

GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES:- (16th January – 20th January, 2018)

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the project commencement of the Rajasthan Refinery at Pachpadra in Barmer district. This is the first oil refinery in the state. The 43,000 crore rupee project is a joint venture between HPCL and the Rajasthan government.
- Bangladesh, India and Nepal have given nod to operating procedures for movement of passenger vehicles in the sub-region under Bangladesh-Bhutan-India-Nepal (BBIN) motor vehicles agreement.
- Sanjay Manjrekar launched his autobiography named 'Imperfect', in Mumbai. The book was published by Harper Collins. Sanjay Manjrekar has played 37 Test matches. His first test appearance was in the Delhi Test against the West Indies.
- The Centre has sanctioned projects over 10,000 crore rupees in the North East for better network connectivity.
- India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements for collaboration in the Information and communication technology (ICT) sector, setting up of an e-office system and connecting of National Knowledge Network (NKN) for collaboration among universities and academics. With the move, Sri Lanka has become the first country to be connected to India's NKN through a Gigabyte optical fibre network.
- Market regulator SEBI has approved the appointment of Vijay Kumar as Managing Director and CEO of the country's largest agri-commodity bourse NCDEX.
- The Election Commission of India, Achal Kumar Joti announced dates for elections to the Assemblies of Meghalaya, Tripura and Nagaland. The CEC announced the polling for legislative assembly elections in Tripura on 18 February, while Meghalaya and Nagaland will go to vote on 27 February. (**Note:** First Chief Election Commissioner of Independent India was Sukumar Sen.)
- Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik has launched the 'Mukhyamantri Kalakar Sahayata Jojana' (MMKSJ) – an assistance scheme for Artists in the state. Around 50,000 artists will be benefited from this. The government has decided to give Rs 1,200 per month as artist assistance.
- India, for the first time, took part in a two-day meeting of the international military cooperation departments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in Beijing, China. This is the first meeting attended by India in the field of defence cooperation under the SCO framework. The SCO comprises of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan were admitted in 2017 into the grouping in which China plays an influential role.
- India's most-valued lender HDFC Bank Ltd crossed Rs.5 trillion market capitalisation for the first time, making it only the third Indian company to achieve this milestone. Tata Consultancy Services Ltd (TCS) and Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) are the other two companies which crossed market capitalisation of Rs5 trillion.
- Maharashtra has become the first state in the country that has come out with a public cloud policy, virtually mandating its departments to shift their data storage onto the cloud.

- Facebook-owned instant messaging platform WhatsApp has rolled out a feature that connects small businesses with customers. Currently, only Android users can access the feature and they can avail it through the latest update of the app. The new feature will be available first in Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, UK and the US before being launched globally in the coming weeks.
- India has joined the Australia Group export control regime and has become the 43rd Member of that Group. It is an informal forum which seeks to ensure that exports do not contribute to the development of chemical or biological weapons. India has managed entry into Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group despite not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- Indian Naval Ship Vikramaditya, the Indian Navy's largest ship and its sole aircraft carrier was formally affiliated to the Indian Army's highly-decorated and battle-hardened Bihar Regiment and the Indian Air Force's No 6 Squadron.
- Mauritius was the largest source of foreign investment in India, followed by the US and the UK, according to a census by the Reserve Bank of India.