

MOU Industry/States/Others

- Paisabazaar.com, the country's largest digital lending platform, has entered into partnership with Microsoft to develop industry first innovations, to deliver innovative and unique customer experience on its platform using artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- International Finance Corporation (IFC), member of the World Bank Group, is set to enter into a pact with PNB Housing Finance to form an \$800-million platform to support construction of environment-friendly affordable houses across the country.

Appointments and Resignations

Name	Post	Institution
NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant has been granted an extension of his tenure until June 30, 2019.		
Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar has been made the brand ambassador of the upcoming T20 Mumbai League. The league is scheduled from March 11 to 28.		
Rahul Mahajan	Editor-in-Chief of Rajya Sabha TV	
Michael McCormack	Deputy Prime Minister	Australia
Cyril Ramaphosa	President	South Africa
South Africa's embattled President Jacob Zuma has resigned.		
Ethiopian PM Hailemariam Desalegn resigns		
After Nepal's Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba resigned from his post, KP Sharma Oli has become new Prime Minister of Nepal for the second time.		
Actress Priyanka Chopra's spokesperson has confirmed that she has quit as the global ambassador of jewellery designer Nirav Modi's brand following allegations of money laundering against him.		

Awards and Recognitions

Award Name	Person/Institution	Extra Knowledge
Raj Kapoor Award for Excellence in Cinema	Veteran filmmaker Ramesh Sippy	
Former President Pranab Mukherjee will be conferred an honorary D.Litt by the Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology (IEST) on March 4 for his role as a public figure for many decades.		

- Indian Air Force officer Avani Chaturvedi has become the country's first woman to fly a fighter jet solo, as she operated Russian-made MiG-21 aircraft in her first training sortie. She is one of the three from the first women-batch inducted into IAF fighter stream in 2016. Notably, women are barred from combat roles in the Army and Navy.
- India's Umang App was named winner of the Best M-Government Service award in the Accessible Government category while Aadhar won the best emerging technology award at the recently concluded World Government Summit 2018 in Dubai, where India had the status of 'Guest of Honour' country.

Conference and Summits

Summit	Place	Extra Knowledge
Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) Secretary Anand Kumar announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and France President Édouard Philippe will jointly hold an International Solar Alliance (ISA) Summit at the President house in New Delhi on March 11.		
India-Russia Agriculture Business Summit 2018	New Delhi	
World Sustainable Development Summit 2018	New Delhi	
Economic Times Global Business Summit	New Delhi	
International Conference on Sustainable Biofuels, ICSB 2018	New Delhi	
World Environment Day 2018	India	To be held on June 5, 2018. The theme to be - Beat Plastic Pollution
Magnetic Maharashtra Investors Summit	Mumbai, Maharashtra	
TiE Global Summit (TGS)	Mumbai, Maharashtra	
Global Conference on Pharma Industry and Medical Devices	Bengaluru, Karnataka	
International conference Agricon 2018 and Agriexpo 2018	Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh	
World Congress on Information Technology	Hyderabad, Telangana	
21st National Conference on e-Governance	Hyderabad, Telangana	The theme of the Conference this year is, Technology for accelerating Development .
15th edition of BioAsia 2018	Hyderabad, Telangana	
National Banana Festival 2018	Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala	
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference	Patna, Bihar	
Summit of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)	Vizag, Andhra Pradesh	
7 th meeting of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) on Nepal-India	Kathmandu, Nepal	
India International Textiles Expo (IITExpo) of India	Colombo, Sri Lanka	

International News

- According to United Nations (UN), India is contributing \$1 million for relief efforts in the Pacific Ocean Kingdom of Tonga that was devastated by Cyclone Gita last week.
- The United Arab Emirates has made a record by opening the world's longest zip line, measuring 2.83 kms in length. Guinness World Records officials certified the zip line in Ras al-Khaimah. China has become the vice chair of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global body mandated to combat terror financing.

Canada's Upper House of Parliament has passed a bill to modify the country's national anthem in a bid to make it gender-neutral. The words 'thy sons command' in the second line of the anthem will be replaced with 'all of us command'.

- The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) launched the world's smallest rocket with the ability to put a micro-satellite into orbit, following a failed attempt and several postponements over the last year.
- Rwanda has become the first low-income country to provide universal eye care for its 12 million population.
- Sri Lanka celebrated its 70th Independence Day (4 February 2018). It was on this day in 1948 that Sri Lanka, then Ceylon, gained independence from 133 years of British colonial rule.
- Nepalese tea has finally received an international trademark, over 154 years after cultivation began in the country.
- Dubai International, DXB, has retained its position as the world's number one airport for international passengers for the fourth consecutive year with annual traffic for 2017 reaching 88.2 million passengers.
- Bermuda has become the first country to legalise and then repeal same-sex marriage, in what critics have called an unprecedented rollback of civil rights by the British island territory.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the first Hindu temple in the United Arab Emirates capital, which is home to a huge Indian diaspora.
- External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj met Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz who inaugurated the prestigious National Heritage and Culture Festival Janadriyah in Riyadh, at which India is the guest of honour country.
- Dubai witnessed 15 percent growth in tourist arrivals from India in 2017, hosting 2.1 million visitors, retaining top spot as the source market.
- World's first robot ski competition was held in South Korea in which self-operational humanoid skiers with two legs participated wearing skis.
- The tallest hotel in the world, the 356-metre-high Gevora Hotel, has opened in Dubai.
- Dubai has started testing the world's first self-driving pods that can travel individually and can also couple together to behave like a bus.
- The World Government Summit kicked off in Dubai, UAE, bringing together some of the globe's top thinkers and decision makers, as well as a few celebrity speakers.
- The Pakistani Senate approved a motion to declare Mandarin as one of the official languages of Pakistan. The motion said the step was necessary in view of ties between Pakistan and China.

National News

- President of Iran, Hassan Rouhani arrived in India on a three-day State visit. Rouhani chose to begin his three-day visit from Hyderabad as the city has a long history of cultural and religious ties with Iran.
- Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau arrived in India on a seven-day State visit. His visit is aimed at further strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries.
- King of Jordan Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein arrived in India for a three-day visit. Defence, security and investments are going to be the key areas of discussion on the bilateral agenda.
- Actor Kamal Haasan launched his political party Makkal Needhi Maiam (people justice centre) in Madurai, Tamil Nadu. He also unfurled his party's flag, which has six hands – three in red and three in white – joined together around a star on a white background.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said that the agriculture credit flow target of Rs. 11 lakh crore for 2018-19 is achievable by the banking sector.

India has contributed an additional \$1 million to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund earmarked for SouthSouth cooperation.

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

- The Airports Authority of India (AAI) launched the first of its kind Aviation Multi Skill Development Centre at Old Civil Air Terminal in Chandigarh. Civil Aviation Minister P. Ashok Gajapathi Raju inaugurated the ceremony.
 - The Centre will set up 562 more Ekalavya Model Residential Schools in tribal areas of the country. 271 such schools have already been sanctioned out of which, 190 are currently operational.
 - The Centre has released ₹ 1,000 crore to States and Union territories under the special assistance to scheduled castes sub plan till January end of the current fiscal.
 - The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the implementation of the Prime Minister's Research Fellows (PMRF) scheme with an outlay of Rs 1,650 crore for seven years beginning 2018-19.
 - In a bid to redevelop over 600 major railway stations across the nation, an idea competition SRIJAN (Station Rejuvenation through Joint Action) has been launched at MyGov portal since January 26, 2018, by Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation Limited (IRSDC). All stakeholders like railway passengers, architects, urban planners, engineers are allowed to send their ideas and the last date to submit the entries is March 26, 2018.
 - Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has now introduced a blue coloured Baal Aadhaar card for children below the age of 5 years. To recall all children below the age of 5 don't need to give biometric details for getting an Aadhaar card.
 - The central government has approved a project to abate pollution of river Sal at Navelim in Goa at an estimated cost of Rs 61.7 crore.
 - In its Meeting held on 18th January, 2018, the GST Council had recommended reduction of GST rate on services by way of admission to Amusement Parks including theme parks, water parks, joy rides, merry-go-rounds, go-carting and ballet from 28% to 18%. These services hitherto attracted GST @ 28%.
 - Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched Green Good Deeds campaign. The campaign launched by the ministry aims to sensitise the people and students, in particular, about climate change and global warming.
 - Power Ministry launched a web-based monitoring system and a fly-ash mobile application. It will act as an interface between producers and consumers. The ASH TRACK Mobile App will manage 200 million tonnes of fly ash by tracking coal-based power plants situated within 100 km and 300 km from given location and availability of fly ash.
 - India has joined Ashgabat Agreement on the establishment of an International Transport and Transit Corridor between the Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
 - Indian Railways all new 12,000 horsepower electric locomotive — being produced in collaboration with Alstom of France and which can run at speeds of up to 120 kmph — would be rolled out in March when French President Emmanuel Macron visits India.
 - The government has made Permanent Account Number (PAN) mandatory for any entity conducting financial transactions of ₹ 1 lakh or more. Adding that an Aadhaar-like identity number is being developed for enterprises, the government said PAN will also be used as a Unique Entity Number for non-individuals from April 1. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy under its scheme Development of Solar Cities has approved/sanctioned 60 Cities including 13 Pilot and 5 Model Cities up to 12th Five-year Plan period.
- The government launched the Start-up-India ranking framework to help the Startup India initiative to drive economic growth of the country.
- Laying emphasis on building infrastructure along the Indo-Pak and Sino-India borders, the government has sanctioned early ₹ 1,000 crore to the BSF and the ITBP for construction of bunkers and special late-controlled huts in forward areas.
- On January 20, Mumbai airport (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International airport) created a new world record for single-runway operations by handling 980 arrivals and take-offs in 24 hours, or almost one flight every minute!
 - Kerala, Punjab and Tamil Nadu were the top rankers in NITI Aayog's latest Health Index report which has, for the first time, attempted to establish an annual systematic tool to measure and understand the heterogeneity and complexity of the nation's performance in the health sector.
 - India will host the 8th edition of Theatre Olympics from 17th of this month for the first time. The event will continue till 8th of April.

- Radio Umang, India's first online radio station that allows the listener to just download and tune in, has been launched.
 - The Centre is making efforts to connect all villages through a road network by next year as part of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna. Earlier, the target to complete these works was 2022 but it has been advanced to 2019.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi at World Government Summit in Dubai said that the Union government has saved, more through Aadhaar-enabled Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) of about 400 government schemes.
 - India's first radio festival was being held in New Delhi to mark World Radio Day. The festival was being organized by International Association of Women in Radio and Television, in collaboration with UNESCO.
 - The Hampi monuments which are part of Karnataka's cultural heritage, will be one of the 10 tourist destinations across India to be developed as Iconic Tourism Site by the central government.
 - India and United Kingdom jointly launched research projects on Water Quality Research and Energy Demand Reduction in Built Environment.
 - The Union Cabinet has given approval for creation of National Urban Housing Fund (NUHF) for Rs.60,000 crores. This fund will be situated in Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council (BMTPC), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
 - The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has given its approval to the construction of 4.531 km long 2Lane Bi-Directional Silkyara Bend – Barkot Tunnel with escape passage including approaches on Dharasu -Yamunotri section between Chainage 25.400 Km. and Chainage 51.000 Km in Uttarakhand.
 - The Union Cabinet approved multi-crore developmental projects worth Rs 11,661 crore, which include doubling and electrification of many lines.
 - Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Palace Queen Humsafar Express between Mysuru and Udaipur in Mysuru Railway Station.
 - In view to increase awareness and remove taboo about menstrual hygiene, the Maharashtra government has decided to launch Asmita Yojana on the International Women's Day (March 8).
 - The Chilika lake in Odisha has emerged as the single largest habitat of Irrawaddy dolphins in the world with the spotting of 155 such animals, according to the Chilika Development Authority (CDA).
 - Union Rural Development Ministry sanctioned more than Rs. 700 crore for 43 roads and 15 bridges under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) for Arunachal Pradesh.
- Health minister JP Nadda launched free Viral Load Tests, which measure the quantity of virus in the body. The move is likely to benefit 12 lakh people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) in the country. The Union Cabinet has approved the Department of Commerce's proposal to give focused attention to 12 Champion Services Sectors for promoting their development in order to realise their potential. A dedicated fund of Rs 5000 crore has been proposed in order to support initiatives for sectoral action plans of the Champion Sectors.

BUDGET

- According to Union Budget 2018-19, the government will develop two defence industrial production corridors. Defence minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the first corridor will link Chennai and Bengaluru and will pass through Coimbatore and several other industrial clusters. Second will be in Bundelkhand — a region divided between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- The Union Budget tabled by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has allotted Rs 771.54 crore for electrification of 881 km of rail network in West Bengal.
- The development of 800 MW advanced ultra super critical thermal power plant project got Rs 100 crore for next year from the Department of Heavy Industry with a target to finalise the turbine design, as per 2018-19 budget papers.
- The union government has allocated Rs 5,252 crore in the Union Budget 2018-19 for railway projects in the state as against the state's demand for Rs 6,500 crore.

Andhra Pradesh

- The Andhra Pradesh government has decided to hold the first-of-its-kind, one-day Pelican Festival at the Atapaka Bird Sanctuary on Kolleru.
- Facebook India will work with the Andhra Pradesh government in order to take up innovative pilot projects in the state. Both of them have decided to work on providing internet facility to every household through fiber grid project, internet, WiFi, and TV services at nominal cost of Rs 149.
- The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) and the Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Mission (APSECM), state-designated agency for providing technical assistance to the APCRDA, for construction of energy efficient buildings as per Energy Conservation Building Code (ECBC) – 2017.

Assam

- The Assam government has announced to observe September 22 as Rhino Day to generate public awareness on protection of the one-horned pachyderm.

Bihar

- Bihar clocked a growth rate of 10.3 per cent in 2016-2017 as against 7.5 per cent in the corresponding fiscal a year ago, riding largely on the back of the services sector, according to the latest Economic Survey tabled in the Bihar Assembly.

Chhattisgarh

- Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh announced that the state government is aiming to provide power supply to every household by September 2018.

Delhi

- The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with the Environmental Sanitation Institute and Tata Trusts, has developed a Sanitation Park which was inaugurated in Delhi.
- The Delhi government and the MoEF (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change) jointly launched the Clean Air Campaign, which will continue for 2 weeks till February 23.
- The Delhi government announced the launch of Mission Buniyaad for improving learning skills of children studying in state and municipal-run schools.
- In a move to provide Delhi residents relief from the burgeoning air pollution crisis in the city, the central government has sanctioned schemes worth Rs 1,200 crore to keep a check on alarming pollution levels in the capital.

Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Run for New India marathon in Surat, Gujarat. The Marathon is aimed at creating awareness about social causes and call upon all to resolve to build a New India.

Haryana

- The Haryana government has launched the Gobardhan Yojana to provide for the sale of organic manure and cow urine with an aim to benefit farmers.
- The Haryana government launched Parivartan, a scheme designed to address 10 issues, including cleanliness and pollution, in 46 developmental blocks of the state.
- The Haryana government gave its nod to a proposal to bring in a legislation that would have a provision awarding death penalty to those guilty of raping girls aged 12 years or less.

Jharkhand

- Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das announced that a Dada-Dadi Park for senior citizens would be established in every city of the state soon. The parks in every city of the state will be set up to provide relief to people from hot summer.

Karnataka

- The President of India Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 88th Mahamastakabhisheka Utsav of Lord Gomateshwara in Hassan district of Karnataka.

Kerala

- A gender park open exclusively to women and children will be set up in Kerala's Kottayam.

- Kerala Government has made **vaccination compulsory for school admissions from next academic year onwards**. Parents will have to show details of shots given to children at the time of enrolment in schools

Madhya Pradesh

- The Madhya Pradesh government launched a mobile application pollution metre to spread awareness against pollution in the western part of the state.

Maharashtra

- Railways Minister Piyush Goyal announced that the Railways will set up a coach factory in Maharashtra's Latur district. The new coach plant will create an industrial ecosystem in the drought-prone region boosting shift from agriculture to industry.
- Maharashtra government has approved Ghodazari in Chandrapur district as a new wildlife sanctuary in the state.
- The Maharashtra government has decided to set up a Transgender Welfare Board to protect their Constitutional and human rights. This will make Maharashtra the first Indian state to have such a board.
- In a first in the country, the Maharashtra state government will be setting up an institute for artificial intelligence (AI) in Mumbai.
- The Virgin Group signed an intent agreement with Maharashtra to build a hyperloop transportation system between Mumbai and Pune, which aims to reduce the travel time between the two mega cities to 20 minutes from the three hours at present.
- The Ministry of Railways and the Maharashtra government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up a rail coach factory at Latur, Maharashtra.

Meghalaya

- Meghalaya Governor Ganga Prasad inaugurated the Friendship Gate constructed with an aim to have a Wagahlike beating retreat ceremony for the Indian and Bangladesh border guards.

Odisha

- The Odisha government launched a scheme Khushi to provide free sanitary pads to 17 lakh girl students across the state. The free sanitary napkin scheme is launched for girl students from Class 6 to 12 in all the government and government-aided schools in the state.

Rajasthan

- In the budget speech, Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje announced one time loan waiver of upto Rs. 50,000 for small and marginal farmers in the state.
- Gandhi Nagar of Jaipur, Rajasthan became country's first all-women railway station in the main line category of the Indian railways. Gandhi Nagar railway station has a footfall of nearly 7000 passengers per day and of the 50 trains which pass by, 25 trains halt.

Tamil Nadu

- The government of Tamil Nadu announced signing an agreement with IT Major Microsoft to improve the integration of technology in teaching and learning in the state.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the subsidised scooter scheme for working women on the occasion of the 70th birth anniversary celebrations of late Tamil Nadu leader J Jayalalithaa.

Uttar Pradesh

- In Uttar Pradesh, State government in association with UNICEF launched massive door to door campaign DASTAK to eradicate deadly Acute Encephalitis Syndrome and Japanese Encephalitis disease in the state. The war cry of DASTAK is Darwaja khatkhatoo, AES aur JE ko bhagao.
- At the UP Investors Summit, the government launched a mobile application – e-Saathi. Through the app, people will be able to avail public services sitting at home. UP has become the first state in the country where projects can now be cleared digitally, without any human interface. The digital platform, a single-window system called Nivesh Mitra, was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration session of the UP Investors Summit. Nivesh Mitra will now allow investors to apply for project clearances online.

Uttarakhand

- The Centre has sanctioned Rs 1,500 crore for three years to promote organic farming in Uttarakhand. This is in keeping with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of developing Uttarakhand as an organic state which he spelt out during his visit to Kedarnath last year.

West Bengal

- West Bengal has become the first state to opt out of Modicare scheme. The decision was made because the state had already enrolled 50 lakh people under its own Swasthya Sathi programme.
- Scientists from the Botanical Survey of India have identified a new plant species from two protected National Parks in West Bengal. Named *Drypetes kalamii*, it is a small shrub found to be shorter version of its close relative *Drypetes ellisii*. The plant is named after former President Abdul Kalam.

Finance and Banking News

- IndusInd Bank launched its new Sonic Identity, which is essentially a musical logo called MOGO, as part of its branding initiatives.
- To speed up retail transmission by banks of the central bank's cuts in the lending rate, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that it will link the Base Rate with the Marginal Cost of Funds-based Lending Rate (MCLR) from the next fiscal.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revealed that the estimated inflation for first half of the next fiscal would stand at 5.1 to 5.6 percent.
- According to the report by BMI Research, a unit of Fitch Group, India's fiscal deficit is expected to come in at 3.5 per cent of GDP in financial year 2018-19, as policymakers seek to promote economic growth by reducing the pace of fiscal consolidation.
- The Reserve Bank of India announced setting up ombudsman for addressing customer grievances in the nonbanking finance companies. RBI will start with deposit taking NBFCs and widen the scope to cover NBFCs with asset size of Rs 100 crore.
- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) announced area development plans worth Rs1,918 crore for Punjab to supplement farmers income.
- Equitas Small Finance Bank, the first private sector bank from Tamil Nadu post-Independence, has launched selfSavings, an interactive digital savings account.
- Reserve Bank of India has made banks priority sector norms lenient by saying that all loans to micro small and medium enterprises (MSME) will henceforth qualify as priority sector lending. This was a long time demand from banks. Till date, loans up to Rs 10 crore per MSME borrower was considered for priority sector calculation. The sub-target for bank lending to the micro enterprises has been 7.50 percent of adjusted net bank credit or credit equivalent amount of off-balance sheet exposure, whichever is higher. Foreign banks will also have to follow 8% sub-target for lending to the small and marginal farmers. State Bank of India launched its Global NRI Centre (GNC) in Kochi, Kerala, a one-stop customer service point for all NRI banking-related activities.
- Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank became the fourth such entity to begin operations since issuance of licenses to 11 firms by RBI in August 2015.
- Retirement fund body Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has reduced the interest rate on deposits to 8.55% for 2017-18 from 8.65% for 2016-17 following a general decline in interest rates.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed banks to link the SWIFT (Society for World Interbank Financial Telecommunication System platform) — a global financial messaging service which was misused by jeweller Nirav Modi at Punjab National bank — with the core banking solutions (CBS) of banks by April 30, 2018.
- As announced in its Monetary Policy Statement on February 7, India's central bank, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has now launched the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs). The offices of the NBFC Ombudsmen will function at four metro centres, namely, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai and New Delhi, and will handle complaints of customers in the respective zones.

- The Reserve Bank said there would not be any extension to the February 28 deadline for mandatory KYC compliance by prepaid wallet customers.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept its key interest rate unchanged at 6 per cent for the fourth time in succession at its final bi-monthly monetary policy review of the fiscal, citing concerns about the inflationary push by rising global crude oil prices.

Current Monetary Policy Rates:

- Repo Rate: Unchanged at 6%
- Reverse Repo Rate: Unchanged at 5.75%
- Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate: Unchanged at 6.25%
- Bank Rate: Unchanged at 6.25%
- Cash Reserve Ratio: Unchanged at 4%
- Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR): Unchanged at 19.5%

Business News

- Trade between India and the US is estimated to have jumped substantially from USD 118 billion in 2016 to USD 140 billion in 2017, according to an advocacy group that aims to promote bilateral trade.
- Digital payments startup Paytm has launched two insurance companies, Paytm Life Insurance and Paytm General Insurance.
- Eduvanz Financing – a skill development loan provider, has been granted the non-banking financial company (NBFC) licence by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to start providing loans in the multi-billion skill development sector.
- The regulator National Housing Bank (NHB) has approved the merger of Capital First along with Capital Home Finance and Capital First Securities Limited with IDFC Bank.
- ONGC Videsh Ltd and its partners have acquired a 10 per cent in a large offshore oilfield in Abu Dhabi, UAE for \$600 million, the first time any Indian company has set foot in oil-rich Emirates.
- Google announced a deeper integration with the State Bank of India (SBI) for its digital payment app Tez that will allow users to now create a SBI UPI Id — @oksbi and get access to exclusive offers for the SBI customers.
- According to a report in The New York Post, with a market cap of \$702.5 billion, Amazon has become the third most valuable company in the world, racing past Microsoft, which has a market cap of \$699.2 billion.
E-commerce giant Amazon has launched its own food retailing business in India and the company started testing the market with a pilot project in Pune
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has been recognized as the world's best employers by the Top Employer Institute for the consecutive third year.
- The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has given its consent to roll out WhatsApp BHIM UPI beta launch with limited user base of 1 million and low per transaction limit.
- Google announced the launch of a unified payment service app for its Google Pay platform. Google Pay will combine the features of the already existing Google Wallet and Android Pay.
- Private sector lender Federal Bank made its foray into investment banking by acquiring a minority 26 per cent stake in Equirus Capital, a boutique investment bank.

Economy News

- India announced a national healthcare scheme for half a billion of its poorest citizens in a major giveaway to voters in the final budget before a general election.
- The Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Shri Arun Jaitley launched CriSidEx, India's first sentiment index for micro and small enterprises (MSEs) developed jointly by CRISIL & SIDBI. CriSidEx is a composite index based on a diffusion index of 8 parameters and measures MSE business sentiment on a scale of 0 (extremely negative) to 200 (extremely positive).

- The Reserve Bank raised the exposure limit under exchange traded currency derivatives (ETCD) trading for residents and foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to USD 100 million across all currency pairs involving the Indian rupee.
 - Reiterating its commitment to make the web a safer place for everyone, Google India announced its collaboration with NCERT to integrate a course on Digital Citizenship and Safety in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) curriculum in schools.
 - The change of name of apex indirect tax policy making body Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC) to Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is likely to happen by April after the budgetary exercise gets Parliament nod.
 - According to official data released, direct tax collections grew by nearly 20 per cent between April and January this year with strong growth in both corporate and personal income tax receipts. It grew by 19.3 per cent up to January to ₹ 1.16 lakh crore.
 - Allocations for the Ministry of Planning, which is embodied by the NITI Aayog, have increased by more than 20% over last year i.e. to Rs 339.65 crore in 2018-19 from Rs 279.79 crore in 2017-18.
 - Moody's Investors Service said the Indian economy is starting to recover from the negative impact of demonetisation and disruption caused by the GST roll-out, but kept GDP growth estimates unchanged at 7.6 per cent for 2018.
 - According to the Economic Survey 2017-18, Maharashtra has come out to be one of the largest states in terms of its economic size and prosperity gives it the largest share in India's exports and the goods and service tax (GST) base.
 - The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a fine of around Rs. 136 crores on search engine major Google for unfair business practices in the Indian market for online search.
 - According to the industry outlook by the National Association of Software & Services Companies (Nasscom), India's IT exports are expected to grow at 7.9 per cent to be at \$135-\$137 billion in 2018-19.
- Retirement fund body Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has made it mandatory to file online claims for provident fund withdrawals above Rs 10 lakh, taking another step towards becoming a paperless organisation.

Defence News

- India successfully test-fired its short-range nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-1 with a strike range of over 700 km from a test range off the Odisha coast. Weighing around 12 tonnes, the 15-metre-long Agni-I can carry payloads up to 1,000 kg and is capable of hitting a target beyond 700 km. The missile is also capable of carrying nuclear warheads.
- The Strategic Forces Command (SFC) test-fired Agni II medium-range nuclear-capable missile from Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast. The missile has a strike range of more than 2,000 km.
- Business tycoon Elon Musk's SpaceX has created history by successfully launching the Falcon Heavy rocket, the most powerful operational rocket in the world, into outer space.
- The Indian and Indonesian armies began the sixth edition of their annual military exercise named Garuda Shakti in Bandung, Indonesia.
- The eighth joint military exercise Lamitye between the Indian Army and Seychelles People's Defence Forces began from February 24 in Seychelles.
- India and Nepal would hold a joint exercise, Surya Kiran in Pithoragarh region of Uttarakhand that will include training on jungle warfare, anti-terrorism combat as well as disaster response activities.
- India successfully test-fired nuclear-capable medium range surface to surface missile Prithvi-II off the Odisha coast. Prithvi-II, which has a strike range of 350 km, is capable of carrying 500-1,000 kg of warheads and is thrust by liquid propulsion twin engines.
- India successfully test-fired the nuclear-capable Dhanush ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 kms from a naval ship off Odisha coast.
- India's premier defence research institute Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out successful test flight of its Rustom 2 drone, a medium-altitude long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), at Chalakere in Karnataka's Chitradurga district.
- The Indian military's Andaman and Nicobar Command is going to host biennial multinational naval event Milan 2018 at Port Blair from March 6 to March 13 with the underlying theme of friendship across the seas.

- The Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) Nag was successfully flight-tested in desert conditions against two tank targets at different ranges and timings, informed the Defence Ministry.

Science & Technology

- Taking prime minister Narendra Modi s Digital India initiative forward, a chat based job search mobile app Empzilla , first ever of its kind in the country, is being launched that will do away with existing limitations of employers and job seekers making selection process quick and cost effective.
- MobiKwik, a issuer-independent digital financial services platform and mobile wallet announced the launch of Magic – a digital platform for end-to-end corporate processes, rewards and reimbursements.
- India, which has been making strides in the space race, is set to land its Chandrayaan-2 on the Moon in April. It is India s Chandrayaan-I which discovered the presence of water on the surface of the moon. It is going to be a further extension of that Chandrayaan-2 is India s second lunar exploration mission after Chandrayaan-1. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has started working towards developing igloos on Moon, called the lunar habitats, for safe keeping of astronauts. The habitats will be built by sending robots and 3D printers to the Moon and using lunar soil. Although no mission plan has been prepared yet, scientists want to have the technology ready for building these structures.
 - The moon will get its first mobile phone network next year, enabling high-definition streaming from the lunar landscape back to earth, part of a project to back the first privately funded moon mission. Vodafone Germany, network equipment maker Nokia and carmaker Audi were working together to support the mission, 50 years after the first NASA astronauts walked on the moon.

Sports News

Tournament	Winner	Runner Up
U-19 World Cup trophy	India	They defeated Australia. They lifted the cup for the record fourth time.
8th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2018	Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)	
Senior Women s National Football Championship	Tamil Nadu	Defeated Manipur
Hazare Trophy	Karnataka	Saurashtra
U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy	Vidarbha team	
India Open Boxing Tournament	M C Mary Kom	
Maybank Championship	Golfer Shubhankar	
India Open final (women s singles)	Beiwen Zhang from the US	She defeated P. V. Sindhu
India Open final (men s singles)	Shi Yuqi from China	
Austrian Open International Challenge (Badminton)	Parupalli Kashyap	
Rotterdam Open title	Roger Federer	Beat Grigor Dimitrov

Sports

- Indian women s cricket team pacer Jhulan Goswami has become the first woman in the world to take 200 wickets in ODI cricket. Goswami achieved the feat playing in her 166th ODI against South Africa.
- Virat Kohli became only the second batsman ever after South Africa s AB de Villiers to have earned more than 900 rating points in ICC Rankings, in Test and ODI cricket concurrently.
- India s leading squash player, Saurav Ghosal became the highest-ranked Indian squash player.

- Young golfer Shubhankar Sharma was elevated from 193 to 72, a gain of 121 spots, in the world rankings making him the highest-ranked Indian in the world.
- The first Khelo India School Games concluded in New Delhi with sports powerhouse Haryana topped the overall medal tally.
- The 23rd Olympic Winter Games officially kicked off with a colourful ceremony at Pyeongchang in South Korea.
- Pune-based swimmer, Rohan More became the first Asian as well as the first Indian to swim across the Ocean Seven. Rohan is the youngest person in the world to swim across the Ocean Seven.
- Sharmila Nicollet has become the first Indian golfer to qualify for the China Ladies PGA Tour. Former All-England champion and celebrated badminton coach Pullela Gopichand initiated the country's largest train the trainers programme, inducting 1500 Physical Education (PE) teachers from across Gujarat for advanced training.
- Fast bowler Bhuvneshwar Kumar has become the first Indian bowler to take a five-wicket haul in all three formats in international cricket.
- Virat Kohli has become the fastest batsman to reach 17,000 international runs, achieving the feat in his 363rd innings during the sixth ODI against South Africa.
- Twenty-time Grand Slam champion Roger Federer has become the oldest-ever men's singles world number one tennis player, at the age of 36.
- India's highest ranked men's singles player Kidambi Srikanth and Olympic medallists PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal will lead the country's challenge in the 2018 Commonwealth Games, which is slated to be held in Gold Coast, Australia from April 4.
- Indian boxer Vikas Krishan won a gold medal and was named the best boxer of the tournament at the 69th Strandja Memorial boxing tournament in Bulgaria.
- Indian shuttler Sameer Verma beat former world number two Jan O Jorgensen and clinched the men's singles title at the \$150,000 Swiss Open Super 300 tournament.
- The National Anti Doping Agency (NADA), for the first time in Indian sport, has banned an athlete for the possession of an illegal drug. The disciplinary committee handed over a suspension of four years to hurdler Jithin Paul.
- Aruna Budda Reddy became the first Indian gymnast to clinch an individual medal at the Gymnastics World Cup in Melbourne by securing bronze in the women's vault.
- At 19 years of age, highly-rated Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan is set to become the youngest captain in the history of international cricket.
- Tennis legend Roger Federer became the most decorated winner in the history of Laureus World Sports Awards after he won twin honours at the 18th edition of the awards ceremony in Monaco. It was his sixth award. The awards include the Sportsman and Comeback titles.

Committee

Head of Committee	Purpose
Y H Malegam	In the wake of the Rs 11,300 crore fraud at the Punjab National Bank, the Reserve Bank of India has constituted a five member panel under former board member Y H Malegam to look into the wide divergence by banks in asset classification and provisioning and reasons for frauds and measures to prevent it and also asked them to strengthen the SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication) operating environment.
Rajiv Kumar	The Centre has constituted a committee headed by the Vice Chairman of the NITI Aayog, Rajiv Kumar to study the Brahmaputra and flood control measures in Assam and neighbouring states.

Rankings

Index	India's Rank	Other Information
Global Intellectual Property (IP) index	44	1st - USA
In Terms of Forest Area	8	It is as per the latest Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report
Globalisation index brought out by international logistics company DHL	78	
Global corruption perception index for 2017, released by Transparency International	81	1st – New Zealand

- According to the Military Balance 2018 report by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), India's defence budget broke into the world's top five, beating the UK for the first time. The first five spots are taken by US, China, Saudi Arabia, Russia and India in order.
- According to a report by UNICEF, India ranks 12th among 52 low-middle income countries having highest infant mortality rates with over six lakh children dying within the first month of their birth in 2016. Japan being ranked first and Pakistan being ranked last.
- According to a report, nearly 40 per cent of over 53,000 cyber attacks in India occurred in the financial services sector during 2017, placing it at the 7th spot in the list of targeted countries for Web Application Attacks (WAA)
- India has been ranked 47th out of 86 countries on the Inclusive Internet Index by the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), which was commissioned by Facebook. Sweden took the first place, followed by Singapore and the US.

Loans from Banks

From	To	Amount	Purpose
World Bank	Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)	US \$ 375 million	For Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP).
New Development Bank (NDB)	Government of India	US \$ 100 million	Loan Agreement for financing of Rajasthan Water Sector Restructuring Project for the Desert Areas
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Government of India	US \$ 84 million	For improvement and expansion of water supply in Bhagalpur and Gaya towns in Bihar
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)	India	US \$ 1.5 billion	The funds would be used for investment in India's energy, roads and urban development projects, and the bank will examine allotting more funds for such projects next year.

Rankings (Persons, Cities, Organisations and Others)

Mumbai, India's financial capital is the 12th richest city in the world with a total wealth of \$950 billion, according to a report by New World Wealth. The list was topped by New York as the richest city in the world.

Books

Book	Author	Other Info
Hisaab Kitaab	Anjana Sukhani	The book is a how-to book on household budgeting
Mere Sapnon ka Bharat	Tarun Vijay	It is a compilation of interviews of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
Even When There Is A Doctor	Dr Yashwant Amdekar, Dr Rajesh Chokhani and Krishnan Sivaramakrishnan	The book describes the role of an individual or parents in improving their child's health.

- After the success of her first book *The Great Indian Diet*, actress cum entrepreneur, and now an author, Shilpa Shetty has released her second book. It is called *The Dairy Of Domestic Diva*. The *Dairy of Domestic Diva* is a cookbook that contains recipes of various dishes along with the calorie intake details.
- PM Modi Pens Book Exam Warriors to Help Students Reduce Stress
Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new book – *Exam Warriors* – launched aims to help students breeze through their examinations.
The book reportedly urges young students to tackle their examinations with zeal and energy. Modi has constantly reiterated the fact the exams should be viewed as festivals in order to reduce stress, on his monthly talk show – *Mann ki Baat*.
- Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh released a book on best interviews of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The interviews have been compiled in a book form *Mere Sapno Ka Bharat* by Tarun Vijay, former BJP MP and Editor of *Panchjanya*, an RSS published journal.

Obituaries

Name	Profession	Other Info
Kunwar Bai, a 106-year-old woman from Chhattisgarh who was chosen as a mascot for the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, has passed away.		
Sridevi	Bollywood Actress	
TSR Subramanian	Former Cabinet Secretary of the Union government	
Ratnavel Pandian	Former Supreme Court Judge Justice	
Kanchi Shankaracharya Jayendra Saraswati	Pontiff of the Kanchi Mutt (Kanchipuram, Tamil Nadu)	
M.S. Anantharaman	Violinist	
Kanakalata Mohanty	Odia Writer	
Parbati Ghosh	Odia Actress	
Chandrasekhar Rath	Odia literature	
Madavoor Vasudevan Nair	Kathakali maestro	
Kalamandalam Geethanandan	Ottanthulal artist	
Lakshmi Devi Kanakala	Telugu actor	
Gundu Hanumantha Rao	Telugu actor	
Sudha Karmarkar	Artist, Director	He was veteran theatre artist, director, and pioneer of Children's Theatre
Suresh Seth	Politician	Senior Congress leader and former Indore Mayor

Bolla Bulliramaiah	Politician	He was former Union minister
Kalyan Singh	Politician	
Manganlal Shah	Politician	
Neelabh Mishra	Journalist	
Bal Krishna Goyal	Renowned cardiologist	He served as a friend and cardiologist to top Indian political dignitaries and celebrities.
Muzaffar Hussain	Noted writer, thinker and journalist	
K Panoor	Veteran author and civic rights activist	
Qazi Wajid	Pakistan actor	
Asma Jahangir	Pakistani human rights activist and lawyer	
Johann Johannsson	Musician	He is Icelandic musician and Oscar-nominated composer.
Ruud Lubbers		He is longest serving Dutch prime minister

Important Days

Date	Day	Extra Info
2 February	World Wetlands Day	Theme 2018: "Wetlands for a Sustainable Urban Future"
4 February	World Cancer Day	Theme 2018: "We Can, I Can"
6 February	International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation	
10 February	National Deworming Day	
11 February	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	Theme 2018: "Gender, Science and Sustainable Development: The Impact of Media"
12-18 February	National Productivity Week	Theme 2018: "Industry 4.0 Leapfrog Opportunity for India"
13 February	World Radio Day	Theme 2018: "Radio and Sports"
20 February	World Day of Social Justice	Theme 2018: "Workers on the Move: the Quest for Social Justice"
21 February	International Mother Language Day	Theme 2018: "Our languages, our assets"
24 February	Central Excise Day (75 th)	
28 February	National Science Day	Theme 2018: "Science and Technology for a Sustainable Future"

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