

GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES : - (3rd January, 2017 to 9th January, 2017)

- The Election Commission announced the dates for the assembly elections in five states Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Manipur and Goa. Uttar Pradesh, the biggest state in the country, will go to polls in seven phases.
- Justice Jagdish Singh Khehar has been sworn-in as the 44th Chief Justice of India. President Pranab Mukherjee administered the oath of office and secrecy to Justice Khehar. He replaced Justice TS Thakur.
- Govt's online payments app 'BHIM' is now the number one free app on Google Play Store. The app was launched by PM Modi to simplify digital payments. BHIM - which stands for Bharat Interface for Money - is named after Dr BR Ambedkar.
- Chandrababu Naidu, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has launched a new health scheme, Arogya Raksha Scheme at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram in Vijayawada to provide the medical treatment to the people of the Above Poverty Line at Rs. 1200 premium per annum.
- Maharashtra Government has declared to ban the use of 'Purse Seine Nets' for fishing across Maharashtra to safeguard the Fingerlings, a fish species.
- David R Syiemlieh has been appointed as the Chairman of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). He will take over from Alka Sirohi, a former IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre.
- The U.S. e-commerce giant, Amazon has been awarded a patent for launching a giant flying warehouse that would act as a launch pad for drones to deliver items within minutes. The U.S. e-commerce giant described plans for an "airborne fulfilment centre" (AFC) such as an airship or blimp that would float at an altitude of around 45,000. The airship will be stocked with lots of products.
- The Reserve Bank of India has appointed Surekha Marandi as its Executive Director (ED) in place of U S Paliwal, who retired on December 31, 2016. Marandi will look after Consumer Education and Protection Department, Financial Inclusion and Development Department, and Secretary's Department.
- The United Nations 70th General Assembly has recognised the year 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.
- The Election Commission of India has issued a limitation for campaign expense per candidate. In Goa and Manipur, the limit on election expenses per candidate is Rs 20 lakh. In Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand the election expenses limit per candidate is Rs 28 lakh.
- State-owned fuel retailers, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corp Ltd (HPCL) will offer an upfront discount of Rs.5 on every LPG refill to all LPG customers who will book and pay for it online.
- The Supreme Court of India has stripped Anurag Thakur of his powers as BCCI President for not complying with the orders of the apex court with regard to implementation of the Lodha committee reforms.
- Mobile commerce and payments company Paytm has got the final permission to open a payments bank by RBI.

- Munich Re is opening a composite branch office in Mumbai to service the property-casualty, life, health reinsurance markets across the country. Munich Re Group or Munich Reinsurance Company is a reinsurance company based in Munich, Germany. It is one of the world's leading reinsurers.
- Jovenel Moise has been elected as the President of Haiti.
- MS Dhoni has stepped down as the captain of India's limited-overs sides.
- India's women's football team defeated Bangladesh 3-1 in Siliguri to win the 2016 South Asian Football Federation Women's Championship for the fourth consecutive time. India has won all editions of the eight-nation tournament, which started in 2010.
- China launched its longest bullet train 'Shangri-la of the World' from Kunming, in Yunnan Province, to Beijing.
- Veteran actor Om Puri passed away at the age of 66 after suffering a heart attack.
- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has tied up with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) for augmenting capital support to enterprises in the country. The idea behind tying up with the state-run insurance behemoth is to give a boost to the venture capital ecosystem for MSMEs.
- Renowned Sitar maestro Abdul Halim Jaffer Khan died due to cardiac arrest.
- The Electronic Voting Machines to be used in the upcoming Manipur and Uttarakhand Assembly elections will display photographs of candidates. This provision will be provided for the first time in the country.
- The 11th annual Blind Challenge Car Rally was organised in Bhopal, to raise awareness about the issues concerning the visually-impaired. As part of the rally, drivers were navigated by blind persons tasked with reading the route given to them in Braille.
- Gujarat government has come up with India's first student start-up and innovation policy, which aims to provide Rs. 200 crore in the form of grants to ideas developed by them.
- Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut won the men's singles title of the Chennai Open 2017.
- Reigning Olympic and world 800 m champion and world record holder, David Rudisha is the International Event Ambassador for the 14th Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon to be held on January 15, 2017.
- Japan has decided to be associated with the development of Chennai, Ahmedabad and Varanasi as smart cities.
- The Budget session of Parliament convened to start from January 31, a day before the Union Budget is likely to be presented. The practice of separate railway Budget presentation is being scrapped from this year. The railway estimates will be part of the Union Budget.
- China is setting up the world's highest altitude gravitational wave telescopes in a Tibet prefecture to detect faintest echoes resonating from the universe which may reveal more about the Big Bang theory. Construction has started for the first telescope, code-named Ngari No 1, 30 km south of Shiquanhe Town in Ngari Prefecture.