



CURRENT AFFAIRS (MAY - 2017) :

National

- ⇒ The Union Cabinet cleared the National Health Policy (NHP) which puts forward a concrete framework for universal healthcare and suggests policy directives to make free drugs and diagnostic facilities available across the country. The policy suggests raising public health expenditure to 2.5% from the present around 1.2% of the GDP. Yoga would be introduced much more widely in schools and work places as part of promotion of good health. Targets –
 - Elimination of leprosy by 2018, kala-azar in 2017 and lymphatic filariasis in epidemic pockets in 2017.
 - Reducing infant mortality rate to 28 by 2019.
 - Increasing life expectancy to 70 years from 67.5 years and reduce fertility rate to 2.1 by 2025.
 - Reducing Under-Five Mortality to 23 by 2025.
- ⇒ The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha passed Employees' Compensation (Amendment) Bill 2016, replacing the Employees' Compensation Act, 1923. The Bill provides for payment of compensation from ₹ 50,000 to ₹ 1 lakh to employees or their dependents in the event of injury by industrial accidents, including occupational diseases.
- ⇒ The Uttarakhand High Court declared the Ganga and the Yumuna as living entities, bestowing them the same legal rights as a person. This move could help in efforts to clean the pollution-choked rivers. New Zealand's Whanganui is the only 'legal person' in the world as recognised by their Parliament. The 2500 km long Ganga is the world's third longest and the most polluted river. It originates from Gangotri and the Yumuna is its largest tributary which originates from Yumunotri.

International

- ⇒ The US plans to deploy the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system in South Korea to deal with North Korea's test-firing of nuclear missiles. THAAD can intercept and destroy short and medium range ballistic missiles during the last part of their flights. South Korean retail giant Lotte has been forced to shut down dozens of stores in China as a protest against deployment of US missiles in Seoul.
- ⇒ The European Union leaders in their meeting in Rome marked the 60th anniversary of their founding treaty. The European Union is a political and economic union of 28 member countries and after Brexit it has come down to 27.
- ⇒ The British Parliament gave its final approval to begin the process of Britain leaving the European Union (EU) – better known as Brexit. But Scotland, which voted to remain in the EU, has demanded for 'Scexit', i.e., another referendum on leaving the United Kingdom (UK). It is to be noted that the United Kingdom consists of Great Britain (comprises England, Scotland and Wales) and Northern Ireland.

- ⇒ Pakistan government has approved a move to merge the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), long known as a base for militant groups, with adjoining Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province. A committee to suggest ways for developing seven autonomous tribal agencies had recommended the merger of the troubled region.

Economy

- ⇒ Under the money circulation and credit control policy of the RBI, the existing rates (as on 15.05.2017) are :
 - * Repo Rate (*Repo Rate is the rate at which commercial banks borrow money from the central bank, i.e., RBI*) : 6.25%.
 - * Reverse Repo Rate (*Reverse Repo Rate is the rate at which the commercial banks deposit their surplus money to the central bank*) : 6%
 - * Statutory Liquidity Ratio (*SLR is the percentage of deposits that commercial banks have to maintain with themselves*) : 20.5%
 - * CRR (*Cash Reserve Ratio is the proportion of deposits which the banks have to keep with the central bank*) : 4%
 - * Bank Rate (*Bank rate is the rate at which central bank, i.e. RBI, rediscounts the bills of exchange of commercial banks*) : 6.5%
 - * MSF (*Marginal Standing Facility is the loan banks are permitted to avail themselves from the RBI on overnight basis, using its SLR securities*) : 6.5%.
 - * Base Rate (*Base Rate reflects the actual cost of banks that has to be covered through lending. Banks cannot lend money below the Base Rate, which varies from bank to bank*) : 9.1% - 9.6%.
 - * Term Deposit (Fixed Deposit) Rate (more than 1 year): 6.5% - 7%.
 - * MCLR: 7.75% - 8.10%.

(MCLR, the Marginal Cost of Fund-based Lending Rate, is the new benchmark lending rate at which banks will now lend to new borrowers. Till 31 March 2016, banks used the Base rate as the benchmark lending rate. MCLR is built on four components – Marginal cost of funds, Negative carry on account of CRR, Operating costs and Tenor premium).
- ⇒ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Capital Small Finance Bank (CSFB) to provide loans at a concessional rate to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Capital Small Finance Bank, India's first small finance bank is headquartered in Jalandhar, Punjab.
- ⇒ Finance Minister Arun Jaitley proposed 40 amendments in the Budget for 2017-18. The ₹ 3 lakh limit for cash transaction would be reduced to ₹ 2 lakh.
- ⇒ The government has decided to prosecute about 10 lakh Shell Companies and prepare an Aadhar-based KYC registry to check future black money generation through them. A Shell Company is a non-trading firm formed as a vehicle to (i) raise funds before starting operations, (ii) attempt a takeover, (iii) for going public or (iv) as a front for an illegal business.



- ⇒ In support of weak and non-performing public sector banks (PSBs), the Finance Ministry has announced ₹ 8586 crore capital infusion plan for 10 PSBs. IDBI Bank is to get the highest aid (₹ 1,900 crore) followed by Bank of India (₹ 1500 crore). To avail themselves of the capital support, the identified PSBs require to sign a tripartite MoU between the government, PSB managements and employees' unions. They have to adhere to some milestones which include Active bad loan management, strengthening of credit underwriting, arranging capital from market, divestment of subsidiary stakes, closure of loss-making branches, etc.
- As per the Indradhanush road-map announced in August 2015, the government had promised to infuse ₹ 70,000 crore in PSBs over four years. At the same time, they would have to raise further ₹ 1.1 lakh crore from markets to meet their capital requirements under Basal III norms.
- ⇒ Hyderabad for the third year in a row emerged as the best city in terms of living standards among cities, followed by Pune and Bangaluru. According to the Mercer 2017 Quality of Living Index, Vienna has been ranked at the top and Hyderabad at the 144th place globally.
- ⇒ India ranked 131st on Human Development Index (HDI), 2016 among 188 countries, as released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). With this rank India came down by one slot and fell under the 'medium human development category'. The top three countries in HDI were Norway, Australia and Switzerland.
- ⇒ The Union government has shifted the responsibility of promoting digital transactions in the country from NITI Aayog to the Ministry of IT and Electronics (MEITY). The government is of the opinion that NITI Aayog, which is a think-tank, should focus on monitoring and suggesting ways to improve various government schemes rather than getting involved with implementation.
- ⇒ The RBI announced the formation of an inter-disciplinary standing committee on cyber security which will review the threats inherent in the existing and emerging technology. The 11-member committee will also study adoption of various security standards and protocols. The committee is headed by Meena Hemchandra.
- ⇒ Justice (Retd.) Arijit Pasayat, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Court-appointed Special Investigating Team (SIT) on black money, disclosed on March 2, 2017 that so far around ₹ 70,000 crore black money had been detected in India.
- ⇒ NTPC has installed India's largest floating solar photovoltaic plant at Rajiv Gandhi Combined Cycle Power Plant at Kayankulam in Kerala. The plant, the largest of its kind in India, has been developed indigenously as a part of 'Make In India' initiative.
- ⇒ Social networking site Facebook launched a new initiative 'SheLeadsTech' to support women-financed or co-founded startups. SheLeadsTech will give women-founded or co-founded startups access to a year-long programme that provides tools, mentorship and resources. Facebook also said that India is missing out on a potential 15.5 million new businesses and 64 million additional jobs by not addressing the challenges facing women who want to start a business.
- ⇒ Aditya Birla Group owned Idea Cellular and the British Telecom giant Vodafone have announced the merger of their Indian wireless telephony business, creating the largest telecom operator in the country. The merger would be completed in the next four years and both partners would eventually hold an equal stake in the company (about 35% each). The merged entity will be headed by Kumar Mangalam Birla as Chairman.
- ⇒ India's solar power generation capacity has crossed 10,000 megawatt (MW), a more than three-fold jump in 3 years. The main contribution came from NTPC Ltd., India's largest power producer. The government has targeted 100 GW of solar and 60 GW of wind energy by 2022. Total renewable energy capacity target by 2022 is 175 GW.
- ⇒ India is right now the world's 6th richest country with a wealth of \$6,200 billion. (But excessive population, uneven distribution of wealth and rampant corruption have kept India poor). There are 2.64 lakh millionaires and 95 billionaires in India. Among the Indian cities, Mumbai is the richest (\$ 820 billion), followed by Delhi (\$ 490 billion), Bangaluru (\$320 billion), Hyderabad (\$310 billion) and Kolkata (\$290 billion). There are 9,600 millionaires and 4 billionaires in Kolkata.
- ⇒ The government of India has notified that anyone who is found holding more than 10 scrapped notes will be punished with minimum ₹ 10,000.
- ⇒ According to the Forbes Rich list 2017, the richest persons in the world are -
1. Bill Gates, Microsoft (USA, \$ 86 billion)
 2. Warren Buffett, Berkshire Hathaway (USA, \$ 75.6 billion)
 3. Jeff Bezos, Amazon.com (USA, \$72.8 billion)
 4. Amanico Ortega, Zara (Spain, \$ 71.3 billion)
 5. Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook (USA, \$ 56 billion)
 6. Carlos Slim Helo, Telmex (Mexico, \$ 54.4 billion)
- ⇒ According to the data provided by the Ministry of Tourism, the Domestic Tourist Visits (DTVs) during 2016 recorded a growth of 15.5% over 2015. During 2016, the number of DTVs to the States/UTs was 1653 million as compared to 1432 million during 2015. The top states in terms of the number of DTVs (in millions) during 2016 were Tamil Nadu (344), UP (230) and MP (185) West Bengal was at the 7th position with 74.5 million tourist visits during 2016.



- ⇒ India has dropped from 118th to 122nd place among 155 countries in the 2017 World Happiness Index (WHI) published by the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Although India's per capita income has been improving all the time, but increasing income does not beget happiness. India ranked near the bottom due to the lack of six factors – income, healthy life expectancy, having someone to count on in times of trouble, generosity, freedom and trust. The top ten happiest countries are – 1. Norway, 2. Denmark, 3. Iceland, 4. Switzerland, 5. Finland, 6. Netherlands, 7. Canada, 8. New Zealand, 9. Australia and 10. Sweden.
- Happiness research and measurement has gone mainstream ever since Bhutan (ranked 84th in the above index) brought it to the forefront by arguing that it was more meaningful than mere economic metrics such as GDP and inflation. Bhutan is the only country in the world that has a GNH (Gross National Happiness) Index.
- ⇒ India ranked 87th among the surveyed 127 countries on a Global Energy Architecture Performance Index (EAPI) released as part of the report of the Geneva based World Economic Forum (WEF).
- ⇒ The RBI has clarified that bank branches that refuse to exchange soiled notes from people will have to pay a penalty of ₹ 10,000. But if any message, which is political in nature, is scribbled on a note, it will not be accepted.
- ⇒ HDFC is the first Indian bank to launch an Electronic Virtual Assistance (EVA), an artificial intelligence-driven chatbot which can answer millions of customer queries instantly.
- ⇒ The Non-performing Assets (NPAs) of public sector banks soared to a staggering ₹ 6.8 lakh crore. Out of these NPAs, a whopping 70% are those big corporate houses that are wilful defaulters. Recently the chairman of a key Parliamentary panel favoured naming and shaming method for those corporate houses. Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Chief K V Thomas hopes 'naming and shaming' such corporate houses may help financial institutions get their money back.
- Sports**
- ⇒ Tamil Nadu defeated Bengal to win Vijay Hazare Trophy (Cricket) for the record fifth time in the final at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium in New Delhi.
- ⇒ Tamil Nadu clinched the Deodhar Trophy, a domestic limited over cricket tournament by defeating India 'B' in the final at the Dr. Y. S. Rajashekar Reddy Stadium in Visakhapatnam.
- ⇒ India clinched the Border-Gavaskar Trophy by defeating Australia 2-1 Test matches. Virat Kohli was the team India captain for the first three Tests. In the fourth Test, played at the HPCA Stadium, Dharamshala, the team India was led by Ajinkya Rahane.
- ⇒ International Cricket Council (ICC) has published team and player rankings in different formats –
- Among the 10 Test playing team rankings, India topped the list followed by Australia and England.
 - In One Day International team ranking, South Africa topped the list followed by Australia and India.
 - In T-20 team ranking, New Zealand topped the list followed by England and Pakistan. India stood fourth.
 - In Test batsman's ranking, Steve Smith topped the list.
 - In Test bowler's ranking Ravindra Jadeja topped the list followed by Ravichandran Ashwin.
 - In Test all-rounder ranking, Shakib Al Hasan of Bangladesh topped the list followed by Rabindra Jadeja and R. Ashwin.
- ⇒ Sachin Tendulkar has been roped in as the ambassador of Women's Cricket World Cup 2017 that will begin from June 24 in England and Wales.
- ⇒ Cricket Test matches have completed 140 years. It all began at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on March 15, 1877 when Australia took on England for the first officially recognised Test match.
- ⇒ The Salt Lake Stadium, Kolkata will host the final of the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup final on October 28, 2017. Besides the final, it will host nine other matches also. FIFA also plans to set up the U-17 World Cup headquarters at the Salt lake Stadium.
- ⇒ West Bengal clinched the Santosh Trophy for the Senior National Football Championship by defeating Goa at the GMC Stadium, Bambolim, Goa.
- ⇒ Shiv Shankar Prasad Chawrasia clinched the Hero India Open Golf Crown at the DLF Golf and Country Course, Gurugram.
- ⇒ Samim Khan won the Kolkata Classic Golf Championship at the Royal Calcutta Golf Club (RCGC), Kolkata.
- ⇒ Vani Kapoor clinched the Hero Women's Professional Golf Tour at the Poona Club Golf Course, Pune.
- ⇒ Defending Champion ONGC (Uttarakhand) defeated Indian Overseas Bank to win the 31st Federation Cup Basketball Championship.
- ⇒ Jrtu Rai and Heena Sidhu bagged the first ever gold medal in the newly included 10m pistol mixed event at the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Shooting World Cup at the Dr. Karni Singh Range, Tughlakabad in New Delhi.
- ⇒ Shooter Ankur Mittal clinched the gold medal at the ISSF shotgun World Cup.
- ⇒ India's differently-abled athletes won 18 medals (6 gold, 4 silver and 8 bronzes) in the 2017 Olympics World Winter Games in Austria.
- ⇒ Cheteshwar Pujara has become the first Indian to face 500 balls in a Test innings.



Awards

- ⇒ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announced its prestigious annual cricket awards for 2016-17. The BCCI Annual Awards Committee, comprising Ramachandra Guha, Diana Edulji and N. Ram picked the winners of the awards. Some important awardees are –
 - Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award – Rajinder Goel and Padmakar Shivalkar.
 - C K Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award for Women – Shantha Rangaswami
 - BCCI Special Awards – V.V. Kumar and late Ramakant Desai.
 - Polly Umrigar Award (Best International Cricketer) – Virat Kohli is the first Indian to receive the award thrice.
 - Dilip Sardesai Award (For India's best cricketer in the West Indies series 2016) – R. Ashwin.
 - Jagmohan Dalmiya Award (Best woman Cricketer – Senior) – Mithali Raj.
 - Best Umpire in Domestic Cricket – Nitin Menon.
- ⇒ Malayalam author and journalist MP Veerendra Kumar was honoured with the 30th Moortidevi Award for his Malayalam travelogue 'Hymavathabhoovil'. The award comprises a Saraswati goddess idol, a citation plaque and cash ₹ 4 lakh.
- ⇒ Shah Rukh Khan has been honoured with the 4th National Yash Chopra Memorial Award for his outstanding contribution to Indian Cinema. Rekha presented him the award. Lata Mangeshkar, Amitabh Bachchan and Rekha herself were the previous recipients of the award which was instituted by TSR Foundation and carries a gold medal and a prize money worth ₹ 10 lakh.
- ⇒ French mathematician Yves Meyer has been chosen for the Abel Prize, 2017.
- ⇒ Shantha Rangaswamy, the first captain of Indian women's cricket team, became the first woman to receive the C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award.
- ⇒ Eminent TV journalist Ravish Kumar has been honoured with the first Kuldip Nayar journalism award.
- ⇒ Noted Konkani author Mahabaleshwar Sail has been honoured with the 2016 Saraswati Samman for his novel 'Hawthan'.
- ⇒ Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has won the best actress award at the International Film Festival Awards of Australia for her movie 'Sarabjit', directed by Omung Kumar.
- ⇒ Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi has been given the annual 'Visitors Award' for the best university in the country by the President Pranab Mukherjee.
- ⇒ The Indian-American computer scientist Anshumali Shrivastava won the National Science Foundation's (NSF's) CAREER award.

Persons

- ⇒ Park Genu-hye, the President of South Korea, has been impeached on corruption charges.
- ⇒ Manohar Parrikar of BJP has become the Chief Minister of Goa. Previously he was the Defence Minister at the Centre.
- ⇒ N. Biren Singh of BJP is the new Chief Minister of Manipur.
- ⇒ Okram Ibobi Singh, the Chief Minister of Manipur resigned although his Congress party won the highest seats (28) in the 60-seat Assembly. BJP, led by former Congress leader N. Biren Singh claimed to have the support of 32 MLAs.
- ⇒ Captain Amarinder Singh of Congress is the new Chief Minister of Punjab. Congress won 77 seats in the 117-member Punjab Assembly.
- ⇒ Yogi Adityanath, a senior BJP leader and five-term Gorakhpur MP has been elected new Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Out of 403 Assembly seats in UP, BJP won in 312 seats. BJP and its allies totally secured 325 seats.
- ⇒ Trivendra Singh Rawat of BJP has become the new Chief Minister of Uttarakhand. BJP won 57 seats in the 70-member Assembly.
- ⇒ Hosni Mubarak, the former President of Egypt was earlier sentenced to life imprisonment on the charge of corruption and murdering the protesters. But the appeals court found him innocent.
- ⇒ Kripa Shankar Bishnoi, former national champion wrestler, has been appointed international match referee by the United World Wrestling (UWW), the sport's global governing body. He trained Aamir Khan and others for the film 'Dangal'.
- ⇒ Arun Jaitley, the Union Finance Minister was given the additional charge of the Defence Ministry after Manohar Parrikar resigned to become the CM of Goa.
- ⇒ Amitabh Bachchan has become the brand ambassador for India of the Chinese smartphone maker OnePlus.

Died

- ⇒ Dr. Thomas Starzl, who pioneered liver transplant, passed away.
- ⇒ Tarak Mehta, a noted Gujarati playwright and humorist, died recently. His writings were adopted into a highly popular TV Serial 'Tatak Mehta Ka Oolta Chasma'.
- ⇒ Rabi Ray, former Lok Sabha Speaker passed away in Bhubaneswar.
- ⇒ Seema Verma, an Indian-American has been named as the Chief of the Centre of Medicare and Medicaid Services of the USA.
- ⇒ Pyarimohan Mahapatra, also called the 'Chanakya of Odisha Politics', passed away.
- ⇒ Dev Raj Sikka, a renowned meteorologist popularly known as Monsoon Man and the Father of Indian Meteorology died recently. He was the first to indicate a link between the El Nino phenomenon and the Indian monsoon in 1982.



Miscellaneous

- ⇒ Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu flagged off the first indigenously built 'Medha' rake, made under the Make in India campaign. The 12-coach train was on tracks of the Western Railways, i.e., Dadar-Borivali emu.
- ⇒ The commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman introduced the Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) to declare it an institution of National Importance. The Noida, UP based FDDI was established in 1986.
- ⇒ Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir signed an agreement for the completion of the Shahpur Kandi Dam project. The project is 11 km downstream Ranjit Sagar Dam on the river Ravi.
- ⇒ India's first integrated heliport has been inaugurated in the Rohini area of national capital Delhi. It is built by State owned Pawan Hans Limited.
- ⇒ Darjeeling has opened the country's first hill station bicycle path. It is a 20 km track with thick pine forest.
- ⇒ United Nations General Assembly has suspended Venezuela and Libya from voting for the second time in two years because they failed to repay millions of dollars due to the UNO.
- ⇒ M. Hamid Ansari, the Vice-President of India represented the country in Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) held in Jakarta, Indonesia.
- ⇒ The 2017 Mobile World Congress (MWC) was held in Mobile World Capital Barcelona, Spain. Several handset-makers viz., BlackBerry, Motorola, Google, Nokia, HTC, Huawei, LG, Samsung, Sony launched flagship devices, tablets, etc. It was organised by the GSM Association.
- ⇒ Vice-President Hamid Ansari was on an official visit to Rwanda (capital-Kigali) and Uganda (capital-Kampala).
- ⇒ Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, a major space research centre of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has commissioned the world's third largest hypersonic wind tunnel at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
- ⇒ India and Russia signed two agreements for long-term supply of spares for the Indian Air Force's Sukhoi-30 fighter jets, a fleet plagued by engine troubles and poor serviceability.
- ⇒ The Union Cabinet approved a National Commission for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (NCSEBC). The new panel will replace National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) that looks into inclusion or exclusion of other backward castes for quotas, among other issues.
- ⇒ The World is facing largest humanitarian crisis since the World War II with 20 million people facing starvation and famine. The most sufferers are Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and North East Nigeria. Arab World's poorest country Yemen is the worst sufferer.
- ⇒ The North Delhi Municipal Corporation launched India's largest waste-to-energy plant at Narela-Bawana. The project will use 2000 metric tonnes of waste every day to generate 24 MW of energy.
- ⇒ The Lok Sabha passed the Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Bill, 2016. According to the Bill, the successors of those who migrated to Pakistan and China during partition will have no claim over the properties left behind in India.
- ⇒ A 3-day festival 'Destination North East-2017' was held in Chandigarh in the endeavour to take North East to every corner of India. Chandigarh has been chosen this year to organise Destination North East-2017, i.e., for the first time outside Delhi to organise this event.
- ⇒ A 360-foot high and 55 tonnes in weight flag post, said to be the country's tallest, was inaugurated at the Indo-Pak Attari Border.
- ⇒ The Haryana Assembly announced a 'Tirtha Darshan' scheme, under which senior citizens of the State will be able to go on pilgrimage within the country on government expenses. However, the scheme is restricted to the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families only.
- ⇒ The Ministry of AYUSH inaugurated the World Integrated Medicine Forum of Regulation of Homeopathic Medicinal Products : National and Global strategies in New Delhi. This is the first-of-its-kind forum considering the increased perception of the international world towards India as a key player in the progress of the homeopathy drug industry.
- ⇒ Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu unveiled the fully unreserved Howrah-Ernakulam (Kerala) Antodaya Express.
- ⇒ The government has envisaged a programme named 'Blue Revolution' to unlock the country's latent potential and possibilities in the fisheries sector.
- ⇒ Half of the 4096 km long border that India shares with Bangladesh has been fenced. The aim of the project is to curb infiltration and smuggling of cattle and fake Indian currency notes. The total fencing is targeted to be completed by 2019.
- ⇒ The mega cultural festival 'India by the Nile' was held at the foot of the Pyramids with a Crafts Mela showcasing joint handicraft exhibition of India and Egypt.
- ⇒ India among other countries in the South East Asian Region, which bear half of the global tuberculosis burden, signed a 'Call for Action' and pledged to scale up measures to end the disease by 2030. India reports 2.8 million new TB cases annually and nearly half of a million deaths due to the disease.
- ⇒ Researchers from the Indian Meteorological Department and the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology have found that the life giving rain is actually 'acid rain' in many parts of the country. Acidity, or basicity of a solution is measured in 'potential of hydrogen' or pH scale. Solutions with a pH less than 7 are acidic and that greater than 7 are basic. Pure water is neutral, at pH 7, being neither an acid nor a base. The pH of lemon is 2.2.



- ⇒ The remnants of pre-Harappan civilisation were found at Kunal village in the district of Fatehabad in Haryana during excavation works to revive the Saraswati river. The remnants include ornaments, beads and bones. The Harappan civilisation is around 3500-year-old and the pre-Harappan civilisation is around 5000-6000 years old.
- ⇒ According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), an estimated 6.5 million premature deaths every year in the world are linked to air-pollution. India alone contributes 1.59 million deaths due to this. The energy sector emits the majority of air pollutants.
- ⇒ Bangladeshi lawmakers adopted a resolution declaring March 25 as 'Genocide Day'. The Pakistani Army launched a brutal onslaught on unarmed civilians on the night of March 25, 1971 to suppress the Bengali movement under the 'Operation Searchlight'.
- ⇒ 106 gold coins of the Gupta emperors (4th & 5th century AD) and two gold coins of the Kushan dynasty (1st century AD) have been recovered from the village Jankipura in Tonk district of Rajasthan.
- ⇒ A joint military exercise 'Surya Kiran X' between India and Nepal was held in Pithoragarh area of Uttarakhand.
- ⇒ The second edition of the joint Army exercise between India and Oman named 'Al Nagah-II, 2017' was held at Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.
- ⇒ Air India has set a world record by flying around the world with an all-female crew. The flight flew over the Pacific Ocean from New Delhi to San Francisco and flew back to New Delhi over the Atlantic. Apart from the all-female cockpit and cabin crew, other staff involved in the flight were all women.
- ⇒ The Jaipur airport has been ranked as the best airport in the world in the category of 2 to 5 million passengers per annum. In a survey carried out by the Airports Council International (ACI), Jaipur airport got 'Best Airport by Size' in the category.
- ⇒ A team of scientists from National Institute of Oceanography, Panaji (Goa) has informed that India's only live volcano of Barren Island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands has started erupting smoke and lava again.
- ⇒ India's first air-conditioned rail ambulance has been unveiled by the Central Railway zone and will be stationed at Kalyan, Maharashtra.
- ⇒ The Vijayawada Airport of Andhra Pradesh has been renamed as Nandamuri Tarak Rama Rao (NTR) Amaravati Airport.
- ⇒ Focusing on women Welfare and newborn, the Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has come with an innovative scheme-KCR Kit. The KCR Kit consists of 16 essential things needed for a newborn and will be useful for up to three months.
- ⇒ Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated a 24 x 7 toll free helpline number 181 for distressed women. The helpline will facilitate quick response of various services, including lodging police complaint to provide medical and legal counselling to women victims.
- ⇒ The Week-long tribal festival 'Bhagoria' was celebrated in Madhya Pradesh.
- ⇒ The Assam government, led by Sarbananda Sonowal decided to make Sanskrit along with computer education as compulsory subject in the State schools.
- ⇒ Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje inaugurated a medical project Rajasthan Heart Attack Treatment Programme (RAHAT).
- ⇒ The Parliament approved a bill granting women working in the organised sector a paid maternity leave of 26 weeks, up from existing 12 weeks. The law will apply to all establishments employing 10 or more people and the entitlement will be for the first two children.
- ⇒ INS Tillanchang, a Water Jet Fast Attack Craft (WJFAC) was commissioned into the Indian Navy at Karwar naval base in Karnataka. INS Tillanchang is the third ship of four WJFACs built by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. The first two ships of the class, INS Tarmugli and INS Tihayu were commissioned in 2016 and are based at Visakhapatnam.
- ⇒ The world's oldest aircraft carrier INS Viraat was decommissioned on March 6th after 57 years of service. The ship is popularly known as the 'Grand Old Lady.' It was first commissioned by the British Royal Navy as HMS Hermes on November 18, 1959 and decommissioned after serving 27 years. India then bought it for \$ 465 million and renamed it as INS Viraat.
- ⇒ A world ranking of the number of women Parliamentarians has placed India at number 148 among all 193 United Nations member countries. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the UN Women published the ranking which was topped by Rwanda (61% women) and followed by Bolivia and Cuba.
- ⇒ The 21-nation grouping of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) held a Summit in Jakarta. India was represented by the Vice-President Hamid Ansari.
- ⇒ Transparency International has released the Global Corruption Barometer for the Asia-Pacific Region. India has the highest bribery rate among the 16 Asia-Pacific countries. Nearly 7 in 10 Indians who accessed public services paid a bribe. Japan is the least corrupt country.
- ⇒ The foundation stone of the Banana Research Centre has been laid down in Vaishali, Bihar.

Books & Authors :

- ⇒ Borderlands : Travels Across India's Boundaries – Pradeep Damodaran
- ⇒ Things to Leave Behind – Namita Gokhale
- ⇒ The People's Maharaja – Khushwant Singh
