bank
(c) Punjab National Bank (d) Andhra Bank

192. Government of India has introduced a bill in Parliament to rename some High Courts of India. Which among the following High Court has been included in this bill.
(a) Bombay High Court (b) Madras High Court (c) Calcutta High Court (d) All of the above
193. According to the Supreme Court of India Life term imprisonment means:
   (a) Imprisonment for 12 years   (b) Imprisonment for 15 years
   (c) Imprisonment for 20 years   (d) Imprisonment till death

194. Who among the following has been nominated as the Republican Party's official President candidate for US President election 2016?
   (a) John Kasich   (b) Ted Cruz   (c) Marco Rubio   (d) Donald Trump

195. India's most valuable brand in 2015-16 is:
   (a) Reliance Industries Limited   (b) Tata
   (c) Airtel   (d) ONGC

196. Who among the following has been appointed as the JKCA (Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association) President?
   (a) Abdoul Rouf   (b) Imran Raza Ansari   (c) Farooq Abdullah   (d) Naim Ansari

197. The Indian government signed a three-point bilateral agreement with the ……………….aiming to harness new technologies in the hydrocarbon sector in July 2016.
   (a) Chinese Government   (b) Japanese Government
   (c) US Government   (d) Australian Government

198. "Ace Against Odds" is an autobiography of:
   (a) Sachin Tendulkar   (b) Sania Mirza
   (c) Saina Nehwal   (d) Mahesh Bhupati

199. The highest rated Indian bank in the list of Global Mobile Banking Benchmark is:
   (a) SBI   (b) HDFC   (c) ICICI   (d) Citi Bank

200. Rajya Sabha has passed Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Bill 2016. Features of this bill is/are:
   (a) Children younger than 14 years can now work in family enterprises and farms after school hours and during holidays
   (b) Child Labour Act proposes complete prohibition of employment of children up to the age of 14 years while banning employment of children between 15-18 years in hazardous works
   (c) It provides for a fine of Rs 60,000 to an employer who employees children below the age of 14 years or an imprisonment of up to two years.
   (d) All of the above

201. The ‘Operation Muskan’ is an attend to trace and rescue
   (a) missing children   (b) missing women
   (c) missing disabled persons   (d) missing farmers

202. Who was adjudged the Mr. World 2016?
   (a) Nicklas Pedersen   (b) Megan Young
   (c) Rohit Khandelwal   (d) Aldo Esparza Ramirez

203. In which state of India did the Union Cabinet approve the setting up of AIIMS under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,011 crore in July 2016?
   (a) Uttar Pradesh   (b) Madhya Pradesh   (c) Jharkhand   (d) Karnataka
204. Jurisdiction over the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) and National Informatics Centre comes in the ambit of:
(a) NITI Aayog
(b) Ministry of Home affairs
(c) Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology
(d) Ministry of Science and Technology

205. NASA celebrated the .......... anniversary of Project Viking and with it the beginning of search for Martian life, in July 2016.
(a) 30th
(b) 35th
(c) 40th
(d) 50th

206. Who amongst the following has been appointed as the Chairman of Airports Authority of India?
(a) Ashwani Kumar
(b) Ravindra Nath
(c) Guruprasad Mohapatra
(d) Anoop Kumar Mittal

207. Chairman of Bank Board Bureau is:
(a) Vinod Rai
(b) Dipak Gupta
(c) Raghuram Rajan
(d) KV Kamath

208. Which among the following became the first commodity exchange in the world to use RFID (Radio Frequency Identification Technology) technology?
(a) NMCE
(b) MCX
(c) NCDEX
(d) None of the above

209. Who has SBI started a joint venture with, to drive Investment into stressed assets?
(a) LIC
(b) NICL
(c) Brookfield Asset Management Inc
(d) Sri Ram Asset Management Company

210. ............... the oldest litigant in Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri mosque dispute was, who recently died in July 2016.
(a) Hasim Ansari
(b) Asmat Ansari
(c) Mahant Paramhans
(d) Baba Ramdas

211. Who among the following has been appointed as the UIDAI chief?
(a) Archis Mohan
(b) Dilasha Seth
(c) Ajay Bhushan Pandey
(d) KV Kamath

212. India bought INS Viraat from which of the following country?
(a) USA
(b) France
(c) Britain
(d) Russia

213. Falkland Islands is a territory of:
(a) Argentina
(b) Britain
(c) Brazil
(d) Peru

214. Petrapole Integrated Check Post will boost trade between:
(a) India and Myanmar
(b) Bangladesh and Myanmar
(c) India and Bangladesh
(d) India and Bhutan

215. Which of the following Country’s appeal has been rejected by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) against a doping ban on its athletics team from the Rio Olympics 2016?
(a) Jamaica
(b) Zimbabwe
(c) Russia
(d) Kenya

216. Which of the following state/UT has banned 15-Year-Old Petrol, 10-Year-Old Diesel Vehicles in National Capital Region in July 2016?
(a) Haryana
(b) Delhi
(c) Uttar Pradesh
(d) Rajasthan
217. According to the latest World Health Organization (WHO) reports, Delhi’s rank in the list of most polluted cities in the world is:
   (a) 1st  (b) 5th  (c) 11th  (d) 15th

218. How many Indian companies have made it to the Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue in 2016?
   (a) 5  (b) 7  (c) 10  (d) 21

219. Which among the following Company topped Fortune 500 list in 2016?
   (a) State Grid  (b) China National Petroleum
   (c) Walmart  (d) Apple

220. President of Nasscom is:
   (a) R. Chandrashekhar  (b) Arun Janardhanan
   (c) Ishita Mishra  (d) Sheela Bhatt

221. The ban by IAAF of the Russian __________ , from the RIO Olympics, has been upheld by CAS (Court of Arbitration for Sports).
   (a) Contingent for all games  (b) track and field team
   (c) swimming team  (d) weighlifting team

222. This Olympic games was hit by a Terrorism. Eleven members of the Israel's Olympic Team were taken hostage and executed by four Arab Terrorists on September 6, 1972. Which Olympic Games are we talking about?
   (a) Madrid  (b) Munich  (c) Los Angeles  (d) Moscow

223. The vision of "Housing for all by 2022" was flagged off with the __________ on July 25, 2015.
   (a) Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana  (b) Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana
   (c) Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana  (d) Jawaharla Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission

224. A coffee table book as a tribute to "The Golden Quadrilateral" was launched by Nitin Gadkari on July 22, 2016. This book was commissioned by
   (a) National Highway Authority of India  (b) Ministry of Road Transport, Highways and Shipping
   (c) Maruti Suzuki India Limited  (d) Larsen & Toubro Limited

225. Which is the South Korean car manufacturer who is planning to mark its entry into the India by setting up its manufacturing unit here.
   (a) Mazda Motors  (b) Kia Motors  (c) Datsun  (d) SSangyong

226. Which of the following country's Central Bank Account at the Federal reserve Bank of New York, was a hacked into in February 2016?
   (a) Phillipines  (b) Sri Lanka  (c) Bangladesh  (d) Ukraine

227. Which Indian Bank's offshore (undisclosed) account has been hacked into?
   (a) State Bank of India  (b) Union Bank of India
   (c) Central bank of India  (d) Indian Overseas Bank
228. The National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) is launching its "desi" payment system through Smart Phone on July 31st. What is this system called?
   (a) Immediate Payment Service System  
   (b) Bharat Bill Payment System  
   (c) United Payment Interface  
   (d) Electronic Toll collection

229. In the Sustainable Development Index, released by Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Bertelsmann Stiftung, India is ranked ______ out of 149 nations assessed.
   (a) 102  
   (b) 92  
   (c) 110  
   (d) 121

230. This Ex French Finance Minister has been asked to Stand Trial for her role in a 400 million euros payment to a businessman Bernard Tapie in an out of court settlement between the state and Tapie. Who is this?
   (a) Michel Sapin  
   (b) Christine Lagarde  
   (c) Dominique Strauss-Kahn  
   (d) Nicolas Sarkozy

231. Union Ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad and Manoj Sinha launched a scheme in July that makes it available at all post offices and enables India Post to deliver it to people’s doorstep. What is IT?
   (a) Soil from Benares  
   (b) Tirupati Laddoos  
   (c) Cash upto Rs. 50000  
   (d) Gangajal

232. This Indian Artist who lived in France was awarded the highest French civilian honour, the Commandeur de la Legion d'honneur (Legion of Honour) on July 14, 2015. He was born in Madhya Pradesh and studied in J.J. School of Arts. He is a recipient of such prestigious awards like Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, Padma Vibhushan. Who is he?
   (a) M.F. Hussain  
   (b) Syed Haider Raza  
   (c) Vasudeo S. Gaitonde  
   (d) Norman Douglas Hutchinson

233. What is the name of the Naval Air Station at Arakkonam near Chennai?
   (a) INS Kabali  
   (b) INS Rajali  
   (c) INS Dronacharya  
   (d) INS Jarawa

234. The Indian Social worker Judith D’Souza, who was kidnapped in Kabul and Subsequently rescued worked for
   (a) Red Cross Society  
   (b) Aga Khan Foundation  
   (c) Missionaries of Charity  
   (d) Afghan Relief Organisation

235. Which of the following years would be celebrated as the “International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development”?
   (a) 2016  
   (b) 2017  
   (c) 2018  
   (d) 2019

236. Which day is celebrated as the World Day for International Justice?
   (a) June 20th  
   (b) September 27th  
   (c) July 17th  
   (d) First Friday of August

237. Pokemon Go has not banned in which of the following places?
   (a) Auschwitz Museum  
   (b) The Presidential Palace in Jakarta  
   (c) Saudi Arabia  
   (d) London Underground

238. Where was the G 20 Summit held in July 2016?
   (a) Shanghai  
   (b) Chengdu  
   (c) Rio de Janeiro  
   (d) Johannesburg
239. Who is the first Indian captain to Score a double century in an Overseas tour?
(a) Sunil Gavaskar (b) Sourav Ganguli
(c) Virat Kohli (d) Gundappa Viswanath

240. Who is the first Indian Athlete to become a World Champion at any Level?
(a) P.T. Usha (b) Milkha Singh (c) Neeraj Chopra (d) Vikas Gowda

241. Which Indian wrestler selected to represent the country in the Rio Olympic failed the dope test according to NADA (National Anti-Doping Agency)?
(a) Sushil Kumar (b) Narsingh Yadav (c) Satpal Singh (d) Yogeshwar Dutt

242. Who has been appointed as the Kerala Chief Minister's financial advisor?
(a) Gita Gopinath (b) Raj Chetty (c) Jagdish Bhagwati (d) Naina Lal Kidwai

243. The social activist Swami Agnivesh joined which of the following political parties in July 2016?
(a) Biju Janata Dal (b) Samajwadi Party (c) Bahaujan Samaj Party (d) Janata Dal (U)

244. Who is the chairman of the Bar council of India, which suspended more than 100 lawyers in Tamil Nadu in July 2016 for disrupting court proceedings?
(a) K.K. Venugopal (b) Justice HL Dattu (c) Manan Kumar Mishra (d) Nilesh Kumar

245. Who moved the Supreme Court to challenge the triple talaq under Muslim personal law?
(a) Shah Bano (b) Shayara Bano (c) Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (d) Zakia Soman

246. Who is the first Prime Minister under the newly adopted Constitution of Nepal?
(a) Khadga Prasad Oli (b) PKD Prachanda (c) Sushil Koirala (d) Baburam Bhattarai

247. CBSE made its Digital Marksheet of the Class XII Board Exam available in __________ which was a initiative launched in 2015 as a part of the Digital India campaign.
(a) eKranti (b) eSign (c) Digi Locker (d) Online Registration System

248. After the Hungarian Grand Prix on July 24, in the Formula 1 standings, who among the following does not figure in the top 4?
(a) Lewis Hamilton (b) Nico Rosberg (c) Kimi Raikkonen (d) Sebastian Vettel

249. Where is the biggest Oil refinery owned by Essar Oil located?
(a) Jamnagar, Gujarat (b) Stanlow refinery, UK (c) Vadinar, Gujarat (d) Visakhapatnam, A.P

250. The RBI has imposed a 5 cr penalty on an Indian Bank in the case of foreign exchange irregularities that came to light in October 2015. Which bank is this?
(a) Indian Overseas Bank (b) Bank of Baroda (c) Union Bank of India (d) Federal Bank of India
251. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 mandates against abortion after pregnancy crosses the .............. Threshold.
(a) 15 week (b) 6 months (c) 20 week (d) 18 week

252. Who among the following is the Director General of CRPF (Central Reserve Police Force)?
(a) Archana Ramasundaram (b) K Durga Prasad (c) Raman Tripathi (d) Niraj Singh

253. Who among the following is set to replace Narsingh Yadav for Rio Olympics 2016?
(a) Sushil Kumar (b) Praveen Rana (c) Bhopendra Sharma (d) Yogeshwar Dutt

254. Who among the following clinched the Tour de France title 2016?
(a) Briton Chris Froome (b) Andre Grripel (c) Lance Armstrong (d) Rafal Majka

255. Who among the following is the Director General of IOC (International Olympic Committee)?
(a) Chirostophe de Kepper (b) Thomas Bach (c) John Coates (d) Craig Reedie

256. Who among the following is the President of IOC (International Olympic Committee)?
(a) Chirostophe de Kepper (b) Thomas Bach (c) John Coates (d) Craig Reedie

257. A report 'Digital Payments 2020' has been published by:
(a) Google (b) Boston Consulting Group (c) Both (a) and (b) (d) None of the above

258. Market size of digital payments in India is expected to touch ............... billion dollar by 2020 according to report 'Digital Payments 2020', which published in July 2016.
(a) 100 (b) 200 (c) 400 (d) 500

259. Which among the following has acquired Yahoo's core internet properties in July 2016?
(a) Google (b) Microsoft (c) Verizon (d) Nokia

260. Ranking of India in female labor participation in World is:
(a) 101st (b) 120th (c) 102nd (d) 131th

261. "Kargil Vijay Diwas" is celebrated every year on:
(a) 27th July (b) 26th July (c) 26th November (d) 6th December

262. Flipkart's Myntra has taken over ............... to pump up its Fashion Wardrobe.
(a) Jabong (b) Snapdeal (c) Amazon (d) e-cart

263. Which of the following ruled that the Indian government is liable to pay compensation made to the foreign investors of Devas Multimedia in its joint venture with Antrix?
(a) Supreme Court of India (b) High Court of Andhra Pradesh (c) Permanent Court of Arbitration (d) International Court of Justice

264. Who among the following has been chosen as the Vice-President of South Sudan in July 2016?
(a) Salva Kiir (b) Taban Deng Gai (c) Riek Machar (d) Ramar Aseku
265. The Government of India has notified a ………….time hike in basic salary of central government employees and pensioners following the implementation of 7th pay Commission recommendations.
(a) 2.76  (b) 2.87  (c) 2.37  (d) 2.57

266. AFSPA stands for:
(a) Anti- Fraud Special Protection Agency  (b) Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act
(c) Anti-Fraud (Special Powers) Act  (d) Armed Forces (Special Protection) Act

267. India discovered natural gas in Indian Ocean in July 2016 following a joint expedition with
(a) UK  (b) Japan  (c) Vietnam  (d) USA

268. Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (Group) Co will sign a definitive agreement to buy a controlling stake in India's …………… in a $1.4 billion deal in July 2016.
(a) Sun Pharma  (b) V- Pharma  (c) Ranbaxy  (d) Gland Pharma

269. Railway Ministry released a report on cleanliness in July 2016. According to this report which among the following states in India is the cleanest?
(a) Tamil Nadu  (b) Gujarat  (c) Andhra Pradesh  (d) Kerala

270. Who among the following is known as Iron Lady of Manipur?
(a) Irom Sharmila Chanu  (b) Monika Khanbemgam  (c) Nupi Kheitel  (d) Nandini Chanu

271. How much percentage FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) limit raised in bourses (Indian Stock Exchanges)?
(a) 5%  (b) 10%  (c) 15%  (d) 20%

272. Train passengers in India can avail insurance cover for premium of …………….from September 2016.
(a) Re 1  (b) Rupees 100  (c) Rupees 500  (d) Rupees 1000

273. How much percentage India's economic growth rate has been pegged in 2016-17 , according to CRISIL?
(a) 7.6%  (b) 7.9%  (c) 10%  (d) 11%

274. Who made history as the first woman to win a major party US presidential nomination?
(a) Hillary Clinton  (b) Lisa Murkowski  (c) Dianne Feinstein  (d) Mazie Hirono

275. Recently Parliament of India has passed RERA act to increase transparency and investment in real estate sector. RERA stands for:
(a) The Real Estate Regulation Authority  (b) The Real Estate Regulation Act
(c) The Real Estate Regulation and Investment Act  (d) The Real Estate Regulation and Investment Authority

276. Who among the following won the Ramon Magsaysay Award for 2016?
(a) Bezwada Wilson  (b) T.M. Krishna  (c) VIENTIANE RESCUE  (d) All of the above

277. In which area of Uttarakhand Chinese troops transgression was noticed by visiting officials in July 2016?
(a) Bara Hoti  (b) Uttarkashi  (c) Ram Nagar  (d) Pithauragerh
278. The African Regional Office (ARO) that would channel funding drawn from the New Development Bank (NDB) will be set up at:
(a) Pretoria  (b) Johannesburg  (c) Cairo  (d) Tshwane

279. Chinese handset maker LeEco (Le Holdings Co Ltd.), has acquired which of the following Company in July 2016?
(a) Micromax  (b) Motorola  (c) Lenevo  (d) Vizio

280. Which of the following is willing to invest in Tata Steel JV?
(a) Japanese Government  (b) Quebec Government  (c) Sri Lanka Government  (d) Nepal Government

281. Which among the following religion least share in India's population according to 2011 census?
(a) Muslims  (b) Sikh  (c) Buddhist  (d) Jain

282. Cognizant acquired which of the following company in July 2016?
(a) Idea Couture  (b) Redmi  (c) Lusaca Ltd.  (d) Brown tel.

283. "The Schooldays of Jesus" has been authored by:
(a) John M. Coetzee  (b) Ms. Strout  (c) David Szalay  (d) Madeleine Theine

284. Which among the following statement is incorrect regarding The Man Booker Prize?
(a) The Man Booker Prize for Fiction is a literary prize  
(b) Awarded each year for the best original novel  
(c) Written in the English language  
(d) Published in the UK or Commonwealth Nations

285. Oracle Corp has bought which of the following giant in July 2016?
(a) Cognizant  (b) Lava  (c) Micromax  (d) NetSuite

286. In which state of India due to fuel crisis Odd- even formula has been introduced for motor vehicles in July 2016?
(a) Assam  (b) Tripura  (c) Bengal  (d) Odisha

287. Chairman of Oracle is:
(a) Larry Ellison  (b) Zach Nelson  (c) David Paul  (d) Michael Wagnor

288. Who among the following quits as NDDB( National Dairy Development Board) Chief?
(a) T Nanda Kumar  (b) T E Narasimhan  (c) Sohini Das  (d) Swaraj Baggonkar

289. Mahasweta Devi was related with, which of the following literature?
(a) Bengali Literature  (b) Assamese Literature  (c) Odiya Literature  (d) Hindi Literature

290. Mahadayi River flows in which of the following state/ States?
(a) Goa  (b) Karnataka  (c) Both(A) and (B)  (d) None of the above

291. Mahadayi river water sharing dispute is related to which of the following states of India?
(a) Maharashtra  (b) Karnataka  (c) Goa  (d) All of the above
292. Which of the following is not a constitutional body?
(a) Inter state council
(b) National commission for women
(c) National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)
(d) National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

293. Which of the following articles of India gives special status to Jammu and Kashmir?
(a) Article 350  (b) Article 370  (c) Article 300  (d) Article 356

294. Istanbul city is recently in news, it is situated in which of the following countries?
(a) China  (b) Pakistan  (c) Turkey  (d) Saudi Arabia

295. South China Sea dispute is recently in news, it is part of which of the following Oceans?
(a) Atlantic Ocean  (b) Indian Ocean  (c) Pacific Ocean  (d) None of the above

296. International Workers’ Day, also known as Labour Day is celebrated every year on
(a) 1st May  (b) 1st June  (c) 1st March  (d) 1st July

297. The Centre is in the process of serving demand notices to telecom companies based on the CAG report alleging a loss of more than Rs.12,400 crore to the ex-chequer due to under-reporting of revenue. Who is the current Comptroller and auditor general of India?
(a) Vinod Roy  (b) Shashi Kant Sharma  (c) VN Kaul  (d) Vijay Sharma

298. The merger of State Bank of India with its associate banks and Bhartiya Mahila Bank is likely to be completed by
(a) March 2017  (b) April 2017  (c) May 2017  (d) January 2017

299. Maximum number of gold medals won by an individual at any single Olympic Games is
(a) 9  (b) 8  (c) 7  (d) 6

300. How many gold medals did India win in London Olympics 2012?
(a) 6  (b) 0  (c) 1  (d) 8
### ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATION

<p>| | | | | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>121</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>141</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>161</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>171</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>181</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>191</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>211</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>221</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>231</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>241</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>271</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>291</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPLANATION

1. c Sulur in Tamil Nadu has been chosen as the LCA base. The LCA project began in 1985 and the IAF planned to induct it in 1994 to replace the MiG-21s.

2. a The government has roped in India's first national orchestra band - All India Radio's Vaadya Vrind - to prepare a musical composition for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

3. a Puducherry government has drawn up a massive Rs 120 crore plan to build toilets for 55,000 households in the union territory without the facility under the Swachh Bharath Abhiyan scheme.

4. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat radio programme will be aired in Bangladesh. It will be for the first times that Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat will be broadcast in a foreign country.

5. d Legendary actor Sharmila Tagore, Slumdog Millionaire star Freida Pinto and director Deepa Mehta are among Indian and Indian-origin film personalities invited by the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to be its members.

6. a The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has given its first phase of licence to ITI Reinsurance, thus clearing the first ever Indian private sector reinsurance company in the country.

7. a HDFC Bank has launched an SME Bank which will provide full-fledged digital banking service to small and medium sector enterprises.

8. d The World Bank Group is to be the financial partner for the International Solar Alliance that aims to collaborate on increasing solar energy use around the world.

9. a Google has finally revealed the name of its next Android version. And as widely speculated, Android N is Nougat.

10. d Delhi to host ISSF World Cup finals in 2017.

11. a The first two contemporary or fourth generation Light Combat Aircraft 'Tejas,' designed and built in India, joined the Indian Air Force's squadron called Flying Daggers.

12. c Maharashtra Governor C Vidyasagar Rao and Chairman Emeritus of Tata Sons, Ratan Tata, inaugurated the newly-created peacock conservation project at Raj Bhavan in Maharashtra.

13. b Kerala government has decided to ban 'electronic cigarette' in view of studies claiming that its use can cause various health issues, including cancer and heart ailments.

14. d Four species of reptiles, six species of amphibians, 26 species of fishes, three species of wild ginger and three of figs are among the 445 species new to science identified in India in 2015. The figure includes 262 animal species and 183 plant species.

15. d The European Union formally extended damaging economic sanctions against Russia by six months due to a lack of progress in resolving the conflict in eastern Ukraine.

16. c The foundation Day of the State Bank of India (SBI) on 1st July 1955.

17. b Equitas to be a first Private Bank from Tamil Nadu and the city of Chennai.

18. c State Bank of India (SBI) launched 'SBI Mingle', allowing its customers access various banking services via these social platforms.

19. b Indian Oil Corporation and Haryana Dairy Development Cooperative Federation signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to set up Vita milk booths at 1,500 petrol pumps of IOC for sale of milk and milk products.

20. c Banks will no longer exchange notes introduced prior to 2005. If anyone has such notes he would need to approach one of the 20 offices of the Reserve Bank of India directly to get such notes exchanged.

21. d The Shimla Municipal Corporation (SMC) would soon be charging a green fee from vehicles entering the city.
22. b Maharashtra State government has decided to regularise thousands of unauthorised structures falling outside the core area of the Navi Mumbai Airport project.

23. d Upcoming IT Park of Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC) is at Electronic Complex area in Indore.

24. d Immigration to Germany from other European Union countries hit a new record of over 6, 85,000 people last year, led by Romanians, Poles and Bulgarians.

25. b The Colosseum or Coliseum, also known as the Flavian Amphitheatre is an oval amphitheater in the centre of the city of Rome.

26. c Continued warming of Antarctica could wipe out 60 per cent of Adelie penguin colonies by the end of the century, warns new research.

27. d Mr. Coomaraswamy would assume charge on July 4. He would hold the post for six years.

28. c India has the third-largest number of start-ups globally.

29. a Startup India is an initiative of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)

30. b A new facility to enable online tracking of containers has been introduced at the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) to help track movement of containers on a real-time basis, becoming the first Indian port to install such a technology.

31. d The capital of Iraq is Baghdad.

32. a Malcolm Bligh Turnbull is the 29th and current Prime Minister of Australia. Turnbull became Prime Minister and Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia after he defeated Tony Abbott at the September 2015.

33. b Linda Burney becomes first Indigenous woman elected to Australia's lower house.

34. b The Paracel Islands, also known as Xisha in Chinese and Hoàng Sa in Vietnamese, is a group of islands, reefs, banks and other maritime features in the South China Sea.

35. c RBI Governor will be chairperson of MPC.

36. c State-run refiners Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) are planning to set up India's biggest oil refinery. The refinery would come up on the west coast and would cost $30 billion (about Rs. 2 lakh crore).

37. c The chairman of APEC is Ashok G Rajani.

38. b

39. d B. Sai Praneeth is a legend player of India. He belongs to Badminton.

40. b Solar-powered Juno spacecraft of NASA belongs to Jupiter.

41. b 91st C.A. A(constitutional amendment act) fixed the size of council of minister both at union and state level.

42. a The Central Bureau of Investigation on Monday arrested IAS officer Rajendra Kumar, the Principal Secretary to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, and four others on corruption charges. They were accused of giving 'undue favours' to a private firm in awarding government contracts worth over Rs. 50 crore.

43. c Ahead of the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath, noted sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik completed carving 103 sand chariots on the Puri beach in an attempt to create a world record.

44. c Following primary investigations into Friday's attack on an upmarket neighbourhood in Dhaka, law enforcement officials said that members of banned militant outfits Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Ansarullah Bangla Team carried out the attack jointly following an in-depth reconnaissance.

45. c haider al-Abadi is prime minister of Iraq.
46. a Leading Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage stepped down as leader of the U.K. Independence Party as the shockwaves from Britain's decision to quit the EU continued to rock the political order.

47. c China's OPPO Electronics Corp. has sought the Centre's approval to expand its operations in India by opening wholesale and single-brand retail stores.

48. c The host country of EURO 2016 is France.

49. d Merlin Joseph, H.M. Jyothi, Srabanî Nanda and Dutee Chand are participant of relay team.

50. b Koneru Humpy and D. Harika are prominent player of chess.

51. c Prakash Javadekar, promoted to Cabinet rank bagged the prestigious Human Resource Development portfolio.

52. b Selection of venue for the Ramayan conclave is Ayodhya in Faizabad.

53. b The Cabinet approved a change in the names of the Madras, Bombay and Calcutta High Courts to reflect the changes in the official nomenclature of these cities to Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata, respectively.

54. d G-20 Labour Ministers meeting is to be organized in 2016 in China.

55. c A meeting of the working group of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) on employment generation and other issues would be held in Hyderabad on July 27 and 28.

56. a Maputo is capital of Mozambique.

57. a The Reserve Bank of India has taken the right steps to address the issue of concessional swaps against Foreign Currency Non-Resident (FCNR) deposits.

58. c HDFC Bank has the largest credit card holders in India with 7.28 million cards, as on March 31, 2016 followed by ICICI Bank (3.65 million).

59. d Domestic banks will need a whopping $90 billion capital to meet the Basel-III norms which will be fully implemented by the March 2016, according to rating agency Fitch.

60. c India was placed at 91st position in the recently released 2016 Networked Readiness Index (NRI) by the Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF).

61. b Prakash Javadekar has been appointed as HRD minister at Union level.

62. c NH 75 connects Mangaluru-Bangaluru.

63. b Sir John Chilcot was the chairperson of U.K's Iraq war Inquiry.

64. b Oscar Pistorius was related with South Africa.

65. c African Development Bank's annual meeting in 2017 will be held at Gujarat.

66. d India's biggest gas importer is Petronet LNG Ltd.

67. a Dipa Karmakar, who has won a gold medal in the women's vaults finals at the Olympic test event in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, has been conferred as world class Gymnast.

68. b Court of Spain has handed to jail term to Lionel Messi and its father for tax fraud.

69. c The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has signed a two-year memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Australian Anti-Doping Agency (ASADA) and World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to bolster India's anti-doping programme.

70. b The London Olympics bronze medallist Yogeshwar Dutt, will compete in 65kg freestyle category in Rio Olympic.

71. a 7th Strategic Electronics Summit 2016 held at Bengaluru in India.
72. c Thuingaleng Muivah), is the general secretary of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (Isak-Muivah).

73. d Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi witnessed the signing of agreements in areas of drug trafficking, pulse trading and sports between India and Mozambique.

74. c The German Parliament passed a landmark "no means no" rape law broadening the definition of sex crimes. This was done in the wake of some incidents that happened during the 2016 new year celebrations.

75. b Namami Gange Programme launched from Haridwar in Uttarakhand.

76. b National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) unveiled India's first centre of excellence focused on Internet of Things (CoE- IoT). The centre of excellence is set up at the Nasscom's " Start-up Warehouse" which is an incubator for startups in diverse fields.

77. c The headquarter of ILO is situated at Geneva.

78. a Guy Ryder is Director General of ILO. Christen Laggard ( IMF), Jim Yong Kim ( World Bank), Margaret Chan ( WHO)

79. d Four deputy governors of RBI are Urjit Patel, R Gandhi, S S Mundra and N S Vishwanathan.

80. c South Asian Basketball Association tournament 2016 has been organized at Bengaluru. India won the event in 2015.

81. b Armed Forces (Special Powers) act enacted by Parliament of India in 1958.

82. a Andhra Pradesh launched 'Smart Pulse' socio-economic survey' in 2016. This survey is based on latest IT tools and would be the most comprehensive survey ever. Just by a touch of button, a person can get all details of the socio-economic status of families and will ensure that all cash benefits to genuine beneficiaries are directly credited into their bank accounts

83. c Ahead of the arrival of China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Colombo a controversy has arisen over an exhibition on the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, which reportedly took place in Kandy a few days ago.

84. c Saudi Arabia suicide attack took place in Medina during month of Ramzan in 2016.

85. a In Dallas area of USA terrorist shot policemen of USA.

86. d The Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) market in India is expected to triple to about $1 billion by 2020, according to a research report by Nasscom.

87. b EPFO comes in the ambit of Labor Ministry.

88. b Largest Producer of sugar in India is Maharashtra.

89. d Milos Raonic is a Canadian professional tennis player.

90. b Captain of Indian Hockey Team Ritu Rani has been dropped from Rio Olympic 2016.

91. a Bharatmala Project will connect eastern and western India through national highways.

92. c

93. b BSE completed 140 years of operations. BSE established in 1875.

94. a Chairman of BSE is SUdhakar Rao.

95. c Mahatma Gandhi was thrown out of the train at the Pietermaritzburg railway station in South Africa. Recently Prime Minister Modi also travelled at this railway station through train.

96. a Typhoon Nepartak, known in the Philippines as Typhoon Weng, was a modest tropical cyclone that struck the central Philippines and the southern China island of Hainan in November 2003. Recently in 2016 it affected Taiwan and China.

97. c NATO's alliance summit in 2016 held at Warsaw.
98. Jens Stoltenberg is secretary - General of NATO.


100. Serena Williams has won 22 grand slam Singles.

101. Anil Agrawal is head of Vedanta Group.

102. 'Solar Mamas' is a group of women engineers From six African countries. These women have been trained by India to fabricate, install, use, repair and maintain solar lanterns and household solar lighting systems in their villages.

103. The President of Tanzania is John Pombe Joseph Magufuli

104. Bitcoin is a form of digital currency, created and held electronically. No one controls it. Bitcoins aren't printed, like dollars or euros - they're produced by people, and increasingly businesses, running computers all around the world, using software that solves mathematical problems.

105. Shinzo Abe is a member of the Liberal Democratic Party.

106. Aditya Puri is Chief Executive and managing director of HDFC Bank.

107. Kudankulam Nuclear power Project(KKNPP) has been established with the cooperation of Russia. It is situated in Tamil Nadu.

108. The winner of the Men's singles in the 130th Wimbledon tennis championship is Britain's Andy Murray. It is his second Wimbeldon and third grand slam. He beat Canada's Milos Raonic in the final 6-4, 7-6, 7-6. However, this was just the 49th Championship in the Open Era (professional tennis player's were allowed to participate).

109. Amul Dutta was first professional Football coach of India.

110. Sun Pharma is also India's largest Pharma Company. The 6 countries where it was rolled out are Netherlands, UK, Spain, Germany, Italy and France.

111. Nirma Ltd. has agreed to acquire Lafarge India's cement assets for about $1.4 billion (Rs.9,400 crore), outbidding Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Cement and Piramal Enterprises.

112. Ali Abbas Zafar is an Indian film director, screenwriter, actor, art director, He is well known for directing Mere Brother Ki Dulhan, Gunday and Sultan.

113. The Union government has set in motion the process of rewarding performing states under Uday, the flagship programme in power sector. It would extend support to the country's first smart grid project to be set up at Gurgaon in Haryana, which has been a performing state under the debt restructuring programme for state-owned power distribution companies.

114. Masala Bonds are rupee -denominated bonds. In these bonds issuer shields itself from any exchange rate fluctuations as the payment is done in rupees.

115. Theresa May, the UK's home secretary, will be the country's next prime minister. Her final rival for the Conservative Party leadership, Andrea Leadsom, withdrew from the race.

116. South Sudan's president Salva Kiir has declared a "unilateral ceasefire" and ordered government and rival forces to abide by it as clashes flared up again in the capital Juba recently in July.

117. Portugal under captainship of Cristiano Ronaldo won Henry Delaunay Cup 2016. Henry Delaunay Cup 2016 is also known as EURO 2016. UEFA started EURO football cup on the name of French football legend Henry Delauney.

118. Eder a substitute player scored only goal in EURO 2016 final and won his Portugal team.

119. Renjith maheshwari leapt a distance of 17.30 m and shattered Arpinder Singh's National Record of 17.17 m set in 2014.

120. SIAM stands for Society of Indian Automobiles Manufacturers
121. d The list, which included 40 philanthropists from 13 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, includes Vineet and Anupama Nayar, founders of the Sampark Foundation; Adar Poonawalla, CEO of Serum Institute of India and Pune-based billionaire Cyrus Poonawallas son; Bain India CEO Amit Chandra and his wife Archana Chandra, CEO of Jai Vakeel Foundation.

122. a P.R. Sreejesh will lead men's hockey team for Rio Olympic 2016. He replaces Sardar Singh as the captain of India. And Sushila Chanu takes over from Ritu Rani.

123. c India is the World's Largest sesame seeds producer. Now India wants more sesame seeds market access in Japan and China market.

124. c Farnborough is a town in north east Hampshire, England. At this place International Airshow organized every year.

125. c

126. c Tufs stands for The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme.

127. c IDFC Bank Ltd acquired a Tamil Nadu based microfinance institution (MFI) called Grama Vidiyal for an undisclosed amount which is spread over 319 branches across seven states. Its presence is in 65 districts of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Puducherry, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Its annual profit is nearly Rs 60 crore and has a loan recovery rate of 99.99%.

128. b NABARD has targeted to double Farmers income by 2022 on its 35th day of foundation on 12th July 2016.

129. c This is a UN Tribunal which was hearing the case

130. b 9 - dash - line is a arbitrary line according to China, within which all the waters of the South China Sea is claimed by it as a part of China

131. c Minister of State for External Affairs VK Singh will lead Operation Sankat Mochan to evacuate Indians from South Sudan, which has been rocked by violence that has claimed hundreds of lives.

132. a Udaan is a Special Industry Initiative (SII) for J&K. It is being implemented by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). Its aim is to address the needs of the educated unemployed in J&K and provide them the skills and job opportunities. At the same time effort is to provide exposure to corporate India of the rich talent pool available in J&K. The target was to reach out to 40,000 youth in J&K over a period of 5 years.

133. b Nabam Tuki took charge as Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh and replaced Kalikho Pul of People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh. J.P. Rajkhowa is governor of Arunachal Pradesh.

134. a A senior IPS officer of Gujarat cadre Ashok Patnaik has been appointed as the CEO of NATGRID.

135. a The government set up a committee under the chairmanship of former chief economic advisor Ashok Lahiri to regularly interact with industry and ascertain areas where clarity on tax laws is required.

136. b China has finished installation of the 4,450 triangular panels on the world's largest radio telescope, the Five Hundred Meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST).

137. b In recently published ICC Test ranking, Ravichandran Ashwin topped the All-Rounders list.

138. c The Union Government is planning to 15 % dilution of its stake 15 Percentage stake sale in NBCC (National Building Construction Corporation Limited) has been approved by The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs.

139. b Under Article 356 of Indian Constitution President Rule is imposed.

140. a UNCLOS stands for UN Convention on the Laws of the Sea.

141. b Duvvuri Subbarao, the former RBI Governor, has recounted his stormy relationship with the government during his five year tenure between 2008 and 2013. In his 308-page book - Who moved my interest rate? Leading the Reserve Bank of India through five turbulent years - describes many incidents.

142. c The government has revised the base year of the All India CPI series from 2010 : 100 to 2012 : 100.
143. b CPI (Consumer Price Index) is prepared by CSO (Central Statistical Organization) and WPI (Whole Sale Price Index) is prepared by Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

144. b Union Health Minister JP Nadda received an official citation from the World Health Organisation and the UNICEF for Elimination of Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus and for being YAWS-free. He added that this accomplishment is significant as India has achieved the milestone of being YAWS-free much before the WHO global target year of 2020 and became first Yaws free country.

145. b Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq became the oldest player to score a Test century for 82 years when he reached three figures against England at Lord's.

146. b The SIT is headed by Justice M B Shah (retd). The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on blackmoney has recommended ban on cash transactions of above Rs 3 lakh and restricting cash holding with individuals to not more than Rs 15 lakh to curb illegal wealth in the economy.

147. a Yatra Online Inc. has agreed to reverse-merge with Terrapin 3 Acquisition Corp. in a transaction that assigns an enterprise value of $218 million to the Indian online travel agency and which will see it trade on Nasdaq (as YTRA).

148. a The 120th and current Governor is the Canadian Mark Carney, appointed in 2013. He is the first non-Briton to be appointed to the post, but made a commitment to the Prime Minister to take up British citizenship.

149. c Rakesh Kumar Chaturvedi was appointed as the new Chairman of CBSE.

150. b The Centre announced an extension of a deadline under the Income Declaration Scheme, aimed at bringing undeclared income and assets into the tax net to, September 30, 2017.

151. c

152. a The Davis Cup is the premier international team event in men's tennis. It is run by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and is contested annually between teams from competing countries in a knock-out format. It is described by the organizers as the "World Cup of Tennis", and the winners are referred to as the World Champion team.

153. c Megastar Amitabh Bachchan will be the face of the "city compost campaign" under Swachh Bharat Mission to encourage citizens to use compost produced from municipal solid waste.

154. b According to the census 2011 8.5% of disabled population are graduate or above.

155. a The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (a protocol to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer) is an international treaty designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out the production of numerous substances that are responsible for ozone depletion.

156. c The report by Grant Thornton shows that India's slip from first to third in business optimism index was due to several key factors including slow progress on reforms like the GST bill and the issue of bad loans faced by state-owned banks.

157. b POSCO is a multinational steel-making company headquartered in Pohang, South Korea.

158. b The Mullaperiyar Dam or Mullaiperiyar Dam is a masonry gravity dam on the Periyar River in the Indian state of Kerala. It is located 881 m above mean sea level, on the Cardamom Hills of the Western Ghats.

159. a The ruins of the ancient Nalanda university dating back to the third century BC have been declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO.

160. d Vijendra Singh of India has participated in WBO Asia Pacific super middleweight boxing championship title.

161. b The Council shall consist of:-

(a) Prime Minister - Chairman

(b) Chief Ministers of all States - Member

(c) Chief Ministers of Union Territories having a Legislative Assembly and Administrators of UTs not having a Legislative Assembly - Member
(d) Six Union Ministers of Cabinet rank in the Union Council of Ministers nominated by the Prime Minister - Member

162. b The Inter-State Council was established under Article 263 of the Constitution of India through a Presidential Order dated 28 May 1990.

163. b The Indus Waters Treaty is a water-distribution treaty between India and Pakistan, brokered by the World Bank (then the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). The treaty was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960 by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Military Dictator of Pakistan Ayub Khan.

164. b A samurai bond is a yen-denominated bond issued in Tokyo by non-Japanese companies.

165. d Nanga Peak is not included in UNESCO World Heritage list.

166. b National Skill Development Corporation comes in the ambit of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

167. a GAAR stands for General Anti Avoidance Rules.

168. c Kerala Bird Atlas, a citizen science project to map the distribution and abundance of birds in Kerala, began in Wayanad district.

169. c Reliance Jio, the digital platform of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), has announced its partnership with India's Olympic contingent as its principal partner.

170. a The first paperless e-court in the Hyderabad High Court got inaugurated

171. c New York University economist Paul Romer is set to be named the World Bank’s chief economist next week, succeeding India’s Kaushik Basu.

172. b Under article 23 of Indian Constitution Child Labor is prohibited.

173. c Pokémon Go is a free-to-play location-based augmented reality mobile game developed by Niantic and published by The Pokémon Company. It was released in July 2016 for iOS and Android devices.

174. d BHU (Benaras Hindu University) in Uttar Pradesh is not among the UNESCO’s World heritage list. The rest are placed in UNESCO's World Heritage List.

175. b Mr. Pema Khandu (37) is the youngest Chief Minister of the India.

176. b Vijender Singh became the WBO Asia Pacific super middleweight champion with a convincing win over Kerry Hope.

177. c Dipika Pallikal Karthik dethroned defending champion JOSHNA CHINAPPA to regain the women’s title in the 73rd Senior National Squash Championship.

178. c 12% percentage of investable income can be invest in equity by EPFO. In 2015, EPFO was given the mandate to invest between 5% and 15% of its investible corpus.

179. d In Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme, minimum and maximum investment in gold is 1 gm and 500 gm respectively.

180. c Sovereign Gold bond can be used as collateral for loans.

181. a CoBRA stands for Commando Battalion for Resolute Action.

182. d R.M. Lodha Committee recommended that no BCCI office-bearer can have more than two consecutive terms.

183. b The National Green Tribunal (NGT) ordered Road Transport Offices (RTO) in Delhi to de-register all diesel vehicles that are over 10 years old.

184. c Justice Swatantra Kumar is the Chairperson of NGT (National Green Tribunal).

185. b The eight military men, who have applied for asylum in Greece, insist they took no part in the putsch and fled from Turkey to save their lives after coming under police fire.
186. b The men’s crown in the 73rd Senior National Squash Championship was captured by title holder and top seed Saurav Ghosal, who created history by winning it for the 11th time, defeating fourth seed Harinderpal Singh Sandhu.

187. c Glamorgan teenager Aneurin Donald equalled Ravi Shastri’s record of fastest double-century in first-class cricket with a brilliant innings against Derbyshire.

188. d Bandhan received RBI’s ‘in-principle’ approval in April 2014 and the final nod on June 17, 2015.

189. c The Goods and Services Tax Bill or GST Bill, officially known as The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Second Amendment) Bill, 2014, proposes a national Value added Tax.

190. a REITs stands for Real Estate Investment Trusts.

191. d Recapitalisation involves Capital Infusion into Banks

1. Allahabad Bank Rs 44 crore
2. Bank of India Rs 1,784 crore
3. Canara Bank Rs 997 crore
4. Central Bank of India Rs 1,729 crore
5. Corporation Bank Rs 677 crore
6. Dena Bank Rs 594 crore
7. Indian Overseas Bank Rs 3,101 crore
8. Punjab National Bank Rs 2,816 crore
9. State Bank of India Rs 7,575 crore
10. Syndicate Bank Rs 1,034 crore
11. UCO Bank Rs 1,033 crore
12. Union Bank of India Rs 721 crore
13. United Bank of India Rs 810 crore

192. d Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad introduced the High Courts (Alteration of Names) Bill which, once passed by Parliament, will replace Bombay, Madras and Calcutta with Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata respectively in the names of corresponding high courts.

193. d According to the Supreme Court of India Life term imprisonment means Imprisonment till death.

194. d Donald Trump officially became the Republican Party’s presidential nominee.

195. b Tata remained India’s most valuable brand in 2015-16 with a brand valuation of $13.7 billion.

196. b

197. c The Indian government signed a three-point bilateral agreement with the US government aiming to harness new technologies in the hydrocarbon sector.

198. b "Ace Against Odds" is an autobiography of Sania Mirza.

199. c ICICI Bank, the highest rated Indian bank, achieved an overall score of 63 out of 100, SBI scored the lowest with 35 points among 46 large retail banks. Axis Bank scored 52 points and HDFC Bank 48 points, while Citibank in India stood second last with 38 points.

   Forrester evaluated across 14 countries, including Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, Spain, Turkey, the UK, and the US.

200. d All of the above statements are correct.

201. a The Mumbai Railway Police till 20 July has successfully traced as many as 4,804 ‘missing’ children and reunited 4,386 of them with their family under ‘Operation Muskan’.

202. c Rohit Khandelwal has become the first Indian to win the coveted title of Mr. World 2016 at the grand finale of the competition held at the Southport Theatre & Convention Centre in Southport in U.K.
204. a The government gave its nod to the establishment of a new All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh, a move which aims at providing super-speciality health care to people of the state and creating a large pool of doctors.

204. c Under the new rules, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, led by Ravi Shankar Prasad, will have complete jurisdiction over the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) and National Informatics Centre.

205. c NASA celebrated a historical milestone, the 40th anniversary of the first U.S. spacecraft to land on Mars in July 2016. 40 years ago on July 20, 1976, the first of two landing crafts touched down on the surface of Mars, beginning the main act of NASA's Project Viking, the search for evidence of microbial life native to the planet. The Viking project, comprised of two separate spacecraft, together took more than 65,000 images of the Mars planet and collected overwhelming amounts of data. The primary goal of the Viking mission was to search for evidence of life on Mars.

206. c Guruprasad Mohapatra has been appointed as the Chairman of Airports Authority of India.

207. a Chairman of Bank Board Bureau is is Vinod Rai.

208. c The National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) has started introducing the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology in exchange-approved warehouses and became the first commodity exchange in the world to use this technology.

209. c SBI will form a joint venture with Brookfield Asset Management Inc to drive investment into stressed assets Sri Ram Asset Management.

210. a Hashim Ansari (95) the oldest litigant in the Babri Masjid case, died early due to heart-related complications.

211. c Ajay Bhushan Pandey has been appointed as the UIDAI chief.

212. c Viraat had first served British Navy for over 30 Years before being bought by India. Viraat was originally commissioned by British Royal Navy as HMS Hermes on November 18, 1959.

213. b The Falkland Islands, a remote South Atlantic archipelago, is a British overseas territory.

214. c Petrapole ICP is the second ICP on the India-Bangladesh border after the Agartala ICP at the Agartala (India)-Akhaura (Bangladesh) land border. It will also be the biggest land port in South Asia.

215. c The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) rejected Russia's appeal against a doping ban on its athletics team from the Rio Olympics starting 2016, drawing an angry condemnation from Moscow.

216. a The Haryana government banned 15-year-old petrol and 10-year-old diesel vehicles from roads within National Capital Region (NCR) limits.

217. c According to the latest World Health Organisation (WHO) reports, Delhi occupies the 11th position on the list of most polluted cities in the world.

218. b Seven Indian companies have made it to the latest Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue.

- IOC (Indian Oil Corporation) 161
- Reliance Industries 215
- Tata Motors 226
- SBI 232
- Bharat Petroleum 358
- Hindustan Petroleum 367
- Rajesh Exports 423

219. c Seven Indian companies have made it to the latest Fortune 500 list of the world's biggest corporations in terms of revenue, with the retail giant Walmart topping the global rankings.

220. a President of Nasscom is R. Chandrashekhar.
221. The Russian Federation had appealed to CAS to overturn the decision of International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). It has been rejected.

222. 11 Israeli Olympians were taken hostage by the Palestinian Terror Organisation, Black September and executed. A famous movie "Munich" was also shot based on this event.

223. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was flagged off in June 2015 by Narendra Modi.

224. The book was commissioned by Maruti Suzuki. The author is BOB RUPANI. The Foreword is by ex Chairman of Maruti R.C. BHargava.

225. Kia Motors is an affiliate of Hyundai.

226. In February 2016, instructions to steal US$951 Million from Bangladesh Bank, the central bank of Bangladesh, were issued via the SWIFT network. Five transactions issued by hackers, worth $101 million and withdrawn from a Bangladesh Bank account at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, succeeded. The Federal Reserve Bank of NY blocked the remaining 30 transactions, amounting to $850 million, at the request of Bangladesh Bank.

Of the amount stolen $20M was traced to Sri Lanka (and recovered) and $81M to the Philippines (not recovered). The Federal Reserve Bank of NY blocked the remaining 30 transactions, amounting to $850 million, at the request of Bangladesh Bank.

227. One of UBI's offshore USD Nostro Account of the bank was a part of the cyber incident. A Nostro Account is a foreign currency denominated account by a Non Local Bank at a Local Bank in the respective country of the currency desired.

228. NPCI is an organization promoted by the Banks and Supported by RBI. It is launching UPI in July, BBPS (in August), ETC (in September), National Common Mobility Card in October, RuPay Credit Card in November. UPI is an attempt to reduce cash transactions in India.

229. Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Switzerland were the Top 5 that order.

The Index has 15 Sustainable Development Goals - No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Good Health & Well Being; Quality Education; Gender Equality; Clean Water & Sanitation; Affordable & Clean Energy; Decent Work & Economic Growth; Reduce Inequalities; Sustainable Cities & Companies; Responsible consumption & Production; Climate Action; Life Below water; Life On Land; Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure; Peace Justice & Strong Institutions; Partnerships for Goals.

330. Christine Lagarde who is the IMF Chief, has to stand Trial in the case. She was the finance Minister in the 2007 - 2011 period. Michel Sapin is the Finance Minister since 2014. Kahn held the post from 1997 to 1999, while Sarkozy was the Finance Minister for a short Duration of 6 months in 2004.

231. Gangajal from Gangotri and Rishikesh will be available at all the post offices

232. Syed Haidar Raza is one of the eminent painters of India. He passed away on July 23, 2016. Vasudeo S. Gaitonde (V. S. Gaitonde) (1924-2001) was regarded as one of India's foremost abstract painters. He completed his art diploma at Sir J. J. School of Art in 1948. An untitled 1995 oil painting by him fetched $4.4m at a Christie's auction in Mumbai, setting a new world record for Indian art. Norman Douglas Hutchinson (1932-2010) was a British Royal painter, noted for his 1988 painting of Queen Elizabeth II. Hutchinson was born in Calcutta, India in 1932.

233. It also has the longest military runway in Asia. It operates under the Eastern Naval command. INS Dronacharya - cochin ; INS Jarawa - Port Blair.

234. The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is a private, not-for-profit international development agency, which was founded in 1967 by Prince Shah Karim Al Hussaini, Aga Khan IV. It seeks to provide solutions to problems of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and ill health in the poorest parts of South and Central Asia, Eastern and Western Africa, and the Middle East

235. This resolution has been taken by the UN World Toursim Organisation (UN WTO)

236. June 20th - World Refugee day; Sept 27th - World Toursim Day ; 1st Friday of August is the International Beer day.

237. There is a Fatwa against Pokemon (even the earlier version) in Saudi Arabia. Auschwitz has banned it as it was considered "insensitive and disrespectful" to play it in the Museum. The game is designed by Niantic.

238. It was help in Chengdu in china
239. c Virat Kohli Scored a 200 at Antigua in the first test of the West Indies Tour in On July 23rd, 2016

240. c Neeraj Chopra won the Gold Medal at Under 20, World Championships at Bydgoszcz - Poland, by throwing the Javelin to a distance of 86.48 m.

241. b Metadienone is a performance enhancing substance that was found in the dope test of Narsingh Yadav's. It is an Anabolic Steroid, popular in the body building community since the 60s. It aids protein synthesis and muscle growth in a short span of time.

242. a Gita Gopinath did her B.A from Lady Shriram College, University of Delhi (1992), M.A. from the Delhi School of Economics (1994). She completed her M.A. from the University of Washington (1996). In 2001, she completed her Ph.D from Princeton University, under the mentorship of Ben Bernanke (former chairman of the Federal Reserve) and Kenneth Rogoff (a former director of research at the International Monetary Fund). In 2010, she was appointed as a permanent professor at Harvard University's Economics department. This made her the “third woman ever and the first Indian after Nobel laureate Amartya Sen to receive such an outstanding honour.

243. d Swami Agnivesh, has been fighting for issues like tribal rights and citizens' grievances for decades. He has been a MLA in Haryana in the past. He is an Arya Samaj scholar and had participated in several anti-graft campaigns, including that of Anna Hazare in 2011, during which he had courted controversies. He is also the winner of the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize (the Right Livelihood Award), 2004. At the age of 28, he abandoned a career as a professor of law and management in Calcutta for a life of activism.

244. a About 126 lawyers of the Madras High Court were suspended for disrupting work for the last 55 days.

245. b She is the '35-year-old from Uttarakhand' whose writ petition questions oral divorce, after she was summarily issued a talaqnama on 10 October 2015 by her Allahabad-based property agent husband Rizwan Ahmad. Shayara Bano has urged the court to declare that triple talaq or talaq-e-bidat (unilateral verbal pronouncement of talaq), nikah-halala (where a woman is made to consummate a nikah with another man in order to go back to her former husband) and polygamy are illegal and in violation of Articles 14 (equality before law), 15 (prohibition of discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, sex, place of birth), 21 (protection of life and personal liberty) and 25 (freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion) of the Constitution.

246. a KP Oli tendered his resignation in July 24 2016, when he failed to garner enough votes during the No Confidence motion against him in the parliament.

247. c CBSE made available the marksheets in DigiLocker. The DigiLocker username and password was sent via SMS at mobile number registered with CBSE.

248. d The rankings of (a), (b), (c) are 1, 2 and 4 respectively. The 3rd Ranked driver is Daniel Ricciardo of the Red Bull Team.

249. c Vadinar. This refinery is India's second largest single-location refinery, with an annual capacity of 20 million tonnes (405,000 barrels per day). Stanlow refinery is also owned by Essar. It is the second largest Refinery in UK and caters to 15% of the UK's transportation needs.

250. b The RBI carried out an inspection after Rs 6,100 crore import remittances were effected by Bank of Baroda's Ashok Vihar branch in New Delhi. The amount was allegedly transferred in the garb of payments for imports that never took place, it is suspected. RBI investigation has noted deficiencies and failures in internal control mechanisms.

251. c The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971 mandates against abortion after pregnancy crosses the 20-week threshold.

252. b Union Government has appointed senior IPS officer K Durga Prasad has Director General (DG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

253. b The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) reportedly announced Praveen Rana as the replacement of Narsingh Yadav at the Rio Olympics in the 74kg freestyle category. Narsingh, who was previously selected to represent India, failed dope test.

254. a Briton Chris Froome clinched his third Tour de France riders title 2016.

255. a Chirostophe de Kepper is the Director General of IOC (International Olympic Committee).

256. b Thomas Bach is the President of IOC (International Olympic Committee).
257. c A report ‘Digital Payments 2020’ has been published by Google and Boston Consulting Group.

258. d Market size of digital payments in India is expected to touch 500 billion dollar by 2020 according to report ‘Digital Payments 2020’, which published in July 2016.

259. c The telecommunications giant Verizon announced that it will spend $4.8 billion to acquire Yahoo's operating business, which includes advertising technology and popular online content such as Yahoo Sports, Yahoo Finance and micro-blogging site Tumblr. Also included in the deal: the Yahoo brand and real estate attached to the core business including Yahoo's headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif.

260. b Ranking of India in female labor participation in World is 120th.

261. b Every year 26 July is celebrated as “Kargil Vijay Diwas” to honour the sacrifices of Indian war heroes in the Kargil war.

262. a India e-commerce giant Flipkart has beaten rivals including Snapdeal and Amazon, to buy online fashion portal Jabong from Global Fashion Group. The purchase was made by Flipkart’s fashion unit Myntra, and the combination should help the company take on increasing competition from Amazon Fashion in India.

263. c The international tribunal of arbitration in The Hague has ruled against Antrix Corporation, the commercial arm of India’s space organisation, in the ongoing case with Devas Corporation over sharing of spectrum on satellites. With this, India may likely have to fork out $1 billion as compensation to Devas.

264. b President Salva Kiir appointed a new first Vice-President, Taban Deng Gai, who had been Mining Minister in a coalition government.

265. d The Government of India has notified a 2.57-fold hike in basic salary of central government employees and pensioners following the implementation of 7th pay Commission recommendations.

266. b AFSPA stands for Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act.

267. d A large natural gas discovery has been made in the Indian Ocean following a joint expedition by India and the U.S., opening up a new resource to meet energy needs. India’s Oil Ministry and the US Geological Survey made the discovery of large, highly enriched accumulations of natural gas hydrate—an icy form of the fuel—in the Bay of Bengal.

268. d Shanghai Fosun Pharmaceutical (Group) Co (2196.HK) will sign a definitive agreement on Wednesday to buy a controlling stake in India’s Gland Pharma in a $1.4 billion deal.

269. b Railway Ministry released a report on cleanliness in July 2016. According to this report, Gujarat is cleanest state while Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are the dirtiest.

270. a Irom Sharmila Chanu is known as Iron Lady of Manipur.

271. c The cabinet of Union Government of India approved raising of the foreign shareholding limit to 15% from the existing 5% in Indian stock exchanges.

272. a Train passengers booking their tickets online through the IRCTC website will be able to opt for travel insurance cover from September for a premium of just one rupee. The scheme offers travellers or their families compensation of up to Rs. 10 lakh in the event of death or permanent total disability, Rs. 7.5 lakh for permanent partial disability, up to Rs. 2 lakh for hospitalization expenses.

273. b 7.9% percentage India’s economic growth rate has been pegged in 2016-17, according to CRISIL.

274. a The Democratic Party formally nominated Hillary Clinton for president, making her the first woman chosen by a major American party.

275. b RERA stands for The Real Estate Regulation Act.

276. d Human rights activist Bezwada Wilson and south Indian classical musician T.M. Krishna have been conferred the Ramon Magsaysay Award for 2016, along with Philippine ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales, Indonesian charity organization Dompet Dhuafa, Laos’ free ambulance service Vientiane Rescue and Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers.
277. a In Bara Hoti area of Uttarakhand Chinese troops transgression was noticed by visiting officials in July 2016.

278. b The African Regional Office (ARO) that would channel funding drawn from the New Development Bank (NDB) will be set up at Johannesburg. The main objective was to accelerate infrastructure in Africa.

279. d Chinese handset maker LeEco (Le Holdings Co Ltd.) said it has acquired US-based consumer electronics firm VIZIO for $2 billion.

280. b Tata Steel said the Quebec government will invest Canadian $175 million (about USD 133 million) in its joint venture firm's direct shipping iron ore project (DSO project).

281. d Muslim (14.23%), Sikh (1.72%), Buddhist (0.70%) and Jain (0.37%)

282. a American IT firm Cognizant has bought Idea Couture.

283. a "The Schooldays of Jesus" has been authored by John M. Coetzee. Recently it is shortlisted for booker prize.

284. d The Man Booker Prize is awarded only that is published in UK.

285. d Oracle (ORCL) has announced that plans to acquire NetSuite for $9.3 billion, the deal reunited NetSuite CEO Zach Nelson with his old boss and early investor, Oracle chairman Larry Ellison.

286. b Tripura has introduced odd-even formula due to fuel crisis in July 2016.

287. a Larry Ellison is the Chairman of Oracle.

288. a T Nanda Kumar quits as NDDB (National Dairy Development Board) Chief.

289. a Mahasweta Devi was related with Bengali literature.

290. c Mahadayi River flows between Goa and Karnataka.

291. d Mahadayi river water sharing dispute is related to the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa. Mahadayi Water Tribunal has been hearing the petition filed by Goa against Maharashtra and Karnataka against the diversion of water.

292. b National Commission for Women was set up as statutory body in January 1992 under the National Commission for Women Act, 1990. Remaining all are constitutional bodies in India.

293. b Article 370 of the Indian constitution is an article that grants special autonomous status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

294. a International Workers’ Day, also known as Labour Day or May Day in some places, is a celebration of labourers and the working classes that is promoted by the international labour movement, socialists, communists and anarchists and occurs every year on May Day (1 May), an ancient European spring festival.

295. b Shashi Kant Sharma is the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. He succeeded Vinod Rai as the supreme auditor of the Constitutional body on 23 May 2013.

296. a The merger of State Bank of India with its associate banks and Bhartiya Mahila Bank is likely to be completed by March 2017, SBI chief Arundhati Bhattacharya said.

297. b Michael Fred Phelps took the record away from fellow American swimmer Mark Spitz (7) for the most first-place finishes at any single Olympic Games. Till now maximum number of gold medals won by an individual at Olympics in any event stands at 8 medals.

298. b India in the 2012 London Olympics won 6 medals including 2 silver and 4 bronze which is considered as the best performance by India so far in terms of medals won at any Olympic game.