

GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES:- (4th December – 11th December, 2017)

- International Day of Persons with Disabilities was observed on 3rd December.
- The Indian Navy Day was observed on 4th December to celebrate achievements and role of the naval force to the country.
- International Conference on Climate Change Began in Nepal. The conference 'Resilient Hindu Kush Himalaya: Developing Solutions towards a Sustainable Future for Asia' was organized by Nepal's Ministry for Environment in collaboration with International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).
- Cyclone Ockhi Hit Southern India.
- The Andhra Pradesh assembly unanimously passed the Kapu reservation bill which will provide the community with a 5 percent quota in education and employment in the state.
- India's first Madame Tussauds wax museum has been opened in New Delhi with 50 life-like figures.
- Aditya Puri, the Managing Director of HDFC Bank, is the only Indian on Fortune's 'Businessperson of the Year' Top 20 list. HDFC Bank is India's largest private bank by market capitalization. Reserve Bank of India has labeled HDFC Bank as 'domestic systematically important bank'—in other words, 'too big to fail'.
- Paytm Payments Bank rolled out Paytm FASTag to enable electronic toll fee collection on highways across the country, in line with the government's move to make FASTag mandatory on every new vehicle sold from December 1. The Paytm FASTag is a simple and reusable tag based on radio-frequency identification technology (RFID) that can be placed on a vehicle's windscreen. Currently, India has four Payments Bank including Paytm Payments Bank. The other three operational ones are Airtel Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank and Fino Payments Bank.
- Mumbai's 18-year-old batsman Prithvi Shaw has been named the captain of the Indian Under-19 team for the 2018 U-19 World Cup, scheduled to be held in New Zealand.
- Veteran actor Shashi Kapoor passed away. Shashi Kapoor made his Bollywood debut in 1961, as the lead actor, in the film Dharmputra.
- The World Soil Day was celebrated on 5 December globally. The Theme for Soil Day 2017 is 'Caring for the Planet starts from the Ground'.
- The Fifteenth Finance Commission held its first meeting under the Chairmanship of Shri N.K. Singh. The Commission approved the setting-up of its office at Jawahar Vyapar Bhawan on Janpath in New Delhi.
- Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district was included in the National Capital Region (NCR), taking the total number of districts in the NCR to 23. Cities in the NCR get funds at "attractive" interest rates from the National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB) for infrastructure development. Besides Delhi, there are at present 22 districts 13 of Haryana, seven of Uttar Pradesh and two of Rajasthan in the NCR.
- British singer-songwriter Ellie Goulding signed as a Global Goodwill Ambassador for UN Environment, joining the fight to save the lives and habitats of people and animals by cleaning up our air and seas, fighting climate change and protecting species.

- India's largest floating solar power plant opened in Kerala (Banasura Sagar dam in Wayanad).
- Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has announced the creation of a new virtual currency named 'Petro' in a bid to ease the country's economic crisis.
- The 10th Jaipur International Film Festival (JIFF) is all set to present International Cinema to film buffs. JIFF is the first film festival in the country that selects documentary films too.
- International Solar Alliance (ISA) has now become a treaty-based international intergovernmental organization, which aims at increasing solar energy deployment in member countries. The ISA was jointly launched by the PM Narendra Modi and the president of France in November 2015 in Paris.
- The Madhya Pradesh Assembly unanimously passed a Bill awarding death to those found guilty of raping girls aged 12 and below. With this, Madhya Pradesh becomes the first State where those convicted of such rapes will face the gallows.
- Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been voted the Time magazine readers' Person of the Year, despite spearheading the continued bombardment of Yemen, leading to the starvation of its citizens. The award goes to those who "for better or worse" influenced the year.
- #MeToo 'Silence Breakers', the vanguard of a global movement by millions of women to share their stories of sexual harassment and abuse, was revealed to be Time magazine's Person of the Year.
- Sixteen-year-old Mohamad Al Jounde from Syria was awarded the International Children's Peace Prize for his efforts to ensure the rights of Syrian refugee children.
- Russia was banned from the 2018 Winter Games by the International Olympic Committee over its state-orchestrated doping programme, but clean Russian athletes will be allowed to compete under an Olympic flag.
- Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh will be promoting a UNICEF sports initiative for youngsters in South Asia, which will also have the ICC's backing. Yuvraj launched the "Power of Sports to Shape the Future of Adolescents" campaign in South Asia.
- Uttar Pradesh becomes the first state to endorse the Centre's draft bill that makes instant triple talaq a cognizable and non-bailable offense.
- Armed Forces Flag Day was observed throughout the country on 7 December to honor the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiantly fought on our borders to safeguard the country's honor.
- The government has set up a high-level committee headed by NITI Aayog chief executive Amitabh Kant to address the problem of stressed assets (Non-performing assets) in India's power sector.
- India's largest digital bank Paytm Payments Bank is the only bank providing zero balance accounts and zero charges on digital transactions. The bank has unveiled 'Paytm Ka ATM' outlets that allows customers to open Saving Accounts and deposit/ withdraw money from their bank accounts. Vijay Shekhar Sharma is the Chairman of the Paytm Payments Bank.

- UNESCO has inscribed 'Kumbh Mela' on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The 'Kumbh Mela' is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on the earth.
- Australia's parliament has legislated for marriage equality, passing a bill almost unanimously to allow two people, regardless of sex, to marry. Australia now becomes the 25th country to recognize same-sex marriage.
- Kacheguda Railway Station in Hyderabad under the South Central Railway (SCR) has earned the unique distinction of being the first Energy Efficient 'A1 Category' Railway Station on Indian Railways. The station has achieved 100% energy efficiency by replacing 1,312 conventional lights with light-emitting diode (LED) lighting, among other steps.
- The Kerala government has decided to raise the legal drinking age from 21 to 23 years.
- The Taj Mahal, India's iconic ivory-white marble mausoleum in Agra, is the second best UNESCO world heritage site in the world, according to a new survey by online travel portal TripAdvisor. The Taj Mahal is rated after Cambodia's Angkor Wat.
- President of USA Donald Trump has announced that the US now recognizes Jerusalem as Israel's capital.
- In a significant development, elite export control regime Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) decided to admit India as its new member. India's entry into the export control regime would enhance its credentials in the field of non-proliferation despite not being a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) is the first global multilateral arrangement on export controls for conventional weapons and sensitive dual-use goods and technologies.
- The waste management system being implemented in Kerala's coastal town of Alappuzha has been recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as one of the five models across the world for fighting the pollution menace.
- Axis Securities, a subsidiary of Axis Bank, has become the first-ever broking arm of a bank to take membership of a commodity exchange by registering itself with NCDEX (National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange).
- Star Screen Awards were announced. Vidya Balan bagged the award for Best Actress (Critics) for Tumhari Sulu, Irrfan won the Best Actor Award for his performance in 'Hindi Medium'. Rajkummar Rao won the Best Actor Award (Critics) for Newton & Best Actor in a Supporting Role Award for Bareilly Ki Barfi as well.
- Kanchanmala Pande became the first Indian to win World Para Swimming Championship Gold.
- Cristiano Ronaldo (from Portugal) has won the Ballon d'Or for a fifth time to move level with rival Lionel Messi. The Real Madrid forward was named the winner of France Football's prestigious award at a ceremony in Paris, France.
- Half a billion people have gained access to electricity in India since 2000, almost doubling the country's electrification rate, according to the World Energy Access report released by the International Energy Agency (IEA). This "remarkable" growth puts India on course to achieving access to electricity for all in the early 2020s, the report added.

- India has been declared free from infectious Trachoma which is a contagious bacterial infection of the eye.
- On the occasion of International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Sarvesh Kumar Tiwari, was appointed as the President of Para-Sports Foundation (PSF), India.
- Minister of State for Culture (Independent Charge) Dr. Mahesh Sharma has inaugurated the three days 'Bodhi Parva: BIMSTEC Festival of Buddhist Heritage' in New Delhi.
- The international football federation, FIFA, has lifted a two-year suspension against Kuwait's football association.
- Human Rights Day was observed on 10th December. This year, Human Rights Day kicks off a year-long campaign to mark the upcoming 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a milestone document. The Campaign is named as #standup4humanrights.
- Musician Diddy was on the top of Forbes' annual world's highest-paid musician list.
- A unit of China Three Gorges Corp. is building a 1 billion yuan (\$151 million) floating solar power plant, the world's biggest, in the nation's eastern province of Anhui.
- BSE's India International Exchange (India INX) has received approval from the capital market regulator SEBI on the framework for the listing of debt securities.
- Senior IAS officer Pradeep Singh Kharola took charge as the Chairman and Managing Director of Air India.
- Rahul Gandhi has been elected 16th President of Congress since Independence.
- India defeated Germany in the Hockey World League Final to grab the bronze medal at the event, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- Lalji Singh, a pioneer of DNA fingerprinting technology in India and former Vice-Chancellor of Benares Hindu University, BHU (2011 to 2014), passed away..
- The Government to Government Umbrella Agreement between India and Germany concerning Financial Cooperation in 2016 (II) under the Indo-German Development Cooperation was signed to formalize an amount up to Euro 200 million for the Financial Cooperation in form of loan for the project 'Climate Friendly Urban Mobility III' and Euro 11 million accompanying measures in form of grant for four projects.