

GENERAL AWARENESS UPDATES:- (9th January – 15th January, 2018)

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Parliamentary Conference in Delhi on the occasion of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The day is celebrated every year to mark the contribution of the overseas Indian community in the development of India. It also commemorates the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to Mumbai on 9 January 1915. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is held from 7-9 January every year.
- Union Minister of Earth Sciences Dr Harsh Vardhan dedicated India's fastest and first multi-petaflops supercomputer named 'Pratyush' to the nation in Pune. It is established at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune.
- Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal launched a common card for rides on public buses and the metro. Delhi is the first city in the country to have a common mobility card.
- World's largest Ice Festival 'International Ice and Snow Festival' was held in Harbin, China.
- Music composer A R Rahman became the brand ambassador of Sikkim.
- Gujarat has topped the logistics index chart, according to a Report released by Union Minister for Commerce & Industry Suresh Prabhu in New Delhi. The chart is an indicator of the efficiency of logistical services necessary for promoting exports in particular and economic growth in general. Among the Union Territories, Daman & Diu occupied the top slot.
- Peter Sutherland, the first Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), has passed away in Dublin, Ireland.
- The Matunga suburban station on the Central Railway (CR) has found its way into the Limca Book of Records for having an all-woman staff. Matunga station is situated in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- Punjab National Bank (PNB) and National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) have tied up to provide financial assistance for economic empowerment of persons belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) families living below Double Poverty Line (DPL).
- World Bank has projected India's growth rate at 7.3 percent in 2018 and 7.5 for the next two years.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has appointed Dilip Asbe as Managing Director and CEO of the organisation. NPCI is an umbrella organisation for retail payment systems in India.
- Professional player Aditya Mehta won the Kolkata Open 2018 International Invitation Snooker Championship in the capital city of West Bengal Kolkata. In the final he defeated Englishman Professional Player Alfie Burden.
- Aanchal Thakur made history as she won India's first ever international medal in skiing. The 21-year-old clinched bronze in the coveted Alpine Ejder 3200 Cup. The Championship was organised by the Federation Internationale de Ski (skiing's international governing body) in Erzurum, Turkey. She won the medal in the slalom race category.

- The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has introduced a concept of 'Virtual ID' to further strengthen privacy and security of Aadhaar number holders. The Aadhaar number holder can use 'Virtual ID' in place of an Aadhaar number whenever authentication or KYC services are performed. Aadhaar card holder can generate the Virtual ID from UIDAI website and give for various purposes, including SIM card verification, instead of sharing the actual 12-digit biometric ID.
- Jeff Bezos, founder and CEO of Amazon has become the richest man in the history, overtaking the wealth Bill Gates ever had to his name, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) appointed Harjinder Singh as the Chef De Mission for the 23rd Winter Olympic Games to be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea in February 2018.
- Noted rocket scientist Sivan K was appointed as the 9th chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). He has replaced A.S. Kiran Kumar.
- The National Youth Day has been celebrated every year on 12 January. This is the day when **Swami** Vivekananda, one of the greatest social reformers, thinkers, and philosophers of India, was born.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched its 42nd Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) from the First Launch Pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The PSLV-C40 is to place 31 satellites, originating from seven countries, across two orbits. ISRO successfully sent up a rocket carrying India's 100th satellite along with 30 others.
- China became Nepal's second internet service provider, breaking India's monopoly in providing internet access to Nepal.
- IndusInd Bank and Dynamics Inc. announced plans to introduce the first battery-powered, interactive payment cards to the Indian market in 2018.
- India has signed an MoU with the United Kingdom to enable the return of illegal Indian migrants within a month of their detection by authorities abroad.
- American and Japanese military forces have launched joint exercise named 'Iron Fist'.
- The Supreme Court collegium has recommended the name of senior advocate Indu Malhotra as the first woman lawyer to be directly appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court of India. She will be the seventh woman judge since independence to make it to the Supreme Court. At present, Justice R Banumathi is the lone woman judge in the apex court. The first woman to be appointed as a judge of the apex court since independence was Justice M Fathima Beevi in 1989.
- India has emerged as a top borrower from the China-sponsored Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with USD 1.5 billion worth of loans last year and USD three billion more in the pipeline.
- The 70th Army Day was celebrated on 15th January 2018 to pay homage and salute to the courageous and brave Indian soldiers who have been sacrificing their lives for protecting the country. Every year on this day, the 'Army Day' is celebrated to commemorate the day when General (later Field Marshal) K.M Cariappa took over the command of Army from General Sir F.R.R Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief in 1949 and became the first Commander-in-Chief of Indian Army post Independence.

- Benjamin Netanyahu became the second Israeli PM to visit India after Ariel Sharon.
- The World Economic Forum (WEF) has ranked India at 30th position on a global manufacturing index.
- IDFC Bank and Capital First have approved a merger of Capital First with IDFC Bank.
- The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)'s India International Exchange listed the first bond on its Global Securities Market. The bonds issued by Indian Railways Finance Corporation (IRFC) are one of the highest credit rated bonds issued by an Indian corporate and has been IRFC's first foray into the Green Bond market.
- Maharashtra's mine workers who face an increased risk of tuberculosis will be part of awareness programmes on the illness, as part of a partnership that the Maharashtra Government recently formalized with Johnson & Johnson. The collaboration would also look at infection prevention, diabetes, obesity and menstrual hygiene and support healthcare professionals and nurses in the State to develop skills in these areas.