

## **GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES:- (17<sup>th</sup> December – 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2017)**

- Double Olympic medalist Sushil Kumar clinched a gold medal at the Commonwealth Wrestling Championships in South Africa. Another Olympic medalist, Sakshi Malik also clinched a gold medal in the championships, in 62kg women's freestyle category.
- Top Indian shuttler P V Sindhu won the Silver medal in women's singles summit clash of the Dubai World Super Series Final in Dubai.
- World 10,000m champion Sir Mo Farah has been voted BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2017. He became the first long-distance runner to win the Sports Personality award since Paula Radcliffe in 2002.
- Real Madrid has earned the honor of being able to wear the official FIFA World Champions Badge on their competition jerseys for the duration of 2018 by defeating Gremio in the final of the FIFA Club World Cup UAE 2017. The first team to ever receive the FIFA World Champions Badge was the Italy men's national team for their victory at the 2006 FIFA World Cup.
- The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved a scheme to provide a pension of Rs.1500 to transgenders above 18 years of age in the state. After Kerala and Odisha, Andhra Pradesh becomes the next state to sanction pension scheme for the transgender community.
- Oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan inaugurated eastern India's first compressed natural gas (CNG) stations for scooters in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The CNG stations were part of GAIL's Pradhan Mantri Urja Ganga and City Gas Distribution (CGD) projects in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.
- The World Health Organisation has declared Gabon a "polio-free country".
- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has temporarily barred Bharti Airtel and Airtel Payments Bank from conducting Aadhaar-based SIM verification of mobile customers using eKYC process. The action follows allegations of Bharti Airtel using the Aadhaar-eKYC based SIM verification process to open payments bank accounts of its subscribers without their informed consent. Airtel Payments Bank is the first entity to get the final license from Reserve Bank of India for launching a Payments Bank.
- Frenchman Francois Gabart smashed the world record for the fastest non-stop solo navigation of the globe, completing the mammoth feat in 42 days, 16 hours, 40 minutes and 35 seconds.
- Dish TV India Limited (Dishtv), Asia Pacific's largest direct-to-home (DTH) company and part of the Essel Group has received the final approval for closing of the merger of Videocon d2h with DishTV. Following the amalgamation, the combined entity will be renamed as DishTV Videocon Limited.
- Samsung India has entered into a partnership with UNESCO to launch virtual reality content and 360-degree videos on Indian heritage sites. There are 36 UNESCO heritage sites in India at present.
- A conservative billionaire and former president, Sebastian Pinera, has won Chile's presidential election run-off.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 5 crore on Syndicate Bank for non-compliance with its directions on "Cheque Purchase or Discounting, Bill Discounting, and Know Your Customer (KYC)" norms.
- As per the IT Ministry, the government will bear the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges, for two years with effect from January 1, 2018, on transactions up to Rs 2,000 made through debit cards, BHIM UPI or Aadhaar-enabled payment systems to promote digital transactions. MDR is charged on payments made to merchants through BHIM UPI platform and AePS (Aadhaar enabled Payment System).
- The government has engaged private lender ICICI Bank to enable online payments at 470 mandis integrated with the national portal of electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM).
- Eminent Bengali poet Joy Goswami will be given the 31st Moortidevi Award for the year 2017. The First Moortidevi Award winner was C. K. Nagaraja Rao.
- Goa has celebrated its 56th Liberation Day. The state was liberated on 19th December in 1961 from Portuguese control after almost 450 years of colonial rule.
- India currently ranks 60th out of 127 countries on the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2017. The list was topped by Switzerland.
- The International Migrants Day was organized across the world on 18th December. The theme for IMD 2017 is 'Safe Migration in a World on the Move.'
- ICRA Management Consulting Services (IMaCS), an arm of ICRA, launched a set of four fixed income indices:- ICRA Gilt Indices, ICRA Liquid Indices, ICRA Corporate Bond Indices and ICRA Composite Debt Indices.
- The BJP has retained power in Gujarat for the 6th time in a row and swept the polls in Himachal Pradesh finishing just short of the two-third majority.
- Iraq has overtaken Saudi Arabia for the first time to become India's top crude oil supplier in the current fiscal.
- Indian junior boxers had clinched total 11 Medals (six gold, four silver and a bronze medal) at the fifth International Sven Lunge Memorial Tournament, to finish as overall champions in the German city of Schwerin.
- The Assam government has signed an MoU with Isha Foundation to conserve and rejuvenate the rivers of Assam. The two main rivers of Assam are Brahmaputra and Barak.
- The Telangana state government's prestigious Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS) has finally got the Green Nod from central government.
- The government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into an agreement with the moonshot factory of Alphabet (earlier Google) X to bring the breakthrough Free Space Optical Communication (FSOC) technology in order to provide internet through the government Fibergrid project. This association with X labs to implement FSOC in AP is first of its kind in the world to provide wireless internet connection at a higher speed of up to 20Gbps and to a distance of up to 20kms.
- Delhi has emerged as one of the most expensive premium office locations in the world. Ranked 7th in the list, rent of Delhi's premium office location is higher than San

Francisco and Dubai. Mumbai is at 16th position in the list. The top spot is again taken by Hong Kong.

- The World Bank has committed \$125 million (around Rs800 crore) loan to India for the STRIVE (Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement) project for skill development.
- France's parliament has approved a law banning all exploration and production of oil and natural gas by 2040 within the country and its overseas territories.
- Lionel Messi, the star forward of Barcelona, has received La Liga's top scorer and best player awards for the 2016-2017 football season. Ballon d'Or award winner for 2017 is Cristiano Ronaldo.
- The Reserve Bank of India has placed Bank of India under the Prompt Corrective Action Framework, consequent to the onsite inspection under the Risk-Based Supervision Model carried out for the year ended March 2017. This is the first time that the central bank has invoked PCA for a large bank of the size of BoI.
- The Reserve Bank of India has put Kolkata-based United Bank of India under the prompt corrective action (PCA) framework. The additional action points were in the view of high net non-performing assets, low leverage ratio and need to raise capital.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the scheme of amalgamation between IndusInd Bank and Bharat Financial Inclusion.
- AU Small Finance Bank has announced signing an MoU with Sahaj e-Village for extending its banking service in remote areas through Business Correspondent Agent (BC) model.
- YES Bank and the European Investment Bank will co-finance \$400-million funding for renewable power generation in the country.
- The Union Cabinet has approved the Ministry of Railways' transformative initiative to set up India's first ever National Rail and Transport University (NRTU) in Vadodra, Gujarat to skill its human resources and build capability. 1st Railway Minister of Independent India was John Mathai.
- The United Kingdom has topped Forbes' rankings of best countries in the world for business in 2018 for the first time, up from fifth last year. India was ranked 62nd on the list.
- The Minister of Communications Manoj Sinha launched DARPAN- "Digital Advancement of Rural Post Office for A New India" Project, with an outlay of Rs. 1400 Crore, to improve the quality of service, add value to services and achieve 'financial inclusion' of the unbanked rural population.
- The government has appointed Justice U D Salvi as officiating chairperson of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) following the superannuation of Justice Swatanter Kumar. The first chairperson of the tribunal was Justice Lokeshwar Singh Panta, who was appointed on October 18, 2010.
- The central English city of Birmingham will host the Commonwealth Games in 2022. The 2022 Commonwealth Games were originally given to Durban in 2015, but the South African city was stripped of the event this year because of financial difficulties.

- India's first and only design university, 'World University of Design' opened its campus at Sonapat, Haryana.
- The famed Mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan's birth anniversary on December 22 was celebrated as National Mathematics Day.
- Authors Mamang Dai and Ramesh Kuntal Megh have won this year's Sahitya Akademi award for their work The Black Hill, a novel, and Vishw Mithak Sarit Sagar, a literary criticism, in English and Hindi respectively.
- A loan agreement has been signed between India and Germany for providing additional funding of EUR 20 million for the Pare Hydroelectric Plant project under Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation. The objective of the project is the generation of hydroelectric power for the socio-economic development of the North Eastern region.
- Indian Navy Conducts Exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr' or 'Sea Breeze' with Oman Navy.
- With earnings of Rs.232.83 crore, actor Salman Khan has topped the Forbes India Celebrity 100 list 2017.
- Kisan Diwas (Farmer's Day) is observed every year on 23 December to celebrate the birth anniversary of the fifth prime minister of India Chaudhary Charan Singh.
- The government had formally launched the 'Ganga Gram' project at the Ganga Gram Swachata Sammelan in New Delhi. As part of its clean Ganga mission – Namami Gange, the Ganga Gram project is an integrated approach for the holistic development of villages situated on the banks of the holy river with the active participation of villagers.
- With an aim to bring the foreign policy to the masses the External Affairs Ministry has come up with an initiative called SAMEEP - 'Students and MEA Engagement Programme'. Under this MEA official will talk to students to help them better understand foreign policy.
- The seventh edition of the India International Coffee Festival (IICF) will be held in Bengaluru from January 16-19.
- SBI Card, the credit card issuer and Bharat Petroleum, the leading petroleum company in India announced the launch of the BPCL SBI Card – the most rewarding fuel co-branded credit card in the country. The BPCL SBI Card will offer up to 70 liters of free fuel per year to cardholders.