

Top Questions of August 2016

Indian Railways

Q. Name the Train making **Agartala (Tripura)** the third capital city in India's North-East to be connected by a direct train to the national capital (New Delhi)?

Q) Name the Indian Railway track that will connect India with Bangladesh connecting which cities?

Q) Name 4 new series of trains to be operational in the next couple of months, which were first proposed on the Rail Budget?

Q) Maharashtra and the Indian Railways signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for which new line across the Sahayadri Mountain range?

Q) What is the name of China's largest high speed train maker that became the first foreign company to set up assembly line of rail transportation equipment in India?

Defence

Q) Who was honoured (posthumously) with the Ashok Chakra on the eve of the Independence Day on 14 August 2016?

Q) Which foreign newspaper on 24 August 2016 carried out the report that claimed massive data leak about the combat and stealth capabilities of

Indian Navy's soon-to-be inducted French Scorpene submarines?

Banking

Q) What is the foremost implication of RBI final guidelines for Bank licenses?

Q) What are Masala bonds?

Q) What is an important step taken towards cashless future in India, National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI's) Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and name the four launched their UPI-enabled apps on 25 August?

Q) Who was appointed by the Union Government as the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and will become 24th Governor of RBI?

Q) Which public-sector undertaking received the certificate of incorporation for its Payments Bank during August 2016?

Politics

Q) Who was elected as the new Prime Minister of Nepal to become country's 24th Prime Minister in just 26 years?

Q) What is the name of the ambitious and historical amendment bill, primary aimed of making Indian roads safe and saving lakhs of innocent lives, which was approved by the Union Cabinet on 3 August 2016?

Q) Which three proposed names proposed by West Bengal government for new name of the state?

Books

Q) What is the latest and probably the last book of the Harry Potter saga released worldwide recently?

Education

Q) What are the important recommendations for Indian Foreign Services (IFS) Exam by the Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs?

Q) Leading stock exchange BSE during August 2016 signed a first-of-its-kind agreement with which IIT?

Q) Which new IIT institute was formally inaugurated on 28 August 2016 that became the first IIT of Karnataka state?

Mission & Policy

Q) What is “Mission Bhageeratha”?

Q) Name the nationwide breast feeding programme with the primary objective of promoting the practice among mothers?

Q) What is the new minimum wage for unskilled non-farm workers of the central government as announced by

the Union Government on 30 August 2016?

Q) What is the name of the massive irrigation project that aims to solve the water problems of the parched Saurashtra region of Gujarat?

Q) What is the name given to the online library initiative launched on 24 August 2016 for persons with visual and print disabilities by the department of empowerment of persons with disabilities, (DEPwD)?

Q) What is “Akashvani Maitree”, and which neighbouring country is a part of it?

Q) The Telangana Government on 22 August 2016 released a draft on re-organisation of the state. According to this how many new districts will be created in the state?

Automobile

Q) Which automobile giant launched its Jeep range of global sports utility vehicles (SUVs) in India on 30 August 2016?

Sports

Q) England posted the highest ever one-day international (ODI) total of 444 runs as they beat Pakistan by 169 runs at Trent Bridge, whose record England broke? – **Sri Lanka**

Q) Indian wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt got an Olympic medal upgrade for his 2012 bronze medal as a Russian wrestler was found guilty of using banned substances. What is the name of this Russian wrestler who had won the Silver medal?

Q) What achievement was made by the only Indian-owned F1 team Force India at the 2016 Belgian Grand Prix that concluded on 28 August 2016?

Q) Which four players were conferred with the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award for year 2016?

Q) World No.1 Spain's Carolina Marin achieved which landmark achievement by winning Gold in Olympic?

Q) By winning the 4X100 m relay for Jamaica on 19 August 2016, sprinter Usain Bolt achieved which major achievement?

Corporate & Business

Q) Vijay Kelkar, Ratan Tata and Nandan Nilekani are joining hands to

start a microfinance institution (MFI) from their respective philanthropic capital. What is the name of this upcoming MFI?

Space

Q) With which successful launch India became just the fourth country in the world to demonstrate the flight testing of scramjet engine?

Person

Q) Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who passed away at the age of 95 in Gujarat on 13 August 2016, was the spiritual head of which sect?

Information Technology

Q) What is the name of tech giant Google's video calling app that was launched on 16 August 2016?

01 August 2016

1) Which capital city became the third state capital in India’s North-East to be connected by a direct train to the national capital (New Delhi) after the newly-laid broad gauge track was inaugurated on 31 July 2016? –

Agartala (Tripura)



(Photo Courtesy: Indian Express)

Explanation: Tripura capital Agartala finally found place in the national railway map in the true sense of the term when Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flagged off the first Tripura Sundari Express from Agartala to Delhi (Anandvihar) on 31 July 2016. The weekly train will take 47 hours to cover a distance of 2,480 kms.

– With this, Agartala also became the third state capital in the Northeast to be connected by a direct train to the national capital after Guwahati and Itanagar. Four Northeastern state capitals- Shillong, Kohima, Imphal and Aizwal, are however yet to come on the railway map.

– Rail Minister also announced that work on the Rs 3351-crore Agartala-

Sabroom broad-gauge track covering a distance of 112 km was progressing well and the track would be ready by March 2018.

– The Agartala-Sabroom railway track will be one step forward towards a direct link to the Chittagong port in Bangladesh. The distance between Sabroom and Chittagong is only 74 kms.

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2) Union Rail Minister Suresh Prabhu on 31 July 2016 laid the foundation of the ambitious 15.06 km long railway track that will connect India with Bangladesh through Agartala. Which Bangladeshi town will be connected under this project? – **Akhaura**

Explanation: On 31 July 2016 Suresh Prabhu laid the foundation stone for a 15.06-km railway track that will link Agartala with Akhaura station in Bangladesh. Bangladesh Railway Minister, Md. Mazibul Hoque, also joined him in the function held in Agartala.

– While the railway link would finally directly connect Agartala with Kolkata through Bangladesh, it would also help direct freight movement and exchange tourists between the two countries.

– With land acquisition emerging as a major problem, the Agartala-Akhaura rail link will be executed as an elevated project.

3) According to a notification released by the government during July 2016, which entity has become the newest to be exempted from the ambit of the Right to Information Act (RTI)? –

Strategic Forces Command

Explanation: The Strategic Forces Command, which forms part of the National Command Authority (NCA), has been added to the Second Schedule of the Right to Information Act (RTI), 2005, which exempts security and intelligence establishments from its purview. This was disclosed in a govt. notification released during July 2016.

– The NCA’s Executive Council, chaired by the National Security Adviser, gives inputs to the Political Council, which authorises a nuclear attack if need be. The Political Council is chaired by the Prime Minister and advised by the Executive Council.

– The NCA’s directives are executed by the Strategic Forces Command headed by a Commander-in-Chief of the rank of Air Marshal.

– This mechanism is meant to ensure that the nuclear weapons are under civilian control.

– Among the organisations included in the Second Schedule of the RTI are the Intelligence Bureau, the Research and Analysis Wing of the Cabinet Secretariat, the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, the Special Frontier Force, the Border Security

Force, the National Security Guards and the Assam Rifles.



4) What is the name of the American daredevil who became the first person to jump from 25,000 ft. without a parachute after his successful jump on 30 July 2016? – **Luke Aikins**

Explanation: Luke Aikins (US), who has more than 18,000 jumps under his belt, on 30 July 2016, became the first person in the world to jump from 25,000 ft. (7,620m) without a parachute. He landed in a safety net.

– 42-year old Aikins performed his fall of 2-minute in Simi Valley, southern California and it was aired live on Fox television. During the fall he reached the maximum speed of 193km/h (120mph).

– He is a safety and training adviser for the US Parachute Association.

5) Which franchisee won the fourth season of Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) on 31 July 2016 to take their second consecutive title? – **Patna Pirates**

Explanation: Defending champions Patna Pirates beat Jaipur Pink Panthers in the final of season 4 in the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) on 31 July

2016 to win their second consecutive PKL title.

– Patna Pirates thus became the only team to lift the trophy twice in the tournament’s history of four editions.

– The final was played at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad and reigning champions Patna Pirates a victory 37-29 victory over Jaipur Pink Panthers.

– Patna Pirates’ Pardeep Narwal scored 17 points and was awarded Best Raider while the champions’ Hodi Oshtorak was awarded the Best Defender of the Match respectively.

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2nd August 2016

Nirdeshak



1) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued its final guidelines pertaining to bank licenses on 1 August 2016. What is the foremost implication of these guidelines? – **Universal bank licences will now be available on-tap in India**

Explanation: The RBI on 1 August 2016 issued final guidelines allowing non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), qualified individuals and some private companies to apply for a licence as and when they choose to.

The rules, which follow draft guidelines released on 6 May 2016, also prevent the entry of large industrial houses into the banking sector.

– Those who will be eligible to apply include NBFCs that are controlled by residents and have a successful track record for at least 10 years. However, NBFCs which are part of larger conglomerates with more than 40% of their total assets coming from non-financial businesses will not be eligible.

– In addition, individuals and professionals who are residents and have more than 10 year of banking experience can allow apply.

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2) HDFC, India’s largest private sector mortgage lender, created history on 1 August 2016 as it issued world’s first rupee-denominated bond for overseas buyers at the London Stock Exchange (LSE). What is a popular name given to this first-of-its-kind bond? – **Masala Bonds**

Explanation: Housing Development Finance Corporation (HDFC) became the first entity to issue a bond of this type. This bond, listed on the LSE, raised Rs. 30 billion, equivalent to around US\$ 450 million. It has a maturity of three years and an annual yield of 8.33% and was more than four times oversubscribed.

– The listing of ‘Masala Bonds’ on the LSE was described as a landmark event that will boost economic ties

between India and the UK post Brexit. This bond issue will help HDFC to diversify its borrowing profile and access global investors.



3) Who was selected as the new Vice-Chief of the Indian Army after his name was cleared by

the Union Govt. on 1 August 2016? –

Lt. General Bipin Rawat

Explanation: The government on 1 August 2016 cleared the names of Lt. General Bipin Rawat as the new Army vice chief from 1 September 2016. He was till now heading the Southern Command.

– Lt. Gen P M Hariz will replace him as the Southern Command chief. Indian Army on the same day also got a new signal officer-in-chief in Lt. Gen A R Prasad.

4) What is the name of the latest and probably the last book of the Harry Potter saga has been released worldwide recently? – **“Harry Potter and the Cursed Child”**

Explanation: “Harry Potter and the Cursed Child” is the name of the eight part of the Harry Potter saga by J.K. Rowling.

– The book features adventures of the grown-up Harry Potter who has kids and a different life. The happenings in

the book are set 19 years after the end of the last book.



5) An iconic 87-year old factory of the famous Parle-G brands of biscuits was closed recently in Mumbai. In fact, the company (Parle Products Private Limited) borrowed its name from the area itself where this factory is located. This area was located in which area of Mumbai? – **Vile Parle**

Explanation: The iconic Parle factory at Vile Parle (Mumbai) closed its doors permanently during July 2016, after functioning for 87 years. The factory was shut down mainly to low productivity over the past few years.

– Started in 1929, this was the first factory established by Parle Products Pvt. Ltd., the company that manufactures the highly-popular Parle-G brands of biscuits.

– In fact, the company borrowed its name from the area itself, so much so that the factory has become the landmark for Vile Parle over the decades. But the company will continue production of Parle-G biscuits at its other factories spread all over the country.

6) What is the name of China's ride-hailing firm, which on 1 August 2016 announced to buy Uber's China operations in a deal estimated around \$35 billion? – **Didi Chuxing**

Explanation: The acquisition of Uber's China operations by Didi Chuxing is expected to end bruising competition between the two. The deal will thus combine Didi's \$28 billion worth and Uber China's \$7 billion valuation.

– China has been a challenging market for San Francisco-based app-based cab hailing company Uber Technologies. Uber China has been burning through more than \$1 billion a year in a price war with Didi. However, Uber is profitable in the United States, Canada and about 100 other cities worldwide.

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3rd August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) The Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs, which during August 2016 tabled its report pertaining to Indian diplomatic services, made which important recommendation for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) exam? – **UPSC should have additional paper**

in civil service exam for IFS aspirants

Explanation: The Parliamentary Committee on External Affairs, headed by Shashi Tharoor, Congress MP and former MoS in external affairs, tabled its report in the Lok Sabha during August 2016.

– The committee recommended that the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) should introduce an additional paper in the civil service exam for those wanting to join the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) so that their knowledge of international affairs and required aptitude can be tested.

– In other words, a candidate may be allotted IFS if he/she is in the merit list, has cleared the additional paper and obtained a recommendation from the Interview Board.

– The committee expressed grave concern over inadequate size of India's diplomatic corps considering the tasks and challenges before the country. It said there the number of Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers currently is 770 as against sanctioned strength of 912.

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2) The State Bank of India on 2 August 2016 launched two new cheaper home loan products – '**SBI Privilege Home Loan**' and '**SBI Shaurya Home Loan**'. These products are tailor-made for which groups? – **Government employees and Defence personnel (respectively)**

Explanation: While, 'SBI Privilege Home Loan' will serve the home-loan requirements of government employees, 'SBI Shaurya Home Loan' has been offered for the defence personnel.

– Under the 2 new schemes, employees of central/state governments, defence forces, public sector banks, public sector enterprises of central government and other individuals with pensionable service will be offered home loans tailored to their specific needs. There will be a lower EMI burden post retirement and 0.05% concession over the home loan interest in these schemes whereas no processing charges will apply.

– The launch of 'SBI Privilege Home Loan' and 'SBI Shaurya Home Loan' products is timed with the notification of 7th Pay Commission recommendations. SBI is of the opinion that surplus income can thus be utilised by government employees and defence personnel towards purchase of new/better house.

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3) What is the name of billionaire industrialist Richard

Branson's space company that has been granted an operating licence to fly its passenger rocketship with the world's first paying space tourists

aboard by the US Federal Aviation Administration (USFAA) on 1 August 2016? – **Virgin Galactic**

Explanation: The grant of operating licence to Virgin Galactic is unprecedented as it covers all operations of its six-passenger, two-pilot SpaceShipTwo vehicle, including commercial passenger service.

– The company has not yet announced a date for the start of passenger flights but is selling tickets for a ride aboard SpaceShipTwo at \$250,000 a seat. Commercial service is not expected to debut before 2017.

– The new licence will be modified as Virgin Galactic supplies the FAA with additional data from the SpaceShipTwo flight test programme.

– The FAA, which oversees U.S. airline service and general aviation, is also the chief regulatory body for commercial spaceflight in the United States.

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4) Who is set to be appointed as the new chairperson of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)? – **Rani Singh Nair**

Explanation: Senior Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Rani Singh Nair will be appointed as the new head of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). She has been instrumental in framing the procedures and protocols that led to the roll-out of the income declaration scheme (IDS).

– She is a 1979-batch IRS officer of the income-tax cadre and is presently working as member (legislation and computerisation) in the CBDT, the policy-making body of the I-T department. She will be in office till 31 October 2016.

– She is replacing Atulesh Jindal who retired as CBDT Chairman on 31 July 2016.

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5) What is the name of the cyclonic typhoon that entered mainland China in the late hours of 2 August 2016 after rampaging through Hong Kong? –

Typhoon Nida

Explanation: Typhoon Nida became the first typhoon of year 2016 to be graded under No. 8 warning signal (the third-most severe) by the Hong Kong Observatory. It originated near the Philippines.

– Nida lashed Hong Kong in the early hours of 2 August 2016. Winds of up to 145 kilometers per hour (90 miles per hour) were reported in some parts of the city.

– More than 180 flights to or from Hong Kong’s airport were canceled, and bus, tram and ferry routes suspended. However this typhoon weakened as it went passed Hong Kong and entered mainland China. However no causality was reported in Hong Kong.

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1) The decks for the passage of the ambitious Goods and Service Tax (GST) regime in India were finally lowered as the historic bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha on 3 August 2016. GST is being touted as the single largest tax reform in the country since Independence. While 203 votes in favour of the GST bill were polled in Rajya Sabha, which was the only party that opposed it and walked-out of the house? – **AIADMK**

Explanation: Barring the AIADMK, which staged a walkout on the plea that it violated federalism, all others, including the Congress, voted in favour of the GST Bill. The Bill will now be returned to the Lok Sabha for its approval.

– The shift to the GST regime will lead to a uniform, seamless market across the country. It will usher in the regime called ‘one country, one tax’. It will be a uniform rate, is expected to check evasion, and boost growth rates.

– While it is difficult to quantify the impact on various sectors until the government announces the final GST rate, analysts and economists are

assuming a standard rate of 17-18%. If that happens, then companies in the manufacturing sector are expected to benefit, while those in the services sector stand to lose.

– The GST will have two components keeping in mind the federal structure of India – the Central GST (CGST) and the State GST (SGST).

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2) A regular international flight from Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) to Dubai crash-landed in Dubai on 3 August 2016 but all the 282 passengers and 18 crew members on board were evacuated safely and no injuries were reported. The Boeing 777 aircraft involved in this incident belonged to which gulf-based airlines? – **Emirates**

Explanation: UAE-based Emirates' flight EK521 from Thiruvananthapuram to Dubai was involved in this major accident at the Dubai international airport. The said Boeing 777 aircraft departed at 10.19 am from Trivandrum International Airport and was scheduled to land at 12.50 pm at Dubai.

– But the plane had to make an emergency landing probably due to snag in its landing gear. As the plane landed it caught fire but instant action by airport authorities resulted in no injuries or casualties. Most of the passengers were Indians from Kerala.

3) Who was elected as the new Prime Minister of Nepal on 3 August 2016 to become country's 24th Prime Minister in just 26 years? – **Prachanda**

Explanation: The election of Nepal's former Maoist rebel chief Prachanda (real name Pushpa Kamal Dahal) as country's new Prime Minister was just a formality in country's Parliament on 3 August 2016 after no competitors had come forward to challenge his candidacy.

– The election of a new prime minister became necessary after K.P. Oli resigned during July 2016 just before a no-confidence motion brought by the Maoists who accused him of reneging on a power-sharing deal.

– Nepal has been witnessing years of political instability. The country had adopted its first republican constitution in September that was meant to end years of instability following the abolition of the 239-year-old monarchy in 2008.



4) At least 22 people were feared killed as two buses of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) were washed away when a bridge linking Mahad and Poladpur on the Mumbai-Goa highway in Raigad

district in Maharashtra collapsed in heavy rain in the early hours of 3 August 2016. This bridge was built over which river? – **Savitri River**

Explanation: There were two bridges over Savitri River that connected Mahad with Poladpur in Maharashtra's Raigad district. The new bridge remained intact while the other one constructed during the British era collapsed in the early hours of 3 August.

- At least 22 people were reported missing after two buses of MSRTC (including 18 passengers, two drivers and two conductors) were washed away after bridge collapse.
- The primary reason for bridge's collapse was the high pressure caused due to flooding of the Savitri River due to heavy rain in the catchment of Mahabaleshwar.



5) One of India's top investment bankers, Nimesh Kampani, on 2 August 2016 announced his decision to step down as managing director of the financial entity that he founded and built into one of India's top i-banks. What is the name of this entity? – **JM Financial Ltd**

Explanation: Kampani is part of the legendary 3 Ks of the Indian investment banking scenario in the late

1990s and early 2000s, when foreign investment banks were yet to establish themselves in the country (Uday Kotak of Kotak Mahindra and Hemendra Kothari of DSP Merrill Lynch were the other two).

- Kampani was trusted by the promoters of family business groups and was the confidant of many of India's top family business groups.
- Kampani's relationships with the patriarchs of some of India's biggest business houses encouraged Morgan Stanley to seek a joint venture with him. JM Morgan Stanley was formed in 1997. The partners decided to go their separate ways in 2007.
- He will step aside with effect from 30 September 2016 as reaches 70 while his son Vishal will take over as the new MD.

5th August 2016

Nirdeshak



1) What is the name of the ambitious and historical amendment bill, drafted with the primary aim of making Indian roads safe and saving lakhs of innocent lives, which was approved by the Union Cabinet on 3 August 2016? – **Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill 2016**

Explanation: Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Bill 2016 is being touted as the game-changer bill in the annals of India's motor vehicle acts. Every year 5 lakh road accidents are reported in the country in which 1.5 lakh people lose their lives. Government is committed to reduce the accidents and fatalities by 50% in five years through this act.

– In the present Motor Vehicle Act, there are 223 Sections out of which the Bill aims to amend 68 sections whereas Chapters 10 has been deleted and a Chapter 11 is being replaced with new provisions to simplify third party insurance claims and settlement process.

– The important provisions include increase in compensation for Hit & Run cases from Rs. 25000 to Rs. 2 lakhs. It also has provision for payment of compensation upto Rs 10 lakh in road accidents fatalities.



2) Leading stock exchange BSE during August 2016 signed a first-of-its-kind agreement with which IIT for collaboration in the areas including cyber security? – **IIT Kanpur**

Explanation: The key highlights of the MoU signed between BSE and IIT Kanpur include cooperation for cyber security research in financial markets, developing an environment to deal

with cyber security challenges and tools to strengthen cyber security as also to advise BSE in its cyber related issues.

– Among others, the institute will assist BSE in testing its vulnerabilities in IT system and network and help forming guidelines and auditing security operations.

3) Who was chosen for the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award, as announced on 4 August 2016? – **Shubha Mudgal**

Explanation: Hindustani classical singer Shubha Mudgal has been selected for the Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award for her outstanding contribution towards the promotion of communal harmony, peace and goodwill.

– The award is given on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This will be the 23rd edition of the award. Congress president Sonia Gandhi has been presenting the award ever since it was constituted.

– The award carries a citation and cash award of Rs 10 lakh.

4) Online legal documentation startup LegalDesk.com on 4 August 2016 announced the launch of its electronic signing feature, which allows people to sign documents from remote places using UIDAI's Aadhaar platform. What

is the name of this feature? –

eSignDesk

Explanation: eSignDesk is an electronic signing facility launched on 4 August 2016 by Nandan Nilekani, former Chairman of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

– Users interested in availing this facility need to have a registered mobile number associated with the Aadhaar card. According to the LegalDesk.com documents signed electronically using it will be legally valid in the country.

– The e-signature deters fraud to a large extent as it cannot be replicated or forged; and the content of the document cannot be tampered with.

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5) What is the name of the Russian Navy's rescue ship

that was on its pre-planned visit to India during August 2016 and was asked by the Indian Navy to lend help in locating the missing AN-32 aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF)? – **Igor Belousov**

Belousov

Explanation: Igor Belousov is the name of a state-of-the-art rescue ship of the Russian Navy. It arrived in India on a pre-planned visit and was asked by the Indian Navy (IN) to lend help in locating the missing Russian-origin

Antonov 32 aircraft of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

– Responding quickly to the request the Russian Navy engaged Igor Belousov for over 12 hours in the Indian Ocean region looking for the missing AN-32. But it could not locate the missing aircraft. The rescue ship later proceeded towards Vishakhapatnam, as was the original plan.

– Igor Belousov was inducted into the Russian Navy's Pacific Ocean Fleet search-and-rescue force in November 2015. Its on-board lifesaving equipment includes a 700m deep-diving vehicle and two deep-diving submersibles.

– The missing AN-32 went missing after it took off from Chennai on the morning on 22 July 2016.



1) Summer Olympics of 2016 were officially inaugurated in a grand opening ceremony held at Rio de Janeiro (Rio's) iconic Maracana Stadium on 5 August 2016. The over 300 events of this sporting extravaganza are being held from 5

August to 21 August 2016. These games are which edition of Summer Olympics? – **31st**

Explanation: 31st Summer Olympics (Rio Olympics) were inaugurated on 5 August 2016 at Rio's famous Maracana Stadium on 5 August 2016. The games were officially opened by Brazil's acting President Michel Temer.

– The most important ceremony associated with Olympic Games – the lighting of the Olympic Flame was performed by Brazilian marathon athlete Vanderlei Cordeiro de Lima. Vanderlei de Lima had won a historic bronze medal in Marathon event at 2004 Athens Olympics.

– The official name of 2016 Rio Olympics is Games of the XXXI Olympiad. It is the largest sporting event till dates with as many as 206 countries participating in over 300 events. overall more than 11,000 players and officials are participating in these games.

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2) Who was elected as the new Chief Minister of Gujarat on 5 August 2016 to replace the outgoing CM Anandiben Patel? – **Vijay Rupani**

Explanation: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on 5 August 2016 named

Vijay Rupani as Gujarat's new chief minister and Nitin Patel his deputy thus entrusting two of its most powerful state leaders the responsibility of reviving the party's popularity among voters.

– 61-year old Rupani hails from Rajkot, the heartland of Saurashtra which has a significant population of both Patels and Dalits. On the other hand, Nitin Patel enjoys significant clout in north Gujarat, which was the epicentre of last year's violent protests by the Patidar or Patels demanding quotas for the community in colleges and jobs.

– It is worth mentioning that Nitin Patel was till 4 August 2016 seen as the front-runner for the post. But Amit Shah's inclination towards Rupani sealed the deal in his favour.

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3) In a daring attack, a group of heavily armed militants opened fire in a crowded market place in Assam's Kokrajhar district on 5 August 2016. At least 14 persons were killed in attack that was performed through a high jacked auto rickshaw. What is the name of the busy market that was targeted in this attack? – **Balajan Tiniali market**

Explanation: According to reports, heavily armed militants high-jacked an auto rickshaw and took it to the crowded Balajan Tiniali market, which is around 12 km from Kokrajhar town. These militants started indiscriminate firing on people in the market.

– At least 14 people were killed while over 18 were injured. An army area domination patrol, which was in the vicinity, cordoned off the area and killed one militant. The National Democratic Front of Bodoland (Songbijit faction) is believed to be behind the attack. The attackers were in army uniforms.

– The Kokrajhar district is a Bodo-dominated area and has been a centre of ethnic conflicts for a long time.

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4) What is the name of the portal launched by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to curb illegal collection of money by companies? – **‘Sachet’**

Explanation: ‘Sachet’ is the name given to the newly launched portal of the RBI that will enable public to obtain information regarding entities that accept deposits, lodge complaints and also share information regarding illegal acceptance of deposits.

– It was formally launched by RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan on 4 August 2016. Sachet is expected to help regulators taking cases against deterring entities from carrying out unlawful activities and helping members of public in depositing their hard earned money with genuine companies by giving them timely information about them.

– The general public can file and track a complaint on this website if any firm has illegally accepted money from

them or defaulted in repayment of deposits.

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5) Union Government formally notified how much inflation target on 5 August 2016 which is in line with RBI’s vision regarding vision? – **4%**

Explanation: In another step towards resetting the monetary policy framework, Indian Government on 5 August 2016 formally notified an inflation target of 4%, in line with the agreement reached between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the government last year (2015).

– As per the notification placed by the government in the Lok Sabha, the RBI will look to contain consumer price-based inflation at 4% with a band of +/- 2 percentage points till 2021. The notification, laid down by minister of state for finance Arjun Meghwal, also puts to rest speculation that the government may revisit the target to boost growth.

– RBI governor Raghuram Rajan has been the chief advocate of such a move, arguing that India needs to rein in inflation to achieve sustainable growth in the long run.

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6) Which Indian was formally elected as an individual member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on 4 August 2016 and thus becoming the first-ever Indian woman to achieve this distinction? – **Nita Ambani**

Explanation: Nita Ambani, the founder and chairperson of the Reliance Foundation, was formally elected as an individual member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at its 129th session in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) on 4 August 2016.

- The IOC Executive Board had nominated her to the committee in June 2016. She is India’s first woman member of the IOC and her new position will run till she attains the age of 70.
- She has played a proactive role in the development of IPL team Mumbai Indians and also the Indian Super League (ISL), India’s first professional football league.

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7- 8th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



- 1)** Which important approval was given by voters in Thailand in a referendum held in the country on 7 August 2016?
– **They approved a new Constitution drawn up by the ruling junta**

Explanation: On 7 August 2016, people across Thailand went to the polls in a referendum on a new draft constitution, written by a military-

appointed committee. The military threw out the old constitution when it took power in 2014, after months of political instability and sporadic violence.

- The result of the referendum was declared on the same day, which made it clear that Thai voters had given their approval to the draft Constitution. It was a major victory for the army and a blow to the stuttering pro-democracy movement.
- Made public in March 2016, the draft proposes making it very difficult for a single political party to hold a majority. One of the most controversial clauses calls for the 250-seat senate to be fully appointed by the military government.
- The referendum was the first time Thais have been able to go to the polls since Army chief-turned-Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha toppled the elected government of Yingluck Shinawatra in 2014.



- 2)** Who won the first Gold Medal of the 2016 Rio Olympics on 6 August 2016?
– **Virginia Thrasher (USA)**

Explanation: American teenager Virginia Thrasher won the first gold medal of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games

on 6 August 2016. She won the gold medal in women's 10m air rifle event.

– She held her nerve against two Chinese Olympic champions – Du Li and Yi Siling. Thrasher edged out Du Li, the gold medalist in Athens games of 2004, and defending Olympic champion Yi Siling who won the bronze. Du Li won the silver.

– Thrasher was awarded the first gold of the Games by International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Thomas Bach.

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3) Union Health Ministry on 5 August 2016 launched a nationwide breast feeding programme with the primary objective of promoting the practice among mothers. What is the name given to this programme? – **Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA)**

Explanation: Mother's Absolute Affection (MAA) is the name of the newly launched nationwide breast feeding programme that was launched on 5 August 2016 by Union Health Minister J P Nadda. The programme aims at promoting the practice among mothers.

– As per available data sets, around 20% newborn deaths and 13% under-five deaths can be prevented by breastfeeding.

– For the MAA programme, a total of Rs. 30 crores has been allocated while each district will be

allotted Rs. 4.3 lakh for implementing the various activities under it.

– Hindi actress Madhuri Dixit, who has been nominated as the celebrity brand ambassador of MAA, was also present on the occasion.

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4) Which new Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) was inaugurated by HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar on 6 August 2016? – **IIT Jammu**

Explanation: Union Human Resource Development (HRD) Minister Prakash Javadekar inaugurated the ad interim campus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Jammu on 6 August 2016. This is the northern-most IIT of the country.

– The ad interim campus of IIT Jammu will function for a period of one year from a well-equipped temporary campus in Paloura, Jammu.

– The first batch will have 90 students – 30 each in computer science and engineering, electrical engineering and mechanical engineering.

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5) Vijay Rupani took oath as the 16th Chief Minister of Gujarat on 7 August 2016. Who was appointed as state's first-ever Deputy Chief Minister on the same day? – **Nitin Patel**

Explanation: Senior BJP leader Vijay Rupani was on 7 August 2016 sworn-in as the new chief minister of Gujarat while Nitin Patel took oath as deputy

chief minister at a swearing-in ceremony held in Gandhinagar. Rupani thus became state's 16th Chief Minister while Nitin Patel became the first-ever Deputy CM.

– Earlier on 5 August the BJP central leadership chose Rupani for the post of the chief minister instead of Nitin Patel, who was considered a sure pick for the top job in the poll-bound state.

– Nine ministers from the previous cabinet, including some considered as loyalists of outgoing chief minister Anandiben Patel were dropped. On 3 August, Anandiben Patel had submitted her resignation to Governor O.P. Kohli, after the party's parliamentary board in Delhi accepted her offer to quit the post.

Insurance to become the fourth-largest in terms of gross written premium. This is the first time after the industry opened up in 2000 that a private insurer has surpassed a PSU counterpart.

– ICICI Lombard ended the quarter-ended June 2016 with gross premium of Rs 2,880 crore – an increase of 41% over the previous year and a market share of 11%.

– On the other hand Oriental Insurance's premium during the same period stood at Rs. 2,508 crore. Its market share stood at 9%.

– For one and half decades, the top four slots have been consistently held by New India Assurance, which continues to be the market leader, and three other public sector units – National Insurance, United India Insurance and Oriental Insurance.

9th August 2016

Nirdeshak



United India Insurance



1) Which private sector entity overtook state-owned Oriental Insurance to become the fourth-largest in terms of gross written premium, as disclosed during August 2016? – **ICICI Lombard**

Explanation: ICICI Lombard recently overtook state-owned Oriental



2) President Dr. Pranab Mukherjee on 8 August 2016 gave nod to Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Act, 2016 and Dentists (Amendment) Act, 2016 for facilitating a pan-India uniform test for admission to medical and dental courses. What is the name of this uniform test which has been in the news often? – **National Eligibility cum Entrance Exam (NEET)**

Explanation: National Eligibility cum Entrance Exam (NEET) is the name of the proposed all India test for admission to medical and dental courses. It is designed to curb corruption by bringing in transparency, checking multiplicity of exams and to stop exploitation of students in counselling.

- The NEET is intended to be introduced from the academic year 2017-18.
- The acts were passed by the Lok Sabha during July 2016 while Rajya Sabha passed it on 1 August 2016. The two Acts mandate uniform entrance examination for admission to all medical and dental educational institutions run postgraduate and undergraduate courses.

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3) The Indian Parliament on 8 August 2016 cleared the GST bill as the Lok Sabha passed the amended GST bill that was passed by the Rajya Sabha earlier in the month. Which constitutional amendment is associated with this historic bill? –

122nd Constitutional Amendment

Explanation: The country moved a step closer to rolling out the goods and services tax (GST) regime on 8 August 2016 after Parliament passed the 122nd Constitutional Amendment bill.

- The action now shifts to the states as the government seeks to get the bill ratified by a majority of the Indian states within the next one month to

stay on course for its 1 April 2017 deadline on implementing the much-publicized tax reform.

- GST, a destination-based tax, will subsume various indirect taxes at the central and the state levels including excise duty, service tax, value-added tax, entertainment tax and luxury tax.



4) Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar scripted history on 7 August 2016 as she became the first-ever Indian to qualify for finals of a gymnastics event. Which event is this? – **Produnova vault**

Explanation: Dipa Karmakar, who is the country's first woman gymnast to qualify for the Olympics, managed to perform her 'Produnova' vault cleanly to secure 14.850 points after two attempts on 7 August 2016. She thus finished at 8th spot in the qualifying round and made into the finals.

- The Produnova vault is an artistic gymnastics vault consisting of a front handspring and two somersaults. It is named after Russian gymnast Elena Produnova, who first completed it in 1999.
- The final is slated on 14 August 2016 where Dipa would try to make the cut for an Olympic medal. It is worth mentioning that the eight gymnasts

with the highest individual scores in each apparatus move on to compete for an individual event title in that apparatus.

– Dipa is from Tripura and is the first Indian woman gymnast to win a Commonwealth Games medal.

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5) “Mission Bhageeratha”, a unique scheme to provide safe drinking water to rural households, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 7 August 2016. This scheme is being undertaken by which state government? – **Telangana**

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 7 August 2016 inaugurated the massive 40,000-crore water grid project of Telangana state named ‘Mission Bhageeratha’.

– ‘Mission Bhageeratha’ is the brain child of Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao to provide safe drinking water through a huge pipeline project. The first stage comprises of providing drinking water at Komatibanda, Gajwel in Medak district.

– The primary objective of this ambitious scheme is to provide 100 liters of clean drinking water per person in rural households and 150 liters per person in urban households. This project aims to provide water to about 25,000 rural habitations and 67 urban habitations.

– With this, about 67 thousand households of the Gajwel Assembly

constituency will get safe drinking water through a pipeline.

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10th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) In a historic event, Irom Sharmila Chanu of Manipur broke her 16-year old fast on 9 August 2016, which she started against

the controversial AFSPA that has been clamped in the state. She started her fast after which infamous massacre? – **Malom massacre of 2000**

Explanation: In year 2000 the northeastern state of Manipur was rocked by the Malom massacre in which 10 civilians, including a 1988 National Child Bravery award winner, were gunned down. This incident took place after a military convoy of 8 Assam Rifles was attacked by insurgents. All those killed were innocent bystanders.

– The then-28 year old Irom Sharmila on 2 November 2000 started a fast which she vowed to end only when the government repealed Armed Forces Special Powers Ordinance (AFSPA). She continued the fast till 9 August 2016 thus becoming “the world’s longest hunger striker”. However, she

was force fed during her imprisonment in Imphal.

- The controversial AFSPA was promulgated by the British in 1942 in Manipur.
- During July 2016 Irom Sharmila had announced that she will end her fast and will stand in the Manipur Assembly elections.
- Iron Sharmila is often called "The Iron Lady of Manipur". Her decision to break her fast after 16 years shows how an individual can take on the might of the state with her moral courage.



2) Kalikho Pul, who was found dead in his

residence on 9 August 2016, had served briefly as the Chief Minister of which Northeastern state? –

Arunachal Pradesh

Explanation: Congress rebel Kalikho Pul, who briefly served as Arunachal Pradesh chief minister, was found dead at the chief minister's official residence on 9 August 2016, which he was yet to vacate. He had allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling fan in his bedroom.

- Pul, who took over the reins of the state on 19 February 2016 served as Chief Minister for a brief time with the Supreme Court in July 2016 reinstating

Nabam Tuki. Tuki later made way for Pema Khandu as the tenth Chief Minister of the State.

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3) The outgoing Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Raghuram Rajan maintained status quo on the policy rate in his last policy review on 9 August 2016. What is an important fact associated with this policy review? –
This was the last bi-monthly policy to be decided by a RBI Governor

Explanation: The bi-monthly policy presented on 9 August 2016 was the last bi-monthly monetary policy to be decided by the Governor of the RBI. That's because the broad-based 6-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) may take over the job of deciding monetary policy before the next review scheduled for 4 October 2016.

- The repo rate (the interest rate at which the central bank provides short-term liquidity to banks to help them overcome liquidity mismatches) was left unchanged at 6.50% in this policy review. Rajan's three-year term at the helm of RBI comes to an end on 4 September 2016.

- With retail inflation ruling above its projection of around 5% for year 2017, the RBI held the rate steady.



4) What is the name of the French

footballer who was involved in a world-record £89m transfer to Manchester United from Juventus, as announced on 9 August 2016? – **Paul Pogba**

Explanation: 23-year-old French midfielder Paul Pogba became the costliest footballer in world as he was transferred back to his former club Manchester United from Italian club Juventus for a record price of £89m. He thus returned to Manchester United after four years away, having left United for Juventus for £1.5m in 2012.

– His transfer deal surpassed £85m that Spanish club Real Madrid paid to Tottenham for Wales forward Gareth Bale in 2013.

– Pogba, who helped hosts France reach the Euro 2016 final, has won the Serie A title in each of his four seasons at Juventus.

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5) Which entity will acquire

Monster Worldwide that owns jobs portals like Monsterboard and Jobs.com for \$429 million? –

Randstad

Explanation: Randstad, the world's second-largest staffing company will acquire Monster Worldwide, the entity that owns Monsterboard and Jobs.com, for \$429 million in cash and assumed debt.

– Monster is known primarily for its mid-level jobs listings and its database of job-seekers' resumes. It is a survivor of the dotcom-era. For Randstad, which has struggled to grow in the United States, the purchase fits into a series of acquisitions to expand into online recruiting.

– Though Randstad has grown to rival global number one Adecco in market capitalisation, it trails US market leader Manpower in North America.

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6) US woman fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad came to news in the ongoing Rio

Olympics 2016 on 7 August 2016.

Why? – **She became the first-ever US athlete to wear hijab in Olympics**

Explanation: US fencer Ibtihaj Muhammad became the only American ever to compete in the Olympics wearing a hijab (a veil that covers the head and chest), worn by Muslim women.

– Ranked eighth in the world in sabre, she beat Ukrainian Olena Kravatska 15-13 in her first match before falling to France's Cecilia Berder 15-12 in the round of 16.

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1) What is the main objective of the Maternity

Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 that was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 11 August 2016? – **To increase maternity leave for working women from 12 to 26 weeks**

Explanation: The Rajya Sabha passed the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2016 on 11 August 2016. The bill aims to increase maternity leave for working women from 12 to 26 weeks.

– It will also provide 12 weeks of maternity leave to “commissioning and adopting” mothers and will introduce an option of work-from-home for nursing mothers.

– With the passage of this bill, India will join the league of 42 countries where maternity leave exceeds 18 weeks.

– The International Labour Organisation (ILO) recommends a minimum standard maternity leave of 14 weeks or more, though it encourages member states to increase it to at least 18 weeks.

2) On 9 August 2016 who was appointed by the RBI as the third member of the proposed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) that will take charge of setting policy interest rates in the coming months? – **Dr. Michael Patra**

Explanation: RBI Executive Director Dr. Michael Patra was appointed as the third and final RBI member of the proposed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). The formation of the MPC, a brainchild of outgoing RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan, was announced by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in the Budget this year.

– From RBI’s side, the nominees will be the governor, deputy governor in charge of monetary policy (currently Urjit Patel) and a third member appointed on 9 August – Dr. Michael Patra.

– The committee would comprise of six members – three from the RBI and three by the government. The government representatives will be nominated by a search committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary.

– After it comes into effect, the committee will take over the role of taking interest rate decisions from the RBI governor. The aim of the committee is to bring value and transparency to monetary policy decisions.



3) Who was appointed as the fourth Managing Director of State Bank of India (SBI) on 9 August 2016?

– **Dinesh Kumar Khara**

Explanation: Dinesh Kumar Khara, who is presently working as MD and Chief Executive Officer of SBI Funds Management Pvt. Ltd., was appointed as a Managing Director of the SBI on 9 August 2016.

– The Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) has appointed Khara for a period of three years, extendable by two years after review of his performance.

– SBI has four Managing Directors. The other three MDs are – B. Sriram, Rajnish Kumar and P.K. Gupta. The bank is headed by its Chairperson Arundhati Bhattacharya.



4) The Union Government is in the process of setting up a committee to look into all issues pertaining to the fast growing e-commerce industry in the country, including foreign direct investment (FDI) norms. Who will head this committee? – **Amitabh Kant**

(CEO, NITI Aayog)

Explanation: The proposed committee will look at all the issues, including FDI pertaining to the e-commerce sector. The committee would suggest ways to further promote the growth of the sector.

– Setting up of this committee assumes significance as the government recently permitted 100% FDI in the food processing sector. There are also issues related to ecommerce players selling pharmaceuticals.

– The committee will be headed by Amitabh Kant (CEO, NITI Aayog). The other members in the panel include officials from the commerce and industry ministry and department of electronics and IT, among others.

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5) Tata Group-controlled Tata Chemicals Limited is selling urea business to which entity, as was announced on 10 August 2016? –

Yara Fertilisers India

Explanation: Tata Chemicals Ltd. will sell its business of sale and distribution of urea and customised fertilizers manufactured at Babrala, Uttar Pradesh, to Yara Fertilisers India Pvt Ltd for Rs.2,670 crore. This transaction does not include specialty products and complex fertilizers.

– Tata Chemicals will continue to own the brands Paras, TKS and Daksha. The deal has been done on a slump sale basis, which means the transfer of one or more undertakings as a result

of the sale for a lump-sum consideration without values being assigned to individual assets and liabilities.

– Yara India is a unit of Yara International ASA of Norway, which was founded in 1905 to solve emerging famine in Europe. At present, Yara has a worldwide presence, with close to 13,000 employees and sales to more than 150 countries.

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6) What is the name of the world's biggest furniture

retailer that broke ground for its first store in India in Hyderabad on 11 August 2016? – **Ikea (Sweden)**

Explanation: Ikea, the world's biggest furniture retailer, will open its first India store in Hyderabad by 2017 with investment of Rs. 700 crore. The store will be spread across 400,000 sq.ft. The company on 11 August 2016 broke ground for the store.

– Ikea expects Hyderabad store to draw 5-6 million customers a year. The company has bought 13 acres in HiTec City, the software hub of Hyderabad. Its second store will come up in Mumbai. The company, which operates 328 stores globally, plans to open 25 stores in nine Indian cities.

– Ikea received government approval in 2013 to invest Rs.10,500 crore in India under the 100% foreign direct investment route.

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13-14th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) Which important initiative associated with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) was launched on 11 August 2016? – **Databank to gather information pertaining to MSMEs**

Explanation: Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 11 August 2016 launched a databank to gather information about micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Through the databank, the Finance Ministry will carry out a census of MSMEs online for the first time. The move to go online will help save money as the previous census conducted in 2008 cost Rs. 50 crore, whereas this one is expected to be completed in just around Rs. 1 crore.

– The census process for the MSMEs also officially started from 11 August. Government had recently notified new rules for MSMEs to furnish information in the prescribed format.

– According to the MSME Development (Furnishing of Information) Rules, 2016, MSMEs need to furnish basic details to the Central government online in the databank maintained by it on msmedatabank.in.

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2) Which state on 12 August 2016 became the first state in the country to ratify the constitution amendment bill on the Goods and Services Tax (GST)? – **Assam**

Explanation: The Assam Assembly passed the resolution to ratify the constitution amendment bill on the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 12 August 2016. Earlier the state Cabinet had approved the pertaining bill.

– Thus Assam became the first state to pass the bill. Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the Chief Minister wanted Assam to become the first state to pass the bill to send a positive signal to the industry.

– The Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill for GST was passed by the Lok Sabha on 8 August 2016. The deadline for the rollout of the GST is 1 April 2017.

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3) The Supreme Court on 12 August 2016 gave major relief to diesel luxury car makers as it allowed the fresh registration of high-end diesel cars and SUVs in Delhi and the National Capital

Region (NCR). But the apex court imposed how much green charge on these vehicles for allowing their sale? – **1% of the vehicle's ex-showroom price**

Explanation: Implementing the 'polluter pays' legal principle, a Special Bench led by Chief Justice of India T.S. Thakur on 12 August 2016 directed the car makers or dealers to deposit the 1% 'Environment Compensation Charge' (ECC) with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

– It is worth mentioning that the Supreme Court had imposed a ban on the sale of diesel-run luxury vehicles (with 2000 cc and above engine capacity) on 16 December 2015 with the objective of curbing air pollution.

– The manufacturers and dealers of diesel vehicles recently agreed to convey to their buyers that the payment of ECC would be a "condition precedent" for registration. In fact, the suggestion for the one percent ECC came from Mercedes.



4) Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who passed away at the age of 95 in Gujarat on 13 August 2016, was the spiritual head of which sect? – **Swaminarayan Sect**

Explanation: Pramukh Swami Maharaj was the head of of the Bochasanvasi Akshar Purushottam Sansthan (BAPS) of the Swaminarayan sect. On 13 August 2016 he passed away at his ashram located at Sarangpur village in Botad district of Gujarat. He was aged 95.

– He is believed by the followers of BAPS to be the fifth spiritual successor in Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s succession of Gunatit gurus. When he was 28, Pramukh Swami Maharaj was appointed the pramukh, or the president, of the BAPS replacing Shastriji Maharaj at a ritual performed at Amlī Valī Pōl in Ahmedabad on 21 May 1950.

– The BAPS, under him, grew from an organization, whose presence was earlier confined mainly to Gujarat to become one of the most widely spread Hindu institutions with presence across the globe.

– He is credited to have overseen the construction of more than 1,000 temples, including some grand ones such as the Akshardham temples in Gandhinagar and Delhi.

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5) Lalita Babar on 13 August 2016 became the first Indian to qualify for the final of an athletics track event at the Olympics since P.T. Usha in 1984.

She achieved this feat in which event?
– **3000 m steeplechase**

Explanation: 27-year old Lalita Babar did herself and India proud as she made it to the final of the women’s 3000 m steeplechase at the Olympic stadium on 13 August 2016. She made the grade as one of the fastest losers after finishing fourth in her heat, dominated by Kenyan Beatrice Chepkoech.

– She thus became the first Indian to qualify for the final of an athletics track event at the Olympics since P.T. Usha in Los Angeles Olympics of 1984.

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15-16th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) Maharashtra and the Indian Railways on 14 August 2016 signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for laying a new line across the Sahayadri Mountain range that will be the first project to connect the Konkan railway with the Central Railway. Which line is this? – **Karad-Chiplun railway line**

Explanation: The ambitious Karad-Chiplun railway line project aims to connect the western coast with the central part of the country.

- It will be the first project to connect the Konkan railway with the Central Railway. Karad is between Central Railway's Pune and Miraj junctions.
- Miraj is major junction for transporting goods to south as well as towards Hyderabad.



2) Usain Bolt of Jamaica remained the World's fastest athlete as he won the final of the men's 100 m sprint at Rio Olympics 2016 on 14 August 2016. With this win Bolt achieved which landmark achievement? – He became the first-ever athlete to win the 100 m sprint three times and at consecutive Olympics

Explanation: Jamaican sprint king Usain Bolt etched his name as the greatest sprinter of all time as he won the showcase 100 meters race in 9.81 seconds on 14 August 2016.

- He thus became the only man or woman to win the 100 m title three times and at consecutive Olympics.
- His main rival, Justin Gatlin of the United States, the 2004 Olympic champion who later served a

suspension for doping, took the silver medal in 9.89 seconds. Andre de Grasse of Canada won the bronze in 9.91.

- For Bolt, this victory carried both a sense of celebration and farewell. He has said repeatedly that these will be his final Games.



3) Who was crowned world's fastest women at the Rio Olympics 2016 by winning women's 100 m sprint race on 14 August 2016? – Elaine Thompson (Jamaica)

Explanation: Jamaica's Elaine Thompson on 14 August 2016 won the women's 100m at the Rio Olympics by completing the race in 10.71 seconds. This was just 0.01 seconds outside her personal best.

- Defending champion and compatriot Fraser-Pryce, who was attempting to become the first woman to win three successive golds in the event, finished third in 10.86.

- USA's Tori Bowie won the silver medal in 10.83.

4) Who was honoured (posthumously) with the Ashok Chakra on the eve of the Independence Day on 14 August 2016? – **Havildar Hangpan Dada**



Ashok Chakra

Explanation: Havildar Hangpan Dada was on 14 August 2016 honoured with the Ashok Chakra, the highest award to an

army man during peace-time operations.

– The 36-year-old Dada, who laid down his life for the country on 27 May this year, valiantly fought in the treacherous Shamsabari range in North Kashmir eliminating four heavily-armed terrorists who had infiltrated into North Kashmir from PoK. Dada was badly injured in the encounter and passed away later.

– Enrolled in the Assam Regiment of the Army in 1997, Dada was posted with the 35 Rashtriya Rifles, a force carved out for counter-insurgency operations.

– Ashok Chakra is India’s highest peacetime military decoration awarded for valor, courageous action or self-sacrifice away from the battlefield. It was first awarded in 1952.

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5) Who was honoured (posthumously) with the Shaurya Chakra, the third highest peacetime gallantry medal of the country, on the eve of the Independence Day on 14 August 2016? – **Lt. Col. Niranjan E K**

Explanation: Lt Col Niranjan E K was honoured with the Shaurya Chakra, the third highest peacetime gallantry medal of the country, on the eve of the 70th Independence Day on 14 August 2016.

– Niranjan, an officer of the Army’s Corps of Engineer, was part of the special NSG commandos unit that was rushed to the IAF base in Punjab after four terrorists entered the high-security military facility on the intervening night of 1-2 January 2016. He was killed while sanitizing a terrorist’s body.

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6) Which PSU entity launched a Rs. 100-crore start-up fund on its Diamond Jubilee year on 14 August 2016? – **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd (ONGC)**

Explanation: ONGC on 14 August 2016 launched a Rs. 100-crore start-up fund on its Diamond Jubilee year to foster, nurture and incubate new ideas related to oil and gas sector.

– As part of this initiative, ONGC would provide the entire support chain for start-ups, including seed capital, hand-holding, mentoring, market linkage and follow-ups. The aim of the initiative is to increase the contribution of fresh implementable ideas in the oil and gas sector.

– The initiative, christened ‘ONGC Start-up’, is in line with the government’s ‘Start-up India’ initiative.



7) During August 2016, Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) inaugurated the nickel, copper and acid recovery plant in which state that became the first facility in India to produce nickel metal of LME grade from primary resource? – **Jharkhand**

Explanation: Hindustan Copper Limited (HCL) inaugurated the nickel, copper and acid recovery plant on 10 August 2016 at Indian Copper Complex, Ghatsila (Jharkhand). This is the first facility in India to produce nickel metal of LME grade from primary resource.

– The 50 metric ton (MT) Ghatsila plant will meet the growing requirement of nickel, the demand for which in the country is around 45,000 MT and is totally dependent on import.

Explanation: In order to promote less cash economy, the government announced it will bear the transaction cost for all payments made to it through debit or credit cards and net banking.

– The Finance Ministry during August 2016 issued the circular in pursuance of the decision of the government to promote credit/digital transactions in government payments and collections.

– Earlier the government had set up a task force under Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Neeraj Gupta, which had recommended waiving such transaction costs.

– At present, customers bear the transaction cost commonly known as merchant discount rate (MDR) on payments made to the government.

17th August 2016

Nirdeshak



1) Union Govt. during August 2016 announced which important step to promote less cash economy? – **It will bear transaction costs for online payments done to govt.**



2) What is the name of tech giant Google's video calling app that was launched on 16 August 2016? – **'Google Duo'**

Explanation: On 16 August 2016 Google launched its video calling app, 'Google Duo', for Android and iOS users, which will compete with apps like FaceTime and Skype. The video calling app, which was first announced

by Google during May 2016 at its I/O developer conference, aims to take the “complexity out of video calling”.

– The rollout of Duo for Android and iOS started from 16 August, and it will be live worldwide in the next few days. To ensure privacy and security, all Duo calls are end-to-end encrypted. Duo allows users to connect using their phone number without a separate username/account.

– Google has introduced a new feature ‘Knock Knock’ that allows people to see live video of the caller before they answer, helping users connect with the person even before they even pick up.

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3) What is India’s position on the Global Innovation Index that was released on 15 August 2016 by Cornell University, INSEAD and the WIPO? –

66th

Explanation: India climbed 15 spots, from 81st last year, to 66th in the Global Innovation Index (GII) for 2016 and maintained the top spot in the Central and South Asia regions, according to the rankings based on the Global Innovation Index (GII). The Index was released on 15 August 2016 by Cornell University, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

– The index said that India has all the ingredients needed to become a global driver of innovation including strong market potential, an excellent talent

pool, and an underlying culture of frugal innovation. India ranks second on innovation quality among middle-income economies, overtaking Brazil.

– This year, China joined the world’s 25 most-innovative economies, becoming the first middle-income country to enter the top 25 of the index.

– Switzerland, Sweden, the UK, the US, Finland and Singapore lead the 2016 GII rankings.

– This was the 9th edition of GII that ranks over 100 countries of the world on the basis of their innovative capacities.

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4) The National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF), the inter-ministerial body on trade facilitation, was constituted by the Union Government during August 2016. Who is heading this committee? – **The Cabinet Secretary**

Explanation: Consequent to India’s ratification of the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation (TFA) in April 2016, the National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) was constituted during August 2016.

– This prime, inter-ministerial body on trade facilitation will be chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. Its Secretariat will be housed within the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), in the

Directorate General of Export Promotion, New Delhi.

– The defined objective behind setting up the NCTF is to have a national level body that will facilitate domestic co-ordination and implementation of TFA provisions. It will play the lead role in developing the pan-India road map for trade facilitation.

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5) India's first bio-CNG plant was inaugurated on 14 August 2016. The first-of-its-kind plant, which incorporates process of generation of CNG from agricultural waste, has been set up in which city? – **Pune**

Explanation: India's first bio-CNG plant has been established by Pune-based Primove Engineering Private Limited. This plant will use agricultural residue to generate CNG which can be used in automobiles as fuel.

– The process of generation of CNG from agricultural waste involves treating the waste with a special bacterial solution, after which the gas so generated is cleaned and compressed for use in vehicles.

– The plant located in Pirangut, Pune, has been set up as a Proof of Concept (PoC) which can be replicated elsewhere.

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18th August 2016

Nirdeshak

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1) Who won the first medal for India at the Rio Olympic Games by clinching the bronze in women's 58 kg category wrestling event on 17 August 2016? – **Sakshi Malik**

Explanation: 23-year old Sakshi Malik from Rohtak (Haryana) became only the fourth woman athlete from India to win an Olympic medal as she won the bronze medal by defeating Aisuloo Tynybekova (Kyrgyzstan) 8-5 in the Play-off bout on 17 August 2016.

– Weightlifter Karnam Malleshwari (2000, Sydney), boxer MC Mary Kom (2012, London) and shuttler Saina Nehwal (2012, London) were the only other women players from India to have won a medal in Olympics.

– Sakshi turned the tables on the Kyrgyz wrestler in the dying seconds of the bout as Tynybekova was in complete command in most part of the clash.

– She also became the first-ever woman wrestler from India to win an Olympic medal.

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2) Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu on 17 August 2016 announced 4 new series of trains to be operational in the next couple of months. What are the names of these trains which were first proposed on the Rail Budget? –

Antyodaya Express, Humsafar Express, Tejas Express and UDAY Express

Explanation: Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu officially announced 4 new trains to be pressed into service within a couple of months. These new trains are – Antyodaya Express, Humsafar Express, Tejas Express and UDAY Express.

– **Antyodaya Express** will be a long-distance, fully unreserved, super-fast train service and is to be introduced for the common man. It will operate on dense routes.

– **Humsafar Express** will be a fully 3-AC train and is expected to provide safe and comfortable travelling experience to the middle-class.

– **Tejas Express** will run at 130 km an hour with facilities such as local

cuisine, Wi-Fi and other amenities on board.

– The term UDAY in **UDAY Express** stands for Utkrisht Double-Decker Air-conditioned Yatri. This new series of overnight trains plying on the busiest routes are expected to increase capacity by 40%.

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3) Former FIFA president **Joao Havelange** passed away at the age of

100 on 16 August 2016. He was an iconic sports administrator of which country? – **Brazil**

Explanation: Brazil's Joao Havelange held the FIFA presidency for 24 years until being succeeded by Sapp Blatter in 1998. He was also a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) from 1963 until 2011.

– In 1974 he succeeded Britain's Sir Stanley Rous to be elected FIFA president, marshalling support among those unhappy at the perceived European domination of the world governing body. As FIFA president he led the World Cup's expansion from 16 to 32 teams, with six competitions held under his tenure.

– It was Havelange who launched a wave of new tournaments, notably the world championships at Under-17 and Under-20 level in the late 1980s and the FIFA Confederations Cup and

FIFA Women's World Cup at the start of the 1990s.

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4) Which state became the first non-BJP state to ratify the amended GST Bill after this state's legislative assembly and council approved the GST Bill on 16 August 2016? – **Bihar**

Explanation: Bihar became the first non-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state to ratify the constitution amendment bill needed to roll out the proposed goods and services tax (GST) on 16 August 2016.

– Its legislative assembly and council approved the landmark legislation, making it only second to BJP-ruled Assam which ratified it a few days ago.

– The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) needs at least 16 states to ratify the bill. The alliance is in power in 14 states.

– Bihar being one of the earliest states to ratify the bill is significant also because the Chief Minister Nitish Kumar-led JDU had a bitter parting of ways with the BJP in 2013 following the nomination of Narendra Modi as the party's prime ministerial candidate in the 2014 general election.

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5) Which former union minister was appointed as the new Governor of Manipur by the Union Government on 17 August 2016? – **Najma Heptullah**

Explanation: Former union minister Najma Heptullah, who lost her cabinet post in the last reshuffle, was appointed Governor of poll-bound Manipur on 17 August. She had resigned from the Union Ministry on 12 July 2016 after crossing 75 years of age.

– She will now relieve V. Shamuganathan, Governor of Meghalaya, who has been holding additional duties with regard to Manipur since September 2015.

– Apart from Heptullah at Manipur, **Banwarilal Purohit** was given charge of Assam, while **VP Singh Badnore** was made Governor of Punjab, which too is headed for Assembly elections next year.

– **Prof. Jagdish Mukhi** was named Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands in place of Lt Gen (Retd) AK Singh.

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19-20th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) World No.1 Spain’s Carolina Marin shattered PV Sindhu’s hopes of winning an Olympic gold as she defeated her in the women’s badminton singles final at the Rio Olympics on 19 August 2016. With this gold medal Marin achieved which landmark achievement? – **She became first European woman to win Olympic women’s badminton singles title**

Explanation: Carolina Marin defeated India’s PV Sindhu by 21-19, 12-21, 21-15 to win the Olympic gold medal for women’s singles Badminton title. This was the first time that a European player won the women’s Olympic badminton gold which has been traditionally dominated by Asians in general and the Chinese in particular.

– The bronze medal was claimed by Nozomi Okuhara (Japan) when China’s Li Xuerui surrendered the medal by not playing in the bronze medal match.

– Despite her final loss, PV Sindhu became the first Indian to win a silver medal in badminton at the Olympics. She is just the fourth Indian to win an Olympic silver medal after Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore (2004), Vijay Kumar (2012) and Sushil Kumar (2012).

– A day before on 18 August 2016 Sindhu became the first Indian to reach a final in badminton at the Olympic Games after she defeated Japan’s Nozomi Okuhara. Earlier, she

defeated World No. 2 Wang Yihan in the quarterfinals.

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2) By winning the 4X100 m relay for Jamaica on 19 August 2016, sprinter Usain Bolt achieved which major achievement? – He became the first sprinter to win an extraordinary “triple-triple” of sprint titles

Explanation: Usain Bolt has now won the three sprint titles (100 m, 200 m and 4X100m relay) in three consecutive Olympic Games, an extraordinary achievement for any athlete. He is the first athlete to achieve this rare feat in sprints.

– Bolt drew down the curtain on his brilliant Olympic career by securing a sweep of the sprint titles for a third successive Games when Jamaica successfully defended the 4x100 m relay crown on 19 August 2016.

– On 19 August 2016 Usain Bolt ran the anchor leg as the Jamaicans won in 37.27 seconds to add the relay gold to the 100 m and 200 m titles he had won for a third straight Olympics. This was Bolt’s ninth gold medal.

– His ninth gold medal drew him level with Paavo Nurmi, the Finn who dominated distance running in the early 20th century, and American sprinter and long jumper Carl Lewis as the most successful Olympic track and field athletes.

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3) Which public-sector undertaking received the certificate of incorporation for its Payments Bank during August 2016? – **India Post**

Explanation: The Department of Posts' plan to set up a payments bank came one step closer to reality with The India Post Payments Bank Ltd (IPPB) receiving the certificate of incorporation from the Registrar of Companies on 17 August 2016.

– The Department of Posts is expected to complete the rollout of its branches all over the country by September 2017.

– The India Post Payments Bank will be managed professionally and most of its Grade A employees will be hired from market.



4) What is the name of the world's longest aircraft that took-off on its maiden flight on 17 August 2016 in the UK? – **Airlander 10**

Explanation: Airlander 10 is the name of the world's longest aircraft that is part plane and part airship. It has been developed by British firm Hybrid Air Vehicles (HAV). The £25m aircraft measures 92 m in length and is thus

about 15m longer than the biggest passenger jets.

– It took-off on its maiden flight from Cardington Airfield in Bedfordshire on 17 August 2016. Its original test flight on 14 August 2016 was postponed due to some technical reasons.

– Christened the 'Martha Gwyn', the aircraft was first developed for the US government as a surveillance aircraft but the project was shelved amid defence cutbacks. The huge aircraft will be able to stay airborne for around five days during manned flights.

– HAV claims it could be used for a variety of functions such as surveillance, communications, delivering aid and even passenger travel.

5) Indian wrestler Narsingh Yadav was ousted from Rio Olympics just before his first bout on 18 August 2016. While hearing WADA's appeal against the clean chit given to him in a dope scandal by India's doping agency NADA, the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) also slapped 4-year ban on him. Narsingh Yadav was alleged to have taken which banned substance? – **Methandienone**

Explanation: Narsingh Yadav's road to Rio was fraught with obstacles after he was named to represent India ahead of double Olympic-medallist Sushil Kumar.

- There was more drama in store for Narsingh after he returned positive for a banned steroid (Methandienone) following a dope test in June 2016 by the NADA.
- But days before the Olympics, Narsingh was cleared of doping charges by the NADA who said the wrestler was indeed a victim of ‘sabotage’ and deserved the benefit of doubt.
- However, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) filed an urgent application before the CAS ad hoc Division to challenge the decision of NADA India to exonerate Narsingh Yadav.
- The CAS panel did not accept Narsingh’s argument that he was the victim of sabotage and noted that there was no evidence that he bore no fault. The CAS also slapped 4-year ban on him thus ending his hopes of appearing in Olympics.

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21-22th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) 31st edition of Summer Olympics culminated at Brazilian city Rio de Janeiro through a grand closing

ceremony on 21 August 2016. What is India’s place in the final medals tally? –**67th**

Explanation: India finished a lowly 67th at the 31st Summer Olympics that closed at Rio de Janeiro on 21 August 2016. India won just two medals – a silver and a bronze. Badminton player P.V. Sindhu won the silver medal in women’s singles while woman wrestler Sakshi Malik gave India a bronze medal in women’s 58 kg freestyle wrestling event.

– India was tied with Mongolia at 67th place.

– It was an inferior performance for India this time as compared to the 2012 London Olympics where India won six medals – 2 silver and 4 bronze.

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2) USA once again came on top on the medals tally at Olympic Games at it finished with a total of 121 medals including 46 gold medals in the 31st Olympic Games that concluded in Brazil (Rio) on 21 August 2016. Which country shocked sporting powerhouse China to emerge second in the medals tally? – **Great Britain**

Explanation: Great Britain created Olympics history as it not just won second place in the overall medals tally at 31st Olympics by finishing one place above China but also became the first country to increase its medals tally in the games immediately following one it hosted.

– It is worth mentioning that Great Britain had finished third in the London Olympics of 2012 that it had hosted. It won a total of 65 medals in those games with 29 gold medals. While Britain got fewer gold medals in Rio Olympics (27), it won as many as 67 medals overall, which is 2 more than previous Olympics.

– Since the modern Olympic era began in 1896, no country has increased its medal tally at the summer Games immediately following one it hosted. Great Britain has now done this.

Rio 2016 medal table (Top Three)

Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	
USA	46	37	38	121
Great Britain	27	23	17	67
China	26	18	26	70



3) Urjit Patel was appointed by the Union Government as the new Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 20 August 2016. Patel, who will take charge on 4 September 2016, will becomeGovernor of RBI –**24th**

Explanation: On 20 August 2016 The Union Govt. named Urjit Patel as the 24th Governor of the RBI. He will take over from Raghuram Rajan when the latter leaves office after his term ends on 4 September 2016.

– It is expected that the choice of Urjit Patel will ensure continuity at the RBI since he has been the deputy governor in charge of monetary policy. He is the eighth RBI Deputy Governor to be promoted as the Central Bank chief.

– Patel has been instrumental in putting in place the flexible inflation targeting framework that the central bank is now following. Patel has also been responsible in making a number of other changes at the RBI including a revamp of HR processes.

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4) Which bank became the first public sector bank to make locker visiting facility free for its customers, as announced by this bank on 20 August 2016? –**Punjab National Bank (PNB)**

Explanation: In a customer-friendly move, public sector lender Punjab National Bank (PNB) on 20 August 2016 made locker visiting facility free for its customers. Earlier, the customers were allowed 12 free visits at lockers in a year.

– Now, the PNB locker holders can make any number of visits in a year without paying any additional cost. The new rule has been put in place since 1 August 2016. With this, PNB became the first public sector bank to make

locker visiting facility free for its customers.

– PNB used to charge customers Rs. 50 per visit after the limit of 12 free visits in a year. Banks in general charge customers to visit lockers beyond a permitted level in a year.

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5) What is the name of the Indo-Canadian Sikh MP who became Canada’s first woman House Speaker after she was named as the new Leader of the government in Canada’s House of Commons on 20 August 2016? – **Bardish Chagger**

Explanation: Bardish Chagger was on 20 August 2016 named as the new Leader of the government in Canada’s House of Commons, becoming the first woman to hold the post in the country’s history.

– Chagger, the 36-year-old Waterloo MP and Minister of Small Business and Tourism, was among 19 Indian-origin candidates who won in last year’s general election.

– The latest development made her the first woman in Canadian history to hold the job of guiding government legislation through Parliament and replaces Dominic LeBlanc.

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1) The Telangana Government on 22 August 2016 released a draft on re-organisation of

the state. According to this how many new districts will be created in the state? – **Seventeen (17)**

Explanation: In a major administrative revamp, the Telangana government on 22 August 2016 issued draft notification on rearranging district borders to create 17 new districts. With this the state will have 27 districts. The re-organisation of the state has been planned to be completed by October 2016.

– The state Government invoked a 1974 act that provides for the re-organisation. The number of mandals and revenue divisions too will go up.

– Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao has mooted the idea of carving out new districts in order to minimise the hassle for people in commuting to the district headquarters and to enhance the efficiency of the administration. The government has given a month’s time for people to send their feedback on the break-up of districts and formation of new revenue divisions.

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2) According to media reports appearing on 22 August 2016, the Union Government could present the next Union Budget by the end of January instead of last day of February as has been the practice of years. What is the primary reason for this proposed change? – **To complete the Budget exercise before the beginning of the new financial year**

Explanation: The Union Budget has for decades been presented on the last day of February, but this could soon change with the government mulling advancing it to January-end. This change is being planned so as complete the exercise before the beginning of the new financial year.

– While the Constitution does not mandate any specific date for presentation of the Budget, it is usually presented on the last working day of February and the two-stage process of parliamentary approval takes it to mid-May.

– As the financial year begins on 1 April, the government in March takes Parliament approval for Vote on Account for a sum of money sufficient to meet expenditure on various items for two to three months.

– The Finance Ministry is feeling if the Budget process was initiated earlier, there would be no need for a Vote on Account and a full Budget can be approved in one stage before

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3) Which four players were conferred with the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award for year 2016 as announced by the Union Government on 22 August 2016? – **P.V. Sindhu, Sakshi Malik, Dipa Karmakar and Jitu Rai**

Explanation: The Union Government on 22 August 2016 conferred the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2016 to Olympic medallists P.V. Sindhu and Sakshi Malik, ace gymnast Dipa Karmakar, who lost a medal by a whisker, and shooter Jitu Rai. This is for the first time the nation's highest sporting award has been conferred on four athletes.

– Dipa Karmakar's coach, Bishweshwar Nandi, was selected for the Dronacharya Award, alongwith Nagapuri Ramesh (athletics), Sagar Mal Dhayal (boxing), Raj Kumar Sharma (cricket), S. Pradeep Kumar (swimming) and Mahabir Singh (wrestling).

– The Punjabi University of Patiala will be awarded the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2015-16. On the other hand 15 sportspersons will be honoured with the Arjuna Award and three with the Dhyan Chand Award.

– The Selection Committee for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award and

the Arjuna Award was headed by Justice S.K. Agarwal, retired Delhi High Court Judge. The Selection Committee for the Dronacharya Award and the Dhyan Chand Award was headed by former boxer M.C. Mary Kom.

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4) What is the name of China’s largest high speed train maker that became the first foreign company to set up assembly line of rail transportation equipment in India? – **China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC)**

Explanation: China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC) is the name of the state-run high speed train maker of China. It is the largest such entity of China.

– On 21 August 2016 it announced that its first \$63.4 million joint venture plant in India to repair and manufacture railway locomotive engines has started operations.

– It thus became the first foreign company to set up assembly line of rail transportation equipment in India after Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled his ambitious ‘Make in India’ campaign in 2014.

– The joint venture named CRRC Pioneer (India) Electric Co. Ltd., is housed in Haryana. The plant will repair and manufacture railway locomotive engines.

– This is China’s first major investment in Indian Railways after the two worked out a multi-pronged collaboration for Chinese participation in the modernisation of Indian railway systems.

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5) Which Indian actor will receive French Government’s prestigious ‘Legion of Honor’ award, as announced during August 2016? – **Kamal Haasan**

Explanation: Actor Kamal Haasan will be awarded the ‘*Chevalier de L’Ordre Arts et Lettres*’ (The Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French government. The Order is part of France’s premier award, the Legion of Honor.

– This award is conferred “to recognize eminent artists and writers, as well as people who have contributed significantly to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world.”

– Other Indians who have been conferred the Chevalier Order include veteran musician Balamuralikrishna, and actors like Sivaji Ganesan, Amitabh Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai, Nandita Das and Shah Rukh Khan.

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1) During August 2016 the Union Govt. has decided in favour of banning all cash transactions above how much amount as was recommended by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) appointed by the Supreme Court? – **Rs. 3 lakh**

Explanation: To put a check on black money in the country, Narendra Modi-led NDA Government has decided to ban the cash transactions over Rs. 3 lakh. This was decided after the govt. received the recommendations from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) appointed by the Supreme Court.

– Since the Jan Dhan Yojna was launched two years ago, the number of bank accounts have squirted. Now, businessmen will have no excuse in payments making via banks. Until now, businessmen cite the reason for holding huge cash for making payments to employees.

– The finance ministry is also trying to promote use of plastic money and recently did away with transaction charges for government services.



2) Dr. Donald A. Henderson, who passed away during August 2016, was the iconic pioneer in the fight against which disease? – **Small Pox**

Explanation: Starting in 1966, Dr. Henderson led the World Health Organization’s war on the smallpox virus. He achieved success astonishingly quickly. The last known case was found in a hospital cook in Somalia in 1977.

– Smallpox, caused by the variola virus, was long one of mankind’s most terrifying scourges. It killed almost a third of its victims, often through pneumonia or brain inflammation. Many others were left blind from corneal ulcerations or severely disfigured by pockmarks.

– The only other disease to have been banished from the earth is Rinderpest, a little-known relative of measles that kills hooved animals and had once caused widespread starvation in Africa. It was eradicated in 2011.

– Dr. Donald A. Henderson passed away on 19 August 2016 at Towson, Maryland at the age of 87.



3) Global drug behemoth Pfizer Inc. on 22 August

2016 announced acquiring which cancer drug company in a deal worth \$14 billion that will add blockbuster prostate cancer drug Xtandi to its portfolio? – **Medivation Inc.**

Explanation: Pfizer Inc. would buy U.S. cancer drug company Medivation Inc. in a deal valued at about \$14 billion. This was announced by the company on 22 August 2016. The deal will add iconic prostate cancer drug Xtandi to Pfizer’s portfolio.

– Xtandi, which generated U.S. net sales of \$330.3 million in the second quarter, has posted double-digit growth, putting Medivation on track to achieve its target of more than 50 per cent in revenue growth for the year.

– Pfizer expects to complete the acquisition, which was approved by boards of both companies, in the third or the fourth quarter.

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4) Who took over as the second woman Chief Justice of Bombay High Court on 22 August 2016? – **Justice Dr. Manjula Chellur**

Explanation: Justice Dr. Manjula Chellur, till now the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, took oath as the Chief Justice of the Bombay High

Court at a swearing-in ceremony held at Raj Bhavan on 22 August 2016.

– She thus became the second woman Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court after Justice Sujata Manohar in 1994. She will have a tenure as the court’s 41st Chief Justice till her retirement on 4 December 2017.

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5) What is the name of the Mumbai-born brothers who came to limelight after their ad-tech venture was bought by a Chinese consortium for a mind-boggling \$900 million on 22 August 2016? – **Divyank and Bhavin Turakhia**

Explanation: Divyank and Bhavin Turakhia is the name of Mumbai-born brothers and serial entrepreneurs who came to limelight after their ad-tech venture Media.net was acquired by a China-listed consortium in an all-cash deal for \$900 million.

– This makes it one of the largest merger and acquisition (M&A) in the ad-tech industry beating Google’s buyout of AdMob for \$750 million in 2010, followed by Twitter’s acquisition of MoPub for \$350 million three years later.

– Chinese consortium, which has acquired Media.net from Turakhia brothers, is led by Beijing Miteno Communication Technology that will finally acquire the entity from consortium.

– It is worth mentioning that this is the second exit for Turakhia brothers who had earlier sold their web-presence business Directi to a Nasdaq-listed firm for \$160 million in 2014.

25th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) Major telecom companies rolled-out which new verification facility for mobile connections from 24 August 2016? – **Instant Aadhaar based eKYC**

Explanation: Major telecom companies like Airtel, Vodafone and Idea from 24 August 2016 started the e-KYC (electronic-Know Your Customer) facility for activation of SIM cards.

– Under this, customers will just need to know their Aadhaar number, which along with their fingerprint, will be good enough for confirmation for both new pre-paid and post-paid connections.

– It is worth mentioning that earlier in August 2016 the Department of Telecom (DoT) had issued a circular notifying “use of ‘Aadhaar’ e-KYC service for issue of mobile connections.



2) Which foreign newspaper on 24 August 2016 carried out the report that claimed massive data leak about the combat and stealth capabilities of Indian Navy’s soon-to-be inducted French Scorpene submarines after which Indian Govt. established a probe to sustain the claims? – **‘The Australian’**

Explanation: ‘The Australian’, in its report had claimed that it had seen the stunning leak running into 22,400 pages that details the entire secret combat capability of the six Scorpene-class submarines that French shipbuilder DCNS has designed for the Indian Navy.

– Leading Australian investigative journalist Cameron Stewart broke this leak story and he claimed that the leak came from a DCNS employee in France in 2011.

– Mazgaon Docks Limited (MDL) is building six Scorpene submarines with technology transfer from DCNS of France. This alleged leak shocked the whole defence fraternity in India and the Union Govt. ordered a high-level probe into the matter lead by Naval Chief.

3) Which state became the first in the country to sign MoU with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)? –

Maharashtra

Explanation: The Maharashtra Govt. on 23 August 2016 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Airports Authority of India for the proposed Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) to develop 10 districts.

– The 10 proposed airports under RCS are – Shirdi, Nanded, Amravati, Gondia, Nashik, Jalgaon, Solapur, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg.

– The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) is expected to provide numerous concessions to promote air operations in untapped routes as part of the National Aviation Policy and the Maharashtra Govt. is seeking to develop these 10 airports under the scheme.

– The central government can give concessions on aviation turbine fuel for RCS routes, while state can give concessions on VAT and lands for airport.

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4) “Akashvani Maitree”, the channel and website launched by President Pranab Mukherjee on 23 August 2016, will provide radio platform for listeners of which neighbouring country apart from India? – **Bangladesh**

Explanation: “Akashvani Maitree” – the Bangla radio channel is an initiative of All India Radio (AIR) that will provide a platform for blending content both from India and Bangladesh and preserving Bengali culture.

– Akashvani Maitree and its multimedia website is a unique venture and initiative of AIR not only for the Bengali listeners in West Bengal, Bangladesh and the adjoining areas but the entire Bengali speaking diaspora living in different parts of the globe.

– The channel will be broadcast from a state-of-the-art brand new high power 1000Kw DRM transmitter with a capacity to reach the entire length and breadth of Bangladesh through medium wave and will be also available globally on its website and mobile app.



5) The National Green Tribunal (NGT) on 23 August 2016 directed a Panama-based shipping company and its two Qatar-based sister concerns to pay Rs. 100 cr. as damages for causing an oil spill when a cargo vessel sank off Mumbai coast during August 2011. What was the name of this cargo vessel? – **MVRak**

Explanation: MV Rak was the name of a Panama-registered cargo vessel that was owned and managed by Republic of Panama's Delta Shipping Marine Services SA, Qatar-based Delta Navigation WLL and Delta Group International.

– It was carrying 60,054 MT coal of Indonesian coal that was sent from Lubuk Tutung in Indonesia and was to be delivered to in Gujarat. The cargo belonged to Adani Enterprise Limited (AEL). It sank approximately 20 nautical miles off the coast of Mumbai on 4 August 2011. This resulted in an oil slick in the Arabian Sea.

– NGT Chairperson Swatanter Kumar also ordered the Gujarat-based Adani Enterprises Ltd to pay Rs. 5 crore as environmental compensation for dumping coal in the seabed.

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26th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) In an important step towards cashless future in India, National Payments Corporation of India's (NPCI's) Unified Payments Interface (UPI) went live on 25 August 2016 that will enable customers to make everyday payments with just a few

taps on their smartphones. Of the participating 21 banks, which four banks launched their UPI-enabled apps on 25 August? – **Axis Bank, Union Bank, Federal Bank and Bank of Maharashtra**

Explanation: India moved closer to a cashless future on 25 August 2015 as four banks – Axis Bank, Union Bank, Federal Bank and Bank of Maharashtra – launched their Unified Payments Interface-based (UPI-based) apps. These 4 banks launched their UPI-enabled android apps on Google Play Store.

– The UPI system will allow customers to safely and instantaneously transfer funds almost as easily as they send a text message.

– The system uses a single identifier that eliminates the need to exchange sensitive information such as bank account numbers or credit card details during a financial transaction.

– The UPI system will be available only for bank customers with Android smartphones initially. Union Bank's UPI app, Federal Bank's Lotza, Axis Bank's Axis Pay and Bank of Maharashtra's MahaUPI apps are now UPI-enabled. However other participating banks will also launched their UPI-enabled apps very shortly.

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2) The world’s first self-driving taxis made its debut in which country on 25 August 2016? – **Singapore**

Explanation: nuTonomy, an autonomous vehicle software startup, on 25 August 2016 started world’s first self-driving taxis. Under this service, members of the public can hail a free ride through their smartphones in taxis operated by nuTonomy.

– It is worth mentioning that nuTonomy’s launch thus beat Uber, which has plans to offer such rides in Pittsburgh, by a few weeks.

– nuTonomy has initially started its service with small six cars, which it plans to grow to a dozen by the end of the year. The ultimate goal is to have a fully self-driving taxi fleet in Singapore by 2018, to help cut the number of cars on Singapore’s congested roads.

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3) According to media reports appearing on 25 August 2016, a government panel has recently cleared commercial use of genetically modified (GM) mustard seed that would be India’s first food crop. Which institution

has developed this GM seed? – **Delhi University**

Explanation: The GM mustard developed by Delhi University scientists makes use of three genes already incorporated in rapeseed hybrids in Canada, the United States and Australia.

– Media reports claimed that technical clearance for indigenously developed GM mustard seeds was given on 11 August 2016 by the panel of government and independent experts following multiple reviews of crop trial data generated over almost a decade.

– Permitting GM food crops is a big call for India, which spends tens of billions of dollars importing edible oils and other food items every year.

– But the road to final approvals for GM mustard seed will not be smooth due to wide-spread public opposition to the technology.

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4) Which European country was hit by a massive earthquake on 24 August 2016, resulting in the death of around 250 persons? – **Italy**

Explanation: A powerful earthquake measuring 6.2 on the Richter scale hit Central Italy in the early hours of 24 August 2016. The region affected by the quake is among the seismically most active in Italy, being affected by the meeting of the African and Eurasian tectonic plate.

– Scores of buildings were reduced to dusty piles of rubble in communities close to the epicenter of the quake.

The most hit towns were Amatrice, near the epicentere, Accumoli and Pescara del Tronto. Around 250 persons were killed while around 400 persons were injured.

– In Amatrice, the facade and rose window of the church of Sant’ Agostino were destroyed. The quake also created cracks in the Baths of Caracalla in Rome.

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5) What is the name given to the online library initiative launched on 24 August 2016 for persons with visual and print disabilities by the department of empowerment of persons with disabilities, (DEPwD)? – **‘Sugamya Pustakalaya’**

Explanation: ‘Sugamya Pustakalaya’ is the name of the online library launched for persons with visual and print disabilities. It will include online books in various accessible formats.

– This online library will focus on collection of all accessible materials from all over the country in single online library system.

– The initiative has been created in collaboration with National Institute of Visually Handicapped (NIVH), member organizations of Daisy Forum of India (DFI), Bookshare and powered by TCS Access.

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28-30th August 2016 *Nirdeshak*



1) In an important development, India successfully tested its own scramjet engine as it launched two such engines from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota (AP) on 28 August 2016. With this India became just thecountry in the world to demonstrate the flight testing of scramjet engine – Fourth

Explanation: India became just the fourth country/entity in the world to demonstrate the flight testing of scramjet engine as Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) test launched two scramjet engines from Sriharikota on 28 August 2016.

– First successful test of scramjet engine (also called air-breathing engine) was done by Russia in 1991. The European Space Agency (ESA) became second entity/country to achieve this milestone. Later in 2004 NASA propelled the US in this league. Now India has become the fourth country to successfully test scramjet engine technology.

– The flight of scramjet engines is an important milestone in ISRO’s endeavour towards its future space transportation system. The scramjet

engine is used only during the atmospheric phase of the rocket's flight.

– Scramjet engines will help bringing down launch cost by reducing the amount of oxidiser to be carried along with the fuel. Such engines designed by ISRO uses hydrogen as fuel and the oxygen from the atmospheric air as the oxidiser.

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2) According to the resolution passed by the West Bengal Government on 29 August 2016, it has been proposed to give three new names to the state in three languages. Which three proposed names are these? – **Bangla in Bengali, Bengal in English and Bangal in Hindi**

Explanation: The West Bengal Assembly passed a resolution to change the name of West Bengal to Bangla in Bengali, Bengal in English and Bangal in Hindi on 29 August 2016.

– The said resolution was moved by state Parliamentary Affairs Minister Partha Chatterjee under Rule 169 of the Constitution. It was passed by 189-31 votes. The proposal for name change was adopted by the state Cabinet on 2 August 2016.

– The Mamata Banerjee-led state government has said that the proposed change is being undertaken for cultural reasons as well as logistical reasons.

– However, opposition parties including Congress, the Left Front and BJP opposed the move.

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3) Vijay Kelkar, Ratan Tata and Nandan Nilekani are joining hands to start a microfinance institution (MFI) from their respective philanthropic capital. What is the name of this upcoming MFI? – **Avanti Capital**

Explanation: Vijay Kelkar, former finance secretary and chairman of the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), Ratan Tata, chairman emeritus of Tata Sons and Nandan Nilekani, co-founder of Infosys Ltd and the architect of Aadhaar, are in the process of floating a new microfinance institution (MFI) named 'Avanti Capital' by investing in it.

– Venkataramanan, managing trustee of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, will be the fourth founding director. The investment in this entity will be done from the respective philanthropic capital of the entrepreneurs.

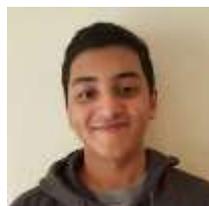
– Avanti Capital will be a technology-enabled financial inclusion vehicle and will focus on delivering affordable and timely credit to under-served and un-served segments in India.

– Avanti will apply to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for registration and is expected to start operations before the end of the financial year.

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4) Which new IIT institute was formally inaugurated on 28 August 2016 that became the first IIT of Karnataka state? – **IIT Dharwad**

Explanation: Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javdekar formally launched IIT Dharwad chapter in Dharwad on 28 August 2016. It thus became the first IIT institute in the state of Karnataka.

- It is overall the 23rd IIT in the country.
- IIT Dharwad has already started functioning from this academic year (2016-17) from a temporary structure. Located at Walmi centre on Dharwad's outskirts till its permanent campus is built in the sprawling 470 acres allocated by the government at nearby Kelgeri town, the institute will be mentored by IIT-Bombay over the next three years.



5) What is the name of the Indian origin teenager who came to limelight recently as he devised a way to solve the problem of how to make a deadly form of breast cancer more treatable? – **Krtin Nithiyandam**

Explanation: 16-year old UK-based Krtin Nithiyandam came to limelight during August 2016 as he claimed to have found a way to make a lethal form of breast cancer more treatable. It is called the triple negative breast cancer and it is considered deadly because it does not respond to drugs.

- It is a kind breast cancer that shows aggressive tumour behaviour and poor prognosis.
- Krtin believes he has found a way to coax the more deadly cells associated with this type of cancer into their differentiated form by blocking a protein called ID4.
- He had last year won the Google Science Fair for creating an Alzheimer's test which can spot the disease 10 years before diagnoses.



6) What achievement was made by the only Indian-owned F1 team Force India at the 2016 Belgian Grand Prix that concluded on 28 August 2016? – **Force India got fourth place in the Constructors' Championship as it overtook Williams F1 team**

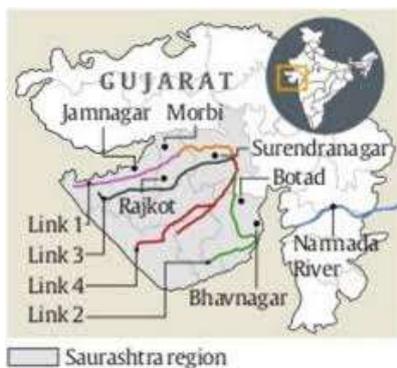
Explanation: Force India, the first-ever and the only F1 team owned by an Indian management achieved a historic milestone at the 2016 Belgian Grand Prix on 28 August as it the team managed to finish fourth (Nico

Hulkenberg) and fifth (Sergio Perez) in the race.

- It was best-ever showing of 2016 calendar and propelled it to fourth place in the Constructors' Championship, a point ahead of the legendary Williams F1 Team.
- The race was won by Mercedes team's Nico Rosberg (Germany) while Red Bull team's Daniel Ricciardo (Australia) and Rosberg's teammate and F1 champion Lewis Hamilton (UK) finished second and third respectively.

31st August 2016

Nirdeshak



1) What is the name of the massive irrigation project inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 30 August 2016 that aims to solve the water problems of the parched Saurashtra region of Gujarat? – **Saurashtra Narmada Irrigation (SAUNI) Project**

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first phase of the Saurashtra Narmada Irrigation (SAUNI) Project at Sanosara in Gujarat on 30 August 2016. The

ambitious project that aims to solve the water problems of the parched Saurashtra region is a brainchild of Narendra Modi when he was Chief Minister of the state.

- The project was launched in 2012. The Rs. 12,000 crore project involves filling up 115 dams in the region with excess water from the Sardar Sarovar dam.
- In the first phase, around 10 dams and reservoirs of Jamnagar, Rajkot and Morbi will be filled with water from Narmada River. It is being claimed that nearly 10,22,589 acres of farming land would benefit once the project is completed.

(Photo Courtesy: Indian Express)

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2) What is the new minimum wage for unskilled non-farm workers of the central government as announced by the Union Government on 30 August 2016? – **Rs. 350 per day**

Explanation: The Union Government announced a hike in minimum wage for unskilled non-farm workers of the central government (for 'C' category areas) to Rs. 350 per day, from the current Rs. 246 per day on 30 August 2016.

- The decision to raise minimum wage was taken following deliberations at the meeting of the Minimum Wage Advisory Board under the chairmanship of the Labour Minister

for revising the basic minimum wages in the central sphere.

– The hike was seen as an attempt to mollify trade unions that have threatened to go on a nation-wide strike on 2 September 2016.



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3) A panel of the European Union on 30 August 2016 ordered Apple Inc. (US) to repay a record \$14.5 billion (€13 billion) plus interest as penalty for tax benefits it enjoyed from a selective tax treatment provided by a European country. Which country is this? – **Ireland**

Explanation: EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager on 30 August 2016 disclosed that Ireland granted illegal tax benefits to Apple Inc., which enabled it to pay substantially less tax than other businesses over many years. The illegal tax benefit allowed Apple to pay an effective corporate tax rate of 1% on its profits in 2003 down to just 0.005% in 2014.

– This is the largest tax penalty in a three-year crackdown on sweetheart fiscal deals granted by EU nations.

– However, charges of the EU were opposed by the Irish Government as well as Apple Inc. Apple said it would appeal against an EU ruling and is confident the decision will be overturned.

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4) Indian wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt got an Olympic medal upgrade for his 2012 bronze medal as a Russian wrestler was found guilty of using banned substances. What is the name of this Russian wrestler who had won the Silver medal? – **Besik Kudukhov**

Explanation: With Russia's Besik Kudukhov being found guilty of using banned substances, he has been stripped of his silver medal in the 60kg freestyle category at the 2012 London Games, clearing the way for Yogeshwar's bronze medal to now be upgraded to silver.

– With this, Yogeshwar will join Sushil Kumar as the second Indian wrestler, and only the fifth Indian ever, to win an individual silver medal at the Olympics.

– It is worth mentioning that Kudukhov had beaten Yogeshwar and went on to finish runner-up. He died in a car accident in 2013. USA's Coleman Scott will now be the sole bronze medallist.

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5) England posted the highest ever one-day international (ODI) total of 444 runs as they beat Pakistan by 169 runs at Trent Bridge on 30 August 2016 to secure a series victory. Whose record England broke? – **Sri Lanka**

Explanation: The score 444 for 3 wickets scored by England against Pakistan at Trent Bridge is the highest ODI score till date. This surpassed the 443-9 posted by Sri Lanka against the Netherlands in 2006.

– The England record was helped by a brilliant 171 by Alex Hales, 90 not out by Joss Buttler and 85 by Joe Root. Buttler also made England’s fastest ever 50 from 22 balls.

– Pakistan were forced to bat aggressively but their batsmen struggled to build partnerships as they were bowled out for 279.



6) Which automobile giant launched its Jeep range of global sports utility vehicles (SUVs) in India on 30 August 2016? – **Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA)**

Explanation: Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) on Tuesday launched two of its global sports utility vehicles (SUV) – the Jeep Wrangler and the Jeep Grand Cherokee in India. These iconic SUVs have been priced between Rs. 71.59 lakh and Rs. 1.12 crore (ex-showroom, New Delhi).

– The flagship SUVs will be imported as completely built units (CBUs) and will be available in three cities shortly – Ahmedabad from 1 September, followed by New Delhi and Chennai.

– The company has invested \$280 million in a facility at Ranjangaon, near Pune, to mobilise its localisation strategy.

1 September 2016



1) Which important facility was started by the Indian Railways for passengers booking train tickets online from 31 August 2016? – **Facility to opt for travel insurance cover of up to Rs 10 lakh**

Explanation: A person booking a train ticket through the IRCTC website will be able to opt for travel insurance cover for a premium of 92 paise only from 31 August 2016. The new facility has been made available to all passengers excluding those travelling on suburban trains while booking online irrespective of the class. It has been started on a trial basis.

– It does not cover children up to 5 years of age and foreign citizens. It is for passengers holding tickets such as confirmed, RAC and wait-listed ones.

– The scheme offers travellers/nominees/legal heirs a compensation of Rs. 10 lakh in the event of death or total disability, Rs. 7.5 lakh for partial disability, up to Rs. 2 lakh for hospitalisation expenses and Rs. 10,000 for transportation of mortal remains from the place of a train accident or where an untoward incident, including terrorist attack, dacoity, rioting, shootout or arson, occurs.

– The scheme has been implemented by IRCTC in partnership with ICICI Lombard General Insurance, Royal Sundaram General Insurance and Shriram General Insurance selected through a bidding process.

– Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu had in his budget (2016-17) speech announced that the railways will provide optional travel insurance for train journey at the time of booking.

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2) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 30 August 2016 issued which important guideline to banks pertaining to registration of customers' mobile number? – **It made it mandatory for banks to allow customers to register their mobile numbers through any ATM**

Explanation: In an important move the RBI has made it mandatory for banks to allow customers to register their mobile numbers through any ATM. Banks have also been told not to insist that customers visit only their home branch to get their mobile numbers registered and to have this facility for customers across branches.

– It is worth mentioning that registering mobile numbers (linking numbers to bank accounts) is important because it facilitates SMS alerts for every transaction and helps curb fraud. Mobile numbers are also used to send one-time passwords (OTPs) in transactions where the credit card is not present.

– A registered mobile number is also a prerequisite for using a mobile banking application.

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3) The Supreme Court on 31 August 2016 quashed the allotment of 1,000 acres by the former CPI(M)-led government in West Bengal to Tata Motors declaring that the entire acquisition process was illegal. In which year this allotment was done? – **2006**

Explanation: The court was hearing petitions filed by farmers, questioning the manner in which over 1,000 acres was allotted by the CPI(M)-led government to Tata Motors without adhering to sections 4 and 5 of the Land Acquisition Act, which mandate public notice for receiving objections.

– The Left Front government’s policy to acquire the land saw widespread protests in the State and ultimately led to an electoral victory for Mamta Banerjee’s Trinamool Congress.

4) Which state became the first in the country to distribute 2 crore LED bulbs under the Union Government’s Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for all (UJALA) scheme? – **Gujarat**

Explanation: According to a release of the Union Power Ministry Gujarat has become the first state to distribute 2 crore LED bulbs under the Government of India’s Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for all (UJALA) scheme.

– Gujarat has reached this milestone in just 96 days and over 42 lakh households have already benefited from the scheme.

– The distribution of 2 crore LED bulbs has led to an annual energy savings of 259 crore kwh, which is equivalent to

lighting up 5 lakh Indian homes for an entire year. Alongside the savings, the state has also gained from daily CO2 emission reduction of 5,000 tonnes.

5) Which entity has entered into agreement acquire TEN Sports Network from Zee Entertainment or \$385 million, as announced by it on 31 August 2016? – **Sony Pictures Networks India**



Explanation: According to an announcement made on 31 August 2016, Sony Pictures Networks India (SPN) and its affiliates have entered into definitive agreements to acquire TEN Sports Network from Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEE) and its subsidiaries for \$385 million (Rs 2,600 crore).

– The TEN Sports channels being acquired include TEN 1, TEN 1 HD, TEN 2, TEN 3, TEN Golf HD, TEN Cricket, and TEN Sports that operate in several countries, including the Indian sub-continent, Maldives, Singapore, Hong Kong, West Asia and Caribbean.



6) During August 2016 who made history of sorts when appointed as the first-ever Hindu priest to serve in the role of Chaplain at any university in the United States? – **Brahmachari Vrajvihari Sharan**

Explanation: Brahmachari Vrajvihari Sharan came to limelight after he was appointed Chaplain in Georgetown University. He thus became the first-

ever Hindu priest to serve as the Chaplain in any university of the US.

– Sharan led his first worship service on 28 August 2016 with around 40 students attending this service.

– Sharan is a Senior Monk at Shri Golok Dham Ashram (Vrindavan and New Delhi) where he was initiated in 2003. He subsequently completed ritual training at the Vishwanath Sannyas Ashram in both Varanasi and Delhi.

– He is an Acharya (a qualified trainer of Hindu priests) and advises more than twenty temples worldwide.

2 September 2016



1) With the ratification of the Constitution

Amendment Bill for Goods and Services Tax (GST) by which state's Legislative Assembly on 1 September 2016, the bill is now ready for President's nod? – **Odisha**

Explanation: The Odisha Legislative Assembly on 1 September 2016 unanimously ratified the Constitution Amendment Bill for Goods and Services Tax (GST), thus paving the way for sending the bill for Presidential approval and ushering the country in GST regime.

– The Constitution (122nd Amendment) Bill, 2014 on GST was passed by Parliament recently and Odisha has become the 16th state to ratify it after Goa. Ratification of the Bill by at least half of the total States was mandated before it is sent for the President's nod.

2) The 2-day “BRICS Convention on Tourism” started at which place in India from 1 September 2016? – **Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh)**

Explanation: The “BRICS Convention on Tourism”, being held on 1-2 September 2016 in Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh), is a precursor to “The BRICS Summit” to be held in Goa on 15-16 October 2016. The event is being organized by the Ministry of Tourism.

– Delegations from all 5 BRICS countries (Brazil, China, India, Russia and South Africa) participated in this 2-day event. It primarily comprised of inter- Governmental exchange of views and ideas, Panel discussions on Technology, Innovation in Tourism, and Cooperation between the BRICS countries for promoting intra-regional tourism.

3) India has decided to grant Permanent Residency Status (PRS) to foreign investors in an effort to shore up greater foreign investments. The decision pertaining to this was taken by the Union Cabinet on 31 August 2016. What is the proposed primary eligibility criterion for this status? – **Minimum investment Rs. 10 crore within 18 months or Rs. 25 crore within 36 months by foreign investor**

Explanation: The Union Cabinet on 31 August 2016 approved the Permanent Residency Status (PRS) scheme that will allow foreign investors who qualify for the status and their families multiple entry into the country for a maximum of 20 years without any stipulation governing their stay.

– Until now, investors have only been eligible for business visas lasting up to five years.

– In order to avail this scheme, the foreign investor will have to invest a minimum of Rs. 10 crore within 18 months or Rs. 25 crore within 36 months. Further, the foreign investment should result in generating employment to at least 20 resident Indians every financial year.

– While the PRS will be granted for 10 years, it can be reviewed for an additional 10 years if the PRS holder does not come to adverse notice.

– The scheme is in line with similar incentives offered by jurisdictions such as Hong Kong and Singapore, which are among the top investment destinations in the world.



4) The Senate of the Brazilian Parliament impeached Dilma Rousseff, country's first female president, and removed her from office for the rest of her term on 31 August 2016. What was the main charge against her? –

Manipulating the federal budget in an effort to conceal the nation's mounting economic problems

Explanation: The Senate impeached the suspended President Dilma Rousseff by 61 votes in favour of impeachment and 20 against it. She was earlier suspended from the post of President during May 2016 to face the impeachment trial.

– The impeachment thus put a definitive end to 13 years of governing by the leftist Workers' Party. This was the era, during which Brazil's economy boomed, lifting millions into the middle class and raising the country's profile on the global stage.

– On the other hand Michel Temer, the interim president who served as

Rousseff's vice president before breaking with her this year, was sworn-in as country's new President. He is expected to stay in power until the next scheduled election in late 2018.

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5) History was created when first U.S. commercial flight in last 5 decades landed in Cuba on 31 August 2016. This historic flight carrying over 150 passengers was between which cities? – **Fort Lauderdale (U.S.) to Santa Clara (Cuba)**

Explanation: JetBlue Flight 387 was the first regularly scheduled commercial flight in 55 years between the United States and Cuba, the Cold War foes. This flight was thus another example of how the two countries are normalizing relations.

– A ceremonial water cannon salute showered the Airbus 320 jetliner before it departed Fort Lauderdale (Hollywood International Airport) while Cuban dignitaries at Santa Clara (Abel Santamaría Airport) greeted the flight when it landed.

– Nine other U.S. airlines will soon follow with their own routes, which could balloon up to 110 flights per day from cities throughout the U.S. to Cuban cities.

– U.S. President Obama had opened the door to Cuba in December 2014, when he and Cuban President Raul Castro announced that the longtime foes would re-establish diplomatic relations.

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3 September 2016

1) Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) completed how many years of its incorporation on 1 September 2016? – **60 years**

Explanation: Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) came into existence on 1 September 1956 and it started its operations from this date. It was incorporated by consolidating the business of over 250 private life insurance companies that were providing their services at that time.

– Earlier the Parliament of India had passed the Life Insurance of India Act on 19 June 1956 creating the Life Insurance Corporation of India.

– Thus LIC completed 60 years of its incorporation on 1 September 2016. It commemorated its 60 years by organizing Diamond Jubilee celebrations. LIC is the largest insurance company in India with an estimated asset value of Rs. 1,560,482 crore (US\$230 billion).

2) As part of its Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India announced what benefit for its policyholders on 1 September 2016? – A one-time bonus ranging from Rs 5 to Rs 60 per thousand rupees of sum assured

Explanation: Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) on 1 September 2016 announced a special one-time bonus ranging from Rs 5 to Rs 60 per thousand rupees of sum assured to policyholders as part of its Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

– This converts into Rs 500 for a policyholder with an assured sum of Rs 1,00,000, or Rs 6,000, depending on the duration of the policy, meaning older the policy or closer to the maturity date, maximum the bonus.

– The bonus will be eligible for policies in force as of 31 March 2016, and existing on or after 1 September 2016. Even policies which have lapsed as of

31 March 2016 will be eligible provided they are subsequently revived.

– The move will benefit over 29 crore individual policyholders of LIC as well as over 12 lakh group policyholders.



3) Which political party was recognized as a national party by the Election Commission of India

(ECI)? – **All India Trinamool Congress (TMC)**

Explanation: According to an order of the ECI, the Trinamool Congress has satisfied one of the conditions mentioned in the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968 to be recognised as a national party.

– It is a recognised State party in West Bengal, Manipur, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh.

– With this, India has seven recognised national parties – the Congress, the BJP, the BSP, the CPI, the CPI(M), the NCP and the All India Trinamool Congress. Recognition as a national or a State party ensures that the election symbol of that party is not used by any other political entity in polls across India.

– A political party becomes eligible to be recognised as a national party if it has won 2% of seats in Lok Sabha from at least three different States in the latest general election; or in a Lok Sabha or Assembly election it has polled 6% of the total valid votes in at least four states, in addition to winning four Lok Sabha seats; or it has been recognised as a State party in at least four states.

4) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 1 September 2016 came out with which new measure for banks' stressed assets? – **It expanded the market for banks' stressed assets by permitting them to be sold to other lenders**

Explanation: The RBI expanded the market for banks' stressed assets by permitting them to be sold to other lenders, including non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and financial institutions. It also issued guidelines specifying that all assets classified as doubtful should be reviewed by the board of banks or a committee of board members.

– Till now the banks were permitted to sell stressed assets to securitisation companies and reconstruction companies.

– Besides, RBI also mooted an e-auction mechanism for NPAs to attract a wide variety of buyers.

5) What is the name of the new political party floated by cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu, as announced on 2 September 2016? – **Awaaz-e-Punjab**

Explanation: The announcement of new political party named 'Awaaz-e-Punjab' was done on 2 September 2016 online through a poster. The poster featured Navjot Singh Sidhu, Akali Dal MLA and former Olympian Pargat Singh and the Bains brothers, who are Ludhiana-based Independent MLAs.

– Sidhu also announced that his newly founded outfit will contest the 2017 assembly polls on all 117 seats.

– Earlier, there were reports that Sidhu, who resigned as BJP Rajya Sabha member could join Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP).

4-5 September 2016

1) Pope Francis officially declared Mother Teresa a saint at a Sunday morning Mass on 4 September 2016. After this canonization, Mother Teresa is now known by which official name? – **St. Teresa of Calcutta**

Explanation: Mother Teresa, the tiny nun who cared for the world's most unwanted, became the icon of the Roman Catholic faith on 4 September 2016 as her canonization was held at St. Peter's Cathedral in the Vatican City on this day.

– She was formally declared a Saint by Pope Francis. After being conferred with the sainthood, Mother Teresa will be formally known as St. Teresa of Calcutta. Albanian born Mother Teresa (1910-1997) was a Roman Catholic nun and missionary.

– She was the founder of the 'Missionaries of Charity' in India that run homes for the diseased and dying people. She arrived in India in 1929 and devoted rest of her life in India. She became Indian citizen in 1948 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.



2) Urjit Patel took over as the new Governor of the Reserve

Bank of India (RBI) on 4 September 2016 as Raghuram Rajan's term as head of India's central bank ended a day earlier on 3 September 2016. What is Patel's chronological order as RBI's Governor? – **24th**

Explanation: Urjit Patel became the 24th Governor of the RBI on 4

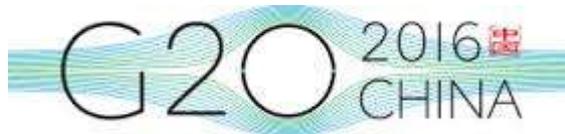
September 2016 as he replaced Raghuram Rajan.

– Patel is someone who is well versed with the changing dynamics of Indian economy since early 1990s. Even during the current tenure under Raghuram Rajan, he is best-known for preparing a report that helped India shift to an inflation targeting regime for setting interest rates.

– He is an economist from Yale University, has worked at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) from 1990 to 1995 and been a non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution since 2009.

– It is worth mentioning that Osborne Smith, a professional banker, was the first Governor of the RBI and held this prestigious post from 1 April 1935 to 30 June 1937.

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3) The 2016 G20 Summit started at which Chinese city from 4 September 2016, in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the Indian contingent? – **Hangzhou**

Explanation: The 2016 G20 Summit, which is the 11th summit of the world's 20 largest economies, is being held on 4-5 September 2016 at Hangzhou (China). It is also the first ever G20 summit to be hosted in China. China thus became the second Asian to host the summit after 2010 G20 Seoul summit was hosted in South Korea.

– Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the Indian contingent in the Summit. Other G20 countries include – Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi

Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, the UK, the USA and the European Union.

– Eight guest invitees in 2016 G20 Summit at Hangzhou include Chad, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Laos, Senegal, Spain, Singapore and Thailand.

– US President Barack Obama and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping announced the ratification of the Paris Agreement (of the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference) by their countries at the Summit.

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4) Indian insurance regulator IRDAI during September 2016 extended the revival option for unit-linked insurance plans (ULIPs) to two years which means lapsed ULIPs could be revived even two years after the policy has lapsed. What was the maximum revival period for ULIPs till now? – **90 days**

Explanation: The earlier regulation insisted on payment within 90-days for ULIPs, following which the ULIP would lapse. Lapsed policies are a huge cost and concern for both insurers and policyholders.

– Taking this into account, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) during September 2016 announced that policyholders will be able to revive ULIPs even two years after the policy has lapsed.

– The new regulation makes ULIPs on par with traditional plans, which have always enjoyed a two-year grace period for payment.

– The average tenure of most ULIP plans is 10-20 years. IRDAI has mandated that ULIPs should run a minimum tenure of 10 years.

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5) Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on 3 September 2016 approved the use of chilli-based PAVA shells for crowd control measures in the Kashmir Valley, thus banning the use of the controversial pellet guns. The term PAVA in these chilli-based guns stands for – **Pelargonic Acid Vanillyl Amide**

Explanation: Pelargonic Acid Vanillyl Amide (PAVA) shells are also known as Nonivamide. PAVA shells are non-lethal, which temporarily incapacitates the target and paralyzes them for a few minutes. The shells actually contain an organic compound found in chillis.

– The Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh approved the use of PAVA shells in place of the controversial pellet shells. The use of pellet guns and the number of fatal eye injuries in the Kashmir Valley resulted in a huge outcry over its use by security forces to control protests.

– An expert panel was thus setup to find a suitable alternative to pellet guns for crowd-control measures in the wake of violent protests after the killing of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani on 8 July 2016.

– Around 1,000 PAVA shells reached Kashmir Valley on 4 September 2016.



6) The Guinness World Records during September 2016 officially declared India's Majuli Island (Assam) as the World's largest river island (fluvial island). This record was held by

which geographical body till now? – **Marajo Island (Brazil)**

Explanation: Brazil's Marajo Island (in the Amazon River) was till now the largest river island in the World, according to the Guinness World Records. Its place has now been taken by Assam's Majuli Island in India.

– Majuli Island is surrounded by Subanisri River in the North, main Brahmaputra River on the South and Kherkatia Suli, split channel of Brahmaputra River in northeast. The island has total 144 villages with a population of over 160,000 and a density of 180 individuals per square km.

– It is spread over an area of 880 sq. km.

6 September 2016

1) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently came out with which proposal with regard to Islamic banking? – **It changed its outlook towards Islamic banking and potentially proposed opening Islamic finance in the country**

Explanation: The RBI has proposed working with the government to introduce interest-free banking to tackle financial exclusion for religious reasons, potentially opening Islamic finance to the largest Muslim minority population in the world.

– This proposal was made in RBI's annual report that was released on 3 September 2016.

– The proposal marks a shift in stance by the RBI, which had previously said Islamic finance could be offered through non-bank channels such as investment funds or cooperatives.

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2) What is the name of the sitting Supreme Court judge who during September 2016 sent a communication to the Chief Justice of India, expressing his

disinclination to participate in the meetings of the Supreme Court collegium? – **Justice J. Chelameswar**

Explanation: Justice J. Chelameswar came to news as sent a communication to the Chief Justice of India Justice T.S. Thakur during September 2016, expressing his disinclination to participate in the powerful Supreme Court collegium meetings.

- Collegium is the Supreme Court group that meets to recommend appointments and transfers of judges.
- It is worth mentioning that Justice Chelameswar was the lone dissenting judge on the five-judge Constitution Bench led by Justice J.S. Khehar, which scrapped the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) law passed by Parliament and upheld the collegium system of judicial appointments in a majority judgment on 16 October 2015.
- He is the fifth senior-most judge in the Supreme Court hierarchy and is scheduled to retire on 22 June 2018.

3) Outgoing RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan during September 2016 came out with what warning for the financial world that was given wide coverage in the media all over the world? – **He warned against low interest rates worldwide**

Explanation: In an interview to the New York Times published on 4 September 2016, Raghuram Rajan

cautioned that low interest rates globally could distort markets and will be difficult to abandon.

- He said such measures by central banks cannot substitute other policy instruments and broader reforms and expressed hope that his successor will finish the process of cleaning bank balance sheets.
- It is worth mentioning that Rajan had predicted the 2008 global financial crisis almost 3 years ago. He had said that excessive risk threatened the entire global financial system.



4) Which company came to limelight as it surpassed China Mobile

Ltd to become China's most valuable company, as was revealed on 5 September 2016? – **Tencent Holdings Ltd.**

Explanation: Chinese mobile gaming and online advertising entity Tencent Holdings Limited came to news on 5 September 2016 as it surpassed China Mobile Ltd to become the country's most valuable company.

- Tencent rose 4.2% to HK\$210.20 in Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index (HSI) on 5 September, reaching a market value of HK\$1.99 trillion (\$256.6 billion), edging past China Mobile's HK\$1.97 trillion and putting the tech company in the ranks of the world's 10 largest public companies, including Apple Inc. and Alphabet Inc. (Google's parent company).
- Tencent's shares have jumped four-fold in as many years by building a lead in mobile gaming and online advertising, surpassing a roughly 20% advance in the HSI.

– Since 2006, the title of China’s most valuable company has been held mainly by government-controlled heavyweights such as China Mobile, Industrial & Commercial Bank of China Ltd or PetroChina Ltd.

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5) Which Canadian province became the first foreign government to issue masala bonds, after it successfully issued the rupee-denominated bond on the LSE? – **British Columbia**

Explanation: Canada’s British Columbia became the first foreign government issuer of masala bonds, with the province successfully raising Rs.5 billion through a rupee-denominated bond on the London Stock Exchange (LSE).

– British Columbia’s bond with a three year tenor was priced to yield 6.62% semi-annually, according to the Canadian government.

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7 September 2016



1) A Supreme Court Bench of Justice Dipak Misra on 5 September 2016 quoted a judgment delivered 54 years ago to state that criticism of the government should not be treated as sedition. The quoted case involved which person’s alleged seditious language against government? – **Kedar Nath**

Explanation: A Constitution Bench led by the then Chief Justice of India B.P. Sinha had in 1962 dismissed the sedition case against one Kedar Nath of Bihar who on 26 May 1953 had told villagers at Barauni in Bihar that if they can drive out the British, they should met the same treatment to the Congress people.

– The 1962 verdict became a defining point for free speech and a blow to the government’s power to muzzle free speech and criticism invoking the draconian colonial law of Section 124 A (sedition) of the Indian Penal Code of 1870.

– The same case was quoted by Justice Dipak Misra in his order on 5 September 2016 as he said that every word of the 1962 Constitution Bench still holds true. The order was given in a case filed by NGO Common Cause and anti-nuclear activist Dr. S.P. Udayakumar.



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2) The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) came out with what important new revelation about the Giant

Panda on 5 September 2016? – **It stated that the Giant Panda is now classified as a “vulnerable” instead of “endangered” species**

Explanation: The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said in a report released on 5 September 2016 that the Giant Panda is now classified as a “vulnerable” instead of “endangered” species. This reflects its growing numbers in the wild in southern China.

– According to this report the wild panda population jumped to 1,864 in 2014 from 1,596 in 2004, the result of work by Chinese agencies to enforce poaching bans and expand forest reserves.

– The panda population reached an estimated low of less than 1,000 in the 1980s due to poaching and deforestation until Chinese Government threw its full weight behind preserving this bamboo-gobbling, black-and-white bear.

– The Chinese government and the World Wildlife Fund first established the Wolong National Nature Reserve in Sichuan province in 1980.

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3) Which country made a new record in T20 internationals as it scored 263 on 6 September 2016? – Australia

Explanation: Australia broke the world scoring record in Twenty20 internationals on 6 September 2016 as an unbeaten century by opener Glenn Maxwell helped the tourists to 263 for 3 against Sri Lanka and win the match by 85 runs at Pallekele.

– The previous mark had been set by Sri Lanka at 260 for 6 against Kenya in 2007.

– Asked to bat first, Maxwell smashed nine sixes and 14 boundaries for his 145 not out in 65 balls to guide Australia to its record-breaking 20-over total.

– Maxwell’s total was also the second highest individual score in T20 internationals, behind teammate Aaron Finch’s 156.

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4) What tennis Grand Slam history was created by Serena Williams on 5 September 2016 as she defeated Yaroslava

Shvedova of Kazakhstan to reach the quarter-finals of 2016 US Open? –

She set a new Grand Slam record of 308 victories and surpassed Roger Federer

Explanation: World number one Serena Williams set a new Grand Slam record of 308 victories with a win over Yaroslava Shvedova of Kazakhstan at the US Open in New York on 5 September 2016.

– With this she surpassed Roger Federer’s record of 307 Grand Slam wins. She had earlier surpassed tennis legend Martina Navratilova’s record of 306 Grand Slam wins.

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5) The Union Health Ministry on 5 September 2016 launched a massive 2 week campaign – ‘Leprosy Case Detection Campaign’ (LCDC) aimed at eradicating leprosy in 149 endemic districts across 20 states. What is the criterion for these endemic districts? –

Where the prevalence rate of the disease is more than one case per 10,000 population

Explanation: The districts having a prevalence rate of more than one case per 10,000 population in any of the last three years have been included in the ‘Leprosy Case Detection Campaign’ (LCDC). This will be second such campaign.

– A total of 297,604 teams comprising one female ‘ASHA’ worker and one male volunteer each would visit every house in their allotted area and screen all the family members for leprosy.

– The states which the LCDC will cover are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Delhi and Lakshadweep.

8 September 2016



1) Tech behemoth Apple Inc. launched which two new range of its iPhones on 7 September 2016? – iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus

Explanation: Apple Inc. CEO Tim Cook launched iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus in a product launch event in San Francisco on 7 September 2016.

– The new phones come in two sizes, a 4.7-inch screen and a 5.5-inch Plus model, and feature several changes including water and dust resistance.

– Apple has removed the headphone jack in favour of earbuds that connect through the phone’s charging port. It also unveiled a set of wireless headphones called AirPods that can be purchased separately at extra cost.

– The storage has been doubled in new iPhones, with 32GB is now base storage with the black variants only available in 128 and 256 GB. Pricing remains the same as the same as the iPhone 6s, with the iPhone 7 Plus costing \$760.



2) What is the primary objective of the #Gas4India campaign that was launched by the Union Petroleum and Natural Gas

Ministry on 6 September 2016? – **Promote natural gas in the country and make the country a gas-based economy**

Explanation: #Gas4India is the name of a unified cross-country, multimedia, multi-event campaign to communicate the national, social, economic and ecological benefits of using natural gas as the fuel of choice to every citizen.

– #Gas4India campaign was launched by the Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry on 6 September 2016 with the primary objective of promoting the use of gas in the country. Under the campaign, public and private sector companies working in the sector have joined hands to promote the natural gas sector.

– The campaign includes social engagement via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and its official blogsite, as well as hyper local, offline events to directly connect with consumers.

3) Which public-sector oil company recently launched dynamic pricing at a few of its retail outlets on a pilot basis and thus became the first entity to launch such initiative in this sector? – **Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd (HPCL)**

Explanation: To beat competition from its own peers and private players, state-run Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd (HPCL) recently launched the experiment with dynamic fuel pricing at its fuel retail outlets.

– The initiative of dynamic pricing has been launched at a few of its retail outlets on a pilot basis, to be extended to other outlets across the country at a later stage.

– Dynamic or real-time pricing means the cost of a product could be flexible and is a common phenomenon internationally.

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4) What is the name of the 2-day tsunami mock drill featuring 23 nations that started from 7 September 2016 in Indian Ocean in India? – ‘IOWave16’

Explanation: The mock-drill named ‘IOWave16’ involves evacuation of around 35,000 people from the coastal regions of India. It started on 7 September 2016 and is featuring 23 countries including India as the host country.

– The evacuation drill is being taken up in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala, Gujarat and Goa.

– The drill is being organised by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the UNESCO, which coordinated the setting up of Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWMS) in the aftermath of the 26 December 2004 tsunami. More than 2 lakh people were killed in that deadly tsunami.

– The major objectives of IOWave16 include testing the efficiency of communication links, disaster management offices and local communities at risk.

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5) What is the name of the Indian scientist under whose leadership a Delhi University team has developed a genetically modified (GM) mustard variety that is inching towards a possible commercial launch? –

Deepak Pental

Explanation: Deepak Pental and his colleagues at the Delhi University worked on GM mustard for around a decade. A Government committee on 5 September 2016 announced that it found the seeds to be safe for “food/feed and environment”. This GM mustard variety is the first indigenously developed GM food crop of India.

– Government of India will soon decide on the commercial launch of the high-yielding mustard and plans to indigenously develop other GM food to reduce reliance on multinationals such as Monsanto.

– However commercial production of GM food crops in the country has been opposed by activists and politicians amid fears GM food could compromise food safety and biodiversity.

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6) Who became the first woman cricketer from India to be awarded an honorary life membership of the prestigious Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC)? – Anjum Chopra

Explanation: Former India captain Anjum Chopra created cricketing history as she was awarded an honorary life membership of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

– Having made her international debut at 17, Anjum went on to play 12 Tests, 127 ODIs and 18 T20s. A left-hander, Anjum aggregated 548 runs in Tests, 2,856 runs in ODIs, which included a century against England at Northampton in 1999. She led India to a rare Test series win against South Africa in 2002.

– She was also the first Indian woman to hit an international century.

9 September 2016

1) Indian Railways implemented an experimental dynamic surge pricing system on which three series of trains from 9 September 2016 under which passengers will have to shell out between 10-50 per cent more depending upon the time they purchase the ticket? – Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Durgam Expresses

Explanation: Indian Railways implemented the dynamic surge pricing system (or flexi-fare system) on an experimental basis in the air-conditioned and Chair Car coaches of the three trains – Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Durgam besides the Sleeper Class in Durgam trains. This system implemented from 9 September 2016 has been modelled on the dynamic fare system in vogue in the aviation sector.

– While 10% of the seats will sell at normal fare, charges will rise by 10%

with every 10% of berths sold, with a ceiling of 50%.

– First AC and Executive Class coaches have been kept out of the new system given that their tariffs are already premium.

– The revised fares will not apply to tickets already issued for journeys to commence on or after 9 September 2016. Dynamic surge pricing system is expected to rake in Rs. 500 crore more for Indian Railways.

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2) What is the name of the advanced weather satellite that was successfully placed in the intended orbit by ISRO through its GSLV-F05 rocket on 8 September 2016? – INSAT-3DR

Explanation: INSAT-3DR is the name of India's third exclusive meteorological satellite that was launched on 8 September 2016 by GSLV-F05 rocket by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

– INSAT-3DR, configured with an imager and two transponders, will continue the services rendered by previous satellites and further augment the capability to provide both meteorological and search and rescue services.

– India now has six meteorological satellites out of which three – Kalpana-1, INSAT-3D and INSAT-3DR – are exclusively for providing weather services.

– It was Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV's) fourth flight with the indigenous cryogenic engine CE-7.5, with the first three being developmental flights. Hence it was just the first operational flight of GSLV.

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3) Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated Majuli as state's new district on 8 September 2016. What is a special feature associated with this new district? – **It became India's first island district**

Explanation: Majuli, the 400 sq. km island on the Brahmaputra River on 8 September 2016 became the first river island district of India. It became the 35th district of the state of Assam.

- The decision to upgrade Majuli to a district from sub-division was one of the first decisions taken by the Sarbananda Sonowal government in Assam, on their first cabinet meeting on 24 May 2016, after coming to power with a thumping majority.
- The island, which is the cultural capital of the state, is also fighting for survival as almost 60% of the land has been washed away by the Brahmaputra.
- It is worth mentioning that Majuli has toppled Marajo in Brazil to bag the coveted title by Guinness World Records, improving its bid to be declared a UNESCO world heritage site.

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4) The 2016 ASEAN Summit concluded on 8 September 2016. This

summit was held at which place? – **Vientiane (Laos)**

Explanation: The summit meet of the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was held from 6 to 8 September 2016 at the Laotian capital Vientiane.

- On the sidelines of the ASEAN Summit, the East Asia Summit was also held in Vientiane that was spearheaded by the United States and China while 6 other countries – Russia, India, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand were other members. India was led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the East Asia Summit.
- East Asia Summits are held after ASEAN leaders' meeting and include all ASEAN member nations.
- China's diplomatic, economic and military clout within ASEAN and the region was the top agenda in ASEAN summit as well as the East Asia Summit.

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5) The first edition of Internet of Things (IoT) India Congress 2016 started from 7 September 2016 at which city? – **Bengaluru**

Explanation: Internet of Things (IoT) India Congress aims to bring together key stakeholders across the value chain and verticals to collaborate, ideate and share a common road-map for IoT implementation.

- The 3-day event was inaugurated by Information Technology (IT) and Electronics Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad.
- It brought together the IoT practitioners (hardware-devices, portables, sensors, software, business) and IoT enablers (regulatory, training, investors in IoT, end users) on one stage.

10 September 2016



1) Which state has been adjudged the cleanest State in the country in the list on the condition of sanitation in rural areas of 26 states as released in a survey carried out last year by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO)? – **Sikkim**

Explanation: The result of the survey carried out in 2015 by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) was released on 8 September 2016 by Union Rural Development, Drinking Water and Sanitation Minister Narendra Singh Tomar.

– The NSSO conducted the survey in May-June 2015 covering 73,176 households in 3,788 villages across the country. The ranking were given on the basis of percentage of households having access to sanitary toilets and using them (either household or community toilets).

– Sikkim scored 98.2% on a scale of 100 to emerge as the cleanest State in the country. Kerala scored 96.4. Among the other top 10 states were Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Haryana, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Meghalaya.

– The States which fared poorly in the study include Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir.

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2) Which districts emerged as the cleanest districts in the country in 'Hills' and 'Plains' categories as disclosed by Union Rural Development, Drinking Water and Sanitation Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on 8 September 2016? – **Mandi (Hills) and Sindhudurg (Plains)**

Explanation: A total of 22 hill districts and 53 plain areas were assessed under the Gramin Swachh Survekshan launched in May this year. Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) was judged as the cleanest district in 'Hills' category and Sindhudurg (Karnataka) cleanest in the 'Plains' category.

– The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation had commissioned Quality Council of India (QCI) to carry out the assessment. Each district has been judged on four distinct parameters. Maximum weightage was placed on accessibility to safe toilets and water.

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3) Which bank on 8 September 2016 became the first bank in India to deploy 'software robots' that emulate human action, in its over 200 business processes? – **ICICI Bank**

Explanation: On 8 September 2016 the country's largest private lender ICICI Bank became the first bank in India to deploy 'software robots, that emulate human action, in its over 200 business processes, thereby reducing the response time to customers by up to 60%.

– The bank claimed that it has re-engineered over 200 business processes which are powered by software robots across various functions of the bank.

– This initiative marks a milestone in the banking innovation in the Indian banking industry as it joins a select

group of overseas organisations which have deployed this unique state-of-the-art robotic technology in such a large way.

- Software robots have reduced the response time to customers by up to 60% and increased accuracy to 100% thereby improving the bank's productivity and efficiency.



4) The use of which Samsung smartphone was banned by the Ministry of Civil Aviation on board aircrafts in India on 9 September 2016? – **Samsung Galaxy Note 7**

Explanation: The Ministry of Civil Aviation on 9 September 2016 advised airlines and travellers not to turn on or charge the Samsung Galaxy Note 7 smartphone during flights. Passengers can carry them in their hand baggage in switched-off mode.

- Passengers have also been advised not to stow them in their checked-in baggage
- This phone has been under scrutiny since it was recalled for having batteries that are at risk of catching fire and exploding.
- This announcement was done a day after US regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a similar warning.
- It is worth mentioning that Samsung has said it shipped 2.5 million units of the Galaxy Note 7 since its launch on 19 August 2016, many of which have been recalled.

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5) In Britain's biggest damages claim, a lawsuit worth \$19 billion against which financial entity was filed in the country on 8 September 2016? –

MasterCard

Explanation: The case brought by Walter Merricks, a former chief financial services ombudsman alleges that the global card payments company MasterCard set unlawfully high fees charged to stores when shoppers swipe their debit or credit cards that were passed on to consumers in higher prices.

- Mastercard was accused of doing this for 16 years between 1992 and 2008, according to the documents filed at the Competition Appeal Tribunal on 8 September 2016.
- Merricks was head of Britain's financial services ombudsmen for ten years until 2009, helping to settle disputes between consumers and financial services companies.

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6) Who defeated World No.1 Serena Williams in the semi-finals of U.S. Open to make her maiden entry into a tennis Grand Slam final on 8 September 2016? –**Karolina Pliskova** (Czech Republic)

Explanation: Karolina Pliskova of Czech Republic upset Serena Williams in the semi-final of U.S. Open by 6-2, 7-6 (7-5) to make her first appearance in a Grand Slam final.

- Thus for the second year in a row, Serena Williams' bid to make history ended with a shocking loss in the U.S. Open semifinals. The defeat also ended Williams' 3-year reign as World No. 1.
- At the 2015 U.S. Open, Williams' bid for a calendar-year Grand Slam ended

when she lost in the semi-finals to unseeded Roberta Vinci of Italy in one of the biggest surprises in tennis history.

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11-12 September 2016



1) India's Mariyappan Thangavelu created history on 9 September 2016 by winning the gold medal in the men's high jump T-42 event at the Rio Paralympics. He thus became overall theIndian to win a gold medal in Paralympics –**Third**

Explanation: With his jump of 1.89 m, Mariyappan Thangavelu won the gold medal in the men's high jump T-42 event at the Rio Paralympics on 9 September 2016. His compatriot Varun Singh Bhati clinched the bronze medal in the same event. With this he became the third Indian to win gold medal in Paralympics.

– In Paralympics history, India's other two gold medals came through Murlikant Petkar (swimming in 1972 Heidelberg, West Germany) and Devendra Jhajharia (javelin throw in 2004 Athens).

– Bhati jumped his personal best of 1.86 metres to finish third. India's other medal prospect Sharad Kumar finished at sixth. This is the first time 2 Indians had finished on the podium in the same event.

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2) The United States and Russia on 10 September 2016 announced a landmark agreement and entered into an unexpected military partnership. This agreement pertains to the objective of bringing peace in which west Asian country? – **Syria**

Explanation: The breakthrough agreement on Syria between the United States and Russia was announced in the early hours of 10 September 2016 after daylong final negotiation session in Geneva between U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

– The agreement foresees a nationwide ceasefire starting 12 September 2016, followed a week later by an almost unexpected new military partnership targeting the Islamic State and the al-Qaeda as well as the establishment of new limits on President Bashar Assad's forces.

– The agreement is expected to reduce violence in Syria and lead to a long sought political transition, ending more than five years of bloodshed.

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3) Who won the U.S. Open men's singles title on 11 September 2016 to become the oldest U.S. Open men's champion in 46 years? –**Stanislas Wawrinka**

Explanation: Stanislas Wawrinka (Switzerland) won the third Grand Slam title of his career as he defeated World No. 1 Novak Djokovic (Serbia) by 6-7 (1/7), 6-4, 7-5, 6-3 to win the

men's singles title of 2016 U.S. Open on 11 September 2016.

– 31-year old Wawrinka thus became the oldest winner of the men's tournament since 35-year-old Ken Rosewall in 1970 and the first over 30 to take the title since Pete Sampras in 2002.

– This was the first U.S. Open title for Wawrinka. His first Grand Slam title was the Australian Open in 2014. Later he added the French Open title to his kitty in 2015.

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4) Who won the women's singles title of 2016 US Open on 10 September 2016 and also claim the world

no1. spot in women's tennis? –

Angelique Kerber

Explanation: Angelique Kerber of Germany won her first U.S. Open title on 10 September 2016. It is also her second Grand Slam title after Australian Open this year. She defeated Karolina Pliskova of Czech Republic by 6-3, 4-6, 6-4. It was the first Grand Slam title for Pliskova who had defeated Serena Williams in semi-final.

– Kerber became only the second German woman to achieve the world's top ranking since computer rankings were introduced in 1975, and the first since Steffi Graf in March 1997.

– At 28 Kerber, she also the oldest player to make her debut at No.1, a record previously held by Jennifer Capriati, who was 25 years, 200 days when she reached No.1 in October 2001.

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5) Which district of the country has been chosen for carrying out experiments

on the ambitious LIGO project (the first outside the U.S.) that proved existence of gravitational waves? – **Hingoli (Maharashtra)**

Explanation: According to disclosures made by a senior scientist with the Department of Science and Technology, Maharashtra's Hingoli district has been chosen for carrying out experiments on the ambitious LIGO (Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory) project that proved existence of gravitational waves, a major breakthrough in science.

– This proposed facility is expected to be established at Aundh in Hingoli district (Maharashtra). A flat site with four km unhindered strips is needed to carry out the LIGO experiments and Aundh site fits the bill.

– It would be third such laboratory in the world, first outside the United States. The existing laboratories are located in Hanford, Washington, and in Livingston, Louisiana.

– LIGO-India will bring considerable opportunities in cutting edge technology for Indian industries.

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13 September 2016

1) Who created history by becoming the first ever woman from India to win



a medal at the Paralympics on 12 September 2016? – **Deepa Malik**

Explanation: India's Deepa Malik created history by becoming the first ever woman from the country to win a medal at the ongoing Rio Paralympics (Brazil) on 12 September 2016. She bagged a silver medal in the shotput F-53 event. Her throw of 4.61m was the best in her six attempts.

– Fatema Nedham of Bahrain won the gold medal with the best throw of 4.76m.

– Deepa is a paraplegic, paralysed from waist down and mother of two and wife of an Army officer. She was affected by a spinal tumor some 17 years ago that made it impossible for her to walk.

– Her silver is third medal of the Games for India after gold and bronze were won by Mariyappan Thangavelu and Varun Singh Bhati in men's high jump.

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2) The Union Cabinet approved setting up of the GST Council on 12 September 2016. What will be the most keenly awaited action of this Council? – **The decision on the final GST rate**

Explanation: The Union Cabinet approved setting up of the GST Council, which will decide on the rate of tax under the new Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, likely to kick in from 1 April 2017.

– The GST Council will consist of Union Finance Minister, Minister of State in charge of Revenue Department and State finance ministers. It will make recommendations on important issues related to GST, including items and rates. Its secretariat costs will be borne by the central government.

– The GST Council will be created as per Article 279A of the amended

Constitution and its Secretariat will have its office at New Delhi.



3) The Supreme Court on 12 September 2016 ordered what modification of its earlier order to release 15,000 cusecs of Cauvery River to Tamil Nadu? – **It reduced the amount to be released from 15,000 cusecs to 12,000 cusecs a day**

Explanation: The Karnataka Government had filed a plea in the Supreme Court to restrain its earlier order of 5 September 2016 to release 15,000 cusecs of Cauvery River water from its reservoirs to a distressed Tamil Nadu. The state government had asked to completely stop the release of water.

– A Bench of Justices Dipak Misra and U.U. Lalit refused to agree with Karnataka's plea to completely stop the release of water. However, it reduced the amount to be released from 15,000 cusecs to 12,000 cusecs a day.

– The Bench ordered that for the interim, Karnataka will release 12,000 cusecs on a daily basis till 20 September 2016.

– It is worth mentioning that Karnataka Government in its plea had said that it cannot control the turmoil within the State post the court order to release Cauvery River water to Tamil Nadu. The turmoil and public unrest turned more violent in Karnataka on 12 September.

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4) What is the name of the Governor of Arunachal Pradesh who was removed from his post by President Pranab Mukherjee on 12 September 2016? – **Jyoti Prasad Rajkhawa**

Explanation: Jyoti Prasad Rajkhawa was sacked from the post of Governor of Arunachal Pradesh by the President Pranab Mukherjee on 12 September 2016.

– The sacking was imminent after Home Minister Rajnath Singh conveyed during a meeting with President Pranab Mukherjee on 7 September 2016 that Rajkhawa’s position had become untenable and he had lost the centre’s confidence.

– It is worth mentioning that in July 2016 the Supreme Court while restoring the Congress Government in the state had accused Governor Rajkhawa of violating the constitution. Later the Union Govt. had asked Rajkhawa to resign “on health grounds” but he had defiantly refused to step down.

– Rajkhawa, a former bureaucrat, was appointed Arunachal Pradesh Governor by the NDA Government in 2015.

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5) The Fair Fixation Committee of Delhi Metro submitted its report to the Union Urban Development Ministry during September 2016. The

committee has primarily recommended a sharp increase of up to 66% in ticket prices. Who led this committee? –

Justice (retd) M.L. Mehta

Explanation: The Union Government had in June 2016 set up the three-member Fair Fixation Committee under former Delhi high court judge, Justice (retd) M.L. Mehta to look into fare revision issue of Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and report within three months.

– According to media reports the committee has recommended the lowest fares to be increased to Rs10 from Rs. 8 now, and the maximum fare to Rs. 50 from Rs. 30 at present.

– Now the DMRC board, headed by the Urban Development Secretary Rajiv Gauba, will take a final call on the Committee’s recommendations on fare hike.

14 September 2016



Padma Vibhushan



Padma Bhushan



Padma Shri

1) Union Government during September 2016 came out with which important policy change in the process of the selection of the awardees for various Padma awards? – **To throw open the nomination process of the awards to the general public**

Explanation: The Union Government took a major step in the process of nominating the persons for the prestigious Padma Awards by throwing open the nomination process of the Awards to general public. This means any Indian can now recommend any achiever for the Awards.

- This step was taken in order to maintain transparency and curb the crony culture of lobbying and influence in choosing the various persons for these annual awards which have been awarded since 1954.
- The nominations can be made online on the site (<http://padmaawards.gov.in/>) but the nominators would be required to furnish their Aadhaar details for authenticity and accountability. This website also hosts an interactive dashboard of all the awardees from 1954, the year when these awards were instituted, to 2016.
- Opening up of the nomination process to the general public will also help in identifying unsung or lesser known people of excellence.



2) For the fourth time in its history, the heads of states gathered for the UN General Assembly meeting (on 13 September 2016) started discussions on a burning global health issue that needs to be addressed on a war footing. Which global health issue is this? – **Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)**

Explanation: The rising antimicrobial resistance (AMR), seen in new strains of drug-resistant bugs, was the main issue on which discussions started at the 71st United Nations General Assembly meeting that started from 13 September 2016.

- This is just the fourth time that a burning health issue has featured as the primary issue in a UN General Assembly meeting. It is the fourth such health concern after Ebola, non-communicable diseases and HIV.
- At the UNGA, India, already in the spotlight for misuse of antibiotics, will have to submit and have in place national action plans to combat AMR as outlined in the resolution adopted at the 68th World Health Assembly, held in 2015.
- It is worth mentioning that the UN General Assembly meets every year in regular session commencing on the Tuesday of the third week in September 2016.



3) Who won the second gold medal for India at the 2016 Rio Paralympics on 13 September 2016? – **Devendra Jhajharia**

Explanation: India's Devendra Jhajharia bettered his own world record to win gold in the men's javelin throw F46 event at the 2016 Rio Paralympics on 13 September. He improved on his previous record by throwing the javelin to 63.97 metres mark to create a new world record.

- He had won gold in the javelin event at the 2004 Athens Paralympics with a record throw of 62.15 metres.
- Devendra thus took India's tally at this edition of the Paralympics to four medals – two golds, one silver and a bronze.
- The Rajasthan born Devendra, with an amputated left hand, was awarded the Arjuna award in 2004 and the

Padma Shri in 2012, becoming the first Paralympian to receive the honour.

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4) The Union Cabinet on 12 September 2016 gave its approval to a proposal to set an agency to raise Rs. 20,000 crore from loans and bond sales to fund infrastructure development at central higher educational institutions. What is the name given to this agency? – **Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)**

Explanation: The proposed Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) will be a special purpose vehicle (SPV) and work from a state-run bank. It is expected to ease pressure on the government, which currently is the sole funder of such institutions.

– The agency will have a capital base of Rs. 2,000 crore, of which Rs.1,000 crore will be equity from the central government.

– The move to establish HEFA may mark the beginning of a market-linked fee structure in central government-funded educational institutions, including the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), National Institute of Technology (NITs) and central universities.

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5) What is the name of the latest release of the iOS operating system released by Apple Inc. on 13 September 2016 that will serve company's iPhone and iPad range? – **iOS 10**

Explanation: iOS 10 is the tenth major release of the iOS operating system developed by Apple Inc., being the successor to iOS 9. iOS 10 update for iPhone (from iPhone 5 onwards) and iPad is expected to be milestone

software for Apple products, with major changes to phone and tablet routine.

– The new operating system improves and adds upon user experience system-wide including 3D Touch expansion, an updated lock screen, and “widget” support.

– iOS 10 was first introduced at the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference keynote address on 13 June 2016.

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15-16 September 2016

1) The Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare during September 2016 declared India free from Avian Influenza (H5N1). According to the government notification, the last outbreak of H5N1 in India was reported from which place? – **Humnabad (Karnataka)**

Explanation: India had notified outbreak of Avian Influenza (H5N1) on 9 May 2016 at Humnabad, Bidar district, Karnataka. There has been no further outbreak reported in the country thereafter. After this several control measures were adopted in the radius of one Km around outbreak location.

– Post the surveillance the state has shown no evidence of presence of Avian Influenza. India has declared itself free from Avian Influenza (H5N1) from 5 September 2016.

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2) Which global chemical giant on 14 September 2016 confirmed its acquisition of GM seeds business Monsanto for \$66 billion, a deal that would create the world's biggest seeds and pesticides company? – **Bayer AG**

Explanation: Bayer AG is a German multinational chemical and pharmaceutical company founded in 1863. It confirmed its record-breaking \$66bn takeover of GM seeds business Monsanto on 14 September 2016. U.S.-based Monsanto is known for its genetically modified (GM) seeds for crops.

– The use of such seeds is widespread in the US, but plans to introduce these into Europe and Asian countries have prompted fierce protests by environmental activists.

– The deal, which will give the new company control of more than 25% of the world’s supply of seeds and pesticides, comes amid a wave of mergers in the agriculture sector.

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3) The merger between which two telecom entities on 14 September 2016 created the third largest mobile operator by subscriber base in India? – **RCom and Aircel**

Explanation: According to an announcement made on 14 September 2016, Anil Ambani-led Reliance Communications (RCom) will merge its wireless business with Aircel to create the country’s third-largest mobile operator by subscriber base. It will have a combined subscriber base of 195 million, behind Bharti Airtel and Vodafone.

– RCom and Aircel’s Malaysia-based promoters Maxis Communications Berhad will hold 50 per cent each in the venture, with equal representation on the board.

– The creation of the new entity will first involve RCom demerging its existing cellular business, which has around 100 million subscribers. Other businesses, including tower assets

and fixed-line enterprise units will continue to remain with RCom. The wireless unit will then be merged with Aircel.

– RCom had earlier merged with Sistema JSFC’s Indian operations – MTS- under which the Russian company holds a 10 per cent stake in RCom.

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4) The 3rd edition of the BRICS Urbanisation Forum Meet started from 14 September 2016 at which place in India? – **Vishakhapatnam**

Explanation: The 3rd BRICS Urbanisation Forum Meet was inaugurated in Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) by Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on 14 September 2016.

– Around 300 delegates from the 5 BRICS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa are participating in the 3-day meeting.

– The primary objective of the Meet is to discuss the new challenges, investments and planning in the field of urbanization.

– The conference will also discuss how to increase the productivity, how to make a separate urban finance system and creation of employment opportunities.

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5) What is the name of the strongest super typhoon of 2016 that hit the Philippines and Taiwan before making its landfall in Southeast China in the early hours of 15 September 2016? –

Typhoon Meranti

Explanation: Typhoon Meranti, also known as Typhoon Ferdie in the Philippines, is the strongest typhoon since Typhoon Megi in 2010 in terms of pressure, the strongest since Typhoon Haiyan of 2013 in terms of maximum sustained winds, as well as the strongest tropical cyclone in 2016.

– The first warning about this tropical warning was issued on 8 September 2016 by the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) as it developed about 155 km west of Guam in the western Pacific Ocean. On 12 September 2016, the JTWC upgraded Meranti to a super typhoon, with 1-minute maximum sustained winds of 240 km/h.

– It thus became the strongest tropical cyclone worldwide in 2016, surpassing Cyclone Winston which had winds of 290 km/h (180 mph) when it struck Fiji in February 2016.

– Tens of thousands of homes lost power across Taiwan as the island-country was hit by super-typhoon Meranti on 14 September 2016. Later the super typhoon struck mainland China in the early hours of 15 February 2016 and despite losing its stream it brought heavy destruction here. Xiamen was the most affected city.

6) Which team won the 55th edition of Duleep Trophy on 14 September 2016? – **India Blues**

Explanation: Ravindra Jadeja's match haul of ten wickets and Cheteshwar Pujara's unbeaten 256 in the first

innings helped India Blues beat India Green by a mammoth 355 runs to win the 2016 edition of the Duleep Trophy.

– India Red was the third team of the tournament.

– This was the first domestic-level first class cricket tournament to be played in flood lights with pink balls.

17 September 2016

1) The 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is being held at which place? – **Margarita Island (Venezuela)**

Explanation: Founded in 1961, The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a group of states which are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. Venezuela is the host country of the 17th Summit of the NAM countries. The Summit is being held from 13 September to 18 September 2016.

– India is a founding member of the NAM with later Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru known as one of the pillars and conceivers of the movement.

– The host country Venezuela is, meanwhile, reeling under a severe economic crisis with its economy shrinking (-8%, according to International Monetary Fund figures) and the world's worst inflation rate (482%).

– There have been reports of food riots and the government has declared a state of emergency. In fact, to host the NAM summit, President Nicolas Maduro has reportedly shut down Margarita Island.

2) What important fact is associated with Indian representation in the 17th NAM Summit? – This is the first NAM summit since 1979 that has not been attended by an Indian Prime Minister

Explanation: On 15 September 2016, Vice-President Hamid Ansari left for Venezuela's Margarita Island, where the 17th NAM summit is being hosted from 13 to 18 September 2016.

– This is thus the first NAM summit that has not been attended by an Indian PM, except for 1979 when caretaker PM Charan Singh skipped the summit in Havana.

– Much has been made of Prime Modi's decision to skip the summit, considering that NAM counts Jawaharlal Nehru as one of its founding fathers. It is believed that the pursuit of a US-centric foreign policy could be one of the main reasons, since one of NAM's founding principles was to stay neutral during the Cold War. However, the Indian Government is not accepting this and has reiterated that its NAM policies remain unchanged.

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3) The 100th anniversary (Birth Centenary) of which maestro associated with Indian classical music was observed on 16 September 2016? – M.S. Subbulakshmi

Explanation: Madurai Shanmukhavadiyu Subbulakshmi (M. S. Subbulakshmi) was the leading

exponent of classical and semi-classical songs in the Carnatic tradition of South India. She was the first musician ever to be awarded the Bharat Ratna (in 1998).

– Born on 16 September 1916 in Madurai (Tamil Nadu) M. S. Subbulakshmi was one of the leading Carnatic vocalists of her era. She travelled to London, New York, Canada, the Far East, and other places as India's cultural ambassador.

– She also acted in a few Tamil films in her youth. Her many famous renditions of bhajans include the chanting of Bhaja Govindam, Vishnu sahasranama, Hari Tuma Haro and the Venkateswara Suprabhatam.

– She passed away on 11 December 2004 in Chennai at the age of 88 years.

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4) Barring former Chief Minister Nabam Tuki, all the Congress MLAs of Arunachal Pradesh including Chief Minister Pema Khandu, on 16 September 2016 joined a new political front thus presenting the prospect of the Congress losing the government in the state. What is the name of this new political front? – People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh (PPA)

Explanation: In a shocker for the Congress, all but one of its MLAs on 16 September 2016 joined a new political front – People's Party of Arunachal Pradesh (PPA).

– Pema Khandu, who two months ago became Chief Minister in a development that restored the Congress government, joined the PPA with 43 MLAs and virtually converted it into a PPA government. Earlier the Supreme Court had restored the Congress government led by Nabam

Tuki but he abdicated in favour of Khandu.

– It is the second time this year that the Congress has been hit hard by rebellion.

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5) The meeting of the Environment Ministers of BRICS countries was held on 16 September 2016 at which place in India? – **Goa**

Explanation: Environment Ministers of BRICS nations met in Goa on 16 September 2016 to prioritise actions for cooperation in critical areas, including air and water pollution and climate change.

– The meeting assumed significance after the adoption landmark global environmental agreements like Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement last year.

– The Goa meeting was organized by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India.

– Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa comprising BRICS block together accounts for 41.6% of global population, 29.31 % of total world's territory and about 22% of world's total GDP. These nations have rich biodiversity and natural capital.

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18-19 September 2016



Army camp in Kashmir in the early

1) 17 soldiers of the Indian Army were killed and 19 were injured in a suicide attack on an

hours of 18 September 2016. This attack, the deadliest terrorist strikes on security forces in a decade, took place at which place? – **Uri (Baramulla District)**

Explanation: A fidayeen (suicide) attack by terrorists claimed lives of 17 Indian soldiers on 18 September 2016 as the heavy armed terrorists struck the camp close to the headquarter of the 12th Brigade at Uri in Baramulla District.

– Four terrorists involved in the attack were killed in the retaliatory action by the security forces.

– This attack was the deadliest terrorist strike on security forces in recent times and the biggest in a decade in J&K. It is worth mentioning that 7 military personnel were killed in the Pathankot (Punjab) terror attack in January 2016 when militants attacked the Indian Air Force base there.

– According to media reports, the reason for such high number of casualties in this attack could be attributed to the fact that a large number of soldiers had been stationed at the camp in tents and other temporary structures. Some of these tents caught fire during the attack.



2) What will be the name given to the latest and the most-advanced destroyer ship of the Indian Navy that was launched on 17 September 2016? – **INS Mormugao**

Explanation: The Indian Navy's latest destroyer ship, to be named the INS Mormugao, was launched at Mumbai's

Mazgaon Docks on 17 September 2016. The ship will now be fitted out with armaments and equipment and inducted into the Navy two years later.

– INS Mormugao is slated to be the most advanced destroyers built in India. The Rs. 7,000-crore warship, made under Project-15B, will have advanced stealth features and surface-to-air as well as cruise missiles.

– With displacement of 7,300 tonnes, the Mormugao spans 163 metres in length and is powered by 4 Ukrainian gas turbine engines to achieve speeds in excess of 30 knots, approximately 56 km per hour.

– The first ship under P-15B, INS Visakhapatnam, would be commissioned in 2018. In 2011, the government had sanctioned the construction of four destroyers under Project-15B at a cost of Rs 29,700 crore.

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3) The Supreme Court on 16 September 2016 gave which important order to give a boost to railway, metro projects and dedicated freight corridor projects in the country? – **It stayed an order of the NGT that directed authorities like railways to seek prior environmental clearances (ECs) for their projects**

Explanation: In an order that would speed up construction work of Indian Railways and metro rail in various cities, the Supreme Court on 16 September 2016 stayed an order of National Green Tribunal (NGT) directing them to seek prior environmental clearances (ECs) for their projects like dedicated freight corridor.

– The Bench was hearing pleas filed by Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd (DFCCIL) and

the Metro Rail against the order passed by the green tribunal that they are required to seek ECs for all their projects.

– The National Green Tribunal had on 31 May 2016 held that all metro rail projects needed environmental clearance after conducting proper Environment Impact Assessment.

– Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the PSUs, said construction works like metro rail in cities and dedicated freight corridors would help in reducing pollution and the NGT asking them to seek ECs was ridiculous.



4) 2016 Rio Paralympics closed on 18 September 2016 with a dazzling closing ceremony held at the iconic

Maracana Stadium. Which country topped the medals tally of the Paralympic Games? – **China**

Explanation: China dominated the 15th edition of Summer Paralympic Games that were held from 7 September to 18 September 2016. It won total 237 medals including 105 gold medals, 81 silvers and 51 bronze.

– Britain was second in the medals tally with 147 medals (64 gold medals, 39 silvers and 44 bronze) while Ukraine was third with 117 medals (41 gold medals, 37 silvers and 39 bronze).

– India finished the games with 4 medals (2 gold medals, 1 silver and 1 bronze) and finished with 42nd position in the medals tally.

– The Games concluded with a grand Closing Ceremony at the Maracana Stadium.

5) What is the name of the Iranian paralympic athlete who died during the cycling event on 17 September 2016?

– **Bahman Golbarnezhad**

Explanation: Death of 48 year old Iranian cyclist Bahman Golbarnezhad in a cycling event on 17 September 2016 in the closing stages of the 15th Paralympic Games marred the euphoria the games otherwise generated.

– Golbarnezhad, who wore prosthesis on his left leg, fell during a mountainous descent in the road race and died before he could be treated in hospital.

– The Iranian flag flew at half-mast in the Athletes' Village and a minute's silence was held at the closing ceremony.

20-21 September 2016



1) 27 cities found place in the third and the latest list of smart cities that was released by Union Urban Development Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu on 20 September 2016. With this a total of 60 cities have been chosen for Union Government's ambitious Smart Cities Plan. Maximum 5 cities of which state were included in this latest list? –

Maharashtra

Explanation: A maximum of five cities from Maharashtra (Aurangabad, Kalyan-Dombivali, Nagpur, Nashik and Thane) have found place in the list of 27 new cities in the Smart Cities Plan of the Union Govt. that was released on 20 September 2016 by Union Urban Development Minister M. Venkaiah Naidu.

– Four cities, each from Tamil Nadu (Madurai, Salem, Thanjavur and Vellore) and Karnataka (Hubbali-Dharwad, Mangaluru, Shivomogga, Tumakuru), have made it to the list followed by three from Uttar Pradesh (Agra, Kanpur and Varanasi) and two each from Madhya Pradesh (Gwalior and Ujjain), Punjab (Amritsar and Jalandhar) and Rajasthan (Ajmer and Kota).

– One city each from Andhra Pradesh (Tirupati), Odisha (Rourkela), Gujarat (Vadodara), Sikkim (Namchi) and Nagaland (Kohima) has been selected in this round.

– So far, the urban development ministry has selected 60 cities in three rounds and has covered 27 states and Union Territories. Only nine more states and UTs are still to get on board including Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir.

2) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance came out with its Rs. 6,057 crore initial public offering (IPO) on 19 September 2016. What important fact is associated with this IPO? – **It is the first-ever IPO by an insurance entity in the country**

Explanation: ICICI Prudential Life Insurance's IPO worth Rs. 6,057 crore is the first initial offering by an Indian insurance company. The IPO will close on 21 September 2016.

- It is also the country's second biggest IPO in terms of size after the public issue of Coal India Limited (CIL), which raised Rs. 15,000 crore via the capital market route in 2010.
- ICICI Prudential Life Insurance, majority owned by ICICI Bank, has already raised Rs. 1,635.33 crore from the 40-odd anchor investors on 16 September, with some of the marquee names such as Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, Nomura, Government of Singapore, UTI MF and HDFC Standard Life, among others.

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3) What is the name of the Baloch leader of Pakistan who came to news on 19 September 2016 after he announced that he will formally file asylum papers to the Indian Government? – **Brahamdagh Bugti**

Explanation: Brahamdagh Bugti is the leader of Balochistan Republican Party (BRP) and is currently living in exile in Switzerland. He is a survivor of the attack on a BRP hideout in Kohlu near Quetta in 2006 launched by Pakistani Army in which his grandfather Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti was killed.

- During August 2016 Bugti had thanked Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for raising the issue of the situation in Balochistan in his Independence Day speech.
- India last granted political asylum to the Dalai Lama in 1959.

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4) What is the name of the supercomputer launched at IIT Guwahati on 19 September 2016 that is the fastest supercomputer of the Northeastern region of the country? – **Param-Ishan**

Explanation: Param-Ishan is the name of the latest supercomputer of the country that was launched at IIT Guwahati on 19 September 2016 by Union Human Resource Development Minister Prakash Javadekar.

– This supercomputer has been developed jointly by C-DAC and IIT Guwahati. It has the computing power of 250 Teraflops per second and capacity up to 300 Tera bites.

– Param-Ishan can be used in the application areas like computational chemistry, computational fluid dynamics, computational electromagnetic, civil engineering structures, nano-block self-assemble, optimization etc.

– North East India receives heavy rainfall during monsoon, which leads to flooding and landslides. Param-Ishan can be used for Weather, climate modeling and seismic data processing.

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5) Who takes over as the new Chairman of the UPSC from 21 September 2016? – **Alka Sirohi**

Explanation: Former IAS officer Alka Sirohi takes over as the new Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) from 21 September 2016. She replaces Deepak Gupta who demitted the office a day earlier on 20 September. She was till now a member of the commission.

– The UPSC is headed by a chairman and can have a maximum of 10 members. It conducts the prestigious civil services examination to select officers of Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

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6) Former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan resumed his academic role in which international academic institution, as disclosed by the institution on 18 September 2016? –

Booth School of Business (University of Chicago)

Explanation: Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Raghuram Rajan has resumed his role as “Distinguished Service Professor of Finance” at the Booth School of Business (University of Chicago). He will teach international corporate finance there in the winter of 2017.

– This disclosure was made by Chicago Booth School, which elaborated that this course will explore the challenges of corporate finance and investment in a more integrated global economy.

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22 September 2016



1) The Union Cabinet on 21 September 2016 approved the merger of Railway Budget with the General Budget thus ending a 92-year old practice of preparing a separate budget for the railways. This shift has been done on the recommendation of which committee’s report? – **Bibek Debroy Committee on Restructuring of Indian Railways**

Explanation: After the meeting of the Union Cabinet on 21 September 2016,

the Government announced that from now all proposals of Railway Budget will be part of the General Budget and presentation of the integrated budget will be advanced by around a month. It hopes that advancing the date will help initiate revenue mobilization and capital expenditure measures right from the beginning of the fiscal year.

– However, functional autonomy of railway will be maintained. There will also be separate discussion on railway expenditure each year in the Parliament.

– The move follows a suggestion to the effect by Niti Aayog member Bibek Debroy in his report on restructuring the Indian Railways. A committee headed by Debroy last year recommended that the Rail Budget should be phased out progressively and merged with the General Budget.

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2) In which year the practice of presenting a separate budget for Railways was started in India? – **1924**

Explanation: It is worth mentioning that the first separate Rail Budget in India was presented in 1924. This practice was adopted following the recommendation of the 10 member-Acworth Committee in 1920-21, headed by British railway economist William Acworth.

– This report led to reorganization of railway finances and the finances of railway were separated from the general finances of the Govt. of India.

– The separation of Railway Budget from General Budget is the second major shift in the schedule of the budget by a National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government. The previous NDA government, under prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2001, changed the time of presenting

the budget to 11am, from the British era practice of presenting it at 5 pm.



3) According to a report released on 21 September 2016, India's first inter-State river interlinking project was given a go-ahead by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) at a meeting chaired by Environment Minister Anil Madhav during August 2016. Which interlinking project is this? – **Ken-Betwa Project**

Explanation: After the go-ahead by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), Rs. 10,000 crore Ken-Betwa Project will be the first river project in India to be located within a tiger reserve. This project is expected to irrigate the drought-prone Bundelkhand region but in the process will also submerge about 10% of the Panna Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, feted as a model tiger-conservation reserve.

– The main feature of the project is a 230-km long canal and a series of barrages and dams connecting the Ken and Betwa rivers that will irrigate 3.5 lakh hectares in Madhya Pradesh and 14,000 hectares of Uttar Pradesh, in Bundelkhand.

– The key projects are the Makodia and Dhaudhan dams, the latter expected to be 77 m high and responsible for submerging 5,803 hectares of tiger habitat in the Panna Tiger Reserve.

4) What is the name of the public joint-venture entity engaged in the supply of rough diamonds whose shutting-down was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 21 September 2016? – **Hindustan Diamond Company Pvt. Ltd (HDCPL)**

Explanation: Hindustan Diamond Company Pvt. Ltd (HDCPL) is a 50:50 joint-venture between Government of India and De Beers Centenary Mauritius Ltd (DBCML).

– It was formed in 1978 with the primary objective of serving the small and medium diamond jewellery exporters, who have no direct access to rough diamonds.

– The CCEA (led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi) on 21 September 2016 gave its approval for initiating the process of winding up of HDCPL. The government feels that the winding up of HDCPL is not likely to affect supply of rough diamonds to Indian companies as Indian diamond industry has grown in these years and several Indian players are associated with top diamond producers now.

5) During September 2016 Adani Group dedicated to the nation the world's largest solar power plant of 648 megawatts (MW) that has been set up with an investment of around Rs 4,550 crore. This huge solar power plant is situated in which Indian state? – **Tamil Nadu**

Explanation: The world's largest solar power plant of 648 megawatts (MW) capacity has been established by Adani Group's associate company Adani Green Energy (Tamil Nadu) Ltd at Kamuthi in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.

– The plant is part of the Tamil Nadu government’s target to generate 3,000 MW in line with its new solar energy policy unveiled in 2012.

– The massive plant comprises of 3,80, 000 foundations, 25,00,000 solar modules, 27,000 metric tonnes of structure, 576 inverters, 154 transformers and 6,000 km of cables. The 648 MW solar power plant, thus is the world’s largest solar power plant in a single location.

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23-24 September



1) Which are the 3 personalities who were named as the outside expert members of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) by the Union Government on 22 September 2016?
– **Chetan Ghate, Pami Dua and Ravindra Dholakia**

Explanation: The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on 22 September 2016 approved the names of Chetan Ghate, a Professor at Indian Statistical Institute; Pami Dua, Director at Delhi School of Economics (DSE); and Ravindra Dholakia, Professor at Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, as 3 outside expert

members of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI.

– The experts will serve for four years and are not eligible for re-appointment. With this MPC has become a 6-member committee (including other three members from the RBI).

– The members of the committee from RBI are Governor Urjit Patel, Deputy Governor R. Gandhi, who is also in charge of the monetary policy, and executive director Michael Patra. The RBI governor will have a casting vote in case of a tie.

– The MPC framework replaces the current system where the RBI governor and his internal team have complete control over monetary policy. While a committee advises RBI on monetary policy decisions, the central bank is under no obligation to accept its recommendations.

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2) India on 23 September 2016 signed the landmark deal with France for purchase of 36 Rafale fighters. What is the approximate value of this deal that has been signed after years of tortuous negotiations between the two countries? – Rs. 58,000 crore

Explanation: India will pay about Rs. 58,000 crore (7.8 billion Euros) for 36 off-the-shelf Dassault Rafale twin-engine fighters. About 15% of this cost is being paid in advance. India will also get spares and weaponry.

- The deal for 36 Rafale aircrafts was signed between Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and his French counterpart Jean Yves LeDrian on 23 September 2016.
- Rafales will come equipped with the Meteor designed to knock out enemy aircraft and cruise missiles significantly more than 100 km away.
- The acquisition of this weapon is likely to be game changer in South Asia. Neither Pakistan nor China, India’s traditional military adversaries, possesses a weapon of the same class.
- India will get first batch of Rafale warplanes roughly within 18 months of the signing of the final contract.

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3) What is the name of the latest smart messaging app launched on 21 September 2016 by tech behemoth Google? – **Allo**

Explanation: Google launched ‘Allo’, the highly anticipated smart messaging app, on 21 September 2016. Allo is an instant messaging mobile app and was announced at Google I/O on 18 May 2016. It has been made available for Android and iOS users.

– Allo incorporates some latest features like ‘Google Assistant’, ‘Smart Reply’ and ‘Incognito Mode’. It also incorporates artificial intelligence to help the users.

– Allo is appearing at a time when smartphones are already crowded with chat apps. iMessage from Apple is prominent among iPhone owners.

Facebook Messenger is widely used on that social network. Also popular is WhatsApp, the chat service from Facebook that has largely replaced text messaging internationally.

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4) The historic 500th Test Match of Indian cricket team started from 22 September 2016 in the form of the first Test of the Test series against New Zealand. This historic Test match has been staged at which place? – **Green Park, Kanpur**

Explanation: Kanpur’s Green Park Stadium staged the historic 500th Test Match of the Indian cricket team. This match is the first Test of the test series against New Zealand. On this very special occasion of Indian cricket’s journey, former Test captains including Sunil Gavaskar, Kapil Dev, Dilip Vengsarkar, K. Srikkanth, Ravi Shastri, Mohammed Azharuddin, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Anil Kumble and MS Dhoni.

– India played its first Test against England at Lord’s in 1932. C.K. Nayudu led the Indian team in this debut test. India lost this test by 158 runs. Since then it has been a momentous journey for over 84 years, from CK Nayudu to Virat Kohli, the present Test captain.

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5) Which film has been chosen as India's official entry for 89th Academy Awards (Oscars Awards), as disclosed on 23 September 2016? – **Visaranai (Tamil)**

Explanation: Tamil film director Vetrimaran's film 'Visaranai' has been selected as India's official entry for Oscars 2017 in the Foreign Language film category. The film based on police brutality went on to bag three National Film awards in India.

– 'Visaranai' is based on M. Chandrakumar's novel 'Lock Up' and has been produced by Dhanush's Wunderbar Productions. According to the information disclosed by Film Federation of India (FFI) it was chosen out of 29 contenders.

– The 89th Academy Awards is scheduled to take place in February 2017 at Los Angeles.

6) The Union Cabinet during September 2016 approved changes allowing the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) to fine those responsible for polluting the Ganga River. Earlier this power was vested solely with which entity? – **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)**

Explanation: The Rs. 20,000-crore National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) is among the flagship initiatives of the government. Though at least 230 projects have been sanctioned this year there is very little progress on the ground in various States along the river such as Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar and Uttarakhand among others.

– It didn't have legal powers to tackle various threats or issue directions to polluters.

– The NMCG, which now has the status of an Authority, will have a two-

tier management structure with a governing council to be chaired by a Director General. There will also be State-level committees.

– The Union Government felt that giving it the status of an Authority will help it tackle 22 drains responsible for 90% of the pollution of the river.

7) 'Indra-2016', the joint military exercise between Russia and India started from 23 September 2016 at which place in Russia? – **Primorsky Territory**

Explanation: The Primorsky Territory is the Russian Eastern Military District and is the venue for the 2016 edition of joint military exercise between Russia and India, titled 'Indra-2016'.

– The exercise primary involves aviation and artillery units. Up to 500 Russian and Indian troops, 50 pieces of weapons and hardware, a formation of unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as the district's attack and army aviation have been involved in the drills.

– The joint military exercise will conclude on 2 October 2016. Originally the exercise was scheduled for late August-early September 2016.

25-26 September 2016

1) Who is the author of the book "Citizen and Society" that was released by President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 23 September 2016? – **Hamid Ansari (Vice President)**

Explanation: Vice President Hamid Ansari's new book titled "Citizen and Society" was released in a programme held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan by President Pranab Mukherjee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 23 September 2016.

– The book is primarily a collection of memorial or anniversary lectures, convocation addresses and speeches on specific themes and occasions given by the Vice President.

– Describing Ansari's life as that of a perfect citizen, President Mukherjee said that the theme of the book is that a citizen cannot be apolitical and has to take part in politics to build the society.

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2) Who was appointed as India's next Ambassador to the United States (U.S.), as announced by the Union Government during September 2016?
– Navtej Sarna

Explanation: India's High Commissioner to Britain Navtej Sarna was on 22 September 2016 appointed as the next Ambassador to the United States. He takes charge after Arun Kumar Singh retired at the end of August 2016.

– Both Sarna and Singh are former Indian ambassadors to Israel, underlying the importance of a posting in Tel Aviv which is one of Washington's closest allies. Sarna is appointed ambassador at a time when the U.S. prepares for a presidential transition.

– Sarna was among the longest-serving spokespersons of the ministry between 2002 and 2008. He has also had postings in Russia, Poland, Iran, Switzerland and Bhutan.

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3) Year-long celebration to mark the birth centenary of which leader was kick-started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Kozhikode (Kerala) on 25 September 2016? – **Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay**

Explanation: 100th Birthday of former Jan Sangh leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay was celebrated on 25 September 2016. Upadhyay was born on 26 September 1916 in Mathura.

– Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay was one of the pillars of the erstwhile Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor of the present Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He is known for his alternative model of governance and politics which he had proposed by integrating some concepts of nationalist Hinduism.

– He was assassinated on 11 February 1968 at Mughalsarai in UP, while travelling in a train.

– Year-long celebration to mark his centenary was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 September 2016 at BJP's National Executive held at Kozhikode (Kerala).

– It is worth mentioning that the Union Govt. had on 23 September 2016 constituted two committees for commemoration of Deendayal Upadhyay's birth centenary. The Prime Minister will chair a 149-member National Committee while Home Minister Rajnath Singh will head a 23-member Executive Committee

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4) Indian spinner R. Ashwin achieved which milestone feat on 25 September 2016 during the fourth day of first Test match between India and New Zealand at Kanpur? – **He became the second fastest to complete 200 Test wickets**

Explanation: Ashwin reached the milestone when he took wicket of New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson. This was his 37th Test match and he thus became the second fastest to reach the 200-wicket milestone.

– The record stands in the name of the legendary Clarrie Grimmett of Australia, who reached 200-wicket mark in his 36th Test match.

– Ashwin thus surpassed Australian great Dennis Lillee and Waqar Younis (Pakistan), both of whom had reached 200-wicket mark in their 38th Test match.

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5) What is the recently launched helpline number to provide information to the citizens pertaining to the status of Swachh Bharat Mission in their respective areas, which was mentioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his “Mann ki Baat” radio address on 25 September 2016? – **1969**

Explanation: The number 1969 has been chosen because Mahatma Gandhi was born in 1869 and the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is dedicated to him. 1969 thus stands for Mahatma Gandhi’s centenary year.

– The 1969 ‘Swachhata Helpline’ was launched during August 2016. Under this helpline, a citizen can call and seek information about any aspect of Swachh Bharat Mission in urban areas including status of their applications for construction of toilets.

27-28 September 2016



1) ISRO’s PSLV rocket created history of sorts on 26

September 2016 as it for the first time injected eight different satellites into two different orbits. What is the name of the Indian weather satellite that was part of this path-breaking launch? –

SCATSAT-1

Explanation: In a first, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)’s PSLV C-35 rocket launched a total of eight satellites into two orbits from Satish Dhawan Space Centre at Sriharikota on 26 September 2016.

– The launch included SCATSAT-1 an Indian satellite for weather-related studies. This satellite, with a life of five years, would provide weather forecasting services through the generation of wind vector products.

– Besides SCATSAT-1, the others seven satellites are PRATHAM and PISAT, two academic satellites from India; ALSAT-1B, ALSAT-2B and ALSAT-1N (all from Algeria); and Pathfinder-1 and NLS-19, from the USA and Canada, respectively.

– The five-kg student satellite PISAT carries an imaging camera as payload to capture imagery of 185 km x 135 km area with about 80m/pixel resolution. The satellite is developed by students of PES University, Bengaluru.

– The other student satellite, PRATHAM, is developed by IIT Bombay.

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2) What is the name of the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of public sector-based Bank of Maharashtra, who in an unprecedented move was sacked from his post by the Union Govt. on 26 September 2016? – **Sushil Muhnot**

Explanation: In an unprecedented move, the Centre on 26 September 2016 sacked Sushil Muhnot, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of

Pune-based Bank of Maharashtra. This sacking was done just 4 days short of his scheduled retirement on 30 September 2016.

– Ravindra Marathe, who was serving as an Executive Director with Bank of India, was appointed new CMD of Bank of Maharashtra on the same day.

– However, the government did not cite any reason for its action. Earlier this year, the Finance Ministry is reported to have served a show-cause notice to Muhnot asking him to explain why he should not be terminated from service for an allegedly occupying two houses.

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3) Who took over as the World Bank's new Country Director for India, as notified by World Bank President Jim Yong Kim on 26 September 2016? – Junaid Ahmad (Bangladesh)

Explanation: Ahmad, a Bangladeshi national, took over as the new World Bank Country Director for India. He replaced Onnu Ruhl who completed his 4 year-term.

– Ahmad was formerly the Chief of Staff to World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim. An economist by training, Ahmad brings with him broad development experience.

– After joining the World Bank in 1991 as a Young Professional, he worked on infrastructure development in Africa and Eastern Europe. He has since held several management positions, leading the Bank's program in diverse regions including Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, as well as in India and South Asia.

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4) Which scientific institution's year-long Platinum Jubilee celebrations were inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on

26 September 2016? – Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

Explanation: Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) came into existence on 26 September 1942 and hence entered 75th year of its formation on 26 September 2016. To mark the occasion, year-long Platinum Jubilee celebrations were inaugurated on 26 September 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

– CSIR is an autonomous body and the largest research and development (R&D) organisation in India. It runs 37 laboratories and 39 field stations or extension centres spread across the nation.

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5) All India Institute of Medical Sciences (Delhi) on 26 September 2016 completed how many years of its establishment? – 60 years

Explanation: All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi is a medical college and medical research public university based in New Delhi. It was established in 1956 and operates autonomously under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

– It is the first of its kind institute in India and was envisioned by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the first Health Minister of India. It was established in New Delhi after former Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's initial proposal to set up the institute in Calcutta was turned down by the then Chief Minister of West Bengal Bidhan Chandra Roy.

– AIIMS, Delhi has 9 centres and 52 teaching departments, with a manpower of over 10,000 that includes more than 800 faculty positions. It produces a significant chunk of specialists (MD/MS), super-specialists (DM/MCh), PhD scholars and allied health and basic sciences experts, including nurses and paramedical professionals.

– For its academic quality, student care, infrastructure and placement opportunities, AIIMS, Delhi, is also the mentor institution for the new AIIMS-like Institutions that are being set up across the country.

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6) Arnold Palmer (USA), who passed away on 25 September 2016, was a legendary player associated with which sports? – **Golf**

Explanation: US golfer Arnold Palmer, viewed as one of the greatest players in the sport’s history, passed away at the age of 87 on 25 September 2016. He died at a Pennsylvania hospital where he was undergoing heart tests.

– During a long career he won more than 90 tournaments worldwide, including seven majors. He was one of golf’s most dominant players in the late 1950s and early 1960s. His 7 majors included 4 Masters (1958, 1960, 1962 and 1964), 2 Open Championships (1961 and 1962) and 1 U.S. Open (1960).

– Palmer was part of “The Big Three” in golf during the 1960s, along with Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player, who are widely credited with popularizing

and commercializing the sport around the world.

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7) What is the name of the world’s largest radio telescope that was officially opened in China on 25 September 2016? – **Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST)**

Explanation: The Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST) is the name of the world’s largest radio telescope that was officially opened in China on 25 September 2016.

– FAST is named after its diameter, which at 500 meters makes it 195 meters wider than the second largest telescope of its kind, the Arecibo Observatory in Puerto Rico.

– It will be used for observation of pulsars as well as exploration of interstellar molecules and interstellar communication signals.

– The telescope cost \$180 million, and displaced 8,000 people from their homes to create the necessary 3-mile radius of radio silence around the facility.

29 September 2016

1) The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 28 September 2016 cleared a Rs 2,256 crore IT project of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), which will help integrate CBEC’s system with the GST network before the rollout in April 2017. What is the name of this project? – **‘Saksham’**

Explanation: Project ‘Saksham’, a new indirect tax network of the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs

(CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 28 September.

- The total cost of the project is estimated to be Rs. 2256 crore, which will be incurred over a period of seven years.
- Project Saksham will help in the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST). It will also help in the extension of the Indian Customs Single Window Interface for Facilitating Trade (SWIFT) and other taxpayer-friendly initiatives under Digital India and Ease of Doing Business of CBEC.
- For Project Saksham, the IT systems of CBEC will be completed by 1 April 2017, when GST is to be introduced. The IT systems will be upgraded while the existing tax-payer services will be kept running.

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2) History was created in Colombia as the government and left-wing FARC rebels signed a historic agreement on 27 September 2016 that formally brought an end to 52-year old conflict in this Latin American country. Who signed this landmark agreement? – **President Juan Manuel Santos** and **Timoleon Jimenez (FARC leader)**

Explanation: The peace agreement was signed at Cartagena on 27 September 2016. The agreement was signed by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos on behalf of his government and Timoleon Jimenez, the supreme leader of country's rebel group FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

- The agreement thus formally ended the conflict between Colombian government and FARC that had been going-on since 1964. This conflict is often described as the last of the major Cold War conflicts and resulted in

death of over 2.5 lakh people while six million were left internally displaced.

- Dignitaries attending the signing ceremony included UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Cuban President Raul Castro.
- The peace agreement came after four years of talks in Havana, Cuba, between government and rebel negotiators. It must be approved by the Colombian people in a popular vote on 2 October 2016 before it can pass into law.

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3) What is India's rank in World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index for 2016-17 that was released on 27 September 2016? – **39th (Out of total 138 countries)**

Explanation: India's ranking in the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) for 2016-17, released by the World Economic Forum (WEF), improved 16 places to 39. This made India the fastest riser up the ranks among 138 countries surveyed.

- India was ranked 55th in the GCI for 2015-17.
- The GCI suggests that improvements in institutions and infrastructure have increased overall competitiveness along with recent reforms such as opening the economy to foreign investors and increasing transparency in the financial system.
- India's competitiveness has improved, particularly in goods market efficiency, business sophistication and innovation, while lower oil prices and improved monetary and fiscal policies have made the economy not only stable, but also the fastest growing among G20 countries.

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4) Former Israeli President Shimon Peres passed away on 28 September 2016 at the age of 93. In which year he was jointly conferred the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to bring peace in Palestine? – **1994**

Explanation: Shimon Peres won the Nobel Peace prize in 1994 for his role in negotiating peace accords with the Palestinians a year earlier in 1993. He shared this prestigious prize with the then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

– Peres was Foreign Minister of Israel when he played pivotal role in Palestinian peace agreements 1993, which were also known as Oslo Accords.

– He became country's 8th Prime Minister in 1984 and served the post for over 2 years. Later he became country's interim Prime Minister after assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

– He was elected country's 9th President in 2007 and occupied this post till 24 July 2014.

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5) "Yudh Abhyas-2016", the 12th edition of the joint military training exercise between India and US concluded on 27 September 2016. This 2-week long exercise was held at which place in India? – **Chaubatia (Ranikhet)**

Explanation: The joint military training exercise between India and the United States was first held in 2004. Since then it has been held on biennial basis and is hosted alternatively in India and the U.S.

– This was the 12th edition of the joint exercise and was held from 14 September to 27 September 2016 in Chaubatia near Ranikhet in Uttarakhand. The event was named "Yudh Abhyas-2016".

– While an infantry battalion of the Indian Army took part in the event, the U.S. was represented by the 20th Infantry Regiment of its 5th Battalion.

– Focus of "Yudh Abhyas-2016" was on dealing with the challenges of militancy in Kashmir. The Army tactically created Kashmir like villages in mountains of Uttarakhand where troops from both the armies practiced war games.

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30 September 2016

1) How much reduction in interest rate for small savings schemes like PPF, KVP and NSC for the October-December quarter was announced by the Finance Ministry on 29 September 2016? – **0.1%**

Explanation: Interest rates on small savings schemes have been reduced marginally by 0.1% for the October-December quarter of 2016-17 as announced by the Union Finance Ministry on 29 September 2016.

– The popular Public Provident Fund (PPF) will fetch an interest rate of 8% in the third quarter of the current fiscal year as against 8.1% in the previous three-month period.

– The interest rate on Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP) has been brought down to 7.7% from 7.8%.

- The rate of interest for the third quarter on Five-Year Senior Citizens Savings Scheme and Five-Year National Savings Certificate has been reduced to 8.5% and 8%, respectively.
- The Sukanya Samriddhi Account (SSA) Scheme, for the girl child, will now fetch an interest rate of 8.5%. The interest rate was at 8.6% in the July-September quarter.
- Depositors will get an interest rate of 7.3% on a 5-year recurring deposit during the quarter beginning 1 October 2016, as against the rate of 7.4% they were getting in the second quarter.
- Interest rates for small savings schemes are notified on a quarterly basis. Accordingly, the Finance Ministry on 29 September 2016 notified the rates of interest on various schemes for the October-December period of 2016-17.

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2) Indian capital market regulator SEBI on 28 September 2016 came out with which historic announcement pertaining to commodities market? – It allowed commodity derivative exchanges to introduce trading in 'options'

Explanation: On the occasion of the first anniversary of the merger of the erstwhile commodities regulator Forward Markets Commission (FMC) with itself on 28 September 2016, country's capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) unveiled options trading on commodity derivative exchanges.

- Currently, the only instrument available in the commodity derivatives market is "futures" on individual commodities. Now these markets have been allowed options trading, for which SEBI's prior approval is required.

- Simultaneously, the Finance Ministry provided legal clarity by specifying a list of 91 commodities on which commodity derivative contracts will be permitted under the Securities Contracts Regulation Act 1956 (SCRA).
- The commodities notified include 17 cereals and pulses, 12 oilseeds and oils, 12 spices, 11 metals, 3 precious metals, 4 plantation products, and 11 energy related products.

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3) What important announcement regarding sports infrastructure was made by the Union Finance Ministry during September 2016? – It granted Infrastructure status to sports infrastructure

Explanation: In an important development for the field of sports in the country, the Ministry of Finance announced that sports infrastructure will be included under the Harmonized Master List of Infrastructure Sub-sectors, including the provision of sports stadia and infrastructure for academies for training and research in sports and sports-related activities.

- This would make the sports sector eligible for obtaining long-term financial support from banks and other financial institutions on the same principle as is available to other infrastructure projects.
- It will also bolster investment in sports infrastructure sector which will contribute to the economy and help in promotion of health and fitness of the people of the country.
- It is worth mentioning that the Ministry of Youth Affairs had moved the proposal for the inclusion of sports in the list to address the issue of deficit of sports infrastructure in the country.

4) Who was conferred with the Moortidevi Award for 2015 on 29 September 2016? – Prof. Kalakaluri Enoch (Telugu)

Explanation: Telugu poet and writer Prof. Kalakaluri Enoch was conferred with the Moortidevi Award of Bharatiya Jnanpith for year 2015 on 29 September 2016. He got this prestigious literary award for his novel '*Anantajivanam*'.

– He received this award from the hands of Dr. Kapila Vatsyayana, the eminent historian, in a function held in New Delhi.

– Moortidevi Award is an annual literary award and is presented by the Bharatiya Jnanpith for a work which emphasizes Indian philosophy and culture. It carries a shawl, Saraswati Statue, Citation and a cheque of Rs. 4 lakh.

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5) Which international airport of India became the first carbon neutral airport in Asia-Pacific following a series of measures taken by it to reduce carbon footprint? – Indira Gandhi International Airport (New Delhi)

Explanation: The GMR consortium- Airports Authority of India (AAI) run Indira Gandhi International Airport (New Delhi) became the first carbon neutral airport in Asia-Pacific following a series of measures taken by it to reduce carbon footprint, including setting up of a 7.84 MW solar power plant.

– The announcement was made by the international body of aerodrome operators across the world, ACI during the Airport Carbon Accreditation certificate presentation ceremony in Montreal, Canada on 27 September 2016.

– Thus this airport was upgraded to highest level of certification – a level 3+ neutrality – available to airports across the world. Carbon neutrality occurs when the net carbon emissions over an entire year are zero or when the airport absorbs or offsets the same amount of emission that was generated.

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1-3 October 2016



1) India ratified the Paris Climate Change Agreement at the United

Nations on 2 October 2016, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. What is the broad commitment from India towards climate change under the adopted agreement? – **To generate at least 40% of country's electricity from non-fossil sources by year 2030**

To Know: Narendra Modi's cabinet had on 28 September 2016 given its approval to ratify the Paris Climate Change agreement. Later on 2 October 2016, Indian officials officially handed over the ratification instruments to UN officials in New York.

– India accounts for about 4.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

– The Paris agreement will come into force when 55 countries contributing to at least 55% of total global emissions ratify the deal. So far, 61 countries have deposited their instruments of ratification accounting for 47.8% of global emissions.

– The Paris agreement was adopted by 185 nations in December 2015. It asks both rich and poor countries to take action to curb the rise in global temperatures that is melting glaciers, raising sea levels and shifting rainfall patterns.

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2) According to the announcement made by Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 1 October 2016, approximately how much disclosure under the Income Disclosure Scheme

(IDS) was made till 30 September? – **Over Rs. 65,000 crore**

Explanation: Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 1 October 2016 announced that the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) had received a total disclosure of Rs. 65,250 crore under its ambitious Income Disclosure Scheme (IDS). The figure could be revised upward as some disclosures that were received manually still remain to be tabulated and verified.

– The four-month compliance window under the IDS for declaring undisclosed income or black money that had escaped assessment had started from 1 June 2016 and closed on the midnight of 30 September 2016.

– The IDS had provided illegal income and asset holders a one-time opportunity to come clean by declaring their black money under the four-month window and pay 45 per cent tax and penalty.

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3) Kotak Mahindra Bank is acquiring which microfinance entity for Rs. 139 crore, as announced by the bank on 29 September 2016? – **BSS Microfinance**

Explanation: According to a notification to the stock exchanges, the private sector bank Kotak Mahindra Bank is acquiring BSS Microfinance for Rs.139.2 crore. Through this deal Kotak Mahindra Bank will acquire 99.49% stake in this entity.

– BSS Microfinance extends microfinance to poor, rural and semi-urban women, primarily for income-generating activities, and also for life quality improvement activities.

– BSS had a loan book of Rs.483 crore at the end of the first quarter and a total of 728 employees. It is present

in Karnataka and Maharashtra and is entering Madhya Pradesh.

– This would be the second acquisition by the bank in less than two years. In November 2014, it acquired another private sector lender, ING Vysya Ltd, in a share-swap deal.

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4) The Union Government on 30 September 2016 constituted a three-member expert committee to examine various issues related to audit firms. Who is heading this committee? –

Ashok Chawla

To Know: Ashok Chawla, the Chairman of The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), is heading the 3-member committee that was constituted by the Corporate Affairs Ministry on 30 September 2016 to examine various issues related to audit firms, including possible adverse impact from restrictive shareholder agreements.

– Chawla is a former finance secretary and had also served as Competition Commission of India (CCI) chairman.

– The committee was constituted following representation from several domestic audit firms about negative impact on them on account of various practices that lead to circumvention of regulations.

– Reserve Bank of India (RBI) deputy governor N.S. Vishwanathan and Jubilant Life Sciences Ltd co-chairman and managing director Hari S. Bhartia are the other members of the committee.

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5) The India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) completed how many years of its establishment on 1 October 2016? – **50 years**

Explanation: Development Corporation Limited (ITDC) is a hospitality, retail and education company owned by Government of India, under Ministry of Tourism. It was formed on 1 October 1966. The 50th (Golden Jubilee) anniversary of the entity was celebrated on 1 October 2016.

– ITDC presently owns over 17 properties under the Ashok Group of Hotels brand, across India.

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6) Union Govt. divested how much of its stake in the PSU entity Hindustan Copper Limited during September 2016? – **7%**

To : Union Govt. on 29 and 30 September 2016 offered 6,47,65,260 shares (comprising 7% of total paid up equity) to public through offer-for-sale (OFS) route. 20% of the offer size was reserved for retail category.

– The divestment trading took place on NSE as well as BSE for the non-retail and retail category respectively. The non-retail category got oversubscribed with 1.56 times. The government pocketed approximately Rs. 400 crore through this stake-sale.

– Hindustan Copper Limited is a vertically integrated company in the mining and metal sector, under Ministry of Mines. Government of India is the major stake holder in said CPSE, owning 89.95% of paid up equity.

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4 October 2016

1) Which 2 states on 2 October 2016 became the first States in the country with all cities and towns of these states declared Open Defecation Free

(ODF)? – **Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat**

Explanation: Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat got the recognition as India's first states with all cities and towns of these states declared Open Defecation Free (ODF). They formally got this recognition on 2 October 2016, the day that marked two years of the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).

– All the 180 cities and towns in Gujarat were declared ODF in a programme held in Porbandar, the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi, on 2 October 2016, while Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N.Chandrababu Naidu declared all 110 cities and towns in the state as ODF at a programme in Tirupati.

– Andhra Pradesh has been in the forefront of construction of toilets in urban areas with a Mission target of construction of 1,94,336 individual household toilets in urban areas. In addition to the central assistance of Rs. 4,000 per toilet, the State Government has been extending assistance of an additional Rs.11,000 per toilet, giving a boost to the programme.

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2) Who will be the Chief Guest for the Republic Day Parade of 2017, as announced by the External Affairs Ministry on 2 October

2016? – **Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**(Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi)

Explanation: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan will be the Chief Guest at the 2017 Republic Day Parade, as

announced by External Affairs Spokesman Vikas Swarup on 2 October 2016.

– The visit of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, who is also the Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE armed forces, is expected to boost bilateral ties in the key areas of trade and security.

– It is also significant given that UAE is a close ally of Pakistan, whom India is trying to diplomatically isolate over the issue of cross-border terrorism.

– The UAE, along with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were the only three countries to recognize the Taliban government in Afghanistan. But the UAE has come a long way since then. Their relations with Pakistan too have undergone a qualitative change.

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3) What important rule became applicable for purchasing insurance policies in India from 1 October 2016? – **It became mandatory to have an e-insurance account to purchase insurance policy**

Explanation: In a new regulation, that became effective from 1 October 2016, it became mandatory to have an e-insurance account to purchase insurance policy in the country.

Though e-insurance was started two years ago, the accounts have been made mandatory only now. The move is aimed at consolidating holder's insurance portfolio and also making the claim process easier.

– It is worth mentioning that from 1 October 2016 insurance policies have been issued in electronic form. It is similar to buying shares online, after which they are stored in demat form. Most policies, including all motor insurance and overseas travel

insurance policies, will only be purchasable in demat form.

– Therefore, a policy-holder will need an e-Insurance Account (eIA) to buy or renew most policies from October 2016.

– The benefits of e-insurance to a policyholder could be similar to what demat accounts brought to investments in securities, including stocks, bonds. From filling up the application form to making payments online to the issuance of the policy document, the entire process could soon be paperless.

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4) Who won the Nobel Prize for Medicine for 2016, as announced by the Nobel Prize

Committee on 3 October 2016? – **Yoshinori Ohsumi (Japan)**

Explanation: The 2016 Nobel Prize in Physiology (Medicine) has been awarded to Yoshinori Ohsumi of Japan “for his discoveries of mechanisms for autophagy.” The professor is currently at the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

– Ohsumi is a cell biologist and had discovered and elucidated mechanisms underlying autophagy, a fundamental process for degrading and recycling cellular components.

– It is worth mentioning that the 1974 Nobel laureate for Medicine, Christian de Duve, had coined the term autophagy (meaning “self-eating”) in 1963.

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5) What is the name of the Brigade Commander of Uri army base who was

removed from the post on 1 October 2016 as the investigations in the terror attack were started by the Indian Army? – **Brigadier K. Somashanker**

Explanation: In what could be a precedent setting, the Indian Army shifted Uri Brigade Commander K. Somashanker pending investigation into the terror attack.

– Four Pakistani terrorists had attacked the camp of the 12th Brigade on 18 September 2016 at Uri in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir. 19 jawans lost their lives in the terror attack while 20 others were injured.

– The army is probing the matter as to how terrorist could carry out the attack despite specific intelligence inputs.

– Earlier, it had emerged that there was specific intelligence about terrorists planning to strike army formations close to the line of control in J&K.

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6) What is the name of the new political party floated on 2 October 2016 by Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan and their associates who were earlier ousted from the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)? – **“Swaraj India”**

Explanation: “Swaraj India” is the name of the new political party that was started by former AAP functionaries, Yogendra Yadav, Prashant Bhushan, Ajit Jha and Anand Kumar on 2 October 2016. The new party is essentially the political front of their socio-political movement ‘Swaraj Abhiyan’.

– Yogendra Yadav will be the President of the newly formed political entity while Ajit Jha will be its General Secretary. Fahim Khan will be Treasurer of the party.

– According to the announcement, “Swaraj India” will focus on “alternative politics” and issues that apparently led to their expulsion from Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP.

– Yogendra Yadav, senior Supreme Court lawyer Prashant Bhushan, Ajit Jha and Anand Kumar had fallen out with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) convenor and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in March 2015, days after AAP’s historic win in Delhi Assembly elections. They had hit out at AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal questioning his “supremo style of working” and “lack of transparency” in the party.

5 October 2016



1) Why a new era in India’s monetary policy was unveiled on 4 October 2016? – Because country’s first monetary policy declaration by the newly constituted Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) was declared on this day

Explanation: A new history in country’s monetary policy era was created as the newly constituted Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) came out with its first-ever monetary policy on 4 October 2016. Till now monetary policies have been formulated by the RBI Governor.

– The MPC, headed by RBI Governor Urjit Patel, presented the fourth

bimonthly monetary policy review on this date. It reduced the key policy rate or the repo rate by 25 bps to 6.25%.

– It is worth mentioning that the first interest rate decision taken by the MPC was unanimous. All six members voted for a reduction in the benchmark repo rate.

– The MPC includes the central bank’s chief (Urjit Patel), Deputy Governor R. Gandhi, Executive Director Michael Patra and three government nominees which includes Chetan Ghate, Pami Dua and Ravindra Dholakia.

2) Which state during October 2016 became the first in India to implement Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in Kerosene? – Jharkhand

Explanation: Jharkhand became the first state in the country to implement Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in Kerosene as it implemented the scheme in 4 district of the state from 1 October 2016.

– These districts are Chatra, Hazaribagh, Khunti and Jamtara.

– Under Kerosene DBT scheme, PDS kerosene is being sold at non-subsidised price and the subsidy is being transferred to consumers directly into their bank accounts. It is expected that this will rationalize the process of subsidies in kerosene and will plug the leakages.

3) British-born scientists David Thouless, Duncan Haldane and Michael Kosterlitz were on 4 October 2016 announced as the 3 joint-winners of the 2016 Nobel Prize for Physics. What is the area of their studies for which they were chosen for the prestigious award? – For studies of unusual states of matter

Explanation: The trio of Thouless, Haldane and Kosterlitz were recognized for their efforts to open the door on an unknown world where matter can assume strange states. They have used advanced mathematical methods to study unusual phases, or states, of matter, such as superconductors, super-fluids or thin magnetic films. Due to their efforts the hunt is now on for new and exotic phases of matter.

– According to the announcement made by the Nobel Prize Committee David Thouless will be given half the prize money while the other half will be divided between Duncan Haldane and Michael Kosterlitz.

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4) Which airport came to news as the trial operations of India’s first integrated on-airport perishable cargo-handling centre started here from 3 October 2016? – **Bengaluru**

Explanation: India’s first integrated on-airport perishable cargo-handling centre began the trial operations at Bengaluru’s Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) from 3 October 2016.

– The on-airport perishable cargo-handling centre of KIA is called Air India SATA Coolport, which is an initiative of Air India SATS Airport Services Private Limited.

– It is spread across 11,000 sq. m and is expected to meet the increasing demand and handling requirements of temperature-sensitive cargo. This facility is also expected to further enhance Karnataka’s status as the country’s pharmaceutical and perishables hub. In recent years, Bengaluru has witnessed a steady increase in perishable cargo volume.

– With a capacity of handling 40,000 tonnes of cargo per annum, the facility will cater to an extensive range of perishable commodities like pharmaceutical products, fruits, vegetables, poultry, seafood and flowers.

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5) Which corporate house entered into strategic partnership with Dassault Aviation of France to execute offsets for the recently concluded deal for 36 Rafale fighter jets? – **Reliance Group**

Explanation: The strategic partnership between Dassault Aviation (France) and Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group has been called “Dassault Reliance Aerospace”. It was jointly announced on 3 October 2016 by Dassault Aviation Chairman & CEO Eric Trappier and Reliance Group Chairman Anil Ambani.

– The joint venture will execute offsets for the recently concluded deal for 36 Rafale fighter jets and the contract value of the value is estimated up to Rs. 30,000 crore. According to Reliance the venture is the largest offset contract to be executed by any defence company in India till date.

– The focus of the joint-venture will on aero structures, electronics and engines and intends to infrastructure and supply chain in India for the aerospace sector. A huge integrated facility is proposed to be set up at Reliance Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Nagpur.

– It is worth mentioning that India and France signed an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) for 36 Rafale multi-role jets in fly-away condition worth Rs. 59,000 crore during September 2016.

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6 October 2016



1) What is the name of the newly launched comprehensive database system of all bridges in the country that was launched on 4 October 2016 by Nitin Gadkari on 4 October 2016? –

Indian Bridge Management System (IBMS)

Explanation: To ensure proper and timely upkeep of bridges, the Union Government on 4 October 2016 formally launched a comprehensive database system of these structures. This database system has been named Indian Bridge Management System (IBMS).

– IBMS aims to fill the gap by preparing a data base of all bridges in the country and detailing their structural condition so that timely action can be taken to repair the structures or build new ones in their place.

– It is the largest platform in the world owned by a single owner, with database that could exceed 1,50,000 bridge structures. So far 1,15,000 bridges have been inventorised, of which 85,000 are culverts and the rest are bridges.

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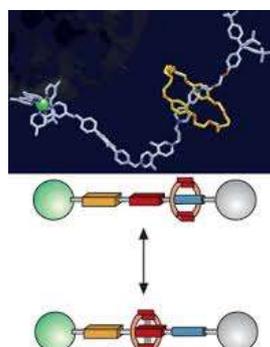
2) The first edition of BRICS U-17 Football Tournament, featuring 5 member nations of BRICS, started from 5 October 2016 at which place in India? – **Goa**

Explanation: BRICS U-17 Football Tournament is an initiative of the Government of India and is organized in Goa.

– Five major emerging economies - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, who are members of BRICS, are playing for the title trophy. The matches will be held every alternate day from 5 to 15 October 2016. The first match was played between Brazil and China, which was won by Brazil 2-0. India lost their first match to Russia by 0-1.

– The league matches will be held at Bambolim Stadium, while the final is scheduled to be held at Fatorda Stadium in Goa on 15 October 2016.

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3) Jean-Pierre Sauvage, Sir J. Fraser Stoddart and Bernard L. Feringa were announced as the winners of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for 2016 on 5 October 2016. In which area of chemistry was their research recognized? – **For developing molecular machines**

Explanation: The Nobel Prize in Chemistry for 2016 has been awarded to Jean-Pierre Sauvage, Sir J. Fraser Stoddart and Bernard L. Feringa for developing molecular machines. According to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences these three have miniaturised machines and taken chemistry to a new dimension.

– The trio has developed molecules with controllable movements, which can perform a task when energy is added. Molecular machines will most likely be used in the development of things such as new materials, sensors and energy storage systems.

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4) Who took over as the first Chairman of the newly constituted Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI)?

– **MS Sahoo**

Explanation: MS Sahoo, who was till recently Competition Commission of India (CCI) Member, assumed charge as the first Chairman of the newly constituted IBBI during October 2016.

– The main activity of IBBI would be to regulate the functioning of insolvency professionals, insolvency professional agencies and information utilities under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code 2016. It is worth mentioning that the Centre had notified the Insolvency Code in May 2016.

– 4 other members of the IBBI are Ajay Tyagi, Additional Secretary, Finance Ministry; Amardeep Singh Bhatia, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs; GS Yadav, Joint Secretary, Department of Legal Affairs; and Unnikrishnan, Legal Advisor, Reserve Bank of India.

– While the Centre has for now set up the IBBI with four members, going forward this will be expanded to 10 (including the Chairman)

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5) What is the name of the deadly hurricane that is moving towards the East Coast of the United States after pummeling through Haiti and Cuba causing widespread destruction? –

Hurricane Matthew

Explanation: Hurricane Matthew is the name of the cyclonic storm that on 3 October 2016 became the first Category Four storm to make landfall in Haiti. It packed top winds of around 230 km per hour. It has been measured as the Caribbean's worst storm in nearly a decade.

– The death toll stood at seven – three in Haiti and four in the Dominican Republic but the full scope of the damage, both human and material, remained unclear. The collapse of a bridge cut off the only road linking Haitian capital Port-au-Prince to the peninsula that makes up southern Haiti.

– Hurricane Matthew later moved to Cuba. On the other hand, South Carolina (US) started evacuating 1.1 million people from its east coast on 5 October 2016 and tried to get them at least 160 kilometers inland. Georgia declared a state of emergency in 13 counties.



6) What is the name of the new smartphone series launched by Alphabet Inc.'s Google on 4 October 2016 that is the first phone series that has been conceptualized, designed,

engineered and tested in-house by Google? – **Pixel**

Explanation: Google on 4 October 2016 launched two smartphones under its newly unveiled Pixel smartphone series – Pixel and Pixel XL. This is the first smartphone series that has been conceptualized, designed, engineered and tested in-house by Google itself.

– The Pixel phones run a new version of Android, called Nougat 7.1, and have a user interface customized by Google.

– Earlier Google had marketed Nexus series of smartphones but it was manufactured by various other manufacturers like LG and Motorola. But similar to Apple’s partnership with Foxconn in China, Google is getting HTC Corp. to assemble the Pixel devices.

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7 October 2016

1) Who was elected as the next Secretary General of the United Nations (UN) after a formal vote in the UN Security Council on 6 October 2016 confirmed his accession to the prestigious post? – **Antonio Guterres (Portugal)**

Explanation: Portugal’s former Prime Minister Antonio Guterres was on 6 October 2016 formally elected as the next Secretary General of the United Nations (UN). A formal vote in the UN Security Council on 6 October 2016 confirmed his selection to the top diplomatic post in the world.

– Guterres will take over from Ban Ki-moon early next year. Ki-moon has been at the helm for past 10 years,

having occupied the post on 1 January 2007.

– As head of the UNHCR refugee agency from 2005 to 2015, Guterres led the agency through some of the world’s worst refugee crises, including Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq.

– Guterres would be the 9th UN Secretary General. But with selection of Guterres, there was some disappointment among campaigners who had hoped for a first female Secretary General, or a candidate from Eastern Europe – which has never held the position.

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2) The 16-judge bench at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 5 October 2016 rejected the case against India for allegedly failing to halt the nuclear arms race. Which tiny country took India, Pak and Britain to court in this case? – **Marshall Islands**

Explanation: The tiny Pacific island nation Marshall Islands was ground zero for a string of nuclear tests between 1946 and 1958, carried out by the United States as the Cold War arms race gathered momentum. So this country with population of just 55,000 maintains it can testify with authority about the devastating impact of such arms.

– Initially in 2014, Marshall Islands accused nine countries of failing to comply with the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which seeks to inhibit the spread of atomic bombs. But the 6 countries in the list (China, France, Israel, North Korea, Russia and the United States) have not recognised the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (also called World Court), the case involved just 3 countries – Britain, India and Pakistan.

– On 5 October 2016 the International Court of Justice said it had accepted Indian arguments that it should not have jurisdiction in the case.

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3) Which Indian pharmaceutical company came to news as it agreed to acquire Actavis UK and Actavis Ireland from Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd for £603 million? – Intas Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Explanation: The Ahmedabad based privately-held Intas Pharmaceuticals Limited came to the news on 5 October 2016 as it announced acquisition of Actavis UK and Actavis Ireland from Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd for £603 million payable in a cash deal. The acquisition will be done through Intas' wholly owned subsidiary Accord Healthcare.

– Actavis UK and Ireland are among the leading suppliers of generic pharmaceuticals in both the UK and Irish markets.

– This acquisition is among India's top overseas buys, in league with last year's \$ 880 million acquisition of US-based Gavis by Lupin. This investment by Intas also represents the largest inward investment by an Indian company into the UK since the EU referendum.

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4) What is the name of the Indian communication satellite that was successfully launched from the European space-pad of Kourou in French Guiana on 6 October 2016? – GSAT-18

Explanation: The GSAT-18 is a communication satellite built by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). It aims at providing telecommunications services for the country by strengthening ISRO's

current fleet of 14 operational telecommunication satellites.

– It was launched by the European launcher Ariane-5 VA-231 at around 2 a.m. (IST) on 6 October and was placed successfully in the orbit in a flawless flight lasting about 32 minutes.

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5) Who created history during October 2016 by becoming the first Indian footballer to sign a professional contract with a club in La Liga, the top tier of Spanish football? – Ishan Pandita

Explanation: Bengaluru's Ishan Pandita on 3 October 2016 joined CD Leganes, a newly-promoted team of the Spanish football's top league – the La Liga. He thus became the first Indian footballer to sign a professional contract for a La Liga club.

– Pandita, a striker, grew up in the Philippines before moving to Bengaluru in 2009. He shifted base to Spain two years ago, and was part of UD Almeria's youth system.

– It is worth mentioning that La Liga is a highly competitive league, with all the top clubs like Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid involved.

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8-13 October 2016

1) How many new districts were added to the state of Telangana on 11 October 2016, which took the number of districts in the state to 31? – 21

Explanation: On the occasion of Vijaydashmi on 11 October 2016, the state of Telangana added 21 new districts to the state, thus taking the total number of districts to 31.

– It is worth mentioning that during 2014 Assembly Elections Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao had promised to create new districts for administrative convenience and providing welfare and developmental programmes to the people in an effective way. The state had just 10 districts when it came into existence during 2014.

– After reorganization the 31 districts are: Mancherial, Nirmal, Kumram Bheem (Asifabad), Kamareddy, Peddapalli, Jagtial, Rajanna (Sircilla), Warangal Urban, Warangal Rural, Mahabubabad, Prof Jayashankar (Bhupalpally), Jangaon, Bhadradi (Kothagudem), Suryapet, Yadadri, Sangareddy, Siddipet, Medchal (Malkajgiri), Vikarabad, , Wanaparthy, Nagarkurnool and Jogulamba (Gadwal), while existing ones were Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Khammam, Nalgonda, Medak, Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy and Mahabubnagar.

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2) What is India's rank in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) for 2016 that was released by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on 11 October 2016? – 97 out of 118 countries

Explanation: India ranked 97th out of 118 countries on the International Food Policy Research Institute's (IFPRI) Global Hunger Index (GHI) in 2016. It was released by IFPRI on 11 October 2016. India was positioned at 80 out of 104 countries the previous year (2015).

– India was thus behind Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, among others, but ahead of Pakistan and three other Asian countries. Nepal (72), Sri Lanka (84), and Bangladesh (90) had higher ranks among 96 countries than India's.

Also, India had the lowest rank among BRICS nations, with Brazil in the top 16, Russia at 24, China at 29 and South Africa at 51.

– Globally, the Central African Republic, Chad, and Zambia were estimated to have the highest levels of hunger.

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3) What is the name of the latest high-altitude station established by the Indian Government, which was inaugurated in Spiti (Himachal Pradesh) during October 2016? – HIMANSH

Explanation: As part of the Indian government's initiatives to better study and quantify the Himalayan glacier responses towards the climate change, the Goa-based National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) established a high altitude research station in Himalayas called HIMANSH. HIMANSH (literally meaning, a slice of ice), is situated above 13,500 ft at a remote region in Spiti, Himachal Pradesh.

– The station was unveiled by Dr. M. Rajeevan, Secretary to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt of India, on 9 October 2016.

– The station houses many instruments to quantify the glacier melting and its relation to changing climate.

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4) A new military station was inaugurated by President Pranab Mukherjee in West Bengal on 8 October 2016. This new station is situated at which place in the state? – Berhampore

Explanation: Berhampore Military Station was inaugurated on 8 October 2016 by President of India Pranab

Mukherjee at Berhampore, West Bengal. The Berhampore Military Station has great importance because it is the only such station between Siliguri and Kolkata which is very near to Bangladesh border.

– The foundation stone of the Berhampore Military Station was laid by President Pranab Mukherjee two years back in February, 2014.

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5) Union Government commenced year-long centenary celebrations of which social activist and former RSS leader from 11 October 2016? –

Nanaji Deshmukh

Explanation: Nanaji Deshmukh was a distinguished social activist, reformer and RSS leader. He was also a leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor of the BJP.

– He was born on 11 October 1916, exactly 100 years ago, in Kadoli (Hingoli district) of Maharashtra. He always laid great emphasis on education. He established country's first Saraswati Shishu Mandir at Gorakhpur in 1950. In 1999 he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan, country's second highest civilian award. He passed away in 2010 at the age of 93.

– Union government started one-year long centenary celebrations to mark 100th birth birthday of Nanaji Deshmukh. Various programmes would be organised during this period including Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav-2016 from 15 October to 23 October in the premises of IGNCA, Janpath, New Delhi.

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6) All the portfolios being held by ailing Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa were reallocated to which senior minister of the party on 12 October 2016? – **O. Panneerselvam**

Explanation: On the advice of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa were on 12 October 2016 reallocated to Finance Minister O. Panneerselvam. However, Jayalalithaa, who has been in hospital since 22 September 2016, would continue to be the Chief Minister of the state.

– Departments transferred to Panneerselvam include Public, Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service, Indian Forest Service, General Administration, District Revenue Officers, Police and Home. He will also preside over the Cabinet meetings.

– Panneerselvam has, twice in the past stepped in as Chief Minister when Jayalalithaa had to step down. In September, 2001, she stepped down as her appointment as Chief Minister was quashed by the Supreme Court and Panneerselvam, a first time MLA then, replaced her. Later, after her conviction by the special court in Bangalore in connection with the disproportionate wealth case, he once again was sworn in as Chief Minister.

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7) Who won the Nobel Peace Prize for 2016, as announced by the Norwegian Nobel Committee on 7 October 2016? – **Juan Manuel Santos (Colombian President)**

Explanation: Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos was on 7 October 2016 announced as the winner of the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end five decades of war in his country. The award came despite a

shock referendum defeat for a proposed peace deal Santos had reached during September 2016 with FARC chief Rodrigo Londono.

– He was awarded “for his resolute efforts to bring the country’s more than 50-year-long civil war to an end”, as announced by the prize committee. The Colombian civil war between the government and the Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has claimed more than 220,000 lives and displaced almost five million people during half a century of conflict.

8) British-born US economist Oliver Hart and Finland’s Bengt Holmstrom won the 2016 Nobel Prize for Economics, as announced by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences on 10 October 2016. What is the field of research of the duo for which they were recognized? – **Research on contract theory (pay and rewards)**

Explanation: The 2016 Nobel Prize for Economics was awarded to British-born US economist Oliver Hart and Finland’s Bengt Holmstrom for work that addresses a host of questions pertaining to contract theory. Contract theory considers, for example, whether managers should get paid bonuses or stock options, or whether teachers or healthcare workers should be paid fixed rates or by performance-based criteria.

– According to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, their findings on contract theory have implications in such areas as corporate governance, bankruptcy law and political constitutions.

– Oliver Hart is an Economics professor at Harvard University while Bengt Holmstrom is a professor of Economics and Management at the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

14 October 2016

1) Who won the Nobel Prize for literature for 2016 as announced by the Nobel Foundation on 13 October 2016? – **Bob Dylan (United States)**

Explanation: The 2016 Nobel Prize in Literature has been awarded to American songwriter, singer and pop musician Bob Dylan “for having created new poetic expressions within the great American song tradition”. It is worth mentioning that very few experts expected the Nobel Foundation to extend the prestigious award to a genre such as pop music.

– Bob Dylan’s original name is Robert Allen Zimmerman. He was born on 24 May 1941 in Duluth, Minnesota. He is the writer of 37 studio albums who turned around everything about songwriting and performing with his twangy nasal voice and a style of harmonica playing.

– Some of his famous albums are – ‘*Blowin in the Wind*’, ‘*Hard Rain*’, ‘*My Back Pages*’ and ‘*Most of the Time*’.

2) King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who was the world’s longest reigning monarch, died in a hospital on 13 October 2016. He was the revered monarch of which country? – **Thailand**

Explanation: 88-year old King Bhumibol Adulyadej was the monarch of Thailand. He was the world’s longest reigning monarch, having ascended the throne on 9 June 1946. He thus served for 70 years and 127 days.

– The king, who was the 9th monarch, was credited with restoring the influence of Thailand’s royalty during 70 years on the throne and earning the devotion of many of his subjects.

– He was seen as a pillar of stability in rapidly changing times in the country. Thailand had embraced industrialisation during his reign but also saw its parliamentary democracy punctuated by 10 military coups, the most recent in May 2014.

– King Bhumibol had been in poor health for some time, and has spent most of the past six years in Bangkok’s Siriraj hospital, where he passed away on 13 October 2016.

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3) Which private sector bank executed India’s first transaction on block-chain, as claimed by the bank on 12 October 2016? – ICICI Bank

Explanation: ICICI Bank on 12 October 2016 announced that it has successfully executed transactions in international trade finance and remittances using block-chain technology in partnership with Emirates NBD.

– The usage of block-chain technology simplifies the process and makes it almost instant to only a few minutes. This is in contrast to the current process which involves a complex and lengthy paper trail that requires international shipping and courier.

– The block-chain application replicates the paper-intensive international trade finance process as an electronic decentralised ledger that gives all the participating entities, including banks, the ability to access a single source of information.

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4) The Union Cabinet on 13 October 2016 gave approval for establishment of which IIM? – IIM Jammu

Explanation: The Union Cabinet on 13 October 2016 approved the establishment and operationalisation of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Jammu on a temporary campus at the Old Government College of Engineering and Technology from the academic year of 2016-17. An out campus will be set up in the Kashmir region later.

– The project will involve a cost of Rs. 61.90 crore on temporary campus for the four years from 2016 to 2020.

– At present, there are 19 IIMs. The IIMs that were started in 2015 are located in Amritsar, Sirmaur, Nagpur, Bodhgaya, Sambalpur and Vishakhapatnam.

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5) The CCEA on 13 October 2016 approved which new formula for ethanol pricing? – The formula to facilitate oil marketing companies to carry out the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme for the next sugar season 2016-17

Explanation: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 13 October 2016 approved a new mechanism for fixing the price of ethanol that oil marketing companies (OMCs) would procure from sugar companies, resulting in a Rs 1-1.50 a litre drop.

– Under the new formula, the OMCs will have to necessarily blend up to 10% of ethanol in petrol. The price OMCs would have to pay to sugar companies for the 2016-17 season (that started from 1 October 2016) was fixed at Rs. 39 a litre, excluding any taxes and duties. This price would be

for ethanol supplied from 1 December 2016 till 30 November 2017.

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15-17 October 2016

1) The 2-day BRICS Summit 2016 was held in Goa on 15-16 October 2016. The 8th edition of the Summit, which brought together the heads of government of the five BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, was held in India fortime? – **Second**

Explanation: The 2016 BRICS Summit that was held in Goa on 15-16 October 2016 was the second hosting of BRICS Summit by India. India had earlier hosted the 4th edition of BRICS Summit in New Delhi on 29 March 2012.

– 1st edition of BRICS Summit was hosted in Yekaterinburg (Russia) in 2009. It was followed by Summits in Brasilia (Brazil, 2010), Sanya (China, 2011), New Delhi (India, 2012), Durban (South Africa, 2013), Fortaleza (Brazil, 2014) and Ufa (Russia, 2015). This is thus the 8th edition of BRICS Summit.

– Participants in the Summit include heads of state of 5 BRICS countries Michel Temer (Brazil), Vladimir Putin (Russia), Narendra Modi (India), Xi Jinping (China) and Jacob Zuma (South Africa). The members of Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) were also invited to the Summit, while Afghanistan and Maldives participated as guest invitees.

– BRICS Summit is the annual summit of 5 BRICS nations, which are the five largest emerging national economies of the world. It was formed on 2009 as

BRIC and initially didn't include South Africa. South Africa became part of the group in 2010 and the acronym BRIC was subsequently changed to BRICS.

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2) The 28th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 28) to the Montreal Protocol concluded on 15 October 2016. This important meeting, in which major countries agreed to phase out 85% of potent greenhouse gas by 2045, was held at which place? – **Kigali (Rwanda)**

Explanation: African country Rwanda hosted the 28th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 28) to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer from 8 to 15 October 2016 in Kigali. The meeting primarily held negotiations on a hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) amendment.

– On 15 October 2016 one hundred and seven countries participating in the meeting came to an agreement to substantially phase out a potent greenhouse gas by 2045 and move to prevent a potential 0.5 C rise in global temperature by 2050.

– Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a family of gases that are largely used in refrigerants in home and car airconditioners. They, however, substantially worsen global warming.

– Late on 14 October 2016, India, China, the United States and Europe agreed on a timeline to reduce the use of HFC by 85% by 2045.

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3) Indian Government on 13 October 2016 ordered the companies to destroy which dangerous greenhouse gas in order to reduce the global warming? – **HFC-23**

Explanation: HFC-23, also known as trifluoromethane, is produced during the manufacture of a common refrigerant gas called HCFC-22, belonging to the hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HFC) family. HFC-23 has 14,800 times more potential to cause global warming as compared to carbon dioxide. It is the worst culprit in the planet-warming hydrofluorocarbon family.

– On 13 October 2016, the Environment Ministry of India directed the five companies producing HFC-23 to destroy the gas through incineration using “an efficient and proven technology”. The order was given from Kigali (Rwanda) where more than 190 countries met for the 28th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 28) to the Montreal Protocol.

– The decision to destroy HFC-23 came at a time when India is fending off pressure to agree to an early timeline for phase-out of HFCs, a set of 19 gases commonly used in air-conditioning and refrigerant industry.



4) Which country won the inaugural BRICS U-17 Football Tournament that concluded on 15 October 2016 in Goa? – **Brazil**

Explanation: Brazil hammered South Africa by 5-1 in the final of the inaugural BRICS U-17 Football Tournament to win the title. The Tournament featured the under-17 men’s teams of all five members of

BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

– It was held from 5 to 15 October 2016 at Goa (India). While the league matches were played at GMC Stadium Bambolim (Goa), the final was played at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium (also called Fatorda Stadium).

– Lopatin Daniil (Russia) emerged as the top-scorer of the tournament by scoring 3 goals.

5) What are the names of two Maharashtra cricketers who on 14 October 2016 broke a 70-year-old partnership record for all wickets in the Ranji Trophy championship by stitching a massive 594 run partnership against Delhi? –**Swapnil Gugale and Ankit Bawane**

Explanation: Maharashtra’s Swapnil Gugale and Ankit Bawane etched their names in record books as they broke a 70-year-old partnership record in the history of Ranji Trophy.

– They stitched a massive, unfinished stand of 594 for Maharashtra against Delhi in a Group B match at the Wankhede Stadium on 14 October 2016. They thus broke the previous all-time best fourth wicket partnership record of 577 set by Vijay Hazare and Gul Mohammed for Baroda against Holkar way back in 1946-47 in Baroda.

6) During October 2016 India received the first parcel of oil to partly fill its ambitious strategic storage in southern India. This oil parcel was received by Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) from which country? –**Iran**

Explanation: India is building emergency storage in vast underground caverns at three

locations in southern India to hold a total of 36.87 million barrels of crude, enough crude to cover almost two weeks of demand.

– Under this ambitious storage plan, India received the first oil parcel from Iran during October 2016. This oil (2 million barrels) was imported by (MRPL).

– India will fill half of the storage with 6 million barrels of Iranian oil while continuing talks with United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia for the remainder.

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7) In the biggest foreign acquisition ever in India, Russian oil major Rosneft, along with a consortium, agreed to acquire 98% stake in which Indian oil company, as announced on 15 October 2016? – **Essar Oil**

Explanation: Billionaire brothers Shashi and Ravi Ruia agreed to 98% of Essar Group flagship firm Essar Oil to Russian oil major Rosneft and a consortium of oil trading firm Trafigura with private investment group United Capital Partners for \$13 billion. This is the biggest foreign acquisition ever in India and Russia's largest outbound deal.

– The business transaction was announced in the presence of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin, at the BRICS Summit in Goa.

– The all-cash deal includes India's second-largest refinery at Vadinar (Gujarat) with capacity of 20 million tonnes.

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18 October 2016



1) In an important development, five-nation group BRICS on 16 October

2016 agreed to set up an independent rating agency based on market-oriented principles. This rating agency is being proposed in view of growing concerns over methodologies of the big three global rating agencies that are allegedly constraining growth in emerging nations. Which are these big three global rating agencies? – **S&P, Fitch and Moody's**

Explanation: It has emerged that the big three global rating agencies – Standard & Poor's (S&P), Fitch and Moody's, all of which are U.S.-based rating agencies, have allegedly constrained the growth of emerging nations by being partial to the parent countries' sovereign ratings.

– Batting for a new credit rating agency backed by BRICS group, New Development Bank president KV Kamath had said despite having deep capital buffers, the ratings of multilateral banks like the BRICS-promoted NDB are affected due to the parent countries' sovereign ratings.

– Citing the case of NDB itself, which is planning to get itself rated for bond-raising in many countries, he had said its rating will be affected because the promoter countries are not AAA-rated.

– The decision to establish the BRICS Rating Agency was taken at the 8th BRICS Summit that concluded in Goa on 16 October 2016.

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2) In a concrete effort to establish its permanent space station by 2022 China launched its longest-ever manned space mission on 17 October 2016. What is the name of the mission that took two Chinese astronauts to the space? – **Shenzhou-11**

Explanation: Shenzhou-11 was put into orbit by a Long March-2F carrier rocket on 17 October 2016. It is the longest-ever manned space mission of China and took two astronauts Jing Haipeng (50) and Chen Dong (37) to space to dock with orbiting space lab Tiangong-2 in two days. The two astronauts will stay in the lab for 30 days.

– The launch was conducted from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre near the Gobi Desert in northern China.

– China, which conducted its first manned space mission in 2003, is putting in billions into its space programme in a bid to catch up with the US and Europe. It also plans to launch its maiden Mars mission in 2020 to match India and others.

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3) According to media reports the Government-constituted expert committee formed to probe the existence of the mythical Saraswati River, in its report has confirmed the existence of this river. Who was heading this 7-member committee? – **Prof. K S Valdiya**

Explanation: The 7-member committee headed by Prof. K S Valdiya to probe the existence of Saraswati River has concluded that the river, so far considered mythical,

did exist. The committee also came up with the complete route of the river and concluded that it was approximately 4,000 km in length.

– According to committee’s report, Saraswati River passed through Pakistan before meeting Western Sea through Rann of Kutch. One-third of the river stretch fell in present-day Pakistan. The longer, two-third stretch measuring nearly 3000 km in length fell in India.

– The committee also concluded that the river had two branches: western and eastern. The Himalayan-born Satluj “of the past”, which flowed through the channels of present-day Ghaggar-Patialiwali rivulets, represents the western branch of the ancient river. On the other hand, Markanda and Sarsuti (corruption of Saraswati) represented the western branch of Saraswati, known as Tons-Yamuna.

– The committee during its six-month research, came across “a unique” palaeochannel (a path abandoned by river when it changes its course) relating to present Ghaggar, Sarsuti, Hakra and Nara rivers.

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4) During October 2016 the SEBI appointed a 3-member bench to adjudicate NSEL broker issue. What is the special fact associated with this appointment? – **SEBI generally appoints only one adjudicating officer after an initial investigation is complete**

Explanation: In a rare instance, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has appointed a three-member adjudicating bench after its initial probe found that certain brokers involved in the 2013 payments crisis at the National Spot Exchange Ltd (NSEL) had mis-sold NSEL products.

– Typically, SEBI appoints only one adjudicating officer after an initial investigation is complete. The officer then issues show-cause notices to the entity being investigated asking why action should not be initiated. Once hearings are complete, a final order is passed.

19-20 October 2016



5) Which auto major launched India's first indigenous zero-emission electric bus on 17 October 2016? – **Ashok Leyland**

Explanation: Commercial vehicle major Ashok Leyland on 17 October 2016 launched India's first electric bus series that has been fully made in the country. This electric bus has been named 'Circuit' and it is a zero-emission, non-polluting vehicle, created specifically for Indian road and passenger conditions.

– Integrated with a fire detection and suppression system (FDSS), this truly Indian innovation can travel 120 kilometers on a single charge.

– Launch of 'Circuit' series gave a boost to Indian Government's 'Make in India' campaign.

– It is worth mentioning that In April 2015, at FAME Delhi workshop, Ashok Leyland had committed to vehicles with full electric power trains by January 2017.

1) In an important development on the road to formalising the biggest reform of the indirect tax regime, the Union Finance Ministry on 18 October 2016 proposed the formula for compensation under the goods and services tax (GST). What is the maximum rate that was proposed under the formula for GST implementation? – **26%**

Explanation: The Finance Ministry has proposed 26% peak rate for GST. It also proposed to the GST Council that the tax have a four-rate structure with two standard rates of 12% and 18%.

– Gold will be taxed at 4%. Additionally, a cess will be levied on ultra-luxury items, tobacco products and pan masala and environmentally harmful products in order to equalise the levy to the current level of tax. This will bring in about Rs. 50,000 crore, which will be used to compensate the States for any revenue loss.

– However, no agreement was reached for the proposed GST rates between the Centre and the States as on 19 October 2016, when the third round of deliberations in the GST Council ended in New Delhi.

2) What is the name of the newly floated political party of Manipuri human rights activist Irom Sharmila, as announced by her on 18 October 2016? – **People's Resurgence and Justice Alliance (PRJA)**



Explanation: From Sharmila's newly floated party People's Resurgence and Justice Alliance (PRJA) will contest the Assembly polls in Manipur in 2017. The announcement of the new political party on 18 October is significant. On the same date in 1948, the first session of Manipur Assembly was held.

– Sharmila would herself contest from two constituencies – Thoubal and Khurai. While Khurai is her home constituency, Thoubal is constituency of Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh.

– 44-year old Sharmila, who broke her 16-year-long fast demanding withdrawal of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) on 9 August 2016, had announced her decision to test political waters.

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3) According to media reports published on 18 October 2016 India has completed its nuclear triad by commissioning INS Arihant – the first indigenously built strategic nuclear submarine, in the Indian Navy. India became overall the fourth country in the world to achieve nuclear triad – **Fourth**

Explanation: India recently became the fourth country to achieve status of nuclear triad, i.e., ability to carry nuclear attacks through all three mediums – land, air and sea. The other three countries with nuclear triad capability are United States, Russia and China.

– India achieved nuclear triad by commissioning the first indigenously built strategic nuclear submarine – the INS Arihant. INS Arihant is a 6,000-tonne submarine that is capable of launching nuclear weapons from underwater. It was commissioned into the Indian Navy quietly during August 2016.

– It has been commissioned after extensive sea trials. Arihant is an SSBN, which is a submarine that can carry ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads.

– SSBNs are equipped with better stealth features and are larger compared to SSNs, which are nuclear-powered attack submarines.

– India already has the land-based Agni ballistic missiles, and fighters like the Mirage 2000s, which are capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

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4) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 18 October 2016 launched the National SC/ST Hub to provide support to entrepreneurs from the community. This Hub was launched at which place? – **Ludhiana (Punjab)**

Explanation: With an initial outlay of Rs 490 crore, the National SC/ST Hub will work towards strengthening market access/linkage, monitoring, capacity building, leveraging financial support schemes and sharing industry-best practices for SC/ST entrepreneurs.

– The Public Procurement Policy 2012 stipulates that 4% of procurement done by ministries, departments and CPSEs will have to be from enterprises owned by SC/ST entrepreneurs.

– It is worth mentioning that Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in his budget speech had announced the setting up

of the National SC/ST Hub under the MSME Ministry.

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5) Which Indian sports personality was, in a rare honour, appointed as a member of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Athletes' Commission, as disclosed on 18 October 2016? – **Saina Nehwal**

Explanation: Star Indian badminton player Saina Nehwal received a letter to the effect from the IOC President Thomas Bach on 17 October 2016 disclosing her appointment as a member of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Athletes' Commission. It is a rare honour for an Indian sportsperson.

– The Athletes' Commission is chaired by Angela Ruggiero and it comprises nine vice presidents and 10 other members.

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6) Which leading Indian travel portal will acquire Ibibo group,

as announced on 18 October 2016, making it the biggest acquisition in this space in the country? – **MakeMyTrip**

Explanation: MakeMyTrip is all set to completely acquire Ibibo group, signalling a major consolidation in the online travel aggregation space. South African investment firm Naspers and Chinese Internet giant Tencent hold 90% stake in Ibibo.

– The acquisition creates a one-stop shop for Indian travellers, as it brings together leading consumer travel brands, including MakeMyTrip, Goibibo, RedBus, Ryde and Rightstay. It is worth mentioning that Ibibo had

acquired online bus aggregator RedBus for about \$110 million in 2014.

The companies did not disclose the deal size, but sources and industry experts pegged it at \$400-\$450 million, making it the biggest acquisition in this space.

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7) What is the name of the private hospital in Bhubaneswar (Odisha), which came to news on 17 October 2016 after death of over 20 people after a major fire in the hospital? – **SUM Hospital**

Explanation: Bhubaneswar-based SUM Hospital and Medical College was hit by a major fire on 17 October 2016. The fire started due to a short-circuit in the central AC unit and immediately spread through an oxygen pipeline to the dialysis unit, the intensive care unit (ICU) and the emergency ward of the hospital.

– Though fire tenders reached the spot and brought the fire under control, a large part of the dialysis unit and the ICU were gutted. Over 20 persons died in the accident.

– The state government has ordered a probe into the incident. The hospital is run by the SOA group of institutions.

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21 October 2016

1) Which football club team on 19 October 2016 became the first Indian team to reach the final of the prestigious AFC Cup? – **Bengaluru FC**

Explanation: Bengaluru FC created footballing history as it became the first-ever Indian team to reach the final

of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Cup on 19 October 2016. It achieved this distinction as it defending champions and Malaysian champion club Johor Darul Ta'zim by 3-1 in the semi-final played at the Sree Kanteerva Stadium in Bengaluru.

- Bengaluru FC skipper and star Indian footballer Sunil Chhetri led the team in style by scoring two superb goals.
- It is worth mentioning that before this Indian clubs have reached AFC Cup semi-finals twice but had their hearts broken in this stage. Dempo lost in semifinals in 2008 and same was the fate of East Bengal in 2013.
- AFC Cup is the equivalent of what Europa League is for European clubs.

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2) According to the media reports published on 20 October 2016 as many as 3.2 million debit cards are being blocked by banks after a major potential security breach was reported. Which are the 5 worst-hit card-issuing banks, which are either replacing or asking customer to change the security codes? – **SBI, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank and Axis Bank**

Explanation: It was reported in media reports on 20 October 2016 that a number of Indian commercial banks will either replace or ask customer to change the security codes of as many as 3.2 million debit cards on fears of potential breaches.

- The worst-hit banks are State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank, ICICI

Bank, Yes Bank and Axis Bank. Of the debit cards affected, 2.6 million are on Visa and MasterCard platforms, while 600,000 are on the home-grown RuPay platform.

- It is worth mentioning that India's largest bank SBI, along with its subsidiary banks, had earlier blocked about 6.25 lakh debit cards of their customers after "suspicious" transactions spiked at third-party ATM machines. However, on 20 October 2016 SBI, Yes Bank and MasterCard denied that there was any breach of their security systems and steps like blocking of cards was taken as a precautionary measure.
- SBI said that it had been informed by card network providers about a potential risk to some cards, and was replacing those cards as a precautionary measure.

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3) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Urjit Patel chaired the

bank's central board meeting in which city on 20 October 2016, which was the first instance of central bank's central board meeting in this city? –

Kanpur

Explanation: On 20 October 2016 RBI Governor Urjit Patel chaired the bank's central board meeting in Kanpur. This was the first time that RBI held the central board meeting in the industrial city.

- It was also the first central board meeting under Patel, who took RBI's reins on 6 September 2016 as its 24th Governor.

– It is worth mentioning that Kanpur is one of the 19 regional offices of the RBI.

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4) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) released the results of the Financial Access Survey for 2016 on 19 October 2016. What is financial access data pertaining to India in this Survey? – **Just over 13 commercial bank branches for every 100,000 adults**

Explanation: According to IMF’s Financial Access Survey for 2016, as of 2015, India had over 1.2 lakh branches of commercial banks across the country. This is higher than the number in the US, China, Brazil, Russia and South Africa. However, this translates to just over 13 commercial bank branches for every 100,000 adults.

– In this respect, China is no better than India with 8 branches for every 100,000 adults.

– While India remains an under-banked country compared to most peers, its banking network is less concentrated in the top cities compared to several of its peers. Of the total number of bank branches in the country, close to 6% of them were located in the three largest cities in India in 2015. In comparison, over 46% of branches of commercial banks were located in three largest cities in South Korea. The corresponding figure for Australia was 39.2%, Brazil (16.4%), China (8.3%) and the US (2.5%).

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5) What is the name of the Mars lander (rover) of the European Space Agency (ESA) that failed to send any signal after landing on Mars’ surface on 19 October 2016? – **‘Schiaparelli’**

Explanation: ‘Schiaparelli’ is the name of the Mars rover of a \$1.3 billion European Mars Mission that landed at Mars’ surface on 19 October 2016 as per its schedule. But the rover failed to emit any signal and thus became the second failed Mars landing in a row for ESA.

– Schiaparelli had travelled seven months and 496 million kilometers onboard the European-Russian Trace Gas Orbiter (TGO) to come within a million kilometers from Mars on 16 October 2016, when it set off on its own mission to reach the surface.

– Schiaparelli’s landing was designed to inform technology for a much bigger and more expensive rover scheduled for launch in 2020, the second phase and high point of ExoMars.

– It is worth mentioning that British-built Beagle 2 robot lab disappeared without trace after separating from its mothership, Mars Express, in 2003. Its remains were finally spotted in a NASA photograph last year (2015). Since the 1960s, more than half of US, Russian and European attempts to operate craft on the Martian surface have failed.

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22 October 2016

1) What is the name of the ambitious regional aviation connectivity scheme that was launched by the Union Government on 21 October 2016 which, among other steps, proposes to fix all-inclusive fares at Rs 2,500 for one-hour flights in its attempt to make flying affordable for the common man? – **Udey Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN)**

Explanation: Union Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajapathi Raju on 21 October 2016 formally launched Udey Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN), the ambitious regional connectivity scheme that primarily aims to make flying affordable for the common man of the country.

– The scheme, a first-of-its kind globally, is expected to jumpstart the regional aviation market and is expected to be a win-win situation for everyone. Under the scheme, airlines will have complete freedom to enter into code sharing with larger airlines for connectivity. Also regional connectivity flights will be exempted from various airport charges.

– Airlines will get exclusive rights for 3 years to fly on a particular regional route. Airfares have been capped at Rs. 2,500 for an hour's flight for regional flights under the scheme.

– The Union Govt. wants to make sure entry and exit barriers are kept reasonably low. Airline can withdraw from scheme after 1 year.

– The Civil Aviation Ministry is hopeful that UDAN will be able to be rolled-out by airline companies by January 2017.

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2) Which important Southeast Asian country announced its separation from the United States (U.S.) and associating itself closer with China in a diplomatically far-reaching

announcement made on 20 October 2016? – **The Philippines**

Explanation: Filipino President Rodrigo Duterte in a historic announcement announced that the Philippines is separating itself from the United States and will now have significantly lesser military and economic co-operation with it. On the other hand he announced the ushering of a new era in Sino-Philippine relationships.

– More significantly this announcement was made during Duterte's state visit to China and Chinese President Xi Jinping was present. President Duterte also suggested he would be willing to overlook an international court ruling in the Philippines' favour to come closer to China.

– This policy shift of Philippines is being seen to have crucial implications for U.S. security strategy in Asia. It is because Philippines is long trusted associate of the U.S. for many decades and is involved in the South China Sea disputes.

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3) Which auto group on 20 October 2016 completed its purchase of a controlling stake in fellow Japanese automaker Mitsubishi Motors Corp. to emerge as the third largest automotive group in the world? – **Nissan Motor Company**

Explanation: Nissan Motor Company completed its purchase of a controlling stake in scandal-hit Mitsubishi Motors Corp. for more than \$2 billion on 20 October 2016. With this the 17-year-old alliance between Nissan and Renault SA (France) produces around 10 million vehicles a year, making it one of the three largest automotive groups in the world, behind Toyota Motor Corp. and Volkswagen AG.

– Nissan announced the deal for Mitsubishi in May 2016. After completing due diligence and receiving regulatory approval, it paid ¥237 billion (\$2.3 billion) on 20 October 2016 and formally took a 34% controlling stake. Nissan-Renault CEO Carlos Ghosn is taking over as the Chairman of Mitsubishi.

– Mitsubishi had admitted in April 2016 that its employees falsified fuel-economy data, leading to plunging sales and an expected loss of more than \$2 billion in the year ending March 2017.

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4) Who was announced as the winner of the inaugural International Prize in Statistics as announced on 19 October 2016? – **Sir David Cox** (British statistician)

Explanation: Prominent British statistician Sir David Cox has been named the inaugural recipient of the International Prize in Statistics on 19 October 2016. He has been chosen for the Survival Analysis Model he developed that is used in the fields of medicine, science and engineering.

– The Cox Model is widely used in the analysis of survival data and enables researchers to more easily identify the risks of specific factors for mortality or other survival outcomes among groups of patients with disparate characteristics.

– International Prize in Statistics will now be annually awarded to an individual or team for major achievements using statistics to advance science, technology and human welfare.

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5) The Union Government on 21 October 2016 completed its 15% disinvestment in which PSU construction company through which it collected around Rs. 2,200 crore? – **NBCC (India) Limited**

Explanation: NBCC (India) Limited is a government owned construction entity that has also significant stakes in project management consultancy and real estate development. Prior to the disinvestment, Govt. of India held 90% in the company, which has a market capitalisation of Rs 15,180 crore.

– The disinvestment of NBCC started from 20 October 2016 with institutional investors getting the chance to bid. The sale was subscribed 1.22 times and hence the stake sale was successful with all 15% govt. stake sold.

– On 21 October 2016 the shares were offered to retail investors at 5% discount. But, the interest among retail investors was not very encouraging. However, the disinvestment process overall was successful and after it the govt. stake in NBCC was reduced to 75%.

– NBCC was 2016-17's third disinvestment by the government through the OFS route. So far this financial year, the government has raised a total of Rs. 5,317 crore by selling its holdings in three public sector undertakings (PSUs), the other two sales being in NHPC (11.3%) and Hindustan Copper (7%).

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23-24 October 2016

1) With which newly started flight, Air India earned itself the record of operating the world's longest nonstop flight? – **Delhi to San Francisco**

Explanation: The newly started Delhi to San Francisco flight of Indian carrier Air India became world's longest nonstop flight with 15,300 kilometres of distance covered in 14.5 hours.

– An important fact associated with this flight was that the flight took the Pacific route instead of the conventional Atlantic route. The Pacific route is almost 1,400 km longer than the Atlantic one. But still the flight took almost two hours less thanks to tailwinds, winds that blow in the same direction as an aircraft and thus make it go faster.

– The maiden flight on the route was undertaken on 16 October 2016 from Delhi (at 4 am) and the flight landed in San Francisco at 6.30 am on 16 October 2016, as it had crossed the International Date Line. The aircraft used on the flight was Boeing-777 200.

– The four pilots involved in the flight were captains Rajneesh Sharma, Gautam Verma, MA Khan and SM Palekar, apart from 10 cabin crew members.

– Air India's Pacific route will remain the world's longest nonstop flight for two years, till Singapore Airlines launches the Singapore-New York, which will cover 16,500 km in 19 hours.

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2) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is ready to introduce which newest denomination currency note very soon, as reported in the media on 21 October 2016? – **Rs. 2,000**

Explanation: According to several media reports, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has very nearly completed preparations for introducing this new high-value currency. The notes have already been printed, and their

dispatch from the currency printing press in Mysuru has commenced.

– The move assumes significance in the wake of a demand from some quarters that notes of Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 500 denominations be withdrawn to prevent hoarding of black money.

– The highest denomination note printed by the RBI was the Rs. 10,000 note in 1938 and in 1954. They were demonetized in 1946 and 1978, respectively.

– According to reports, it costs a little over Rs. 3 to produce a Rs. 1,000 note, the lowest in terms printing costs as a proportion of value. Printing notes of smaller denominations is relatively more costly.

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3) Which telecom giant has agreed to acquire Time Warner for a mammoth \$85.4 billion, as reported in media on 22 October 2016? – **AT&T**

Explanation: US telecom giant AT&T Inc. has agreed to buy Time Warner Inc. for \$85.4 billion. This proposed acquisition will expand AT&T into media and entertainment as its wireless business matures.

– AT&T will gain premium cable channel HBO, CNN and the Warner Bros. Studio through this deal and it means it will become a content owner rather than just a distributor of video.

– However, the deal will go through the poking eyes of the US Congress, Justice Department and US regulatory authorities due to its monopolistic overtures.

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4) Which India firm during October 2016 unveiled CYSVAX, the world's first vaccine to fight against tapeworms in pigs? – **Indian Immunologicals Ltd (IIL)**

25-26 October 2016

Explanation: Hyderabad-based Indian Immunologicals Ltd (IIL), the wholly-owned subsidiary of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), on 19 October 2016 launched the world's first vaccine to fight against tapeworms in pigs.

– The vaccine named CYSVAX also has the potential to significantly reduce the incidence of epilepsy in humans.

– IIL collaborated with Dr. Marshall Lightowers, University of Melbourne, Australia and GALVmed (Global Alliance for Veterinary medicine) to develop the vaccine.

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5) India won the Kabaddi World Cup 2016 by defeating Iran by 38-29 in the finals at Ahmedabad's TransStadia Arena on 22 October 2016. This was the third consecutive world cup title for India. Who was adjudged Most Valuable Player of the World Cup? – **Jang Kun Lee (South Korea)**

Explanation: In the finals of the 2016 Kabaddi World Cup, hosts India beat a resolute Iran side to become the world champions for third consecutive time. India produced a strong comeback in the second half to pip Iran to the title.

– The first half belonged Iran's defence as they did a brilliant job on Indian raiders as they led 18-13 at the end of the first half. But a strong show by Indian raider Ajay Thakur (12 points) tilted the match in India's favour.

– South Korea's Jang Kun Lee, who had a superb tournament, was named the Most Valuable Player of the World Cup. Kenya were named the emerging team of the tournament as they won a lot of hearts and almost made it to the semi-finals. The best referee of the tournament award was given to SMA Mannan from Bangladesh.

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1) The deposit portfolio of Indian banks crossed which milestone figure as on 30 September 2016, as disclosed during October 2016? – **Rs. 100 trillion**

Explanation: The deposit portfolio of Indian banks crossed the Rs.100 trillion mark as on 30 September 2016.

– The collective deposit base of the banking system in India, which is Asia's third largest and the world's fastest-growing major economy, took five years and seven months to double from Rs. 50.46 trillion in February 2011.

– On previous occasions, the deposit base doubled in a much shorter span. For instance, it had taken three years and 11 months to double from Rs. 25.04 trillion in March 2007; and four years and four months each to double from Rs. 12.57 trillion in November 2002 and Rs. 6.26 trillion in June 1998.

– Roughly, in the past decade, the deposit portfolio of the Indian banking system has grown four-fold.

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2) Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 1,500-km-long gas pipeline project in his Lok Sabha constituency on 24 October 2016 that seeks to provide piped cooking gas to residents of Varanasi within two years. What is the name given to this ambitious project? – **'Urja Ganga'**

Explanation: 'Urja Ganga' is the name of the ambitious gas pipeline project which in its first phase promises to provide piped cooking gas to residents of Varanasi within two years.

- In another year thereafter, the project will cater to millions of people in states like Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.
- With the 'Urja Ganga' project, 20 lakh households will get PNG connections. The project is said to be a major step towards collective growth and development of the Eastern region of India. GAIL has built a network of trunk pipelines covering the length of around 11,000 km. With Urja Ganga project, this number will further increase by 2540 km.
- From Varanasi's perspective, an 800-km long MDPI pipeline will be laid and 50,000 households and 20,000 vehicles will get PNG and CNG gas respectively.

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3) The Union Government during October 2016 granted which facility to the service voters and personnel of the armed forces, which was one of the long-pending demands of the forces?
 – **E-Postal ballot facility**

Explanation: The Union Govt. amended electoral rules during October 2016, to allow service voters, including Armed Forces personnel, to get their postal ballot through electronic means to save valuable time.

- For this a notification was issued on 21 October 2016 that amended rule 23 of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961 enabling service voters, including armed forces personnel, to cast their vote in elections through e-postal ballot.
- This would mean that service voters, including personnel from armed forces, can now download the blank post ballot sent to them electronically, mark their preference and post the filled-up

ballot back to their respective returning officers.

- This would cut short the delay experienced in the present system of two-way transmission of ballot paper by the postal services. It is worth mentioning that two-way electronic transmission has not been recommended by the Election Commission of India (ECI) for security and secrecy reasons.

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4) Paul Beatty on 25 October 2016 became the first American writer to win the Man Booker prize for his book comprising satire on US racial politics. What is the name of this book? – **"The Sellout"**

Explanation: "The Sellout" is the name of the book written by 54-year old Los Angeles-born writer Paul Beatty, for which he was awarded the prestigious Man Booker prize for 2016. The book is a laugh-out-loud novel whose main character wants to assert his African American identity.

- With this Paul Beatty became the first American writer to win the coveted prize, considered the most prestigious award for writers of English language. The £50,000 award came three years after eligibility rules were changed to allow writers of any nationality writing in the English language and being published in the UK.

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5) Who took over as the interim Chairman of the Tata Group after Cyrus P.



Mistry was in a highly surprising move removed from the prestigious post on 24 October 2016? – **Ratan Tata**

Explanation: Former Chairman Ratan Tata was named as the interim Chairman of the \$100 billion Tata Group. This decision was taken after the Board of Directors of Tata Sons replaced Cyrus P Mistry as Chairman of the group on 24 October 2016.

– The board also constituted a selection committee to choose a replacement for Ratan Tata within four months. The committee comprises of Tata, Venu Srinivasan, Amit Chandra, Ronen Sen and Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya.

– 48-year old Mistry was the sixth Chairman of Tata Group, the salt-to-software conglomerate. He took over from Ratan Tata in December 2012 and has been a director of the company since 2006.

27-29 October 2016

1) What is the name given to the deadly thermonuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile of Russia, the first picture of which was unveiled during October 2016, which is capable of wiping out nearly all of the UK or France or US state of Texas in one single shot? – **Satan 2**

Explanation: ‘Satan 2’ is the name of the most powerful nuclear warhead ever developed. The first official photos of this thermonuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile (Sarmat) were unveiled during October 2016. The images were published by the Makeyev Rocket Design Bureau on its website.

– The missile will weigh up to 10 tons with the capacity to carry up to 10 tons of nuclear cargo. With that type of payload, it could deliver a blast some 2,000 times more powerful than the

bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The missile will have a range exceeding 11,000 kilometers.

– The missile has been nicknamed ‘Satan 2’ and is capable of wiping out countries as large as UK or France or areas as large as the US state of Texas in one shot.

2) The Dhanvantari Divas on 28 October 2016 was observed as which day for the first time ever by the AYUSH Ministry? – **National Ayurveda Day**

Explanation: The Ministry of AYUSH observed the occasion of Dhanvantari Divas (or Dhanteras) as first National Ayurveda Day on 28 October 2016. According to Hindu scriptures, Dhanvantari (the God of health) had appeared on this day with a pot containing elixir.

– The theme of first National Ayurveda Day was ‘*Ayurveda for Prevention and Control of Diabetes.*’ A national seminar on this theme was organised to mark the occasion.

– The Ministry of AYUSH also launched ‘**Mission Madhumeha through Ayurveda**’, on the occasion. This mission will be a protocol for treating diabetes through Ayurveda and will be implemented throughout the country.

3) An ambitious agreement for World’s largest marine protected area was undertaken on 27 October 2016. This protected area will be established at which place under which 1.57 million sq. km area will gain protection from fishing for 35 years? – **Antarctica**

Explanation: Delegates from 24 countries and the European Union on

27 October 2016 agreed unanimously to designate the Ross Sea in Antarctica as a marine protected area (MPA). This area will cover 1.57 million sq. km area and will be the largest MPA in the world.

– The agreement was agreed upon in a meeting held in Hobart (Australia) under the auspices of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).

– The Ross Sea, its shelf and slope only comprise 2% of the Southern Ocean but they are home to 38% of the world's Adelie penguins, 30% of the world's Antarctic petrels and around 6% of the world's population of Antarctic minke whales.

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4) The Union Cabinet on 27 October 2016 took which important decision pertaining to the disinvestment of public sector undertakings (PSUs)? – **It gave in-principle approval to strategic sale in PSUs**

Explanation: The Union Cabinet on 27 October gave in- principle approval to NITI Aayog's proposal for strategic sale in over a dozen public sector undertakings (PSUs) including those that are making profits.

– The strategic sale will involve a management control transfer as the shareholding of the government would come down to below 50%. Some of these PSUs will be important units and therefore since each unit would be considered in its own merit, the timing of that would be decided by the government accordingly.

– Each PSU sale case would be considered separately after it has been examined by the department of disinvestment and the ministries concerned.

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5) The Union Cabinet on 27 October 2016 approving the establishment of a National Academic Depository (NAD). What will be the main function of NAD? – **It will make available all academic degrees, certificates and awards in the country for verification**

Explanation: National Academic Depository (NAD) will be a digital depository of all academic awards in the country and will have mechanism to provide digital or a printed copy of the academic award with security features to the students or other authorised users. NAD will verify academic awards online on the same day of request initiated by any authorised user.

– Requests for access to academic awards, for example, from potential employers, and academic institutions would be only on the basis of consent of the student.

– School learning certificates, degrees and higher education academic awards will be digitised by academic institutions, which would be responsible for the authenticity of data uploaded. NAD will thus effectively end the trend of fake degrees. However, only recognised institutions would be asked to upload the degrees.

– NSDL Database Management Limited (NDML) and CDSL Ventures Limited (CVL), wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Depositories registered under the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Act, 1992, would operationalise the NAD. The NAD will be rolled out in 2017-18.

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6) The RBI announced which step as a major boost to start-ups in the country on 27 October 2016? – **It permitted**

start-ups to raise ECBs of up to \$3 million in a financial year

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 27 October 2016 permitted start-ups to raise external commercial borrowings (ECBs) of up to \$3 million in a financial year, a move aimed at boosting innovation and promoting job creation.

– According to RBI, the borrowing should be denominated in any freely convertible currency or in Indian Rupees (INR) or a combination thereof. ECBs can be raised from a country which is either a member of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) or FATF-Style Regional Bodies.

– However, overseas branches and subsidiaries of Indian banks and overseas wholly-owned subsidiary or joint venture of an Indian company will not be considered as recognised lenders.

– It is worth mentioning that India has the third-largest number of start-ups globally.

– With this BCEL became the first commodity exchange to lose recognition since SEBI took over the regulation of commodities from FMC in September 2015.

– Primarily set up as an associate of oilseed traders in Navi Mumbai, BCEL received permanent recognition to trade in commodities from the erstwhile regulator, the Forward Markets Commission (FMC), and started trading in castor oilseed.

– The volume of trade during 2013-14 stood at 14,000 tonnes in castor seed, which was the only commodity being traded on it. However, since 13 December 2013, there had been no trading.

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end
OPEN DEFECATION 2) Which state on 29 October 2016 became country's second Open Defecation Free (ODF) state? – **Himachal Pradesh**

30-31 October 2016

1) During October 2016 which entity became the first commodity exchange to lose recognition since SEBI took over the regulation of commodities from FMC in September 2015? – **Bombay Commodity Exchange Limited (BCEL)**

Explanation: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on 29 October 2016 allowed Bombay Commodity Exchange (BCEL) to exit the commodity futures business with immediate effect. It also asked the exchange to drop the term “Exchange”, from its name and avoid its use in any variant.

Explanation: On 29 October 2016 Himachal Pradesh became the second Open Defecation Free (ODF) state of India. The first to achieve this feat was Sikkim.

– Himachal Pradesh successfully achieved a total rural sanitation coverage of 100% in the state and with all 12 districts in the state also being free from open defecation, the state was as an Open Defecation Free (ODF) state. The official announcement in this regard was made by Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh.

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3) Who took over as the Non-Executive Chairman of YES Bank from 30 October 2016? – **Ashok Chawla**

Explanation: Former finance secretary and Competition Commission of India chairman Ashok Chawla took charge as Non-Executive Chairman of YES Bank from 30 October 2016. He took over after non-executive part-time Chairperson Radha Singh completed her tenure as the bank's director on 29 October 2016.

– In March this year, Chawla was appointed additional non-executive director on the bank's board. He was to be appointed as non-executive chairman of the bank after the end of Singh's term.

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4) India won the 2016 Asian Champions Trophy (Men's) as the Indian team defeated arch-rivals Pakistan in the finals on 30 October 2016. With this India has won this title how many times? – **Twice**

Explanation: India won its second Asian Champions Trophy title on 30 October 2016 by defeating Pakistan in the final by 3-2. Goals from Rupinder Pal Singh (18th minute), Yousuf Affan (23rd) and Nikkin Thimmaiah (51st) helped India surmount the challenge from Pakistan. Pakistan made a fabulous come-back from two goals behind to equalize in 38th minute.

– This was the fourth edition of Asian Champions Trophy and was held at Wisma Belia Hockey Stadium at Kuantan (Malaysia).

– This is the second time India has won the Asian Championship title. India had won the inaugural edition of the Asian Champions Trophy (Ordos, China) by defeating Pakistan in the final in 2011. Pakistan reversed the result in the title contest the next year (Doha, Qatar) by defeating India in the finals. Pakistan went on to retain the title in 2013 (Japan) by defeating hosts Japan in the final.

– The Asian Hockey Champions Trophy is an event organized by the Asian Hockey Federation (since 2011). It features the Asian Games top six field hockey teams competing in a round robin format.

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5) Who won the Mexican Formula One (F1) Grand Prix title for 2016 on 30 October 2016? – **Lewis Hamilton (Britain)**

Explanation: Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton (Britain) won the 2016 Mexican F1 Grand Prix title on 30 October 2016 to keep hopes alive for another F1 title. He thus cut teammate Nico Rosberg's (Germany) championship lead to 19 points. Rosberg finished the race at second place.

– Red Bull team's Daniel Ricciardo (Australia) finished fifth but was promoted to third several hours after the race had concluded after penalties for first teammate Max Verstappen (Belgium), the original podium finisher, and then Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel (Germany).

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1 November 2016

1) Which state topped the 2016 All-India State/Union Territory-wise Ease of Doing Business rankings, as announced by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on 31 October 2016?

– **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (jointly)**

Explanation: According to the All-India State/Union Territory-wise Ease of Doing Business rankings for year 2016, as announced by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on 31 October 2016, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have jointly topped the list. On the other hand last-year's topper Gujarat slipped to the third spot.

– The top ten ranks in 2016 included Andhra Pradesh & Telangana (98.78% each implementation rate), followed by Gujarat (98.21%), Chhattisgarh (97.32%), Madhya Pradesh (97.01%), Haryana (96.95%), Jharkhand (96.57%), Rajasthan (96.43%), Uttarakhand (96.13%) and Maharashtra (92.86%).

– These rankings cover the period from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016.

– While last year only seven States had implemented over 50% of the total reform points and no State had an implementation percentage of over 75%, this year saw 17 States crossing the 50% implementation mark and 16 states have an implementation percentage of over 75%.

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2) The Delhi High Court completed how many years of its existence on 31 October 2016? – **50 years**

Explanation: The Delhi High Court turned 50 on 31 October 2016. The High Court was established on 31 October 1966. To commemorate its 50 years a special function was held in at

'Vigyan Bhawan' that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Justice of India T S Thakur, apart from numerous legal luminaries and senior justices.

– Housing a total of 36 courtrooms and dealing in both civil and criminal proceedings, the Delhi High Court has witnessed some of the most challenging cases from the time of its inception.

– The Delhi High Court is equipped with video-conferencing facilities for several years. It allows undertrial prisoners in sensitive cases or witnesses in foreign countries to depose before the court.

– It may use "hologram technology" in future, allowing lawyers to argue in court from a remote location. This was disclosed by Justice Badar Durrez Ahmed during his address in a programme to mark court's 50 years.

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3) The NITI Aayog launched the first ever Agricultural Marketing & Farm Friendly Reforms Index during October 2016. Which rank topped this Index? –

Maharashtra

Explanation: During October 2016 NITI Aayog launched an index to rank States and UTs that is based on implementation of seven provisions proposed under model Agricultural Produce Market Committee Act (APMC Act), joining eNAM initiative, special treatment to fruits and vegetables for marketing and level of taxes in mandis.

– The Index is named as "Agricultural Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index" and it has a score which can have minimum value "0" implying no reforms and maximum value "100" implying complete reforms in the selected areas.

– The state of Maharashtra achieved first rank in implementation of various reforms, with a score of 81.7. The state has implemented most of the marketing reforms and it offers best environment for doing agribusiness among all the states and UTs. Gujarat ranks second with score of 71.5, closely followed by Rajasthan (70.0) and Madhya Pradesh (69.5).

– Almost two third states could not reach even halfway mark of reforms score. Major states like U.P., Punjab, West Bengal, Assam, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu and J&K are in this group.

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4) What is the name of the new initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31 October 2016 on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Patel that aims to promote unity amongst countrymen? – **“Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat”**

Explanation: “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” is the name of the new initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31 October 2016. It was launched on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Patel.

– The initiative aims to promote greater awareness among people of various States about one another, hence promoting the spirit of Unity in Diversity.

– Prime Minister Narendra Modi feels that “Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat” initiative can build bonds between the people of various States of India.

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5) 8 terrorists from the banned organisation SIMI escaped from which Central Jail in the early hours of 31 October 2016 before they were encountered by a STF team? – **Bhopal Central Jail (Madhya Pradesh)**

Explanation: Eight terrorists from the banned Students Islamic Movement of India, (SIMI) who escaped from Bhopal Central Jail in the early hours of 31 October 2016, were later killed in an encounter.

– The terrorists scaled the wall of the ‘high-security’ prison (between 2 to 3 a.m.) in the state capital using prison bed sheets after killing a jail security guard. They were later killed in an encounter mid-morning in Ithkhedi village on the outskirts of Bhopal.

– Most of the escapees had been charged with terror and other heinous crimes and many of them were linked to home-grown terror outfits like the Indian Mujahedeen.

– This was the second major jail break by operatives from the banned SIMI in three years. In 2013, seven members of the group broke out of a jail in Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh.

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2 November 2016



1) What is the name of the glacial lake near Mount Everest that came to news as a part of it was successfully drained by Nepal recently so as to avert the risk of a disastrous flood that could have threatened thousands of lives? – **Imja Tsho**

Explanation: Imja Tsho is the name of the glacial lake located at an altitude of 5,010 metres (16,437 feet). It is

situated just 10 kilometers south of Mount Everest, the world's highest peak. It is the also the fastest-growing glacial lake in Nepal.

– A part of the lake was successfully drained by the Nepal Government as it feared that fast growing water levels in it posed danger of serious flood, which would have a catastrophic impact on the lives of more than 50,000 people living in nearby villages and even in southern districts of the country.

– The Nepal government worked together with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to drain the lake. A team of 40 Nepal army personnel and more than 100 local high altitude workers worked in shifts since April 2016 to complete the project, airlifting or using yaks to transport the equipment.

– A 45-metres long tunnel was constructed to aid outflow of the lake downstream while a mechanical gate was installed to control the discharge.

– It is worth mentioning that climate change is causing Himalayan glaciers to melt at an alarming rate, creating huge glacial lakes which could burst their banks and devastate mountain communities.

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2) What is the name of the newly developed stealth fighter developed by China that was shown publicly for the first time on 1 November 2016? –

Chengdu J-20

Explanation: Taking a big step in its combat capability, China showed its Chengdu J-20 stealth fighter in public for the first time on 1 November 2016. It was displayed at 'Airshow China', held in the southern city of Zhuhai.

– China has been refining designs for the J-20, first glimpsed by plane-spotters in 2010, in the hope of

narrowing a military technology gap with the United States. China is set to overtake the U.S. as the world's top aviation market in the next decade.

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3) The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016 came into effect from 1 November 2016. The act, which seeks to give more teeth to the authorities to curb benami transactions, is an amendment of which earlier Benami act? –

Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act 1988

Explanation: The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016 that came into effect on 1 November 2016, is an amendment of the older Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act 1988.

– The Act defines a *benami* transaction, as a transaction where in a property is held by or transferred to a person, but has been provided or paid by another person.

– Earlier, any violation of the Act would lead to imprisonment of up to three years, or a fine, or both. Now, under the amended Act, any offender would stand to be punished with imprisonment of up to seven years and be charged a fine which may extend to 25% of the fair market value of the benami property.

– If any false information is provided, it would lead to imprisonment for a time period of six months to five years and a fine of up to 10% of the fair market value of the benami property.

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4) Which state became the third in India to become Open Defecation Free (ODF) on 1 November 2016? – **Kerala**

Explanation: The State of Kerala on 1 November 2016 became the third

State overall and the largest State so far to be declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). The formal announcement in this regard was made by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in a ceremony held in capital Thiruvananthapuram.

– Kerala, with a rural population of approximately 3.5 crore, is also the largest State so far to have achieved the ODF Status, after Sikkim (over 6 lakhs) and Himachal Pradesh (over 70 lakhs). It also became the first high density populated state in the country to achieve ODF status.

– Kerala achieved this feat as all 14 districts, 152 blocks, 940 Gram Panchayats and 2117 villages of the State have been declared free from open defecation.

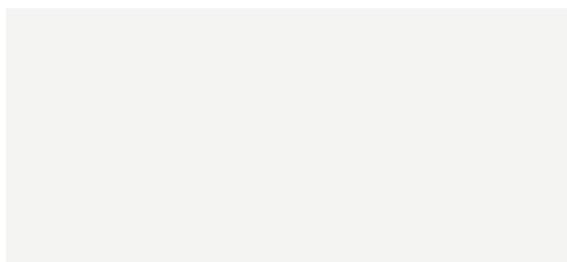
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5) Kerala completed how many years of its formation on 1 November 2016?
– **60 years**

Explanation: The southern Indian state of Kerala completed 60 years of its formation on 1 November 2016.

– Organised on linguistic principles, the modern borders of Kerala came into existence in 1956 when Travancore-Cochin state was merged with Malabar district of Madras and Kasaragod taluk of South Canara district. Parts of Southern Travancore-Cochin on the other hand went to Madras state.

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3 November 2016



1) The value of the equity portfolio of mutual funds achieved which milestone mark for the first time ever, as reported at the end of September 2016? – It was for the first time that the value of mutual fund equity portfolio in listed Indian firms crossed the portfolio holding of LIC

Explanation: According to the data collected by Prime Database, at the end of September, the value of mutual fund equity portfolio in listed firms stood Rs.4.94 lakh crore compared to Rs.4.75 lakh crore held by PSU insurance behemoth Life Insurance Corp. of India (LIC).

– This was thus the first time that the country's 44-firms strong mutual fund industry overtook LIC as a bigger owner of local stocks. Mutual fund holdings were spread across 1,088 companies while LIC has invested in 310 firms.

– On total assets managed, however, mutual funds continue to lag LIC. In the September quarter, the 44 mutual fund houses, managed an average Rs.16.10 lakh crore of investor assets (as disclosed in the data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI). In comparison, LIC, which manages insurance contracts for at least 250 million people, had total assets worth Rs.21 lakh crore.

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2) Which state became the first in the country to unveil the 'Saur Sujala Yojana' on 1 November 2016 under which farmers will be provided with subsidized solar-powered irrigation pumps? – **Chhattisgarh**

Explanation: Chhattisgarh became the first state in India to implement the ambitious 'Saur Sujala Yojana' (SSY). SSY was unveiled formally by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1 November 2016 on the occasion of state's 16th Formation Day.

– Under 'Saur Sujala Yojana' farmers will be provided with subsidized solar-powered irrigation pumps of 3HP and 5 HP capacities. Priority will be given to farmers living in those areas where electricity is not available.

3) The International Conference on Climate Change, Water, Agriculture and Food Security (ICCCWAFS-2016) started from 2 November 2016 in which Indian city? – **Hyderabad**

Explanation: The 2-day International Conference on Climate Change, Water, Agriculture and Food Security (ICCCWAFS-2016) commenced from 2 November 2016 at Hyderabad's ICRISAT campus. It was inaugurated by Nils Ragnar Kamsvag, Ambassador of Norway, who gave his inaugural address.

– Climate change, impacts and adaptation, sustainable intensification of agriculture systems, water resource management, approaches to address food security and promoting bio-economy- are some of the themes that are expected to be debated at the conference.

– Noted professors, agricultural scientists and environmentalists will also present over 70 technical papers on various related issues.

4) Haryana celebrated which landmark formation day ceremony on 1 November 2016? – **50th**

Explanation: 1 November 2016 marked the golden jubilee of Haryana's creation out of Punjab. To mark the special occasion a grand Golden Jubilee function was held in Gurugram (Gurgaon) that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

– The state of Haryana came into existence on the basis of language on 1 November 1966, nineteen years after the catastrophic partition of Punjab between India and Pakistan. It was split out from Punjab, thus affecting a second partition of Punjab.

– Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched a special employment scheme for state's unemployed post graduates. Titled '*Saksham Haryana*', the scheme aims to provide a minimum of 100 hours of work in a month for which a fixed remuneration of Rs. 9000 will be paid.

5) What is the name of the Tata Group veteran who resigned as the chairman of the National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)? –

S. Ramadorai

Explanation: Tata Group veteran S. Ramadorai's resignation as the chairman of the National Skill Development Agency (NSDA) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) sparked speculations that he might be headed back to the Tata Group, India's largest conglomerate.

– His resignation was accepted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and

Rohit Nandan, Secretary of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, was appointed interim head of the NSDA.

– Tata Group is going through crisis after its Chairman Cyrus P. Mistry was in removed from the post in an almost shocking manner.

4 November 2016

1) The RBI on 3 November 2016 came out with which new guideline pertaining to Masala Bonds? – It allowed banks to issue Masala Bonds

Explanation: On 3 November 2016 the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed the banks to issue rupee denominated bonds, (or Masala Bonds), in the overseas market to shore up their capital base as well as for financing infrastructure and affordable housing.

– The RBI had first announced its intention for letting banks tap the overseas market with rupee bonds on 25 August 2016 when it announced a slew of measures to develop the bond and currencies market.

– Companies, including financial entities, were already allowed to raise money through masala bonds and a few issuances totaling Rs. 7,472 crore have already been done.

2) A 4-tier GST tax structure was decided upon at the first day of the two-day GST Council meeting on 3 November 2016. What the minimum and maximum GST rates are, as agreed upon in the meeting? – Minimum 5% and Maximum 28%

Example: A 4-tier GST tax structure of 5, 12, 18 and 28%, with lower rates for essential items and the highest for luxury and de-merits goods that would also attract an additional cess, was decided by the all- powerful GST Council on 3 November 2016.

– The lowest rate of 5% would be for common use items while there would be two standard rates of 12 and 18% under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime targeted to be rolled out from 1 April 2017.

– The highest tax slab of 28% will be applicable to items which are currently taxed at 30-31% (excise duty plus VAT).

– With a view to keeping inflation under check, essential items including food, which presently constitute roughly half of the consumer inflation basket, will be taxed at zero rate.

3) Who was chosen as the Brand Ambassador of Swachh Rail Mission (SRM) and was felicitated by Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu on 2 November 2016? – Bindeshwar Pathak

Explanation: Bindeshwar Pathak, the founder of Sulabh International, was chosen as the Brand Ambassador of Swachh Rail Mission (SRM).

– Sulabh International has been assigned to clean some important railway stations across the country as part of the mission. As a pilot project, Sulabh has started cleaning and maintenance of five important railway stations from September 2016. These railway stations are Gorakhpur, Old Delhi, Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Gwalior.

4) What is the name of the newly built telescope by U.S. space agency NASA that will be the successor of its famous Hubble Telescope and is 100 times powerful than it? – **James Webb Space Telescope**

Explanation: The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States successfully completed building the largest space telescope named James Webb Space Telescope. It is 100 times powerful than the Hubble Space Telescope and may find the first galaxies that were formed in the early universe.

– This newly built telescope will be the successor for NASA’s iconic Hubble Space Telescope that has been in service for last 26 years and has made innumerable discoveries since.

– The Webb telescope’s infrared cameras are so sensitive that it needs to be shielded from the rays of the Sun. However, development of James Webb Space Telescope has been a joint project of the NASA, the European Space Agency and the Canadian Space Agency.

5) Former Scotiabank Vice Chairman Sarabjit Singh Marwah came to news on 2 November 2016. Why? – **He became the first Sikh to be appointed to the Canadian Senate (Upper House)**

Explanation: Toronto-based Marwah, who retired as from Scotiabank in 2014, was among six people from Ontario who were appointed to the Senate by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on 2 November 2016.

– Marwah is an alumnus of Delhi’s St Stephen’s College and the Delhi School of Economics. He also holds

an MBA degree from the University of California in Los Angeles.

– He joined two other turbaned Sikhs – Defence Minister Harjeet Sajjan and Science Minister Navdeep Bains, in the Canadian parliament. While Marwah will be the only Indian-origin member of the Senate (Upper House), there are over 20 MPs of Indian origin the Canadian House of Commons (Lower House).

5-7 November 2016

1) What is the name of the newly launched central scheme for pregnant women that was officially launched on 5 November 2016 and which provides for comprehensive pre-pregnancy services to help over 3 crore pregnant women across the country? –

‘Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan’ (PMSMA)

Explanation: The Union Govt. on 5 November 2016 launched the ‘Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan’ (PMSMA), a new scheme to provide comprehensive and quality antenatal care to pregnant women on the ninth of every month.

– Under the scheme a minimum package of antenatal care services would be provided to pregnant women in their second or third trimesters at government health facilities.

– The key feature of this programme is that the services would be provided by gynecology specialists and physicians with support from private sector doctors to supplement the efforts of the government sector.



2) The first phase of the 'Jang-e-Azadi Memorial'

was formally inaugurated by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal on 6 November 2016. This memorial, being built in memory of contribution and sacrifices made by the Punjabi community in Indian independence movement, is situated in which place of Punjab? – **Kartarpur**

Explanation: The 'Jang-e-Azadi Memorial' is being constructed at the cost of Rs. 200 crore in **Kartarpur** (Jalandhar) in Punjab. The foundation of the ambitious memorial was laid on 19 October 2014 while the work started from 26 March 2015.

– On 6 November 2016 the first phase of memorial was inaugurated by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal. The attractions in the first phase include a 90-minute movie by filmmaker Shyam Benegal, an 45-minute laser show-cum-water fall in the evening and two galleries depicting the freedom movement in Punjab, starting from the First Sikh War led by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in Multan in 1849 to Independence and Partition.

– Seven more galleries would come up in the second phase set to open around March 2017.

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3) Indian women's hockey team won its maiden Asian Champions Trophy Hockey title by defeating which in the finals

on 6 November 2016? – **China**

Explanation: India beat China 2-1 to win its maiden Women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament in Singapore on 5 November 2016. India was helped by a brilliant last minute goal by Deepika Thakur. Deepika also emerged as the leading goal scorer of the tournament.

– In the thrilling encounter, Deep Grace Ekka had given the Indians the lead in the 13th minute but Zhong Mengling pulled China level in the 44th minute. Singapore had hosted the fourth edition of Women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament and India was playing the finals second time.

– Hockey India (HI) announced a cash prize of Rs 2 lakhs for each player and chief coach Neil Hawgood.

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4) Which state during November 2016 became the last to implement the Food Security Act and with this the Act was implemented across the length and breadth of the country? – **Tamil Nadu**

Explanation: On 1 November 2016 Tamil Nadu became the last state in the country to implement the National Food Security Act. It had held itself out of the Act for around 3 years.

– With this the ambitious act to provide subsidised food-grains to around three-fourth of country's population came to effect all over the country.

– It is worth mentioning that the National Food Security Act 2013 seeks to provide subsidised foodgrains under the targeted public distribution system for up to 75% of the rural population and up to 50% of the urban population.

– For Tamil Nadu, the Central government has fixed coverage at 62.5% of the rural population and 37.7% of the urban population, based on the state's poverty ratio.

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5) The sugarcane crushing season for 2016-16 in Maharashtra was officially started from 5 November 2016. Why the crushing season was brought forward by nearly a month from the earlier date of 1 December? –

Because some sugar factories had warned that a delay in crushing would reduce cane weight, impacting sugar recovery and their finances

Explanation: It is worth mentioning that the sugar production in Maharashtra for 2016-17 is expected to be no more than 5 million tonnes (mt), against 8.41 mt in 2015-16. The fall in production has been attributed to a decrease in area under cane production due to drought.



6) In a daring maneuver, the Indian Air Force on 3 November 2016 landed its largest military transport aircraft C-17 Globemaster at which high-altitude place in Arunachal Pradesh close to the India-China border? – **Mechuka**

Explanation: The Indian Air Force (IAF) landed its largest military transport aircraft C-17 Globemaster at Mechuka in Arunachal Pradesh on 3 November 2016. The Mechuka air strip, called the 'Advanced Landing Ground' (ALG), is situated at an elevation of 6,200 feet above sea level.

– About 500 kms by road from capital Itanagar, Mechuka is only 29 km from the China border, and is already part

of a major tourist circuit in the frontier state.

– With this the IAF displayed a strong commitment to secure its international borders along China even in far-flung North-East region.

– The landing of the aircraft gave major boost to the IAF's transport capabilities. The airstrip at Mechuka is maintained by the IAF and will be one of its key forward bases along the China border.

– The C-17, the largest aircraft with the Indian Air Force, has a capacity to carry 102 para-troopers and cargo such as tank and Armored Security Vehicles, among others. The plane has a payload capacity of 77, 520 kg.

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7) Bengaluru FC could not become the first Indian football club to win the prestigious Asian Football Confederation Cup (AFC Cup) as it lost in the finals played at Doha on 5 November 2016. To which team Bengaluru FC lost? – **Iraq Air Force Club**

Explanation: Iraq Air Force Club (officially known by their Arabic name Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya) defeated India's Bengaluru FC by 1-0 in the final of the AFC Cup that was played in Doha (Qatar) on 5 November 2016.

– The lone goal of the match was scored by Ahmed Hammadi on the 70th minute. Hammadi was also the top scorer of the tournament.

– But despite this final lose Bengaluru FC deserved credit as it became the first-ever Indian club to reach the final of AFC Cup. AFC Cup is the equivalent of what Europa League is for European clubs.

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8) Which state was ranked number one by the World Bank in its 'India's State Level Energy Efficiency Implementation Readiness' Report that was released on 4 November 2016? – **Andhra Pradesh**

Explanation: Andhra Pradesh emerged as the most energy efficient state in the country in World Bank's 'India's State Level Energy Efficiency Implementation Readiness' Report. It scored the highest overall score of 42.01. The report was released by World Bank on 4 November 2016.

– Andhra Pradesh was followed by Rajasthan (41.89), Karnataka (39.34) and Maharashtra (39.29).

– The World Bank claimed that the index-based evaluation is not only able to benchmark the readiness of Indian States for energy efficiency implementation, but also reveals critical deficits or barriers in this respect.

9) During November 2016 which country became the first country of the Baltic Sea region to become part of China's ambitious 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) initiative that focuses on connectivity and cooperation among countries primarily between China and the rest of Eurasia? – **Latvia**

Explanation: Latvia became the first country of the Baltic Sea region to become part of China's 'One Belt, One Road' (OBOR) initiative as it signed the pertaining Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 5 November 2016.

– The MoU was signed after Chinese Premier Li Keqiang's meeting with his Latvian counterpart Maris Kucinskis in Riga (capital of Latvia).

– OBOR is China's ambitious connectivity and development initiative

that aims to boost its connectivity and trade across Asia, Africa and Europe. It was proposed by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013.

8 November 2016



1) The 22nd Session of the Annual Conference of Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) started from 7 November 2016 in which city? – **Marrakech (Morocco)**

Explanation: COP22 (i.e., the 22nd Annual Conference of Parties) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) started from 7 November 2016 at North African city of Marrakech (in Morocco). The Conference will conclude on 18 November 2016.

– The most important fact associated with this Conference is that it is the first COP since the historic Paris Climate Change Agreement of December 2015. The Paris Climate Change Agreement formally entered into force on 4 November 2016. Thus the focus of COP22 at Marrakesh is to bring action to the Paris Agreement.

– COPs are also known as United Nations Climate Change Conferences and are held annually since 1995. The first COP was held in Berlin in 1995.

2) Scientists at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur claimed to have found evidence of which supposedly lost river of Odisha? – **Chandrabhaga**

Explanation: Chandrabhaga is the name of the ancient river that is believed to have existed at a distance of about two km from the 13th century Sun Temple at Konark. No trace of any water body is at present visible in the proximity of the temple, but the mythical river figures prominently in ancient literature.

– Almost all myths regarding Konark, including illustrations and photographs, indicate the presence of the Chandrabhaga River in the proximity of the temple. IIT Kharagpur aimed to verify this myth.

– The institute used integrated geological and geophysical exploration in conjunction with historical evidence and analysis of satellite data. Imagery from Landsat and Terra satellites of the US and those obtained by NASA Space Shuttle Endeavour's 'Radar Topography Mission' in 2000 were also used.

– The study verified small trace of characteristic of a typical palaeo channel, i.e., remnant of an inactive river. It was found passing north of the Sun Temple extending approximately parallel to the coast.

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3) Which company became the first to get approval for the Scheme for Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets (S4A) under which there is provision for converting a portion of large loan accounts into equity? – **Hindustan Construction Company Ltd. (HCC)**

Explanation: Infrastructure major Hindustan Construction Company Ltd. (HCC) became the first company to get approval for the Scheme for Sustainable Structuring of Stressed Assets (S4A) as the RBI mandated overseeing committee approved company's application for the same. The ICICI-led Joint Lenders' Forum had proposed the scheme for HCC.

– HCC's total funded debt of about Rs. 5,107 crore has been considered under the scheme, which will be divided into two parts. The first part (sustainable debt) amounts to Rs. 2,681 crore while the second part (unsustainable debt) totals Rs. 2,426 crore. The recast in equity will bring down the promoter holding from 36.07% to 27.44%.

– S4A is the RBI's latest attempt to chip away at the mountain of stressed loans smothering Indian banks. The scheme tries to strike a compromise between banks with problematic accounts and corporate defaulters of the non-willful kind, by converting a portion of large loan accounts into equity.

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4) Which industrialist replaced former Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry for the post of head of the UK-India CEO Forum from Indian side? – **Ajay Piramal**

Explanation: Industrialist Ajay Piramal is the new head of the UK-India CEO Forum, from Indian side. He headed the meeting of the Forum that met on 7 November 2016 coinciding with British Prime Minister Theresa May's visit to India from 6 to 8 November.

– The change in leadership follows Mistry's surprise ouster as the Tata Sons chairman on 24 October 2016. Mistry headed the CEO Forum from

the Indian side and accompanied the PM at various high-level meetings.

– The 61-year-old Piramal was among the Tata Sons directors who voted in favour of Mistry's removal as Chairman and the appointment of Ratan Tata as the interim Chairman.

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5) What is the name of the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi and a former NASA scientist who passed away in a private hospital in Surat on 7 November 2016? – **Kanu Ramdas Gandhi**

Explanation: Kanu Ramdas Gandhi was the grandson of Mahatma Gandhi. He was the son of Ramdas Gandhi, the third son of the Mahatma. He was famous as the boy who walked ahead of Mahatma Gandhi holding one end of his stick on the beaches of Gujarat's Dandi village during the historic Salt Satyagraha of March-April 1930.

– Decades ago, Kanu Gandhi was handpicked by the then US Ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith for studies in MIT, US. Later, he worked with NASA and the US defence department on wing structures of fighter aircraft, while his wife Shivalaxmi was a professor and researcher in Boston Biomedical Research Institute.

– He returned to India after a four-decade long stay in the US in 2014. He was 87.

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9 November 2016

1) Five hundred and 1,000 rupee notes were ceased as legal tender from the midnight after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a surprise address to the nation pertaining to demonetization of these notes on 8 November 2016.

These notes accounted for approximately how much percentage value of all currency in circulation? –

Over 80%

Explanation: In a surprise move intended to eliminate black money and the growing menace of counterfeit currency notes, the Union government on 8 November 2016 scrapped currency notes of Rs. 500 and Rs.1,000 denominations. These account for over 80% of all currency in circulation by value.

– Prime Minister Narendra Modi made a surprising and historic address to the nation to announce this move. He announced that existing Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000 notes can be deposited in an individual's bank or post office accounts between 10 November and 30 December 2016.

– All banks and ATMs will be closed on 9 November 2016 and ATMs in some places on 10 November as well. Once the ATMs start functioning, there will be a withdrawal limit of Rs. 2,000 per debit card, which will be increased to Rs. 4,000 later.

– The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will issue new Rs. 500 and Rs. 2,000 notes starting from 10 November 2016. The new Rs. 500 note will feature the Red Fort and the new Rs. 2,000 note will feature Mangalyaan

– For those who are unable to exchange their specified bank notes on or before 30 December 2016, they will be able to exchange notes along with necessary documentation at specified branches of the RBI by 31 March 2017.

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2) The Goods and Service Tax Network (GSTN) was released on 8 November 2016 with the start of the enrolment process of VAT assesseees

to the GST portal. This process of enrolment was started from which two places? – **Puducherry and Sikkim**

Explanation: The enrolment of VAT assesseees to Goods and Services Tax (GST) Portal started in Puducherry and Sikkim from 8 November 2016. On the same day, the GST Portal will be launched by the Government of India, as part of rolling out the GST from 1 April 2017.

– Puducherry and Sikkim were selected as pilot States to be migrated to the new GST System. The enrolment of other States will be done subsequently and the entire process is expected to be completed by 15 January 2017.

– The GSTN is expected to provide common and shared IT infrastructure for GST implementation, will transfer on-board to its platform the details of about 80 lakh existing assesseees of excise, value-added tax, customs and service tax.

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3) The 7th Session of World Bank’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) was kicked off from 8 November 2016. The convention that advocates limiting tobacco use globally is being held for the first time ever in India. Which city is hosting this event? – **Greater Noida**

Explanation: World Bank’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is the world’s largest convention on tobacco control policy with participation of over 1500 delegates from around 180 countries. FCTC’s 7th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP7) was inaugurated in Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh) in India by Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare J.P. Nadda on 8 November 2016.

– The conference is being held behind closed doors, and media has been banned from attending and covering the events. Tobacco use kills around 6 million people a year globally, with nearly a million deaths in India alone.

– However, COP7 began on a controversial note with nearly 500 farmers from tobacco growing countries protesting outside conference venue in Greater Noida. They were demanding that the conference organisers allow them to participate in the meeting as an important stakeholder.

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4) India’s first liquefied natural gas-driven bus was launched in which state on 8 November 2016? – **Kerala**

Explanation: A new chapter in India’s transport sector was scripted when country’s first liquefied natural gas (LNG)-driven bus was launched in Kerala on 8 November 2016. The first-of-its-kind was flagged-off jointly by Union Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in capital Thiruvananthapuram.

– The LNG bus was rolled out as part of the Centre’s plans to use LNG. LNG is considered to be a cleaner and safer fuel which emits 50% less carbon, for mass transportation.

– The initiative to introduce LNG as a fuel in commercial vehicles in Thiruvananthapuram is a joint effort of Petronet LNG Limited (PLL), Indian Oil Corporation Ltd and Tata Motors Ltd.

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5) In a major victory for animal rights campaigners, the Union Health Ministry during November 2016 prohibited use of the cruel and obsolete “Draize” irritation tests. These

cruel tests for testing cosmetics are carried out on which animal? – **Rabbit**

Explanation: “Draize” irritation tests were developed more than 70 years ago to measure eye and skin irritation using rabbits, who are locked in restraints while a test chemical is applied to one eye or to the shaved skin on their backs.

– Rabbits are then monitored for up to two weeks, without pain relief, for signs of chemical damage, which can include swelling, ulceration, bleeding and blindness.

– The move to ban the cruel “Draize” irritation tests became a reality after Union Minister for Women & Child Development, Maneka Gandhi, wrote to the Ministry regarding the practice, followed by representations Humane Society International (HSI) to end the obsolete animal testing technique.

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10-11 November 2016



1) Donald J. Trump (Republican Party) created history by defeating the favourite Hillary Clinton of Democratic Party in the 2016 American Presidential elections that were held on 8 November 2016. Trump easily surpassed the 270 electoral vote mark in spite of the fact that he won fewer popular votes than Hillary. What important history Donald Trump will write when he will take office on 20 January 2017? – **He will be the oldest President to assume the office**

Explanation: Business tycoon Donald Trump will be 70 years 220 days old when he will assume office as the 45th President of the United States of America. He will thus become the oldest US President to assume office. Till now Ronald Reagan at 69 years was the oldest to take office.

– This is also for the first time that a person who has not served in the government or military will be the President of the US. Trump thus broke almost every rule in US election rulebook and defied innumerable pollsters, opinion-poll makers and intellectuals. Fighting with the tagline ‘*Make America Great Again*’, Trump was not considered a serious Presidential candidate by a large segment of the American intellectual think-tank.

– Indiana Governor Mike Pence will be the new US Vice-President and he defeated his Democrat opponent Tim Kaine. Pence will be the 48th Vice President of the country.

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2) The Supreme Court on 10 November 2016 asked the Punjab Government to share the water of which canal with the neighbouring state of Haryana which raised the political pitch in Punjab? – **Satluj-Yamuna Link Canal**

Explanation: In an important and far-reaching order, the Supreme Court asked the Punjab Government to share the water of the Satluj-Yamuna Link Canal with Haryana. It gave this order as it also declared the controversial the Punjab Termination Agreement Act (PTAA) illegal.

– While the SC order was welcomed by Haryana Government, it was vehemently opposed in Punjab, including by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal. On the other hand Punjab Congress chief Amarinder Singh accused the Akali government of presenting a weak case in the apex court and resigned from his Amritsar Lok Sabha seat in protest. All Congress MLAs also tendered their resignations to Assembly Speaker.

– The 214 km long canal linking Sutlej and Yamuna rivers was planned in 1966 after Haryana was carved out of Punjab. But Punjab has been regularly opposing the project saying its agriculture will suffer. In 2004, Congress' Amarinder Singh, who was then chief minister, had brought the Punjab Termination Agreement Act (PTAA) scrapping all water-sharing agreements with neighbouring states.

– But the then President A P J Abdul Kalam had referred the law to the Supreme Court to establish if the Punjab law was legally valid. The apex court had ruled that construction of the canal should continue without any hindrance.



3) What distinction Melania Trump will achieve when her husband Donald Trump will

take over as 45th President of the United States during January 2016? –

She will become the second foreign-born First Lady of the US

Explanation: Donald Trump's wife Melania Trump will be the second foreign-born First Lady of the United States. She will be the first foreign-born First Lady since Louisa Adams,

the wife of John Quincy Adams, the sixth US president (1825-29).

– Late Louisa was born in London to an English mother and an American father who served as US consul, according to the White House. Till date, she was the only First Lady to be born outside the United States.

– Melania, a Slovenian former model, was born in 1970 in communist Yugoslavia. She met Donald Trump at a Fashion Week party in New York in September 1998, when he was separated from his second wife Marla Marples. They married in 2005.

– She became a US citizen in 2006, a year after her marriage.

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4) Who became the First Indian-American woman to be elected to the U.S. House of Representative? –

Pramila Jayapal

Explanation: 51-year old India-born Pramila Jayapal won the Washington State Senate seat on 9 November 2016 to become the First Indian-American woman to be elected to the U.S. House of Representative.

– She got 57% of the votes from Washington State, leaving behind her rival Brady Walkinshaw who secured 43% votes. She was endorsed by Bernie Sanders, the former Democratic presidential aspirant.

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5) What is the name given to the world's largest digital nation building initiative that was inaugurated by Union HRD Minister Prakash Javadekar on 9 November 2016? –
“Smart India Hackathon 2017”

Explanation: “Smart India Hackathon 2017” is the name of the unique digital initiative launched by the Govt. of India under which students will offer innovative solutions to some of the daunting problems faced by the country.

– HRD Minister Javadekar unveiled the first set of 250 problem statements received from various ministries that the students will be required to solve during the “Smart India Hackathon 2017” that will take place in early 2017. The Hackathon will have nearly 500 problem statements in all which will be published on innovate.mygov.in.

– The HRD Ministry has not only invited India’s top IITs and NITs but also the technology institutes in the remotest parts of the country to participate in the event.

12 November 2016

1) India and Japan signed a landmark civil nuclear agreement in Tokyo on 11 November 2016 after almost six years of wrangling and intense negotiations. What is the most significant fact associated with this civil nuclear agreement that will allow Japan to supply nuclear reactors, fuel and technology to India? – **India became the first non-NPT signatory to have a civil nuclear deal with Japan**

Explanation: India on 11 November 2016 signed a historic civil nuclear deal with Japan during the annual bilateral summit held in Tokyo. The deal was signed in presence of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe.

– With the deal, India became the first-ever country that has not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to have such a deal with Japan. Negotiation on the deal began in 2010 during the UPA government however the negotiations

were stuck on India’s non-membership status in non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

– The deal is significant as it will help guarantee Japan’s continued support to India’s civil nuclear programme. Apart from the Russian reactors, the planned nuclear reactors with France and US depend on Japanese parts. That apart, GE, Westinghouse, and Areva, the companies planning reactors in India have important ownership stakes of Japanese companies Hitachi, Toshiba and Mitsubishi, that were stopped from doing business with India without a final nuclear deal.

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2) India’s first banking robot ‘*Lakshmi*’ was launched in which bank on 10 November 2016? – **City Union Bank**

Explanation: India’s first banking robot ‘*Lakshmi*’ made her debut on 10 November 2016 in Chennai. It was launched in a branch of City Union Bank, the Kumbakonam (Tamil Nadu)-headquartered private banking entity.

– Lakshmi is an artificial intelligence powered robot that became the first on-site bank helper in the country. It can answer queries pertaining to account balance, interest rates on home loans, fixed deposits, etc. Sensitive financial information like account details are displayed discreetly on the robot’s screen and not voiced.

– It has been developed by Coimbatore-based Vishnu Engineering and took six months to become fully operational. It is worth mentioning that leading private bank – HDFC Bank, which is also experimenting with robots to answer customer queries, is testing its humanoid at its innovation lab.

3) Who is challenging Chess World Champion Magnus Carlsen for the World Chess Championship title that opened from 11 November 2016 in New York? – Sergey Karjakin (Russia)

Explanation: Russian chess player Sergey Karjakin is challenging two time Chess World Champion Magnus Carlsen (Norway) for 2016 World Chess Championship. Karjakin had beaten Fabiano Caruana (US) in the final round of the 2016 Candidates' Tournament held in Moscow to earn the right to challenge Carlsen for the title.

– Carlsen is the World No. 1, with an Elo rating of 2853, while Karjakin is ranked No. 9 with 2772 points.

– The highly anticipated title clash is being hosted at Fulton Market Building, New York (US). It is the first time in a decade that Viswanathan Anand (India) will not be involved when the world chess champion will be decided. The five-time champion was dethroned by Carlsen in Chennai (2013) before retaining the crown against the same opponent in Sochi (Russia) a year later.

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4) Who was named interim Chairman of Indian IT behemoth Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on 10 November 2016 as Cyrus Mistry was removed from the post by the Tata Group? – Ishaat Hussain

Explanation: Ousted Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry was on 10 November 2016 also removed as the chairman of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), with immediate effect. He was replaced by 69-year old finance veteran Ishaat Hussain as the chairman of the Board of Directors of the company.

– Hussain shall hold office as chairman of the company until a new chairman is appointed in his place. Significantly, Hussain was one of the two board members to have abstained from the meeting of the Tata Sons board, during October 2016, which decided to sack Mistry.

– Hussain took over as finance director of Tata Sons in 2000 and has kept a close watch on the group's finances ever since.

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5) Videocon d2h, the direct-to-home (DTH) television arm of Videocon Industries Ltd, will merge in which DTH enterprise, as announced on 11 November 2016? – Dish TV

Explanation: According to an announcement made on 11 November 2016, Videocon d2h will be merged in Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd-owned DTH platform Dish TV. Dhoot brothers-owned Videocon will own 44.6% in the merged entity, while Subhash Chandra's Essel Group will have 55.4% stake.

– The new entity will be renamed 'Dish TV Videocon Ltd'. Jawahar Lal Goel, managing director of Dish TV, will lead the combined entity as chairman and managing director.

– At present, India has six private DTH firms – Dish TV India Ltd, Videocon d2h, Reliance BIG TV Ltd, Tata Sky Ltd, Sun Direct TV Pvt. Ltd and Bharti Telemedia Ltd. State-owned broadcaster Doordarshan also runs a DTH platform for free-to-air channels called DD Free Dish.

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13-14 November 2016

1) What is the name of the Indian hockey administrator who became the first Asian to be elected the president of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) on 12 November 2016? –

Narinder Batra

Explanation: Hockey India (HI) President Narinder Batra created history as he became the first Asian to be elected as the President of the International Hockey Federation (FIH), the most powerful hockey body of the world.

– He achieved this distinction as he was voted to the top post by an overwhelming margin during the penultimate day of the 45th FIH Congress held in Dubai. He defeated David Balbirnie of Ireland and Australia’s Ken Read to become the 12th President of FIH.

– Batra got 68 votes in his favour while Balbirnie and Read managed 29 and 13 votes respectively. He replaced Leandro Negre, who has been the FIH chief since 2008. Batra’s win means the power centre of the sport will now move to Asia from Europe, which had been ruling international hockey for decades.

2) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 13 November 2016 laid the foundation of Mopa greenfield airport. This upcoming airport is situated in which state? – **Goa**

Explanation: The foundation of Mopa greenfield airport in Goa was laid by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 13 November 2016. The first phase of the airport, which is located in Pernem, close to Maharashtra border, is expected to be ready in 2020.

– This upcoming airport is expected to ease the increasing pressure on existing airport at Dabolim. Goa has been witnessing huge influx of tourists through flights that is putting immense pressure on Dabolim International Airport.

– GMR Airports, the firm selected to construct the airport is slated to commence work in early 2017.



3) Which city of New Zealand was struck by a 7.8 intensity earthquake on 13 November 2016 after which a tsunami warning was issued? –

Christchurch

Explanation: A powerful earthquake the city Christchurch in New Zealand on 13 November 2016. The magnitude-7.8 quake struck just after midnight and was centered 93 km northeast of Christchurch. It was at a relatively shallow depth of 10 km.

– The impact of the earthquake was felt in form of strong jolts over 200 km away in the capital, Wellington. New Zealand’s National Civil Defence Organisation issued a tsunami warning, which was later downgraded. At least 2 persons died due to earthquake.

– It is worth mentioning that New Zealand sits on the “Ring of Fire,” an arc of seismic faults around the Pacific Ocean where earthquakes are common. An earthquake in 2011 in Christchurch killed 185 people.



4) What is the name of the company that during November 2016 struck a deal in the UAE for building the futuristic series of tubes that could shuttle humans and goods in state-of-the-art pods at breakneck speeds of up to 1,130 km? – **Hyperloop One**

Explanation: A company called ‘Hyperloop One’ has been founded by Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk. During November 2016 it announced that it has struck a deal with the Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) of Dubai to build a Hyperloop that could link Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and eventually to other Emirates.

– Under this fantastic and futuristic project a series of elevated tubes will be connected together to facilitate very high speed travelling through integrated pods. The company aims to make that 160-kilometre trip between Dubai and Abu Dhabi in 12 minutes.

– Hyperloop is touted to be the next generation of transportation, swapping emissions-spewing planes and traffic-jamming cars with superfast, people-carrying pods that will travel in tubes.

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5) Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes team won the penultimate F1 Grand Prix title of the year when he finished first in the Brazilian F1 Grand Prix on 13 November 2016. With this title win Hamilton is 12 points behind teammate Nico Rosberg. Now the F1 champion

of 2016 will be decided in which F1 event that will be the last race of 2016 F1 calendar? – **Abu Dhabi F1 Grand Prix**

Explanation: The Formula 1 Champion of year 2016 will now be decided on 27 November 2016 when the final of Abu Dhabi F1 Grand Prix will unfold. Mercedes’ Nico Rosberg (Germany) is now leading his British teammate and present F1 champion Lewis Hamilton by 12 points.

– Lewis Hamilton produced a masterful performance to win the Brazilian F1 Grand Prix on a wet and crash-strewn track. The victory cut the lead of leader Rosberg, who finished second, to 12 points. Red Bull’s Max Verstappen finished third. Rosberg will secure the championship if he finishes third in Abu Dhabi on 27 November even if Hamilton wins.

– On the other hand Indian F1 team Force India collected 18 points in the race as Sergio Perez (Mexico) finished fourth with 12 points and its other driver Nico Hulkenberg (Germany) finished seventh with 6 points.

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15-16 November

1) Who was given the charge of the task force set up by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 14 November 2016 to oversee the recalibration of ATM machines as the government introduced new Rs 500 and Rs 2,000 notes? – **S.S. Mundra** (Deputy Governor of the RBI)

Explanation: With poor logistics and a time-consuming ATM recalibration process resulting in massive public inconvenience, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 14 November 2016 constituted a task force to oversee the

process of calibration. The task force is being headed by S.S. Mundra, RBI Deputy Governor.

– The task force comprises of officials from the finance ministry, banks, and the central bank, as well as a representative from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It will provide direction and guidance” for recalibrating ATM machines to dispense the new notes of Rs. 500 and Rs. 2000.

– Re-calibration of ATMs involves multiple agencies – banks, ATM manufacturers, National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and switch operators, and multiple activities making it a complex operation requiring immense coordination among these agencies.

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2) Pakistan’s Gwadar Port, which has primarily been established as a new cargo route for Chinese goods destined for the Middle East and Africa, was opened during November 2016. This port is part of which ambitious initiative of China and Pakistan? – **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)**

Explanation: Gwadar Port, which was built in 2008, is being further developed as part of the \$46 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). CPCE is an ambitious initiative between China and Pakistan.

– When China decided to develop the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) in 2015, the idea was to deepen economic ties with Pakistan and ensure security for China’s larger ‘One belt, one road’ project. Involving an investment of \$46 billion, the project is the means by which China can ensure the quickest availability of energy resources from the Middle East

by avoiding the Malacca straits and the South China sea.

– Gwadar Port was opened on 13 November 2016 as a huge Chinese cargo ship exporting goods to the Middle East and Africa passed through the port.

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3) What is the name of the Israeli President who arrived on 14 November 2016 on 6-day official to India and thus became the first Israeli President to come to India in last 20 year? – **Reuven Rivlin**

Explanation: Reuven Rivlin became the first Israeli President in last 20 years to visit India on a state visit as he arrived in Mumbai on 14 November 2016 on his 6-day state visit.

– Rivlin’s visit is expected to pave the way for the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Israel, which had been expected since his election in 2014. Rivlin is the second president of Israel to visit India in two decades. The first Israeli president to visit India was Ezer Weizman who visited Delhi in 1997.

– Israeli President’s state visit is expected to set in motion bilateral exchanges to mark twenty-five years of formal diplomatic ties that was started in 1992 at the end of the Cold War.

– On 15 November 2016 India and Israel signed two key agreements in the field of water resources management and agriculture.

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4) During November 2016 who became the first-ever Chinese to be elected as the head of Interpol, the global police co-operation agency? – **Meng Hongwei**

Explanation: Meng Hongwei came to news as he was appointed the new head of the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO) or INTERPOL during November 2016. He thus became the first Chinese official to be appointed for this important designation.

- Hongwei replaced Mireille Ballestrazzi (France). His elevation as Interpol Chief was on one side seen as another evidence of China’s growing influence on the international stage while on the other hand Amnesty International feared the move could help China pursue political dissidents who have fled the country.
- China is one of many countries that have misused Interpol to pursue dissidents across the globe.

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5) South Korean electronics behemoth Samsung Electronics is acquiring which US audio company in a deal worth \$8 billion as announced by the company on 14 November 2016? – **Harman**

Explanation: According to an announcement made on 14 November 2016, Samsung Electronics is acquiring US audio company Harman for \$8 billion in an all-cash deal. According to the company the deal is expected to accelerate its growth in automotive and connected technologies.

- Harman designs and engineers connected products and solutions for automakers, consumers, and enterprises worldwide, including connected car systems, audio and visual products, enterprise automation solutions; and connected services.
- With acquisition of Harman, Samsung would look to take on Apple

and Google as they already have a strong presence in the auto segment.

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17 November 2016

1) Union Government on 16 November 2016 launched the revamped Toll-Free number of Aadhaar to bring innumerable benefits to Aadhaar holders. What is this newly launched number? – **1947**

Explanation: 1947 is the new revamped Toll-free helpline number of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)’s Aadhaar that was launched on 16 November 2016. This new number is expected to help residents get quick access to information about Aadhaar.

- The free of cost helpline 1947 will be available 24x7 throughout the year on IVRS mode, while call-centre agents will be available from 7 am to 11 pm (Monday to Saturday). On Sundays, agents will answer calls from 8 am to 5 pm. On an average the helpline number will handle 1.5 lakhs daily.
- It can be accessed through mobile or landline and will be especially beneficial in these times when the Aadhaar number is being increasingly used in the banking sector to identify individuals.
- The Aadhaar toll-free helpline 1947 will among other things, enable residents to locate an Aadhaar Enrolment Centre, know generation status of an Aadhaar number (after enrolment) and help retrieve Aadhaar details of any person who has lost his/her Aadhaar or hasnt received it through post.

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2) Sixth edition of India-China Joint Military Training Exercise titled “Hand-in-Hand” started from 16 November 2016 at which place in India? – **Pune**

Explanation: Opening ceremony of the 6th India-China Joint Military Training Exercise, ‘Hand-in-Hand 2016’ was held at the parade ground in Aundh Military Camp in Pune on 16 November 2016.

– The parade was commanded by Lt. Col. Li Guanghua while the Indian contingent was led by Col. Dayanand Sharma.

– The aim of the exercise is to practice joint planning and conduct of counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain. The primary focus will remain at company-level joint drills.

– The 13-day exercise will focus on crossing obstacles, special heliborne operations, firing of various weapons, handling and neutralisation of the Improvised Explosive Devices and conduct of cordon and search operations in insurgency and terrorism scenarios.

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3) DRDO successfully carried out the maiden flight of TAPAS 201, a Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), on 16 November 2016. What is the name given to this indigenously developed UAV? – **Rustom-II**

Explanation: Rustom-II is the name given to the indigenously developed UAV that was successfully tested by

the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) on 16 November 2016.

– The maiden test flight of Rustom-II was undertaken from Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, 250 km from Bangalore, which is a newly developed flight test range for the testing of UAVs and manned aircraft. The flight accomplished the main objectives of proving the flying platform, such as take-off, bank, level flight and landing etc.

– It is worth mentioning that Rustom-II has been designed and developed by Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), the Bangalore-based premier lab of DRDO with HAL-BEL as the production partners. It has been developed to carry out the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) roles for the three Armed Forces with an endurance of 24 hours.

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4) The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of India on 15 November 2016 signed an agreement for a \$500 million loan to build a 9.8 km long road bridge across the Ganges River. This proposed bridge will come at which place? – **Patna**

Explanation: The 9.8 km long bridge over Ganges River is expected to improve transport connectivity between North and South Bihar and for improving the link between the state capital, Patna, and the surrounding areas. This will be India’s longest river bridge.

– The bridge will span both channels of the Ganges River and serve as an alternate route to the existing Ganga Bridge. The project will also build viaducts, embankments, and toll and

service facilities, and will link to national highway networks.

– Along with ADB’s loan and \$900,000 in technical assistance to improve bridge operation and management, the state government of Bihar will provide support equivalent to \$215 million. The project is expected to be completed by the end of December 2020.

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5) Which state on 15 November 2016 made it mandatory to use fly-ash in all government infrastructure and construction within 300-km radius of power plant and thus became the first in the country to have such fly-ash policy? – **Maharashtra**

Explanation: The Maharashtra cabinet on 15 November 2016 approved a fly ash utilisation policy to use the product as a resource by mandating its use in government infrastructure works. With this the state became the first in the country to adopt such policy pertaining to fly-ash.

– Besides, the state government has also made it mandatory for all companies and developers located in a radius of 300 kilometres from a power plant to use fly ash in construction, effectively covering the whole state. Earlier, use of fly ash in construction was compulsory in a radius of 100 kilometres.

– The Maharashtra government aims to dispose of the entire quantity of fly ash produced in the state without causing environment and health hazards.

– Fly ash or coal dust is the ash produced in small dark flecks due to the burning of powdered coal during electricity generation and is harmful to health and environment. It can,

however, be used by the construction industry in making concrete and bricks.

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18 November 2016

1) According to the latest shipping data released on 16 November 2016, which country overtook Saudi Arabia to emerge as top oil supplier to India during October 2016? – **Iran**

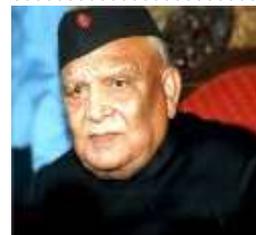
Explanation: Iran overtook political rival Saudi Arabia as India’s top oil supplier in October, as revealed in the shipping data released on 16 November 2016.

– Iran used to be India’s second-biggest oil supplier, a position it ceded to Iraq after tough Western sanctions over its nuclear development programme.

– But India’s oil imports from Iran have shot up this year after those sanctions were lifted in January 2016. In October they surged more than threefold compared with the same month last year, rising to 789,000 barrels per day (bpd), according to ship tracking data and a report compiled by Thomson Reuters Oil Research and Forecasts. That compares to 697,000 bpd supplied last month by Saudi Arabia. Over the whole January to October 2016 period, though, Saudi Arabia still holds India’s top supply spot, at an average of 830,000 bpd.

– It is worth mentioning that India is the third largest oil importer in the world.

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2) One of the most illustrious soldiers of the Indian Army, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) S.K. Sinha passed away in New Delhi on 17 November 2016. Besides being a famous

army officer, he was former Governor of which two states of the country? – **Jammu & Kashmir and Assam**

Explanation: Lt. Gen. S.K. Sinha had joined the Indian Army in 1943. He was famous for leading the first batch of Indian troops who entered Jammu & Kashmir when Pakistan raiders invaded in 1947.

– He resigned from service in 1983 after the government superseded him and appointed General A S Vaidya as the new army chief.

– After retirement Sinha served as Governor of Jammu & Kashmir (2003-08) and Assam (1997-2003). He was Governor (interim) of Arunachal Pradesh for around two and half months in 1999. He also served as India’s Ambassador to Nepal (1990). He passed at the Army Research and Referral Hospital in New Delhi on 17 November 2016. He was 90.

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3) Which prominent country during November 2016 announced that it will withdraw from the International Criminal Court (ICC) alleging that it has failed to achieve its set objectives? – **Russia**

Explanation: Russian Government on 16 November 2016 announced that it is quitting as a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC). It alleged that the ICC failed to meet the expectations to become a truly independent, authoritative international tribunal.

– Russian President Putin had instructed his Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform the UN Secretary General that Russia no longer intends to become a state party to the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the ICC.

– Russia signed the treaty in 2000, but did not ratify it, according to the Russian Legal Information Agency. The Rome Statute has been ratified by 123 countries.

– Based in the Hague, Netherlands, the ICC comprises 124 states from around the world. It is the “court of last resort” and tries four types of crimes – genocide, crimes against humanity, crimes of aggression and war crimes.

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4) Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s brainchild – the International Solar Alliance (ISA), received a global support as over 20 countries, including France and Brazil, signed the pertaining framework agreement on 15-16 November 2016. This agreement was opened for signatures at which place? – **Marrakech (Morocco)**

Explanation: The framework agreement of International Solar Alliance (ISA) was opened for signatures in Morocco’s Marrakech on 15 November 2016, on the sidelines of Conference of the Parties or COP22.

– Over 20 countries, including France and Brazil, became signatories to the framework agreement of the ISA, an initiative that is the brainchild of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It aims to create common buyers’ market for solar finance, technology, innovation, capacity building.

– ISA was jointly launched by Prime Minister Modi and French President Francois Hollande at the COP21 in Paris during December 2016 where representatives from around 70 countries including more than 30 Heads of the States and government participated. It is an alliance of 121 solar resource rich countries lying fully or partially between the tropic of Cancer and tropic of Capricorn and will have its headquarters in India.

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5) History was created during November 2016 as a company of women CRPF was designated to fight against Left-wing

extremism (Naxalites) for the first time ever. This CRPF women company was employed in which Naxalite-infested state?

– **Jharkhand**

Explanation: A company of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF's) 135th Battalion, comprising of women constables, was deployed to fight against Naxalites in the state of Jharkhand during November 2016. This was thus the first instance of women forces of the CRPF being deployed against left-wing extremism.

– The women company under CRPF's 135 Battalion carried out a search operation against Maoists at Karra and other ultra-stronghold areas in Khunti on 12 November 2016.

– CRPF is of the view that since a large number of female cadres have joined the extremists, it will be easier for the women CRPF to gauge the operations in such cases.

– CRPF's female forces have got primary training in Ajmer, and then were shifted to Assam to have rigorous training to use UBGL, mortar and other weapons which so far used to be handled by their men counterparts only. These women constables are well-trained to handle all kinds of weapons such as Insas, AK-47, hand grenade.

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19-21 November 2016



1) At least 120 were people feared killed when 14 coaches of an express train

derailed in the early hours on 20 November 2016 near Pukhrayan in Kanpur Dehat district of Uttar Pradesh. Which train was involved in this accident, which is the biggest train accident in last 6 years?

– **Indore-Rajendranagar Express**

Explanation: Rajendranagar (Patna) bound Indore- Rajendranagar Express (Train No. 19321) was involved in a massive accident on 20 November 2016 as 14 coaches of the train derailed at around 3:10 am at Hasemau village between Pukhrayan and Malasa stations in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur Dehat district. The spot of the accident is around 57 km. from Kanpur.

– S-2 and S-3 were the worst affected coaches while numerous other coaches also bore the brunt in this derailment. At least 115 persons died in the accident. While the exact cause of the accident will be ascertained after inquiry report, prima facie it indicates towards rail fracture.

– This was the worst train accident in the country since the train accident at in West Bengal on 28 May 2010 involving derailment of Gyaneshwari Express in which at least 170 persons were killed.

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2) Olympic silver medalist P.V. Sindhu clinched the first-ever Super Series Premier Badminton title of her career on 20 November 2016. She achieved this distinction by winning which title? –

– **China Open Super Series**

Explanation: Ace Indian badminton player P.V. Sindhu clinched her maiden Super Series Premier title after edging out

Sun Yu of China in the final of the \$700,000 China Open Super Series tournament on 20 November 2016.

– She defeated the local favourite Yu by 21-11, 17-21, 21-11 in the summit clash that lasted an hour and nine minutes. With this maiden title win, Sindhu became the second Indian player to win this prestigious tournament. Saina Nehwal had won the title in 2014.

– China Open Super Series tournament was hosted at the Haixia Olympic Sports Center in Fuzhou.

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3) The Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader of Buddhists, visited and gave sermons in which country on 19 November 2016, a move that risked this country's ties with China? – **Mongolia**

Explanation: The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on 19 November 2016 preached thousands of supporters at the Gandantegchenlin monastery in Mongolia. With this he kick-started his 4-day visit of the landlocked neighbour of China.

– However, this visit is set to test Mongolia's ties with China at a time when it is seeking a critical aid package from its powerful neighbour. A day earlier on 18 November China's Foreign Ministry had strongly urged Mongolia to deny the Dalai Lama a visit. China has protested previous visits by the Dalai Lama by briefly closing its border in 2002 and temporarily canceling flights from Beijing in 2006.

– China views the Dalai Lama as a separatist seeking to split Tibet from China and strongly opposes all countries from

hosting the monk, who has been based in India since fleeing Tibet during an abortive uprising against Chinese rule in 1959.

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4) What is the name given to the state-wide centralised emergency response system of Uttar Pradesh that was launched by Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav on 19 November 2016? – **UP-100**

Explanation: UP-100 is the name of the newly launched state-wide centralised emergency response system of Uttar Pradesh. It primarily aims to reduce police response time to 20 minutes in villages and 15 in urban areas.

– According to the Chief Minister, many a times, there are complaints that phone calls are not attended by the police. Now this complaint will be removed with UP-100. Till now it was the victim who had to run to the police but now it will be the other way round.

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5) Who was appointed the new Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) on 18 November 2016? – **Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar**

Explanation: Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar, a judge of the Supreme Court, was on 18 November 2016 appointed the new Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA). He succeeded Anil R. Dave.

– NALSA has been constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, to provide free legal services to weaker sections of society. It also organises Lok Adalats for amicable settlement of disputes.

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6) Mauritius President Ameenah Gurib Fakim on 18 November 2016 inaugurated India's first genetic garden of naturally occurring salt-tolerant plants called halophytes. This genetic garden has been established in which state? – **Tamil Nadu**

Explanation: India's first-of-its-kind genetic garden of naturally occurring salt-tolerant plants (halophytes) has been established at the coastal town of Vedaranyam in Tamil Nadu. It has been set up by the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF).

– Mauritius President Ameenah Gurib Fakim inaugurated the garden through video-conferencing on 18 November 2016.

– Halophytes tolerate salinity and could grow in saline affected regions. Their seeds contain high oil (30%) and protein (35%) like soyabeans and other oilseed crops and the salt content is less than three per cent.

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22 November 2016



1) India's longest expressway comprising of 6-lane 306 kilometer state-of-the-art road stretch was inaugurated on 21 November 2016. Which expressway is this? – **Agra-Lucknow Expressway**

Explanation: Agra-Lucknow Expressway, which has been a dream project of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav was inaugurated by Samajwadi Party chief Mulayam Singh Yadav on 21 November 2016. The inauguration ceremony was held

at Unna, around 50 km from state capital Lucknow. This 306-km-6-lane expressway has been built in a record 22 month period.

– The expressway aims to reduce traffic congestion and bring down pollution and carbon footprint. For the first time fighter jets of the Indian Air Force (IAF) were part of the inauguration ceremony of an expressway in the country. 6 Sukhoi and Mirage 2000s jets performed simulated landings at the venue.

– The expressway incorporates a 3.3 km stretch marked for landings as part of a Defence Ministry plan for emergencies when military air fields are not available. It also has automated traffic system to manage in fog and reduce accidents.

– It is expected that the Agra-Lucknow Expressway will reduce the travel time from Lucknow to national capital Delhi from present 8-9 hours to 5 hours.

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2) What is the name of the third indigenously designed guided missile destroyer belonging to the 'Kolkata class' that was commissioned into the Indian Navy on 21 November 2016? – **INS Chennai**

Explanation: 'INS Chennai', one of the largest destroyers in the Indian Navy's fleet, was commissioned on 21 November 2016 by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar. It will be assigned to the western fleet after completion of some additional trials of systems deployed on it.

– The ship's construction also marks the end of the 'Project 15A' to build Kolkata-class guided missile destroyers. It has been built at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd in Mumbai.

– The ship is armed with supersonic surface-to-surface BrahMos missiles and Barak-8 long range surface-to-air missiles. It has an overall length of 164 metres and displacement of over 7,500 tons.

– The first ship of the ‘Kolkata class’, named ‘INS Kolkata’, was commissioned on 16 August 2014, followed by ‘INS Kochi’ which was commissioned on 30 September 2015.

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3) In view of the problems faced due to demonetization drive, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 21 November 2016 provided how many additional days for the repayment of small loans? – **60 days**

Explanation: In view of the cash crunch being faced by borrowers due to demonetization, the RBI on 21 November 2016 provided an additional 60 days for the repayment of housing, car, farm and other loans worth up to Rs. 1 crore. It applies to loans payable between 1 November and 31 December 2016.

– The relaxation is available to entities running working capital accounts with any bank with the sanctioned limit of Rs. 1 crore or less. Term loans, both business or personal, secured or otherwise, on the books of any bank or any NBFC, including NBFC-MFI, would get the benefit of this relaxation.

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4) The 47th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) was inaugurated in Goa on 20 November 2016. Who was awarded with the ‘Centenary Indian Film Personality of the Year-2016’ during the inauguration function? – **S. P. Balasubrahmanyam**

Explanation: Legendary singer Padma Bhushan S. P. Balasubrahmanyam was awarded the ‘Centenary Indian Film Personality of the Year-2016’ award by Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting M. Venkaiah Naidu during the inauguration function of the 47th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). He was awarded for his remarkable, extraordinary and exceptional

journey in Indian cinema as a singer, actor and producer.

– On the other hand ‘Lifetime Achievement Award’ was conferred upon acclaimed South Korean film director and writer Im Kwon Taek. Taek is often regarded as the father of Korean cinema for his long and prolific career and his work on Korean themes and subjects. It is worth mentioning that South Korea is also the partner country of IFFI 2016.

– The festival opened with the grand masterpiece of veteran Polish writer and director, late Andrzej Wajda, ‘*AfterImage*’.

– The IFFI 2016 will feature around 300 films from about 90 countries from all over the world.

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5) Which Indian golfer won the Indonesia Open Golf tournament 2016 on 21 November 2016? – **Gaganjeet Bhullar**

Explanation: Gaganjeet Bhullar won the \$3,00,000 Indonesia Open Golf tournament for the second time at Pondok Indah Golf Course in Jakarta on 21 November 2016.

– Bhullar, who also won the tournament in 2013, pipped fellow Indian golfer Jeev Milkha Singh. Jeev settled for the second spot. With this title win Bhullar became fifth player to win the tournament twice.

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23 November 2016



1) India and Switzerland on 22 November 2016 signed a historic agreement for automatic sharing of information of Swiss bank accounts of Indians in a big move towards fighting black money stashed overseas. Under the agreement India will get the first such information from which month onwards? – **September 2018**

Explanation: Under the agreement, Switzerland will share information with India on Swiss bank accounts of Indians as of September 2018 and onwards. Swiss authorities will not share details about accounts held prior to that period, while the first such exchange will happen in September 2019.

– For this the ‘Joint Declaration’ for implementation of Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI) signed was signed on 22 November 2016. The AEOI was signed by CDBT Chairman Sushil Chandra and Deputy Chief of Mission of Swiss Embassy Gilles Roudit in New Delhi.

– Switzerland, which has always been at the centre of the debate on black money allegedly stashed by Indians abroad, used to be known for very strong secrecy walls till a few years ago around its banking practices. A huge global pressure has resulted in Switzerland relenting on the tough secrecy clauses its local laws gave to the banks.

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2) India on 21 November 2016 became associate member of which prestigious international body that runs the world’s largest nuclear and particle physics laboratory? – **European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN)**

Explanation: India on 21 November 2016 became the associate member of European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), the world’s largest nuclear and particle physics laboratory. The agreement pertaining to this was signed by Sekhar Basu, chairman of Atomic Energy Commission and secretary of Department of Atomic Energy (DAE), and CERN director general Dr. Fabiola Gianotti at the DAE’s office in New Delhi.

– CERN is the world’s largest nuclear and particle physics laboratory, where scientists and engineers are probing the fundamental structure of the Universe using the most sophisticated scientific instruments and advanced computing systems.

– India had ‘observer’ status till September 2016, when the CERN Council adopted a resolution upgrading its position.

– Becoming an associate member of CERN will enhance participation of young scientists and engineers in various CERN projects. With CERN membership, India also has to contribute a certain amount of money for research activities.

– Presently CERN has 22 member states, four associate member states, and the observer status is given to four states and three International Organizations.

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3) M. Balamuralikrishna, who passed away on 22 November 2016, was a very eminent personality associated with which field? – **Carnatic music**

Explanation: M. Balamuralikrishna (full name Mangalamapalli Balamuralikrishna) was an iconic Carnatic vocalist, playback singer, composer and actor.

– He was also an accomplished violinist and once accompanied Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, the pioneer of the modern-day Carnatic concert format.

– A native of East Godavari district of the erstwhile Madras Presidency, his father Pattabiramaiah was a musician and his mother Sooryakanthamma was a veena player. He gave his first concert when he was nine. He became a child prodigy of Carnatic music.

– He was awarded Padma Vibhushan, country's second highest civilian award for his contribution towards Indian Art. He died in Chennai at the age of 86.

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4) Senior Congress leader and Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy won the by-election from which Assembly constituency, the result of which was announced on 22 November 2016? – **Nellithope**

Explanation: Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy won the bypoll to the Nellithope Assembly constituency defeating AIADMK's Om Sakthi Segar, by a margin of 11,144 votes.

– Narayanasamy was not a member of Puducherry Assembly and 6 December 2016 was the decline for getting elected to the House. For this A. John Kumar of the Congress had

vacated the seat to enable to contest the by-election.

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5) Veteran Congress leader Ram Naresh Yadav passed away on 22 November 2016. He was a former Chief Minister of which state? – **Uttar Pradesh**

Explanation: Ram Naresh Yadav was a four-time MLA. He served as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh from 1977 to 1979 with the Janata Party. Yadav later joined the Congress.

– The fag end of his political career, when he served as the Governor of Madhya Pradesh, was marred by his alleged involvement in the Vyapam scam. In 2015, the MP Special Task Force lodged an FIR against him for rigging forest guard exams conducted by Vyapam.

– He was also a member of the Rajya Sabha. He passed away at SPGI Lucknow after prolonged illness. He was 89.

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24 November 2016

1) Which entity became India's first operational payments bank on 23 November 2016 as it offered its services in Rajasthan? – **Airtel Payments Bank Ltd.**

Explanation: Airtel Payments Bank Ltd. (APBL) On 23 November 2016 became the first payments bank to start operations in India by offering services in Rajasthan in a limited scale on pilot basis.

– The pilot will run at 10,000 Airtel retail outlets where basic banking services will be provided. Airtel Payments Bank is planning to expand its merchant network in Rajasthan to 100,000 by the end of the year.

– Bank accounts can be opened by customers without documents using Aadhaar based e-KYC. The subscriber’s mobile number would function as a bank account number and transfer from Airtel to Airtel phone numbers would be free.

– Customers will be offered an interest rate of 7.25% on deposits in savings account, higher than the 4-6% commercial banks are offering.

– It is worth mentioning that APBL was the first applicant to receive the final payments bank licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in April 2016. Kotak Mahindra Bank holds 19.9% in it.

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2) Nikki Haley, the South Carolina Governor of Indian origin, was chosen for which important designation by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, as announced on 22 November 2016? –

U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

Explanation: On 22 November 2016 U.S. President-elect Donald Trump chose South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. She will be the first woman and minority in Trump’s Cabinet and will replace Samantha Power.

– She would also be the first ever Indian-American Cabinet rank official in any administration.

– Born Nimrata “Nikki” Randhawa, Haley is the first minority and female Governor of South Carolina, a deeply conservative State with a long history of racial strife.

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3) What is the name of India’s first female Merchant Navy captain who was on 21 November 2016 awarded by the IMO for exceptional bravery and thus became the first woman to receive this award? – **Captain Radhika Menon**

Explanation: Captain Radhika Menon created history as she received International Maritime Organisation (IMO’s) Certificate of Commendation for Exceptional Bravery at Sea on 21 November 2016. She thus became world’s first woman to receive this prestigious award.

– This was awarded for her role in the dramatic rescue of seven fishermen from a sinking fishing boat in tumultuous Bay of Bengal waters in 2015. Menon was heading ‘Sampurna Swarajya’ vessel operated by the Shipping Corporation of India Limited (SCIL) when they saw fishing boat Durgamma off the coast of Gopalpur (Orissa), which was adrift following engine failure and loss of anchor in severe weather. It had 7 fishermen without food or drinks.

– Menon ordered the rescue operation despite choppy weather. It took three arduous attempts in the lashing wind and rain before all seven weak and starving fishermen were rescued.

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4) Renowned physicist and policy maker M.G.K. Menon passed away on 22 November 2016. He was associated with nurturing which famous institute? – **Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)**

Explanation: M.G.K. Menon (full name Mambillikalathil Govind Kumar Menon), who passed away on 22 November 2016, was both a brilliant high energy particle physicist and an institution builder of Indian science. One of his most important contributions was nurturing the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai, which his mentor Homi J. Bhabha founded in 1945.

– He took many important responsibilities including membership of the Planning Commission (1982-89), chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization (1972), Scientific Advisor to the Prime Minister (1986-89), president-ships of the national science academies, Minister of State for Science and Technology and Education (1989-90) and many other positions.

– Menon was a Rajya Sabha member from 1990-96 and a Padma Vibhushan awardee (1985), India's second highest civilian award.

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5) During November 2016 who was elected as the new President of leading industry and trade organisation FICCI for the year 2017? – **Pankaj Patel**

Explanation: Pankaj R Patel, chairman & managing director of Cadila Healthcare Ltd (Zydus Cadila), was on 21 November 2016 elected as the new President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) for the year 2017.

– He will replace Harshavardhan Neotia, Chairman of Ambuja Neotia Group.

– Under Patel's chairmanship, Zydus Cadila has emerged as a global pharmaceutical company that discovers, develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of healthcare therapies in over 50 countries worldwide.

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25 November 2016

1) According to the latest data on global wealth from Credit Suisse, the richest 1% Indians own how much share in country's wealth? – **58.4%**

Explanation: The richest 1% of Indians now own 58.4% of the country's wealth. This was revealed in the latest data on global wealth from Credit Suisse Group AG, the financial services company based in Zurich (Switzerland).

– The share of the top 1% is up from 53% last year. In the last two years, the share of the top 1% has increased at a cracking pace, from 49% in 2014 to 58.4% in 2016.

– It is worth mentioning that the share of the top 1% in the country's total wealth improved from 40.3% in 2010 to 49% in 2014. In sharp contrast, the bottom half of the Indian people own a mere 2.1% of the country's wealth.

– This proves that India is one of the most unequal societies in the world. But the highest un-equality was reported in Russia where top 1% own 74.5% of the nation's wealth. On the other had the top 1% in China own 43.8%, in Indonesia they own 49.3%, in Brazil 47.9%, in South Africa 41.9%.

2) Indian currency rupee on 24 November 2016 collapsed to a new life-time low of Rs. 68.86 against the dollar amid sustained foreign capital outflows. Prior to this fall, when rupee had recorded its lowest value? – **28 August 2013**

Explanation: The rupee hit an all-time intra-day low of Rs. 68.86 (against the dollar) on 24 November 2016. This happened amid sustained foreign capital outflows with investors being inclined towards US dollar, hoping protectionist measures by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

– The rupee had previously hit its all-time intra-day low of 68.85 on 28 August 2013.

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3) What is the new limit for Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) to facilitate digital transactions after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised it on 22 November 2016? – **Rs. 20,000**

Explanation: In view of the ongoing cash crunch the RBI on 22 November 2016 doubled the limit of semi-closed Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs) to Rs 20,000 to facilitate digital transactions.

– While balance in such PPIs cannot exceed Rs 20,000 at any point of time, the merchants can transfer funds from such PPIs to their own linked bank accounts up to Rs 50,000 per month, without any limit per transaction.

– Full KYC PPIs with balance up to Rs 1,00,000 can continue to be made available by authorised PPI issuers. The measures will be effective from 21 November to 30 December 2016.

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4) In a major breakthrough for India, during November 2016 China agreed to import which agricultural commodity from India as part of efforts to ensure market

access for Indian products in that country?

– **Rice**

Explanation: China has agreed to import rice, non-basmati and basmati varieties, from 17 registered mills in India. This development was seen as a major breakthrough for India.

– China is the world’s largest rice importer. However, it had so far not granted market access to India’s non-basmati rice claiming that the item had failed to meet Chinese norms on quality, health and safety.

– After numerous requests from the Indian side, Chinese officials visited India in September 2016 to inspect 19 rice mills registered with the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO). These mills are in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. After this visit China agreed to import non-basmati and basmati varieties of rice from 17 registered mills.

– It is worth mentioning that India had repeatedly sought market access for items including non-basmati rice, pharmaceuticals and many fruits and vegetables among others, citing the country’s widening goods trade deficit with China.

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5) Anil Ambani-led Reliance Capital will sell 49% stake in its radio business and its entire TV business to which group, as was announced on 23 November 2016? – **Zee Group**

Explanation: According to the announcement made on 23 November 2016, Reliance Broadcast Network Ltd (RBNL), part of the Anil Ambani group, has signed definitive and binding agreements with Zee Media Corp. Ltd to sell its 49% stake in its radio broadcast business.

– RBNL runs a network of FM Radio channels in India under the brand name of

92.7 Big FM that reaches out to 45 cities, 1,200 towns and over 200 million people. Big FM was launched in 2006.

– While Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd, a separate entity under Zee Group, will acquire entire TV business of Reliance’s General Entertainment. The general entertainment TV broadcasting business currently comprises of two channels – Big Magic and Big Ganga.

– The stake sales are expected to reduce Reliance Capital’s debt by approximately Rs.1,900 crore.

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6) Who will be the Chief Guest at the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention to be held in Bengaluru during January 2017? – **Antonio Costa**(Portuguese Prime Minister)

Explanation: Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa will be the Chief Guest at the 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention to be held from 7 January to 9 January 2017 in Bengaluru.

– While PM Costa will be the Chief Guest, Surinam Vice president Michael Ashwin Satyandre Adhin will be the Special Guest at the Convention.

– PBD is celebrated on January 9 every year to mark the contribution of overseas Indian community in the development of India.

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26 November 2016

1) Fidel Castro, the iconic revolutionary leader, former President and Prime Minister of Cuba, passed away on 25 November 2016 at the age of 90. He had assumed power in which year after leading the historic Cuban Revolution and ousting President Fulgencio Batista? – **1959**

Explanation: Fidel Castro was a Cuban politician and revolutionary who governed

the Republic of Cuba as Prime Minister from 1959 to 1976 and then as President from 1976 to 2008.

– He led the armed revolt or the Cuban Revolution (1953-1959) against the authoritarian government of Cuban President Fulgencio Batista. At the age of 32, he was the youngest leader of Latin America.

– Castro’s reign Cuba was marked by the U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 and the Cuban Missile Crisis a year later that brought the world to the brink of nuclear war. For decades, he served as an inspiration and source of support to revolutionaries from Latin America to Africa.

– Castro ruled Cuba as a one-party state for almost 50 years before he handed over the reins to his younger brother Raul in 2008.

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2) Veteran journalist Dileep Padgaonkar, who passed away on 25 November 2016, was the former Editor of which reputed English daily? – **The Times of India**

Explanation: Dileep Padgaonkar was the Editor of The Times of India (TOI) from 1986 to 1994. He returned as executive Managing Editor in 1998 and retired in 2002. Thereafter he continued with TOI in a consulting capacity.

– In Oct 2010, he was nominated on a three-member panel of interlocutors for a dialogue with people and politicians of J&K.

– Padgaonkar passed away at a hospital in Pune on 25 November. He was 72.

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3) What is the name of the Chancellor of Nalanda University who on 25 November 2016 resigned from his post? – Prof. George Yeo

Explanation: Prof. George Yeo (Singapore) on 25 November 2016 resigned from the post of the Chancellor of Nalanda University.

– In his strongly worded resignation letter to President Pranab Mukherjee, who is the Visitor of the University, Prof. Yeo said he was surprised with the decision of dissolving the Governing Board of the university.

– Yeo was the second Chancellor of the university after Nobel laureate Prof. Amartya Sen. Sen had resigned in June 2015 and Yeo took over on 6 July 2015.

– Nalanda University is the brainchild of the previous UPA Government, which wanted to develop a world class international university in Rajgir near the historic remains of Nalanda University in Bihar.

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4) Who was named as the interim Chairman of Tata Steel on 25 November 2016? – O P Bhatt

Explanation: Independent director O P Bhatt was appointed the interim Chairman of steel behemoth Tata Steel. This decision was taken by the Board of Tata Steel that met on 25 November 2016, the second time since Cyrus Mistry was removed as Tata Sons chairman on 24 October 2016.

– OP Bhatt was elected as the interim Chairman of the company till the extraordinary general meeting (EGM) of shareholders to be held on 21 December 2016. Six directors supported the resolution while three, including independent director Nusli Wadia, opposed the move.

– Bhatt was appointed as an independent director of the company on 10 June 2013. He has served as the chairman of State Bank of India (SBI), India’s largest commercial bank.

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5) What is the name of the portal and mobile app launched by the Civil Aviation Ministry on 25 November 2016 that aims to provide airline passengers a convenient and hassle-free air travel experience? – AirSewa

Explanation: AirSewa portal and mobile app was launched in New Delhi by Union Civil Aviation Minister Ashok Gajpathi Raju on 25 November 2016. It will be operated through an interactive web portal as well as through a mobile app for both android and iOS platforms.

– AirSewa portal is an attempt to provide such a systematic approach to redressing passenger grievances. The portal will include a mechanism for grievance redressal, back-office operations for grievance handling, flight status/schedule information, airport Information and FAQs.

– Through AirSewa, the major challenge to get the various players who are a part of the civil aviation ecosystem on to a common platform, has been achieved.

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27-28 November 2016

1) Who became the newest Formula 1 World Champion as he won the F1 Championship trophy of 2016 on 27 November 2016? – Nico Rosberg (Germany)

Explanation: German driver Nico Rosberg of Mercedes team became the newest Formula One World Champion on 27 November 2016 even though he finished second in the Abu Dhabi F1

Grand Prix, the last F1 event of the year, held at Yas Marina Circuit (UAE).

– The race was won by his Mercedes teammate and reigning F1 World Champion Lewis Hamilton. By finishing second Rosberg finished the 2016 F1 season with 385 points while Hamilton finished 5 points behind (380). Australian driver Daniel Ricciardo finished the season with third place (256 points).

– Hamilton controlled the race from the front but was under instruction from Mercedes management not to try any strategic games to delay Rosberg. However, he disregarded message after message to speed up and prevent Vettel and Red Bull’s Max Verstappen from closing on Rosberg.

– It is worth mentioning that to win the F1 championship Hamilton had to not just win the title at Abu Dhabi but also ensure that Rosberg finishes outside top three positions.

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2) Indian F1 team Force India achieved which major distinction after the conclusion of 2016 F1 season on 27 November 2016? – It ended the season with 4th place in constructor’s championship standings

Explanation: 2016 was the best-ever year for Indian F1 team Force India, as it finished the season at 4th place in constructor’s championship standings, which is the best-ever finish for the team in its history. Force India finished the year with 173 points and thus relegated much more fancied Williams (138 points) to fifth place.

– For Force India, its Mexican driver Sergio Perez accumulated 101 points while German driver Nico Hulkenberg had 72 points.

– 2016 constructor’s championship was won by Mercedes with 765 points. Red

Bull was second (468 points) while Ferrari was third (398 points).

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3) Bangladesh will honour how many members of the Indian Army, who were martyred during the Bangladesh Liberation War, as announced on 25 November 2016? – 1,668

Explanation: As per announcement made by Bangladesh Liberation War Affairs Minister A.K.M. Mozammel Huq on 25 November 2016, the families of 1,668 members of Indian Army martyrs will receive a Rs. 5 lakh purse (each) as a mark of respect for their supreme sacrifice in the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971.

– Besides Bangladesh Government will be raising a war memorial in the Brahmanbaria district to pay homage to the Indian soldiers who laid down their lives for its war of liberation and independence.

– A retired Lieutenant-Colonel, Kaji Sajjad Ali Zahir, has worked closely with the Indian Army to identify the soldiers who were killed during the war.

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4) A group of armed men in police uniform stormed the Nabha Jail in Punjab on 27 November 2016 and fled with five prisoners, including Khalistan Liberation Front (KLF) chief. What is the name of

this KLF chief who was arrested in 2014?

– **Harminder Mintoo**

Explanation: In a daring attempt armed 5 armed men in police uniform broke into the Nabha jail in Punjab’s Patiala district and freed 6 inmates, including Khalistan Liberation Front (KLF) chief Harminder Mintoo.

– Mintoo was arrested by Punjab Police from Delhi’s IGI Airport in 2014. He was arrested in connection with 10 cases, including the 2008 attack on Sirsa (Haryana)-based Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh and recovery of explosives at Halwara Air Force station in 2010.

– But later on 28 November 2016 Mintoo was again arrested in Delhi. He was arrested in a joint operation conducted by Punjab Police and Delhi Police.

– Five other inmates freed in the attempt include gangster Vicky Gondar, Gurpreet Sekhon, Neeta Deol, Vikramjeet and Kshmir Galwaddi.

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5) Soon to be commissioned Oshiwara railway station in suburban Mumbai will be known by which name, as announced by the Maharashtra state government on 25 November 2016? – **‘Ram Mandir’**

Explanation: ‘Ram Mandir’ will be the new name of Oshiwara railway station, the new railway station on the Western Railway route between Jogeshwari and Goregaon. This station is yet to be commissioned.

– The name ‘Ram Mandir’ was approved by state government due to the fact that a famous Ram temple exists at the place of this new railway station. Even local housing societies name their locality as Ram Mandir in their addresses.

– It is worth mentioning that in cases of stations about to be commissioned, the

state government has the right to come up with a name.

– The station will cater to slow line services on WR’s main line and Harbour line once the corridor is extended from Andheri to Goregaon.

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6) Who was crowned Mr. India World 2016 at a glittering function held in Bengaluru on 24 November 2016? –

Vishnu Raj S Menon

Explanation: Vishnu Raj S Menon from Bengaluru was crowned Peter England Mr. India World 2016 by actor Hrithik Roshan at a star-studded function held in Bengaluru. Menon will now represent India in the Mr. World pageant.

– Viren Barman and Altamash Faraz, both from Delhi, were announced as the first and the second runner-up respectively at the finale of the pageant.

– 16 contestants from all over the country had to go through various grooming sessions that were mentored by eminent panelists from the fashion and film industry of India.

– Rohit Khandelwal passed down his ‘crown’ to Menon after a tough competition from the others. Last year he had made history as the first Asian man to win the title of Mr. World.

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7) Olympic silver-medallist P V Sindhu lost to which player in the final of the Hong Kong Open Super Series final on 27 November 2016 to end up runner-up in the tournament? – **Tai Tzu Ying (Chinese Taipei)**

Explanation: Chinese Taipei’s Tai Tzu Ying defeated Indian badminton ace P.V. Sindhu in the women’s singles final of Hong Kong Open Super Series on 27

November 2016 to dash her attempt to win second consecutive Super Series title.

– Sindhu lost 15-21, 17-21 in a clash which lasted 41 minutes. It was sweet revenge for Tzu Ying, who had lost to Sindhu most recently in the Rio Olympic Games. She now leads 5-3 in the head-to-head record against her.

– Similarly national men’s badminton champion Sameer Verma also faltered in the final as he lost to local favourite Ng Ka Long Agus by 14-21, 21-10, 11-21 in the men’s final. This was Verma’s maiden appearance in a Super Series final.

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8) The 13th edition of the World Robot Olympiad concluded on 27 November 2016. This event was held at which place in India, which was the first staging of this event in India? – **Greater Noida**

Explanation: The 13th edition of the World Robot Olympiad was held in India for the first time on 26 and 27 November 2016. This event was held organized by National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) in collaboration with the India STEM Foundation (ISF) at the India Expo Mart, Greater Noida.

– The theme for this year’s event was ‘Rap the Scrap’, in line with Government of India’s Swachh Bharat Mission. Over 2000 students from 51 countries participated in the event and showcased innovative solutions using robotics technology to reduce, manage and recycle waste.

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29-30 November 2016

1) Union Government on 28 November 2016 announced a new scheme on declaration of black money which envisages tax rate of 50% and provision for locking up a quarter of the declared

income for four years. What is the name given to this scheme that will be in effect till 30 December 2016? – **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 2016**

Explanation: Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, 2016 is the name given to the newly launched scheme associated with declaration of black money that was launched on 28 November 2016.

– This scheme is quite similar to the Income Declaration Scheme (IDS), which offered a four-month window to make declaration till 30 September 2016, except that the tax rate is higher at 50% and 25% of the declared income will be locked in for four years. On the other hand higher taxes and stiffer penalty of up to 85% await those who don’t disclose but are caught.

– With Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana 2016, the government has tried to link black money declaration with poor welfare. The 25% locked-up funds will be deposited in a anti-poverty scheme without interest. This scheme will be notified by the government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

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2) 7 army personnel, including 2 officers, were killed in a major terrorist attack on a military camp in Jammu & Kashmir on 29 November 2016. This incident took place at which place? – **Nagrota**

Explanation: A hostage-like situation arose at a camp of the Indian Army at Nagrota on 29 November 2016 when militants dressed as policemen stormed it in the early hours. This camp is nearly 25 km from Jammu city.

– 5-6 militants alighted from a Maruti car at around 5:30 am before opening fire and lobbing grenades at the sentries on the main gate of the 166 Medium Regiment unit in Nagrota and stormed into the unit.

– All the 12 soldiers, two ladies and two children who were held captive were

successfully rescued but 7 army personnel died in the attack. This included 2 officers.

– The brazen attack was the second in as many months since the siege of another army base at Uri left 19 Indian soldiers dead, spiking tensions between India and Pakistan.

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3) The Union Government during November 2016 constituted a committee to form a strategy to expedite the process of transforming India into a cashless economy. Who is heading this committee?

– **Amitabh Kant** (CEO, NITI Aayog)

Explanation: Niti Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant was appointed the head of the newly formed committee that was tasked with identifying various bottlenecks affecting access of digital payments. The committee was set up following a directive from the Prime Minister’s Office to back up the ongoing demonetization drive.

– Other members of the committee include the Financial Services Secretary; IT Secretary, DIPP Secretary; NPCI MD & CEO; Rural Development Secretary and Chairman NHAI.

– The committee will identify and operationalise in the earliest possible time frame user-friendly digital payment options in all sectors of the economy.

– It will engage regularly with Central ministries, regulators, state governments, district administration, local bodies, trade and industry associations to promote adoption of digital payment systems.

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4) Who took over as the 16th Chief of the Pakistan Army by replacing Gen. Raheel Sharif on 29 November 2016? – **Gen.**

Qamar Javed Bajwa

Explanation: General Qamar Javed Bajwa became the new Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan on 29 November 2016. He replaced the highly appreciated Gen. Raheel Sharif.

– Gen. Sharif passed the baton of command to Gen Bajwa at a ceremony held in the Army Hockey Stadium in Rawalpindi. The command stick of the Pakistan Army is made of traditional Malacca Cane.

– Gen. Bajwa, a career infantry officer belonging to the Baloch Regiment, was chosen as Pakistan’s next Chief of Army Staff and Gen. Zubair Mahmood Hayat as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) on 26 November 2016. He is the fourth officer from the infantry’s Baloch Regiment to become the army chief.

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5) Which film won the coveted Golden Peacock award at the 47th International Film Festival of India (IFFI), which concluded in Goa on 28 November 2016?

– **‘Daughter’ (Iran)**

Explanation: Iranian film ‘Daughter’, directed by Reza Mirkarimi, won the Golden Peacock award at the 47th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). Golden Peacock comprises of a statuette and a cash prize of Rs. 40 lakh.

– The film a family drama set in southern Iran, brings out intergenerational conflict between a strict father and a young daughter.

– The best director award went to Soner Caner and Baris Kaya, co-directors of the Turkish film “Rauf”. The award comes with a Silver Peacock statuette and Rs. 15 lakh in prize money.

– “Daughter” also won the best actor (male) award for Farhad Aslani, who won the Silver Peacock prize and Rs.10 lakh in cash. The best actor (female) award was

bagged by Elina Vasca for her performance in the Latvian film ‘*Mellow Mud*’.

– South Korean director Lee Joon-ik won the special jury award for the film ‘*The Throne*’. The award comes with a special citation, a Silver Peacock and a cash prize of Rs.15 lakh.

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6) Two high level committees were formed by the newly constituted Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) during November 2016. One committee is associated with service providers while the other committee pertains to corporate insolvency and liquidation. Who are heading these committees? – **Mohandas Pai and Uday Kotak**

Explanation: Putting in place the operational framework for insolvency and bankruptcy law, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) during November 2016 formed two committees on service providers and corporate liquidation.

– The nine-member advisory committee on service providers is headed by educationist Mohandas Pai. Members of the panel on service providers include National Institute of Public Finance and Policy’s Professor Ajay N Shah, National Stock Exchange Vice-Chairman Ravi Narain, Sebi’s Executive Director J Ranganayakulu and senior lawyer Amarjit Singh Chandiok.

– On the other hand the panel on corporate insolvency and liquidation is chaired by noted banker Uday Kotak. Other members of this committee include BSE CEO Ashish kumar Chauhan, Credit Information Bureau Chairman M V Nair and Corporate and Economic Research Group Advisory’s Chairperson Omkar Goswami.

– It is worth mentioning that the IBBI has been set up under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code that seeks to consolidate

and amend laws relating to reorganisation as well as insolvency resolution of corporate persons, partnership firms and individuals in a time-bound manner.

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7) Which woman administrative officer was appointed the new Director of Mussoorie-based Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) during November 2016 and thus became the first-ever woman to head this prestigious institution? – **Upma Chowdhary**

Explanation: Upma Chowdhary, the 1983-batch IAS officer of Himachal Pradesh cadre, was appointed the new Director of Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), Mussoorie.

– She thus became the first woman director to head LBSNAA. Her appointment was cleared by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on 23 November 2016.

– LBSNAA is the premier training institution for the higher civil services in India.

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8) Which country created tennis history on 27 November 2016 by winning its maiden Davis Cup title? – **Argentina**

Explanation: Argentina created tennis history as it fought back to beat hosts Croatia 3-2 and win the Davis Cup for the first time in a dramatic final in Zagreb on 27 November 2016.

– Croatia led 2-1 going into the final day and looked on course for their second title when Marin Cilic led Juan Martin del Potro by two sets to love. However, Del Potro staged a remarkable comeback to win 6-7 (4-7), 2-6, 7-5, 6-4, 6-3 in four hours 53 minutes.

– Federico Delbonis then swept past Ivo Karlovic 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 in the decisive fifth contest to clinch victory.

– It is worth mentioning that Argentina has lost previous four Davis Cup finals. Therefore this incredible victory was sweeter for the Latin American country.

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Top Questions of December 2016

Q. Which state will host the National Games of 2022 as declared by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)? – **Meghalaya**

Q) What is Easy pay.?

Q. What is the connection between Kalam Island off Odisha and - **Agni – 5**

Q. Know about Anil Baijal, a 1969 batch IAS officer of UT cadre?

Q. What is **Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM)**?

Q. What is 'Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process'?

Q. India in terms of the size of the economy overtook **United Kingdom** to emerge as the sixth largest economy in the world?

Q) Who was crowned Miss World 2016 - Stephanie Del Valle

Q) India's first ever 'Indian Institute of Skills' (IIS) will be established in which city of Uttar Pradesh? – **Kanpur**

Q) China operationalized world's longest bullet train network that is 2,252 kilometers in length, name two cities connected? – **Shanghai and Kunming**

Q) Role of Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) at Tuting – **Arunachal Pradesh**

Q) What is 'tag-free' Airports who became Tag-Free in India? – **New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad**

Q) What is **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code?**

Q. Why **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1951** was cited recently by SC?

Q. What is 145 M777 ultralight howitzer guns and its significance with India and US.?

Q) Which is India's External Intelligence wing, and who was appointed as the new Chief of it? – **Anil Dhasmana**

Q) Russian Ambassador to Turkey **Andrei Karlov** was shot dead by a gunman in a shocking incident at a photo exhibition in Ankara.

Q) The first Humsafar Express, the new series of express trains for inter-city overnight journeys designed specifically for middle-class passengers, was launched by Indian Railways between which two destinations? – **Gorakhpur and Anand Vihar (Ghaziabad)**

Q) What is the name of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa who is visiting the state of Arunachal Pradesh and its significance? – **Urgyen Trinley Dorje**

Q) Who was selected as the new Chief Justice of India on 6 December 2016? – **Justice J.S. Khehar**

Q) Name of the remote sensing satellite that was successfully launched by ISRO on and was the last launch of its 2016 itinerary? – **Resourcesat-2A**

Q) The government will observe B R Ambedkar's birth anniversary as '**Water Day**' on 6 December 2016.

Q) What is – '**DigiShala**'

1-2 December 2016

1) Which Code associated with quicker resolution of insolvency cases came into effect from 1 December 2016? –

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code

Explanation: The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code became operational from 1 December 2016. It will help quicker resolution of cases pertaining to insolvency and liquidation and unlock the value of assets.

– The Code primarily seeks to consolidate and amend laws relating to reorganisation as well as insolvency resolution of corporate persons, partnership firms and individuals in a time-bound manner. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has been set up under the Code and is headed by M.S. Sahoo.

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2) The Union Government on 30 November 2016 announced the setting up of a 13-member committee, including 6 Chief Ministers, to suggest an action plan to rapidly expand the use of digital payment platforms across the country. Who is heading this committee? –

Chandrababu Naidu (Chief Minister, Andhra Pradesh)

Explanation: A 13-member Committee was constituted by the Union Government to come up with an action plan to rapidly expand the use of digital payment platforms across the country.

– It is being headed by Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu, who will act as Convener. The committee includes five other Chief Ministers – Odisha's Naveen Patnaik, Madhya Pradesh's Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Sikkim's Pawan Kumar Chamling, Puducherry's V Narayanasamy and Maharashtra's Devendra Fadnavis.

– NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant will function as the Member Secretary, while the planning body's Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya will be a member of the committee.

– The committee also includes 5 special invitees – former UIDAI chairman and Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani; Boston Consulting Group Chairman Janmejaya Sinha; netCORE MD Rajesh Jain; iSPIRIT co-founder Sharad Sharma and IIM-Ahmedabad professor Jayant Varma.

– The committee has been primarily tasked with examining existing global standards and best practices in the implementation of a cashless economy, and evaluating the benefits of adopting these standards in the Indian context.

– It will also have to come up with a roadmap for the expansion of digital payment platforms, the public outreach to popularize cashless transactions, the administrative setup required and identify potential bottlenecks.

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3) The Supreme Court in its historic order on 30 November 2016 ordered all cinema halls across the country to play the national anthem before the screening of films. The provision for showing respect to the national anthem has been enshrined in which Act of the Indian Constitution, as quoted by the apex court? – **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1951**

Explanation: A Supreme Court Bench of Justices Dipak Misra and Amitava Roy gave order that all cinema halls in the country will necessarily play the national anthem before the screening of films and all present in the halls must stand up in respect till the anthem ended.

- The order also added that halls should also display the national flag on screen when the anthem is played.
- This historic order was given by the SC bench while hearing a plea to clarify when the national anthem should be sung. The PIL was filed by Shyam Narayan Chouksey seeking a set of parameters on what amounts to abuse of the anthem.

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4) India will acquire 145 M777 ultralight howitzer guns from which country as the pertaining agreement was signed on 30 November 2016 and which will be the first acquisition of howitzers after three decades? – **United States**

Explanation: India on 30 November 2016 formally signed the Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LoA) with the US government for the purchase of seven regiments of M777 ‘Ultra Light Howitzers’. 145 such guns will be purchased for \$737 million (Rs. 5000 crore) under the deal.

- These guns are called ‘Ultra Light Howitzers’ because at 4.2 tons, they weigh only a third of normal 155 mm howitzers. The guns, which can be carried under-slung by heavy lift helicopters like the Chinook, will give the army tremendous flexibility especially along the mountainous border with China.
- Under the deal, three M777 howitzers will be delivered within the next three months to allow high-altitude and desert trials with Indian-made ammunition.
- India signed its last howitzer contract in 1986 with Bofors of Sweden but a bribery controversy that broke in 1987 scuttled the acquisition of more guns. The Bofors howitzers played a decisive role in the 1999 Kargil War between India and Pakistan.

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5) The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on 30 November 2016 agreed to reduce its oil output by around 4.5%. This is the first output cut for OPEC countries since which year? – **2008**

Explanation: OPEC, which is the most powerful association of oil producing countries of the world, agreed to undertake a reduction in production by around 4.5%, or about 1.2 million barrels per day. This decision was taken on 30 November 2016 at its annual meeting in Vienna (Austria).

- The proposal to reduce production was put by OPEC member Algeria. This is the first reduction in oil production by OPEC countries since 2008 and is in line with an accord reached in Algiers in September 2016.
- Saudi Arabia would take a big hit and will contribute around 0.5 million barrels per day (bpd) by reducing output to 10.06 million bpd. On the other hand Iran would freeze output at close to current levels of 3.797 million bpd and other members would also cut production.
- OPEC accounts for nearly a third of global oil production. The decision to reduce production has been taken in an effort to prop up oil prices, which have halved since mid-2014.

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6) Who was appointed as the new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) in place of Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh? – **Lt. Gen. A K Bhatt**

Explanation: Lt. Gen. A K Bhatt was during November 2016 appointed as the country’s new Director General of Military Operations (DGMO). He will be in charge

of all army operations including on the LoC which has seen heightened tension.

– Bhatt thus replaced Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh, who came into limelight during September 2016 when the Indian Army, under him, carried out surgical strikes at five separate locations in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) to target terrorist launch pads.

– On the other hand Lt. Gen. Ranbir Singh was appointed as the General Officer Commanding (GOC) of the Mathura-based Strike 1 Corps, one of the three assault forces of the army, which is mandated to cross into Pakistan in a short notice.

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7) What is the name given to the rising cyclone in the Bay of Bengal that is barreling towards Tamil Nadu coast as on 1 December 2016? – **'Nada'**

Explanation: 'Nada' is the name of the cyclone that emerged from a depression formed over the southwest Bay of Bengal during November 2016. It is on its way to the Tamil Nadu coast and is expected to make a landfall on 2 December 2016. However, the intensity of Nada was greatly reduced by the evening of 1 December.

– A cyclone warning was issued Chennai IMD area cyclone warning centre and the fishermen were advised not to venture into the sea.

– The cyclone is named Nada by Oman as per the cyclone naming convention followed by the South Asian countries.

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3 December 2016

1) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 2 December 2016 revised the ceiling on issuance of securities under the market

stabilization scheme (MSS) to Rs. 6 trillion (Rs. 6 lakh crore). What was the existing MSS ceiling for 2016-17? – **Rs. 30,000 crore**

Explanation: After the withdrawal of the legal tender character of the 500 and 1,000 denomination notes with effect from 9 November 2016 there has been a surge in the deposits with the banks. Consequently, there has been a significant increase of liquidity in the banking system which is expected to continue for some time.

– Hence the ceiling on issuance of securities under the market stabilization scheme (MSS) was revised upwards to Rs. 6 trillion, from the previous limit of Rs. 30,000 crore.

– MSS bonds, which were introduced during former RBI governor Y.V. Reddy's tenure in 2005, are typically issued by the central bank to manage liquidity operations when intervening in the foreign exchange market.

– When the RBI buys dollars, it releases rupee liquidity in the system, which can then be mopped up by sale of MSS bonds.

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2) Four major cities of the world announced on 1 December 2016 that they will stop the use of all diesel-powered cars and trucks by year 2025. Which are these 4 cities? – **Paris, Mexico City, Madrid and Athens**

Explanation: The mayors of Paris, Mexico City, Madrid and Athens announced that they have agreed to ban the use of diesel vehicles in their cities by 2025. The ban will be implemented primarily to improve air quality.

– The commitment for diesel ban was made in a biennial meeting of city leaders, the C40 Meeting of Urban Leaders, held in

Mexico. The use of diesel in transport has come under increasing scrutiny in recent years, as concerns about its impact on air quality have grown.

– The diesel ban is hugely significant. Carmakers will look at this decision and know it’s just a matter of time before other city mayors follow suit.

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3) What is the name of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa who is visiting the state of Arunachal Pradesh, a visit likely to irritate China? – **Urgyen Trinley Dorje**

Explanation: Urgyen Trinley Dorje, the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa, is undertaking a visit of Arunachal Pradesh. It is worth mentioning that Dorje is one of the two major claimants to the seat of the Karmapa, the head of the Karma Kagyu school of Tibetan Buddhism.

– His visit to Arunachal was made possible by a recent decision by the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) of Indian Government, which lifted restrictions on the religious head’s travel within India.

– But this visit is expected to irritate China. The Karmapa had dramatically fled to India in 1999 to escape Chinese government restrictions on his religious studies. On the other hand China claims Arunachal Pradesh as an extension of its claim over Tibet, characterising Arunachal as ‘southern Tibet’.

– The last visit to Arunachal Pradesh by a Karmapa was about 900 years ago, by the 3rd Karmapa, Rangjung Dorje, who died in 1339.

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4) Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn became Thailand’s new King on 1 December 2016 as he succeeded his much-revered late father King Bhumibol Adulyadej. What is the new official name

of the new king? – **King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun**

Explanation: King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun is the name given to the Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn as he became the 10th monarch of the ruling Chakri dynasty. But he will also be known as Rama X. 10th

– The new king accepted the throne in a televised broadcast following an invitation from parliament, formalising his accession. However, new king’s official coronation will not happen until after King Bhumibol’s cremation, expected next year.

– His father, King Bhumibol, the world’s longest-reigning monarch, died on 13 October 2016. Maha Vajiralongkorn was given the title of crown prince, making him the official heir, in 1972.

– Thailand’s monarchy is protected from criticism by tough laws, which restrict media discussion about the royal family’s role, including in the international press.

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5) Magnus Carlsen overwhelmed challenger Sergey Karjakin in the tiebreakers of the World Chess Championship to retain his World title. With this win, Carlsen has been World Chess Champion how many times? –

Thrice

Explanation: Magnus Carlsen (Norway) won his third consecutive World Chess champion title as he defeated challenger Sergey Karjakin (Russia) in the tie-breaker on 30 November 2016.

– The tiebreakers were necessitated after the two chess grandmasters were tied after 12 closely fought games. The tiebreakers consisted of four games of high-speed chess, with each man given 25

minutes to complete his moves, plus an additional 10 seconds for every move made. While the first 2 games were drawn, Carlsen displayed his mastery by winning the last 2 games to emerge winner.

– Carlsen had won his first World championship title in 2013 when he humbled reigning world champion Vishwanathan Anand in Chennai to capture the title.

6) Bombay Dyeing Manufacturing Company, one of the oldest textile businesses in India, officially closed its manufacturing operations on 1 December 2016. However, the company will continue its retail operations. This iconic company had started its manufacturing operations in which year? – **1879**

Explanation: Bombay Dyeing was established by Nowrosjee Wadia in 1879. The company was known for producing quality home textile products at two prime locations in Mumbai. The group is presently led by Nusli Wadia.

– But the high land cost, expensive finance and intense competition from the unorganised sector, besides growing imports from Taiwan, China and Bangladesh hit company's domestic textile production.

– In 2005, the company moved the manufacturing base from Mumbai to Ranjangaon near Pune. The Mumbai sites are being monetised as real estate assets. The company has now decided to close its textile manufacturing facility and focus on retail business. It will continue to focus on the retail business under 'Bombay Dyeing' brand. The company sells linens, towels, home furnishings, leisure clothing, kids wear for which it will purchase products from 10 vendors/suppliers.

4-5 December 2016

1) The sixth ministerial conference of the 'Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process' was held at which place in India on 3-4 December 2016? – **Amritsar**

Explanation: The 6th edition of Heart of Asia Summit – Istanbul Process was held in Amritsar (Punjab) on 3-4 December 2016. This was the first instance of the Summit being hosted in India. Around 40 countries and leading groupings like the European Union, deliberated on various challenges facing Afghanistan, including revival of a peace process in the conflict-ridden country.

– The Summit was jointly inaugurated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Afghani President Ashraf Ghani. Pakistani Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Advisor Sartaj Aziz represented his country in the Summit.

– Both India and Afghanistan came out with stinging attack on Pakistan for its terror stance. They urged Islamabad to end its "selective" approach to fighting terror groups on its soil, and end "terror sanctuaries" for groups that target them.

– The Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process was launched in 2011 and the participating countries include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and the United Arab Emirates.

– The platform was floated to encourage security, political and economic cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

2) Who resigned from the post of the MD and CEO of NSE, on 2 December 2016? – Chitra Ramkrishna

Explanation: Chitra Ramkrishna resigned as Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the National Stock Exchange of India (NSE), India's largest stock exchange. Her tenure was supposed to end in March 2018. Her resignation came just days before NSE's IPO. According to media reports she had differences with the NSE board on key issues of listing of the exchange.

– A chartered accountant by training, Ramkrishna began her career with IDBI in 1983. She was one of the five people hand-picked by legendary S S Nadkarni, then chairman of IDBI, to set up NSE in 1992. She was appointed as the joint managing director of the exchange in September 2009 and was elevated to the post of MD & CEO in April 2013.

– Ramkrishna was the third woman to head an exchange in the Asia-Pacific region after Sri Lanka's Colombo Stock Exchange and China's Shenzhen Stock Exchange.

– Ramkrishna was the second-highest paid executive in the financial services industry, second only to Aditya Puri, MD of HDFC Bank, who took home Rs 9.7 crore in FY16.

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3) Which country was removed as a member of South American trade bloc Mercosur during December 2016? – Venezuela

Explanation: On 2 December 2016 Venezuela was notified that it is being kicked out of South America's trade group Mercosur over its failure to comply with the pact's democratic principles and trade bylaws.

– In a letter addressed to Venezuela's Foreign Minister Delcy Rodriguez, Mercosur's member states, led by Brazil, said it had been stripped of membership rights immediately and that it will be required to renegotiate its membership. The Venezuelan government said it is being unfairly targeted by right-wing regional leaders and that it complies with bylaws.

– Mercosur was created as a customs union in 1991 by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Venezuela became the group's fifth member in 2012.

– However, the bloc lost relevance as its members focused on selling commodities to a single client, fast-growing China. A wave of leftist leaders in the past decade also shifted focus away from trade to create a counterweight to U.S. influence in South America.

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4) What could be the world's first polluted river was discovered by scientists recently. This river, contaminated about 7,000 years ago by Neolithic humans, has been discovered in which country? – Jordan

Explanation: Professor Russell Adams from the University of Waterloo in Canada and colleagues, claimed to have discovered the world's first polluted river in the now-dry riverbed in the Wadi Faynan region of southern Jordan. The river is believed to have been polluted some 7,000 years ago by Neolithic human.

– They found evidence of early pollution caused by the combustion of copper. The findings shed light on a turning point in history, when humans began moving from making tools out of stones to making tools out of metal.

– According to Adams this region is home to the world's first industrial revolution. However, people paid a heavy price for

the increased metal production. Slag, the waste product of smelting, remained. It contained metals such as copper, lead, zinc, cadmium, and even arsenic, mercury and thalium. Plants absorbed these metals, people and animals such as goats and sheep ate them, and so the contaminants bioaccumulated in the environment.

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5) The Indian women's cricket team defeated which team in the finals of Asia Cup T20 Cup on 4 December 2016 to win sixth consecutive title? – **Pakistan**

Explanation: The Indian women's team maintained its supremacy in the Asia Cup Twenty20 by beating Pakistan for its sixth title in as many editions in Bangkok on 4 December 2016.

– Veteran Mithali Raj, who was removed as Twenty20 captain before the start of the tournament, made a statement with an unbeaten 73 to guide India to 121 for five in 20 overs.

– The bowlers then bowled brilliantly to limit Pakistan to 104 for six, completing a 17-run win.

– With the memorable win, India also managed to maintain its enviable record in the continental event, having won all the six editions to have taken place so far.

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6-7 December 2016



1) Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa passed away on 5

December 2016 after battling for life for

74 days in Chennai's Apollo Hospital. She was state Chief Minister for six terms. When she became state's CM for the first time? – **1991**

Explanation: Jayalalithaa was one of India's most articulate and determined political personalities and a top film actress of the 1960s and 1970s. She showed enormous resolve in fighting one obstacle after another since the time she stepped into the world of politics in June 1982, under the mentorship of Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran (MGR), the founder of the AIADMK and her lead co-star in 28 Tamil films. She was 68.

– In 1991 her alliance with the Indian National Congress enabled her to an incredible victory. The AIADMK alliance with the Congress won 225 out of the 234 seats contested and won all 39 constituencies in the centre. Thus she became Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister for the first time.

– Her second term was in 2001 after another Assembly win for AIADMK but had to resign in the same year due to a Supreme Court ruling against her. She however returned for the third term in 2013 after acquittal. Her fourth term was in 2011 when a 13-party alliance led by her won the Assembly Elections. But being sentenced for 4 years in an 18-year-old disproportionate assets case 2014 led to her resignation. Later she returned for her fifth term in 2015 after her acquittal in the same case.

– Her sixth and final term as Tamil Nadu CM began in May 2016 after her party won a historic win in Assembly Elections. She thus became the second Chief Minister after M. G. Ramachandran, to serve consecutive terms as Chief Minister.

– She was buried near the grave of his mentor M.G. Ramachandran on Chennai's

famous Marina Beach in the evening of 6 December 2016.

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2) Who took over as the new Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu on 5 December 2016 after demise of CM Jayalalithaa? –

O. Panneerselvam

Explanation: O. Panneerselvam became the 20th Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu after he took oath in the early hours of 6 December 2016, just around two hours after death of the incumbent Jayalalithaa. He is a strong loyalist of Jayalalithaa and was looking after state's affairs after Jayalalithaa's condition worsened in the hospital.

– For Panneerselvam, it was the third oath as Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, once again in difficult circumstances. The other two times he was sworn in as a stop-gap Chief Minister when Jayalalithaa had to step down over corruption charges.

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3) Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi tendered his resignation for which reason on 5 December 2016? – **The**

constitutional referendum put forward by him was disapproved by Italian voters

Explanation: A constitutional referendum was held in Italy on 4 December 2016. The voters were asked whether they approve a constitutional law that amends the Italian Constitution to reform the composition and powers of the Parliament of Italy. It was aimed to carry out some ambitious reforms in the country was very important for Prime Minister Matteo Renzi.

– However, the constitutional referendum was rejected by voters, with 59.11% voters disapproving it. Opposition parties harshly criticised the bill, claiming that it

was poorly written and that it would have made the government too powerful.

– The outcome energised the anti-immigrant Northern League party, an ally of French far-right leader Marine Le Pen. The party called for an early general election in Italy.

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4) The foreign direct investment (FDI) in India crossed which milestone figure in September 2016, as disclosed during December 2016? – **\$300 billion**

Explanation: According to data disclosed during December 2016, India crossed the USD 300 billion foreign direct investment (FDI) milestone between April 2000 and September 2016. The cumulative FDI inflows during the period amounted to USD 310.26 billion.

– India crossed the USD 300 billion mark at a time when the global economic slowdown has had a dampening impact on FDI flows which are expected to fall this year (2016-17).

– Thirty three per cent of the FDI came through the Mauritius route, apparently because the investors wanted to take advantage of India's double taxation avoidance treaty with the island nation. India received USD 101.76 billion from Mauritius between April 2000 and September 2016.

– The other big investors have been from Singapore, the US, UK and the Netherlands.

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5) Who was selected as the new Chief Justice of India on 6 December 2016? – **Justice J.S. Khehar**

Explanation: Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar will be the next Chief Justice of India, after his appointment to the august post was

confirmed on 6 December 2016. He will be sworn in as the Chief Justice of India by President Pranab Mukherjee on 4 January 2017 and will replace Chief Justice T.S. Thakur.

– Justice Khehar will be the 44th Chief Justice of India. He will also be the first Supreme Court Chief Justice from the Sikh community.

– It is worth mentioning that Chief Justice Thakur had on 5 December 2016 written to the Union government recommending Justice Khehar's name for appointment as the next Chief Justice of India.

8 December 2016



1) What is the name of the remote sensing satellite that was successfully launched by ISRO on 7 December 2016 and was the last launch of its 2016 itinerary? – **Resourcesat-2A**

Explanation: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched 'Resourcesat-2A', the remote sensing satellite from Sriharikota (Andhra Pradesh) on 7 December 2016. The launch was made through the PSLV-C36 rocket.

– After the launch, the 1,235-kg spacecraft started orbiting pole-to-pole at about 824 km from Earth. It was the 37th consecutive successful flight of the indigenous light-lifting rocket, the PSLV.

– The three cameras of different resolution on 'Resourcesat-2A' will give regular micro and macro information on land and water bodies below, farm lands and crop extent, forests, mineral deposits, coastal information, rural and urban spreads besides helping in disaster management.

– Resourcesat-2A is the third remote sensing satellite under 'Resourcesat' series. Resourcesat-1 was put in space in October 2003 and Resourcesat-2 in April 2011, each with a planned life of five years.

2) The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), headed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Urjit Patel, on 7 December 2016 decided to keep the policy rate unchanged at 6.25%. What is the growth forecast for present fiscal (2016-17) as forecasted by the MPC? – **7.1%**

Explanation: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) expects that the growth rate for 2016-17 would be 7.1% as against its previous forecast of 7.6%. The new forecast thus reflects the downward sentiment, primarily due to ongoing demonetization drive.

– The MPC unanimously decided to keep the policy rate (Repo Rate) unchanged at 6.25%, considering the heightened uncertainty of volatility related to US rate hike and the demonetization drive. The financial markets were expecting at-least 25 basis point decrease in the rate.

– The RBI also expects that demonetization will lower the prices of perishables, could reduce inflation by 10-15 basis points by December 2016.



3) Famous political satirist and journalist Cho Ramaswamy passed away in the early hours of 7 December 2016. Apart from being a witty political commentator and theatre personality,

he was editor of Tamil magazine 'Thuglak'. What was his real name? – **Srinivasa Iyer Ramaswamy**

Explanation: Srinivasa Iyer Ramaswamy, popularly known as Cho Ramaswamy, was a multi-faceted personality. He was an accomplished actor, comedian, character actor, editor, political satirist, playwright and dialogue writer, film director and lawyer in Tamil Nadu.

– He was also the founder-Editor of 'Thugalak', a popular Tamil magazine. His popularity in the Tamil Nadu literary circles was mainly due to his impartial assessment of political issues. His political satire 'Mohamed Bin Thuglak' was a runaway success.

– Winner of the B.D. Goenka award for excellence in journalism, Cho was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the BJP government led by A.B. Vajpayee.

4) The government will observe B R Ambedkar's birth anniversary as which national day, as announced by the Union Govt. on 6 December 2016? – **'Water Day'**

Explanation: In view of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's contribution toward the country's water resources management, his birth anniversary (14 April) will be observed as Water Day. This was announced by Union Water Resources Minister Uma Bharti on 6 December 2016, his 61st death anniversary.

– Dr. Ambedkar, during his tenure as Member (Labour) of the Viceroy's Executive Council (1942-1946), had steered formation of an all-India policy for the development of water resources in the country. He had advocated the concept of River Valley Authority or corporation for integrated development of rivers.

– He also introduced the concept of multi-purpose development of river basins and his efforts in this direction culminated with multipurpose development of Damodar, Mahanadi and other rivers immediately after independence.

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5) Who was named *Time* magazine's 'Person of the Year' for 2016, as announced on 6 December 2016? – **Donald Trump**

Explanation: US President-elect Donald Trump was named *Time* magazine's 'Person of the Year' for 2016. This announcement was made on NBC's "Today" show on 6 December 2016. Democrat Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was the No. 2 finalist. She lost to Trump despite winning the popular vote.

– But *Time* magazine, while naming Trump for this coveted title, also called him the "President of the divided states of America." Trump was not happy about that title, but called his selection a "tremendous honor."

– The annual marketing gimmick has, since the 1920s, attempted to select a

single figure or a group that has influenced the year's events.

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6) Who was appointed new Prime Minister of France on 6 December 2016 to replace Manuel Valls after he quit the post to focus on Presidential elections? – Bernard Cazeneuve

Explanation: Bernard Cazeneuve was on 6 December 2016 appointed new Prime Minister of France as Manuel Valls quit his post to focus on running for President in the country's coming elections.

– 53-year-old Cazeneuve is a close ally of President Francois Hollande and has become a popular figure in French politics as the champion of measures tackling extremism. Hollande is not running for re-election.

– Valls will be seeking the Socialist nomination for the vote, hoping to pit himself against conservative candidate Francois Fillon and Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right Front National.

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9-10 December 2016

1) With the primary objective of hastening India's shift towards a cashless economy, the Union Government announced a slew of measures to encourage digital payments on 8 December 2016. Under the announcements, the monthly rental on point of service (PoS) terminals provided by state-owned banks has been capped at – Rs. 100

Explanation: Discounts ranging between 0.5% and 10% were announced by the Union Govt. on 8 December 2016 to encourage digital transactions vis-à-vis physical currency for use of various services.

The incentives are mostly for services provided by Central public sector undertakings, public sector banks and the Railways. Following are the main steps taken by the Govt.

– The monthly rental on around 6,50,000 point of service (PoS) terminals provided by state-owned banks capped at Rs. 100

– No service tax on digital transactions up to Rs. 2000

– Online purchase of rail tickets to come with a free accidental insurance cover of Rs. 10 lakh. The Rail Ministry expects online ticket booking transactions from 58% to 78%

– Discount of 0.75% on digital purchases of petrol and diesel from state-owned outlets

– 0.5% discount for digital purchase of monthly and season tickets for suburban rail travel

– Villages with population less than 10,000 to get two PoS machines each. There are around 1 lakh such villages with an approximate population of 75 crore

– Kisan credit card holders to get Rupay Kisan cards

– State-owned insurers to give 10% discount on online purchase of general insurance policy, 8% discount for life insurance policy

– 5% discount on digital payments to railways for catering, accommodation, etc.

– 10% discount on toll payments using RFID cards and fast tags

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2) Former Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF) SP Tyagi was arrested on 9 December 2016 for his alleged involvement in which case? – The AgustaWestland VVIP chopper deal

Explanation: Former Air Force Chief SP Tyagi was arrested on 9 December 2016 over alleged irregularities in the AgustaWestland VVIP chopper deal worth Rs. 3,600 crores, signed when the Congress was in power. He was arrested with his cousin Sanjeev Tyagi and lawyer Gautam Khaitan after hours of questioning.

– Tyagi headed the Indian Air Force between 2004 and 2007. Investigations have revealed that the Tyagis entered into a consultancy deal with middlemen in 2004, when Air Marshal Tyagi’s cousins were certain that he would be the next air force chief and in a position to influence the deal.

– S.P. Tyagi had been repeatedly questioned on the deal with UK-based helicopter maker AgustaWestland, in which kickbacks were allegedly paid to Indian officials and politicians to influence the contract for a dozen VVIP choppers for the President, Prime Minister and other top leaders of the country.

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3) Which High Court on 8 December 2016 came out with a scathing attack on the practice of ‘Triple Talaq’ saying this form of “instant divorce” is “cruel” and “most demeaning”? – **Allahabad High Court**

Explanation: The single judge Bench of Justice Suneet Kumar of the Allahabad High Court on 8 December 2016 said that Muslim law in the country are contrary to teachings of Quran and the Prophet and that the Constitution is supreme over personal laws of any community.

– It thus came down heavily on the practice of “triple talaq” (divorce by saying ‘talaq’ three times), saying this form of “instant divorce” is cruel and most demeaning, which impedes and drags India from becoming a nation.

– The bench observed that women cannot remain at the mercy of the patriarchal setup held under the clutches of sundry clerics having their own interpretation of the holy Quran.

– The observations were made while dismissing the writ of an elderly Muslim man who was seeking protection for himself and his second wife, half his age. The man submitted in the court that he had divorced his first wife through the custom of “triple talaq” and now felt threatened by relatives of his second wife and his own family.

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4) The United States’ administration on 8 December 2016 granted which status to India that is expected to fast-track cooperation and sharing of high-end US defence technology? – **‘Major Defence Partner’ of the U.S.’**

Explanation: Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and outgoing US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter on 8 December 2016 finalised the “Major Defence Partner” status to India.

– According to a joint-declaration “The designation as a Major Defence Partner is a status unique to India and institutionalises the progress made to facilitate defence trade and technology sharing with India to a level at par with that of the US’s closest allies and partners, and ensures enduring cooperation in the future”.

– It now needs to be formally passed by the two chambers of the Congress – the House of Representatives and Senate – before US President Barack Obama can sign it into law.

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5) What is the name of South Korean President who in a stunning development

was impeached on 9 December 2016? – **Park Geun-hye**

Explanation: Park Geun-hye is the first woman President of South Korea. In a stunning and swift for her, South Korean lawmakers on 9 December 2016 impeached her amid protests that drew millions into the streets of capital Seoul.

– Park was allegedly involved in a case of collusion with a longtime friend to extort money from companies and to give that confidante extraordinary sway over government decisions.

– After the vote, country's No. 2 official, Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn was allowed to assume leadership until the Constitutional Court rules on whether Park must permanently step down. The court has up to six months to decide.

– Park will be formally removed from office if at least six of the Constitutional Court's nine justices support her impeachment, and the country would then hold a presidential election within 60 days.

– The handover of power prompted the prime minister to order South Korea's defense minister to put the military on a state of heightened readiness to brace for any potential provocation by North Korea.

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6) The first American to orbit Earth passed away on 8 December 2016. What was his name? – **John Glenn**

Explanation: John Glenn became the first-ever U.S. astronaut to orbit the Earth in 1962. This historic flight made him an all-American hero and propelled him to a long career in the U.S. Senate. He passed away on 8 December 2016 at the age of 95.

– It is worth mentioning that the Soviet Union leaped ahead of the U.S. in space

exploration by putting the Sputnik 1 satellite in orbit in 1957, and then launched the first man in space, cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin on 12 April 1961.

– After two suborbital flights by Alan Shepard Jr. and Gus Grissom, it was up to Glenn to be the first American to orbit the Earth on 20 February 1962.

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11-12 December 2016

1) What is the name of the new 24-hour TV channel launched during December 2016 by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) with the primary objective of pushing digital transactions? – **DigiShala**

Explanation: A new 24-hour satellite channel named 'DigiShala' was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

– 'DigiShala' will enable and empower every citizen of the country, especially farmers, students, dalits and women in rural areas, to learn the usefulness and benefits of digital payment in our everyday life. The channel will inform and educate about various digital payment options through step by step demos of digital payments using UPI, USSD, Aadhaar-enabled payment systems, e-wallets and cards.

– The channel would be managed by Doordarshan (DD) and piggyback on its infrastructure. Originally it has only three to four hours of original content.

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2) What is the name of the ambitious campaign of Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi launched by President Pranab Mukherjee on 11 December 2016 that aims to mobilise 100 million youth and children for 100 million underprivileged

children across the world? – **'100 Million for 100 Million'**

Explanation: '100 Million for 100 Million' is the name of the campaign that aims to mobilise 100 million youth and children for 100 million underprivileged children across the world, to end child labour, child slavery, violence against children and promote the right of every child to be safe, free, and educated, over the next five years. The campaign is the brain-child of Nobel Peace Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi.

– It was officially launched on 11 December 2016 by President Pranab Mukherjee at a programme organized by the Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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3) What is the name of the chief of Pakistan's spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) who was removed from his post by country's new Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on 11 December 2016? – **Lt. Gen. Rizwan Akhtar**

Explanation: ISI Chief Lt. Gen. Rizwan Akhtar was removed from his post in a major reshuffle by Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on 11 December 2016. Akhtar was appointed president of the National Defence University (NDU).

– According to media reports Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar is the new ISI Chief. Mukhtar possess vast experience in the field of intelligence and has headed the counterterrorism wing of the spy agency in Islamabad. He was commissioned in the Armoured Corps regiment in 1983.

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4) Who was named new Prime Minister of Italy on 11 December 2016 to replace

Matteo Renzi who resigned after referendum defeat? – **Paolo Gentiloni**

Explanation: Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni was asked by Italian President Sergio Mattarella on 11 December 2016 to form a new centre-left government that will guide Italy to the elections that are due by February 2018. Gentiloni will have to get approval of the Parliament for his new government through voting on 14 December.

– He was entrusted with the task to form the new government following Prime Minister Matteo Renzi's resignation over referendum defeat. President Mattarella turned to Gentiloni after opposition parties rebuffed overtures about a possible national unity government. The president rejected opposition demands for an immediate election.

– The populist Five Star Movement, which has led calls for immediate elections, said it will boycott Parliamentary voting of 14 December because the new government would have no legitimacy.

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5) Which team won the International Premier Tennis League (ITPL) title for 2016 on 11 December 2016? – **Singapore Slammers**

Explanation: Singapore Slammers retained the International Premier Tennis League title with a majestic 30-14 victory over table-toppers Indian Aces in Hyderabad on 11 December 2016.

– Singapore Slammers' victory was powered by a brilliant 6-4 win by former World No. 1 Carlos Moya over Mark Philippoussis. Kiki Bertens continued the momentum by upsetting the local favourite Sania Mirza by 6-3.

– In the mixed doubles, Marcelo Melo and Bertens neutralised the power of Mirza

and her Indian partner Rohan Bopanna 6-1. In the last match Marcos Baghdatis (Cyprus) sealed an emphatic win with a 6-4 success over Feliciano Lopez.

– International Premier Tennis League (ITPL) is an annual tennis team league promoted by former Indian tennis ace Mahesh Bhupathi. It was founded in 2013 and features many top tennis players. The first ITPL title was won by Indian Aces in 2014 followed by two consecutive titles by Singapore Slammers in 2015 and now in 2016.

13 December 2016

1) What is the name of the severe cyclonic storm that made a landfall in Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh on 12 December 2016 and severely affecting Chennai? – **'Vardah'**

Explanation: 'Vardah' is the name of the severe cyclonic storm that hit northern Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh on 12 December 2016. It developed over the southeast Bay of Bengal region around 5 days back as a low pressure area and upgraded into a severe cyclonic storm.

– 'Vardah' was initially expected made landfall in Andhra Pradesh and cross the coast between Nellore and Kakinada. But later it changed direction and targeted Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh instead. Heavy rainfall and gusty air lashed Chennai, Kanchipuram and Thiruvalluvar due to the storm. Chennai bore the brunt of the cyclone with suburban rail services completely suspended, runways shut and very limited buses plying on roads. At least 2 persons died as thousands of tree fell all over the city.

– The name 'Vardah' is given by Pakistan as per cyclone naming conventions and stands for red rose in Urdu.

2) Normal commercial traffic through the 57-km long Gotthard Base Tunnel, the world's longest rail tunnel, was commenced from 11 December 2016. This tunnel, which took 17 years to build, is situated in which country? – **Switzerland**

Explanation: The Gotthard Base Tunnel (GBT) is situated in the Swiss Alps and connects Zurich to Lugano. The tunnel took 17 years to build, at a cost of over 12 billion Swiss francs. It was officially opened in June 2016 but regular passenger services have been started from 11 December.

– The GBT has surpassed Japan's 53.9 km Seikan tunnel as the world's longest train tunnel. The 50.5 km Channel tunnel connecting Britain and France has been bumped into third place.

– The ambitious GBT project has been praised across Europe for its pioneering efforts to improve connectivity from Rotterdam to the Adriatic.

– The Swiss-funded tunnel was largely made possible by technical advances in tunnel-boring machines, which replaced the costly and dangerous blast-and-drill method.

3) What is the number of a soon-to-be-commissioned nationwide toll-free helpline to educate people and provide support related to cashless mode of transactions? – **14444**

Explanation: Union Government is in the process of commissioning a new nationwide toll-free helpline number that will seek to educate people and provide support related to cashless mode of

transactions. The Govt. has sought leading IT services and software association Nasscom's help in providing support on a mass scale to people.

– The number 14444 has been assigned by the Department of Telecom (DoT). This toll-free number will thus be the latest addition to various tools already launched by the government to promote digital payments. The Government has already launched a TV channel ('Digishala') and a website ('CashlessIndia') to promote the cause of digital transactions.

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4) What is the name of the 5-month long initiative launched by the Madhya Pradesh Government on 11 December 2016 that aims at turning the Narmada river pollution free by seeking public participation and creating awareness? – **'Narmada Seva Yatra'**

Explanation: 'Narmada Seva Yatra' (NSY) is the name of the new initiative launched by the Madhya Pradesh Government. The initiative seeks to turn the Narmada into a pollution free and unceasing river. NSY was launched by MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan at Amarkantak on 11 December 2016.

– The NSY will create awareness about the conservation of the river and will cover more than 1,900 kilometres in 16 districts of the state. Under the initiative trees will be planted along the banks of the Narmada and sewage water will be treated before it flows into the river.

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5) Who was sworn-in as new Prime Minister of New Zealand on 12 December 2016 to replace John Key? – **Bill English**

Explanation: Bill English, who was Finance Minister till now, became the new Prime Minister of New Zealand on 12 December

2016. He replaced the much-popular John Key, who shocked the nation by resigning due to family reasons a few days ago.

– The centre-right National Party caucus unanimously backed English at a meeting on 12 December. Hours later he was administered the oath of office. State Services Minister Paula Bennett was named as deputy leader.

– English has been in parliament since 1990 and was previously leader of the National Party in 2002 when it suffered its worst election defeat.

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6) According to media reports, which Scandinavian country is facing the unique problem of running out of its garbage and is now importing it to run its recycling plants? – **Sweden**

Explanation: Sweden has run out of garbage and is being forced to import it from other countries to keep its state-of-the-art recycling plants going. The garbage is needed in large quantities as the country sources almost half of its electricity from renewables.

– Sweden was one of the first countries to implement a heavy tax on fossil fuels in 1991. The country's recycling system is so sophisticated that only less than 1 per cent of its household waste has been sent to landfill last year. However, the need of garbage import is just of temporary nature.

14-15 December 2016



1) Which South-American country ordered demonetization of its largest denomination currency note on 11 December 2016 in an effort to target the alleged cash hoarding and huge inflation in the country? – **Venezuela**

Explanation: Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on 11 December 2016 signed an emergency decree ordering the country's largest banknote, the 100 bolivar bill, taken out of circulation. The government is of the view that this will thwart the cash hoarders in Colombia.

– It is worth mentioning that Venezuela is the midst of an economic crisis and crippled with the world's highest inflation. The country is preparing to issue new banknotes and coins in values up to 200 times the highest denomination currently available. The 100 bolivar bill is worth fewer than three cents of a dollar at current market rates. One bill can barely cover the cost of a piece of candy.

– The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has forecast the inflation rate will hit 475% by the end of this year. Falling prices for Venezuela's crucial oil exports have caused a shortage of dollars in the country, driving up prices of imports of food, medicine and other crucial goods.

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2) What is the main recommendation of the Watal Committee on Digital Payments which submitted its report to the Union Government during December 2016? – **An independent payments regulator within the framework of the RBI should be established**

Explanation: The Union Government in August 2016 had constituted a committee to suggest ways to encourage India's movement towards a cashless economy. This committee was headed by former finance secretary Ratan Watal. The committee came out with its recommendations during December 2016.

– The committee has recommended that payments regulations should be independent of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) but should come under its framework. It has thus mooted the creation of a Payments Regulatory Board (PRB) within the central bank- an independent decision making body having some members from outside RBI.

– The panel has also suggested strengthening the payment and settlements Act to include clauses for consumer protection. These include ensuring that the customer is not liable for losses arising from unauthorized transactions, as well as an option to approach the regulator for grievances. It has also sought to address issues on data protection and security.

– The report has recommended opening up of the payment systems like the real-time gross settlement system (RTGS) even to non-bank payment service providers.

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3) What is India's position in the list of the world's largest defence spending countries, as disclosed in IHS Jane's latest annual Defense Budgets report? – **Fourth**

Explanation: IHS Jane's latest annual Defense Budgets report released during December 2016, India has overtaken Saudi Arabia and Russia to become the fourth-largest spender in the world. During 2016 India spent \$50.67 billion on defence sector, as against \$46.6 billion spent during 2015. If the pound continues to weaken, India will spend more on defense than the U.K. by 2018.

– At \$622 billion in 2016, the U.S. is still the world leader in defense spending, with its budget accounting for about 40% of the global total. China is at second place with spending worth \$191.75 billion. It is followed by the United Kingdom, which spent \$53.81 billion on defence spending during 2016. India is now at fourth place and is followed closely by Saudi Arabia (48.68 billion) and Russia (\$48.44 billion).

– On the other hand global defence expenditures rose to \$1.57 trillion during 2016 from \$1.55 trillion in 2015, primarily due to the fact that Asian nations are ramping up defence expenses on growing nervousness around the South China Sea.

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4) During December 2016 the Syrian government troops recaptured major parts of which strategic city from the rebels that fell out into rebel hands in 2012 in one of the early setbacks to the regime of President Bashar al-Assad? – **Aleppo**

Explanation: Aleppo is the largest city of Syria. It has been the center of military confrontation between Syrian armed forces under President Bashar al-Assad and Syrian opposition (including Free Syrian Army and Sunni fighters). The battle of Aleppo began on 19 July 2012 as opposition forces captured major parts of the city to give a big blow to government forces.

– By 13 December 2016 the government forces were able to capture major eastern parts of the city and within a few weeks are expected to take control of complete city. Syrian government offensive was supported by Russia, who carried airstrikes over the rebels.

– Talks between rebels and the Russian military led to the ceasefire deal. The UN Security Council held an emergency meeting on 13 December 2016 to address the situation. The battle for Aleppo has been a humanitarian disaster. The rebels accuse the regime of indiscriminate bombing and killing civilians, while the government says it had no option but to move in as the city was controlled by “terrorists”.

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5) Which cricket stadium in India is poised to replace Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as the world's biggest cricket stadium in terms of seating capacity, as reported in the media during December 2016? – **Sardar Patel Cricket Stadium (Ahmedabad)**

Explanation: The Sardar Patel Cricket Stadium in Motera, Ahmedabad will replace Australia's Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) to become world's biggest cricket stadium in terms of seating capacity. This stadium will take that record after the new renovated venue opens up in two year time. L&T will undertake the expansion project.

– Motera's seating capacity will go up from present 54,000 to seat about 1,10,000 that will put MCG's 100,024 in the shade.

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16-17 December 2016

1) The first Humsafar Express, the new series of express trains for inter-city overnight journeys designed specifically for middle-class passengers, was launched by Indian Railways on 16 December 2016. This first Humsafar train is between which two destinations? – **Gorakhpur and Anand Vihar (Ghaziabad)**

Explanation: The Indian Railways launched the AC III tier Humsafar Express on 16 December 2016 as promised by the railway minister Suresh Prabhu in the railway budget this year. Humsafar Express, made up entirely of AC III coaches, targets middle class passenger group for inter-city overnight journeys.

– The first Humsafar Express, with 16 AC III tier coaches and two power cars, runs between Gorakhpur and Anand Vihar in Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh. It was flagged off by Rail Minister Suresh Prabhu through video conferencing.

– The train features numerous features meant to provide luxury to middle-class passengers such as CCTV, Global Positioning System (GPS)-based passenger information system, mobile and laptop charging points, integrated braille display for the visually impaired, smoke detection and suppression system and a high quality exterior and interior design among others.

– The first group of Humsafar coaches, including power cars, has been manufactured at Modern Coach Factory in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh.

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2) From 15 December 2016 which seven airports of India became 'tag-free' for hand baggage as part of the trials to scrap security stamping procedure? – **New**

Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad

Explanation: The procedure of putting tags on passengers' hand baggage and then stamping these tags was done away at seven airports – four metro cities (New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata), Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Ahmedabad from 15 December 2016.

– The move follows a decision by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), which handles the security at airports, to do away with stamping of cabin baggage tags.

– India has the system of stamping boarding pass and hand baggage since 1992 and this system is unique to the country only.

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3) The Supreme Court on 15 December 2016 ordered closure of all liquor shops along national and state highways in the country. This order will come into effect from which date? – **1 April 2017**

Explanation: A bench led by Chief Justice of India T S Thakur on 15 December 2016 directed the Central and state governments to "cease and desist" from issuing liquor licenses situated on national and state highways. It said that no new license for a liquor-vend along highways shall be granted henceforth.

– Further, the court added that no liquor shops should even be visible from highways and no such shop should be allowed at least within a radius of 500 metres. The court highlighted the significance of road safety and menace of drunken driving while issuing the order.

– The bench set a deadline of 1 April 2017 for expiry of all existing licences and directed the authorities to ensure strict compliance with its order.

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4) On 14 December 2016 which country was removed from India’s tax blacklist after the Indian Government agreed to changes in the double taxation avoidance agreement (DTAA) with this country? – **Cyprus**

Explanation: The Indian government on 14 December 2016 rescinded a notification blacklisting the Mediterranean island nation Cyprus, providing relief to investors who route their investments through it.

– This means that investors can hope for some relief from the Indian tax department for investments routed through Cyprus in the intervening three-year period that attracted some of the stringent provisions like increased withholding tax requirements.

– It is worth mentioning that on 1 November 2013 Cyprus was listed as a “notified jurisdiction” for not providing financial information sought by the Indian government.

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5) Who was appointed as the new Chairman of state-owned behemoth Life Insurance Corp. of India (LIC) during December 2016? – **V.K. Sharma**

Explanation: The Union Govt. on 14 December 2016 appointed V.K. Sharma as the new Chairman of Life Insurance of Corporation (LIC) of India. He has been appointed for a period of 5 years. Sharma had been serving as LIC’s managing director since November 2013.

– He replaced S.K. Roy who retired from the post in September 2016.

– Having joined LIC as a direct recruit officer in 1981, Sharma has served as the

chief executive of its mortgage subsidiary LIC Housing Finance Ltd and zonal manager in charge of the south zone.

– LIC is the largest financial institution in the country with over Rs. 22 trillion in assets, which is over 15% of India’s gross domestic product (GDP) of Rs.134 trillion.

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6) What is the name of the enhanced version of Pakistan’s indigenously-designed cruise missile capable of hitting targets at 700 km that was successfully test-fired by Pakistan Army on 14 December 2016? – **‘Babur’**

Explanation: The missile called ‘Babur’ named after Mughal invader and founder of the dynasty of same name, the missile is part of Babur Weapon System version- 2 and is an enhanced version of the earlier missile.

– It is a low flying, terrain hugging missile, which carries certain stealth features and is capable of carrying various types of warheads.

– ‘Babur’ is equipped with state-of-the-art navigational technologies of Terrain Contour Matching (TERCOM) and all time Digital Scene Matching & Area Co-relation (DSMAC), which enables it to engage various types of targets with pinpoint accuracy even in the absence of GPS navigation.

– It is capable of hitting hit targets at 700 km with all kinds of warheads, bringing many Indian cities within its range.

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7) Which Indian woman cricketer was the only one from the country to be named in the ICC’s Women’s Team of the Year 2016, which was announced during December 2016? – **Smriti Mandhana**

Explanation: Indian batswoman Smriti Mandhana created history as she was named in the Women's Team of the Year 2016, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced on 14 December 2016. It was the first time ever that ICC announced a team of year for women.

– The team was selected on the basis of player's performance between 14 September 2015 and 20 September 2016, which included the ICC Women's World Twenty20 and the ICC Women's Championship. West Indies' Stafanie Taylor was chosen as captain of this team.

18-19 December 2016



1) India defeated which team in the finals of the Junior Hockey World Cup 2016 on 18 December 2016 to win the prestigious title for the second time? – **Belgium**

Explanation: India defeated Belgium by 2-1 in the finals of the Junior Hockey World Cup 2016 to become the first host team to win the title. This was Indian hockey's first-ever world-level title in 15 years, the last being its maiden win in the same competition in 2001.

– In the final India attacked from the word go and kept the pressure throughout the match on first-time finalists Belgium. In terms of possession, circle entries, and shots on target, India dominated every department of the game.

– Gurjant Singh gave India the lead through a brilliant reverse hit in the 8th minute. Simranjeet doubled the lead in 22nd minute. Belgium scored their goal in the dying seconds through Fabrice van Bockrijck but it only changed the scoreline, not the result.

– Enrique Gonzalez de Castejon of Spain was named player of the tournament while Edward Horler (England) was the leading scorer with 8 goals.

– The 2016 Men's Hockey Junior World Cup was the 11th edition of the Hockey Junior World Cup (for men) and was played at Lucknow's Major Dhyan Chand Stadium from 8 to 18 December 2016.

2) The Union Govt. notified the new Income Declaration Scheme (IDS) along with other provisions of the Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 2016 on 16 December 2016. The scheme came into effect from 17 December 2016. What is the deadline to declare unaccounted income under this scheme? – **'31 March 2017'**

Explanation: Tax evaders can declare their unaccounted income till 31 March 2017 under the government's new income disclosure scheme (IDS), officially known as the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana.

– This is the second such income disclosure scheme brought in by the government this year, and the first after the cancellation of old high-value banknotes on 8 November 2016, gives tax evaders another chance to come clean. The first scheme closed on 30 September 2016.

– Under the scheme, a declarant of undisclosed income needs to pay a tax of 30%, a penalty of 10% and a Pradhan

Mantri Garib Kalyan Cess of 33% on the tax, all of which add up to around 50%.

– In addition, the declarant will have to deposit 25% of the undisclosed income in the zero-interest 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Deposit Scheme' for four years. The declarant needs to furnish his/her permanent account number (PAN) while making the declaration. Part of the proceeds of the scheme will be used for welfare schemes for the poor.

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3) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2016 was passed by Parliament as the Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 16 December 2016. This bill is replacing the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. Under the new act, the total types of disabilities mentioned are – **21**

Explanation: The types of disabilities under Rights of Persons with Disabilities Bill, 2016 have been increased from existing 7 to 21. Apart from this, the Central Government will have the power to add more types of disabilities.

– Speech and Language Disability and Specific Learning Disability have been added for the first time. Acid Attack Victims have been included. Dwarfism, muscular dystrophy have has been indicated as separate class of specified disability. The New categories of disabilities also included three blood disorders, Thalassemia, Hemophilia and Sickle Cell disease.

– Additional benefits such as reservation in higher education, government jobs, reservation in allocation of land, poverty alleviation schemes etc. have been provided for persons with benchmark disabilities and those with high support needs.

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4) On 17 December 2016 who was appointed the next Chief of the Indian Army, an appointment which became controversial as it was done by superseding two senior Lt. Generals? – **Lt. General Bipin Rawat**

Explanation: Lt. General Bipin Rawat was appointed as the next Chief of the Indian Army on 17 December 2016. His appointment became a controversial one, as it was done superseding two senior-most Lt. Generals, Praveen Bakshi and P. M. Hariz.

– Lt. Gen Rawat, who is currently Vice Chief of Army Staff, will take over as the 26th Chief after Gen. Dalbir Singh Suhag retires on 31 December 2016. Rawat is an Infantry officer, having been commissioned in the Fifth Battalion of the Eleven Gorkha Rifles.

– The only other time the senior-most officer has not been appointed Chief was in 1983, when Lt. Gen S.K. Sinha was overlooked for the post in favour of Gen. A.S. Vaidya.

– It is worth mentioning that Lt. Gen Bakshi, who heads the Kolkata-headquartered Eastern Command, is from the Armoured Corps. On the other hand, Lt. Gen Hariz, who is from the Mechanised Infantry, heads the Pune-headquartered Southern Command.

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5) Who was appointed the next Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF) on 17 December 2016? – **Air Marshal B.S. Dhanoa**

Explanation: Air Marshal Birender Singh Dhanoa will be the 22nd Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF), replacing Air Chief Marshal Arup Raha who retires at the end of the year.

– Commissioned in the IAF in June 1978 as a fighter pilot, he is a Qualified Flying Instructor and has flown various types of fighter aircraft in his distinguished career. During the Kargil operations, he commanded a fighter squadron and himself flew numerous night strike missions over mountainous terrain. He was till now Vice Chief of the IAF.

– Prior to being appointed Vice Chief, he was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the South-Western Air Command.

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6) Who was appointed as the new Chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the external intelligence wing of India? – **Anil Dhasmana**

Explanation: Anil Dhasmana will take over the reins of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), the organisation that looks after the external intelligence of the country. He will succeed Rajinder Khanna who completes his tenure this year end.

– Dhasmana, a 1981-batch officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been with RAW for the last 23 years during which he has served on important desks including Pakistan.

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7) Who was appointed as the next Chief of the Intelligence Bureau on 17 December 2016? – **Rajiv Jain**

Explanation: Jharkhand cadre IPS officer Rajiv Jain has been appointed as the new chief of Intelligence Bureau (IB). He is currently serving as the Special Director in the IB.

– A recipient of President’s Police Medal, the 1980-batch officer has served in various departments of the IB including the sensitive Kashmir desk. He was advisor to the previous NDA government’s interlocutor on Kashmir K C Pant when talks were held with separatist leaders like Shabbir Shah.

– Jain will take over on 1 January 2017 after the incumbent Dineshwar Sharma completes his two-year tenure on 31 December 2016.

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8) Indian professional boxer Vijender Singh defeated which boxer Tanzanian boxer by a technical knock-out on 17 December 2016 to successfully defend his WBO title? – **Francis Cheka**

Explanation: Indian star boxer Vijender Singh’s juggernaut in professional boxing rolled on as he won his eighth consecutive bout of his career on 17 December 2016. He defeated Tanzanian boxer Francis Cheka by a technical knockout (TKO) to retain WBO Asia-Pacific Super Middleweight title.

– Vijender landed the winning blow in the third round of what was to be a 10-round contest with Cheka. It is worth mentioning that Vijender has now won all his eight bouts since he turned professional on October 2015. Of these, 7 wins have been by knockout.

20 December 2016

1) What is the name of the Russian Ambassador to Turkey who was shot dead by a gunman in a shocking incident at a photo exhibition in Ankara on 19 December 2016? – **Andrei Karlov**

Explanation: Russian Ambassador to Turkey Andrei Karlov was several minutes into his speech at the embassy-sponsored exhibition in the Turkish capital, Ankara, when the gunman fired at least eight shots in the evening of 19 December 2016. Karlov died immediately.

– The gunman was later identified as an off-duty Turkish policeman Mevlüt Mert Altıntas. After killing the Ambassador he shouted “Don’t forget Aleppo, don’t forget Syria!” and “Allahu Akbar”.

– The assassination took place after several days of protests by the Turkish people over Russian involvement in the Syrian Civil War and the battle over Aleppo.

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2) Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of India’s first ever ‘Indian Institute of Skills’ (IIS) in which city of Uttar Pradesh on 19 December 2016? –

Kanpur

Explanation: In line with his vision of making India the skill capital of the World by empowering its youth to be more employable and self-sustainable, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 19 December 2016 laid the foundation stone of country’s first ‘Indian Institute of Skills’ (IIS) in Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh.

– The IIS was conceptualized by Prime Minister during his visit to Singapore’s Institute of Technical Education (ITE). The IIS is being established by Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in partnership with ITE.

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3) What is the interest rate on EPF deposits for the current fiscal (2016-17) as agreed upon by the Central Board of Trustees (CBT) of the retirement body EPFO on 19 December 2016? – **8.65%**

Explanation: The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO’s) apex decision making body, the Central Board of Trustees (CBT), on 19 December 2016 decided to lower the interest rate to 8.65% for the current fiscal (2016-17) from 8.8% in 2015-16.

– As per the EPFO income projections, retaining 8.8% rate of interest for the current fiscal would have left a deficit of Rs. 383 crore.

– In September 2016, the Government reduced interest rates on small savings schemes marginally by 0.1% for the October-December quarter of 2016-17, which resulted in lower returns on PPF, Kisan Vikas Patra, Sukanya Samridhhi Account, among others.

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4) India notched up its highest Test score in an innings (759 for 7) as Karun Nair became the second Indian to score triple century in a Test match in the ongoing Test match against England in Chennai’s MA Chidambaram Stadium on 19 December 2016. What was India’s highest test score till now? – **726 for 9 (declared)**

Explanation: India bettered its highest score in a Test innings on 19 December 2016 as it amassed 759 runs for the loss of 7 wickets (innings declared) in the fifth Test match of the ongoing Test series against England. India’s previous best was 726 for 9 (declared) against Sri Lanka at Mumbai’s Wankhede Stadium in 2009.

– India’s record innings was helped primarily by batsman Karun Nair, who in just his third Test innings, struck an unbeaten 303. He thus became just the second Indian batsman to score a triple century in a Test match. Virendra Sehwag has achieved this distinction twice. Karun also became the first player to convert his maiden Test century into a triple ton. Batsman K.L. Rahul had earlier contributed 199 runs in Indian score.

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5) Which team won the Hero Indian Super League (ISL) title for 2016 on 18 December 2016? – Atletico de Kolkata

Explanation: Atletico de Kolkata defeated hosts Kerala Blasters in the final of 2016 Hero Indian Super League (ISL) on 18 December 2016 at Kochi to win its second ISL title.

– The final was decided in the shoot-out after the teams finished level 1-1 in extra-time. Kolkata prevailed in the shoot-out by 4-3 as Kerala team sunk to another heartbreaking defeat in final. The two had met in the ISL’s inaugural edition in 2014 and Kolkata had triumphed then too with a last-minute goal.

The final was played in Kochi’s Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.



6) Stephanie Del Valle was crowned Miss World 2016 in a glittering ceremony held in Washington D.C. on 19 December 2016. She is from which country? – Puerto Rico

Explanation: Stephanie Del Valle of Puerto Rico was crowned Miss World 2016 as she edged out runners-up from the Dominican Republic and Indonesia to win the top prize in the 66th edition of the Miss World pageant held in the US.

– She was crowned by Miss World 2015 Mireia Lalaguna of Spain. She thus became the second titleholder from Puerto Rico after Wilnelia Merced won the title in 1975.

– First runner-up was Yaritza Miguelina Reyes Ramirez of the Dominican Republic, followed by Miss World Indonesia Natasha Mannuela. Miss Philippines Catriona Elisa Gray and Miss Kenya Evelyn Njambi also made it to the final five. Indian contestant Priyadarshini Chatterjee could not make it into the top 10.

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21-23 December 2016

1) The Union Government on 21 December 2016 approved cadre review and formation of the Indian Enterprise Development Service (IEDS) in the Office of the Development Commissioner, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME Ministry). What will be the primary function of this proposed service? – To achieve the vision of Startup India, Stand-up India and Make in India

Explanation: The decision to create the new cadre – Indian Enterprise Development Service (IEDS) was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 21 December 2016.

– The creation of IEDS is expected to not only strengthen the organisation, but will help achieve the vision of Startup India,

Stand-up India and Make in India. It is also expected to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the MSME Ministry and also help in achieving growth in the MSME sector through a focussed and dedicated cadre of technical officers.

– The IEDS, to start with, will have a cadre strength of 617 officers, 6 of which will be at the level of joint secretaries.

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2) India recently overtook which major country in terms of the size of the economy to emerge as the sixth largest economy in the world as reported on 19 December 2016? – **United Kingdom**

Explanation: In a major achievement, India has managed to overtake its erstwhile colonial master United Kingdom in terms of the size of the economy – the first time after nearly 150 years. This was mainly due to Britain’s recent Brexit-related problems and India’s rapid economic growth.

– Due to nearly 20% decline in the value of the pound over the last 12 months, UK’s 2016 GDP of GBP 1.87 trillion converted to \$2.29 trillion at exchange rate of GBP 0.81 per \$1, whereas India’s GDP of INR 153 trillion converted to \$2.30 trillion at exchange rate of INR 66.6 per \$1.

– Furthermore, this gap is expected to widen as India grows at 6 to 8 per cent p.a. compared to UK’s growth of 1 2% p.a. until 2020, and likely beyond.

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3) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 21 December 2016 imposed penalty on which 5 foreign banks for violation of its instructions on reporting requirements of the FEMA? – **Deutsche Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Bank of America, Bank**

of Tokyo Mitsubishi and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS)

Explanation: The 5 foreign banks – Deutsche Bank, Standard Chartered Bank, Bank of America, Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi and Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) were fined by the RBI for violation of its instructions on reporting requirements of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA).

– Deutsche Bank has been imposed fine of Rs 20,000, while Bank of America, Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi, Royal Bank of Scotland and Standard Chartered Bank have been fined Rs 10,000 each.

– The penalties have been imposed in exercise of the powers vested in the Reserve Bank under the provisions of Section 11(3) of FEMA 1999, taking into account, the violations of the instructions/ directions/ guidelines issued by the RBI, from time to time.



4) Lieutenant Governor of Delhi Najeib Jung submitted his resignation to the Government of India

on 22 December 2016. He has been occupying this post since – **July 2013**

Explanation: In a surprise move, Delhi’s Lieutenant Governor Najeib Jung resigned from his post on 22 December. He said he would be returning back to his first love, academics.

– He took over as the 20th Lieutenant Governor of Delhi from Tejendra Khanna in July 2013. He had particularly tense relations with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.



5) Who became only the third Indian player ever to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy after being named the ICC Cricketer of the Year besides the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year for 2016 on 22 December 2016? – **Ravichandran Ashwin**

Explanation: Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin created history as he became just the third Indian cricketer to win the coveted Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for 2016. He was named for this coveted award after being named the ICC Cricketer of the Year besides the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year.

– Ashwin thus followed in the footsteps of Rahul Dravid (2004) and Sachin Tendulkar (2010), while other recipients of the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy include Andrew Flintoff and Jacques Kallis (joint-winners in 2005), Ricky Ponting (2006 and 2007), Shivnarine Chanderpaul (2008), Mitchell Johnson (2009 and 2014), Jonathan Trott (2011), Kumar Sangakkara (2012), Michael Clarke (2013) and Steve Smith (2015).

– He was also adjudged the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year, which has made him only the second India player after Dravid (2004) to bag the two coveted prizes in the same year.

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24-31 December 2016

1) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 30 December 2016 launched a new mobile app for enabling simpler payments without cash. What is the name of this

app that supports USSD payments and works even on basic phones? – **Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM)**

Explanation: Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is the name of the newest mobile app of the Union Government on 30 December 2016 that is expected to make digital payments simpler. The app, launched by PM Narendra Modi, has been positioned to play a big role in the government’s push for digital transactions.

– The BHIM app is named after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

– BHIM allows customers to transact electronically without having to use a credit or debit card, or by creating and storing a mobile wallet. All UPI (United Payments Interface)-connected banks accept BHIM. Even banks not connected to UPI can receive money through BHIM through IFSC, an 11-digit code assigned to every bank branch by the Reserve Bank of India.

– Even without a smartphone, anyone can use BHIM to make payments by dialing *99# from any kind of mobile phone (number registered with the bank).

– BHIM is now available as an Android version download now, and iOS is coming soon. There is a Rs. 10,000 per transaction limit, and Rs. 20,000 per day for BHIM.

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2) What is the name of India’s longest range nuclear capable missile that was successfully tested by the DRDO on 26 December 2016? – **Agni-5**

Explanation: Agni-5, India’s longest range nuclear capable intercontinental surface-to-surface ballistic missile, was successfully test fired from the Kalam Island off Odisha coast on 26 December 2016 by the Defence Research and

Development Organisation (DRDO). It was the first test of the Agni-5 missile after India became a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

– Agni-5 has a range of over 5,000 km and can carry about a 1,000-kg warhead. It gives India the strategic depth it needs to contain its enemies. It can target almost all of Asia including Pakistan and China and Europe.

– The 17-metre long Agni-5 Missile weighs about 50 tonnes and is a very agile and modern weapon system.

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3) Who was chosen for the Jnanpith Award for 2016 – India’s highest literary award, as announced on 23 December 2016? – Shankha Ghosh (Bangla)

Explanation: Veteran Bengali poet Shankha Ghosh was chosen for year 2016’s Jnanpith Award. This announcement was made by the Jnanpith Board in New Delhi on 23 December 2016.

– 84-year-old Shankha Ghosh is considered to be a stalwart in modern Bengali literature and a leading authority on Rabindranath Tagore.

– He was conferred the Padma Bhushan in 2011 and the Sahitya Academi award in 1999. His award will be the 52nd edition of Jnanpith Award.

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4) Who was appointed as the new Lt. Governor of Delhi by the Union Government on 29 December 2016? – Anil Baijal

Explanation: Anil Baijal, a 1969 batch IAS officer of UT cadre, was on 29 December 2016 appointed as the new Lieutenant Governor of Delhi.

– He was the Union Home Secretary in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led government. He is currently associated with the Vivekananda International Foundation. He replaced Najeeb Jung, who resigned from the post a few days ago.

– Baijal’s appointment came against the backdrop of a tumultuous working relationship between his predecessor Najeeb Jung and the Arvind Kejriwal government.

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5) Who was appointed as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 28 December 2016 to take the vacant post created due to Urjit Patel’s elevation to Governor’s post? – Viral V. Acharya

Explanation: Viral V. Acharya was appointed as one of the four deputy governors of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 28 December 2016. The RBI had a vacancy for Deputy Governor after Urjit Patel was promoted to Governor during September 2016.

– RBI currently has three other deputy governors – SS Mundra, NS Vishwanathan and R Gandhi.

– 42-year old Acharya is a 1995 graduate from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Mumbai and then went on to earn a PhD in finance from NYU-Stern in 2001. He presently teaches Economics at the Stern School of Business in New York University.

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6) During December 2016 which private sector bank launched 'Eazypay'- mobile app for merchants? – **ICICI Bank**

Explanation: On 27 December 2016 ICICI Bank launched 'Eazypay' – a new mobile app for merchants to receive payments. This app is designed to help merchants and businesses collect payments using UPI, credit or debit cards, Internet banking.

– Eazypay is designed to facilitate merchants and businesses like e-commerce companies, telesales companies, to collect payments where the buyer and the seller are not physically present at the same location.

– Any merchant who has a current account with ICICI Bank can use the app to receive payments in store, or during home delivery of goods, through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), credit or debit card, internet banking, and the banks digital wallet Pockets.

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7) Which state will host the National Games of 2022 as declared by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on 27 December 2016? – **Meghalaya**

Explanation: Meghalaya will host the 2022 National Games. This was announced in the annual general body meeting of the Indian Olympic Association held in Chennai on 27 December 2016. The games will feature 32 Olympic and 8 non-Olympic games.

– Till date, only two states in the North East have hosted the National Games – Manipur in 1999 and Assam in 2007.

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8) Sunder Lal Patwa, who passed away on 28 December 2016, was a former Chief Minister of which state? – **Madhya Pradesh**

Explanation: Sunder Lal Patwa, the two-time Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, passed away on 28 December 2016. He was 92.

– He was chief minister twice from 20 January 1980 to 17 February 1980 when he was in the Janata Party and then from 5 March 1990 to 15 December 1992 when he led the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP).

– He started his political career in 1951 with Jana Sangh, which later merged with the Janata Party. He was imprisoned for seven months for participating in RSS movement in 1948. During emergency he was detained under MISA from June 1975 to January 1977.

– In 1999, he won Hoshangabad Lok Sabha and became a minister in Vajpayee Government from 1999 to 2001.

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9) During December 2016 China operationalized world's longest bullet train network that is 2,252 kilometers in length. This ambitious high speed train network connects which two cities? – **Shanghai and Kunming**

Explanation: The 2,252 km-long Shanghai-Kunming high-speed train line links China's prosperous eastern coast to the less-developed southwestern part of the

country. It is the world's longest high-speed railway network.

– This network traverses the five provinces of Zhejiang, Jiangxi, Hunan, Guizhou and Yunnan and cuts travel time from Shanghai to Kunming from 34 to 11 hours. The highest speed on this network will be 330 km per hour.

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10) The newly-constructed Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) at Tuting was inaugurated on 27 December 2016. This ALG is situated in which state? –

Arunachal Pradesh

Explanation: Tuting Advanced Landing Ground (ALG) is situated in Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. It is hardly 30 kms from the international boundary with China. It was inaugurated on 27 December by Arunachal's then Chief Minister Pema Khandu.

– The ALG at Tuting, located at an elevation of 1240 metres on the Eastern Himalayas, is under the control of Air Force Station, Jorhat.

– Tuting is the sixth ALG in Arunachal Pradesh that was inaugurated in the past one year after they were reconstructed and expanded. Apart from defence purposes, this ALG will also be used for civilian use in the interest of people living in the far-flung regions of the state.

– It is worth mentioning that Mechuka, Aalo, Pasighat, Ziro and Vijoynagar are other ALGs in Arunachal Pradesh.

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