

GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES : - (2nd April, 2017 to 8th April, 2017)

- The State Bank of India, the country's largest lender has started functioning as unified entity from 01st April 2017 post merger of its five associate banks, besides Bharatiya Mahila Bank. The five associate banks merged with the SBI are State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, State Bank of Hyderabad, State Bank of Mysore, State Bank of Patiala and State Bank of Travancore. With the merger, the SBI joins the league of top 50 banks globally in terms of assets.
- American singer and song writer Bob Dylan has finally accepted his Nobel Prize for literature, more than three months after the awards ceremony.
- The BRICS-backed New Development Bank (NDB) has invested in seven projects totaling \$1.5 billion in about two years of its operation. NDB began operations in July 2015. The New Development Bank was created with an objective of financing infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries.
- Kenya's Joyciline Jepkosgei has broken the world half marathon record as well as the 10km and 15km marks at the Prague Half Marathon on the way to winning the IAAF Gold Label Road Race in one hour, four minutes and 52 seconds.
- The World Autism Awareness Day 2017 has been observed across the world on 2 April 2017. The 2017 theme for the day is "Toward Autonomy and Self-Determination".
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has inaugurated the 9.2 km long Chenani-Nashri all-weather road tunnel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. The road tunnel will reduce the travel time between the two state capitals of Jammu and Srinagar by approximately two hours. The two-lane Chenani-Nashri tunnel is Asia's longest bi-directional highway tunnel, which will cut the distance between Jammu and Srinagar to around 250 km from the current 350 km.
- Bengaluru's Indian Institute of Science (IISc) (university) and Delhi's Miranda House (college) have made it to the top of respective categories in the country's official higher education rankings announced by the government.
- Tax evasion of over Rs 5 crore under the GST regime would be a non-bailable offense and the police would have the authority to make an arrest without a warrant.
- Rajiv Kumar Chander has been appointed as the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations Offices in Geneva.
- Olympic silver-medallist P.V. Sindhu defeated Carolina Marin (Spain) to lift the India Open badminton title 2017 in New Delhi.
- Phoenix India Research and Development Group launched the first bio-gas fuelled bus in Kolkata keeping a flat fare of just Re.1.
- FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) banned Guatemala's former football chief Brayan Jimenez for life over corruption, bribery and other offences.
- India has been ranked third for the third year in a row in a doping violation report published by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for 2015 with 117 athletes from the country being punished after testing positive for banned substances. India followed Russian Federation (176 athletes) and Italy (129 athletes).

- Ruling Party of Ecuador, Alianza PAIS candidate Lenin Moreno won the Ecuador's presidential election.
- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee declared Jhargram as the 22nd district of West Bengal.
- The first express highway project in the northeast region will be developed along the Brahmaputra river in Assam at an estimated investment of Rs.40,000 crore.
- Amazon India has launched an initiative called 'Amazon Classroom', a virtual training program to help teach new sellers the nuances of online selling.
- The famous Berhampur Thakurani Yatra, one of the biggest festivals of southern Odisha, began with pomp and gaiety.
- The former Indian cricket team skipper MS Dhoni became an acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Gulf Oil India just for a day.
- The Reserve Bank of India has released the first Bi-monthly monetary policy of the new financial year (2017-18). GDP growth has been hiked to 7.4% from 6.7%. Rates in the newly released Monetary policy are as follows-
 - * Repo Rate under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) unchanged at 6.25%.
 - * The Reverse Repo Rate (RRR) under the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) has been hiked to 6%.
 - * The Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate and the Bank Rate are at 6.50%.
 - * Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) remains unchanged at 4% and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) also remains unchanged at 20.50%.
- 6 April was declared as the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace (IDSDP) by the UN General Assembly. On the occasion, the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) launched the digital campaign #WePlayTogether to encourage organizations and individuals.
- The BJP-led government in Uttar Pradesh decided to waive off crop loans of up to Rs.1 lakh of small and marginal farmers in the state.
- Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank Ltd becomes the seventh entity to receive a final licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a payment bank. Among payment bank licence holders, two entities namely Airtel Payments Bank and India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) have started operations so far.
- Bitcoin has finally gained the recognition of a mainstream currency along the lines of other fiat currencies. The privilege follows the implementation of a new law in Japan which categorizes Bitcoin as a legal payment option within the country.
- India's Virat Kohli was named Wisden's Leading Cricketer in the World for 2016. Kohli had also won the prestigious 'Polly Umrigar award' presented to the 'International Cricketer of the Year' at the BCCI Annual Awards. Kohli was additionally declared Wisden India Almanack's Cricketer of the Year for the second time in its 2017 edition.
- India extends \$4.5 billion new line of credit to Bangladesh.
- Malala Yousafzai, the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize has become the youngest United Nations Messenger of Peace.
- Indian boxer K Shyam Kumar won a gold medal in the 49- kilogram category at the Thailand International Tournament in Bangkok.

- World Health Day is celebrated on 7th of April every year to mark the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization. The theme of 2017 World Health Day is 'Depression: Let's Talk'.
- India and Israel signed a mega defence deal worth over 2 billion dollars for advanced surface-to-air missile (SAM) systems.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to slash clearance time for National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT). The NEFT settlement cycle will be reduced from hourly batches to half hourly batches. 11 additional settlement batches will be introduced at 8.30 am onwards, taking the total number of half hourly settlement batches during the day to 23. Starting batch at 8 am and closing batch at 7 pm shall remain the same.
- K Prithika Yashini, aged around 25 years, is the first transgender person to become a police official in India. She has been appointed in Tamil Nadu.