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Aim4Aims Current Affairs Supplement

September 2015 Current Affairs

- Financial Times released data on FDI in H1 2015; India emerged most-favoured destination
- The Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment launched Accessible India campaign
- International Translation Day observed across the world ON 30TH SEPTEMBER
- The theme of the International Translation Day 2015 was The Changing Face of Translation and Interpreting
- **Jayant Prasad appointed as Director General of Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses**

- Maharashtra Government declared 2017 as Visit Maharashtra Year
- World Heart Day 2015 celebrated with theme creating heart-healthy environments **ON 29TH SEPTEMBER**
- Ministry of Railways launched Indian Railway Knowledge Portal
- Union Ministry of Tourism launched new initiatives on World Tourism Day **ON 29TH SEPTEMBER**
- India's 1st dedicated satellite for astronomy research ASTROSAT launched
- World Tourism Day observed with theme One Billion Tourists, One Billion Opportunities **ON 28TH SEPTEMBER**
- Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM): India's Pride
The Mars Orbiter Mission (MOM) on 24 September 2015 successfully completed one year of the mission life around Mars with a large data set acquired by all five payloads of MOM.
- Indian Air Force won 2015 Baba Farid Gold Cup hockey title
- Haryana Government to develop Gurgaon as Smart City
- World Rhino Day observed across the world **ON 23RD SEPTEMBER**
In India, the day was observed with all-day awareness programmes at Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park and Laokhowa Burachapori.
- PV Chandran elected President of Indian Newspaper Society for 2015-16
- Cow declared as National Animal of Nepal
- International Day of Peace observed globally **ON 21ST SEPTEMBER**
The theme of International Day of Peace for the year 2015 is Partnerships for Peace-Dignity for All.
- Sebastian Vettel won 2015 Singapore Grand Prix of Formula One
- PM Narendra Modi formally launched Integrated Power Development Scheme from Varanasi
- Godavari, Krishna Rivers formally linked at Ibrahimpatnam Ferry village in Andhra Pradesh

The two rivers were linked under the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme on Godavari River at Pattisam village in West Godavari district. International Day of Democracy observed with the theme Space for Civil Society **ON 17TH SEPTEMBER**

- 21st International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer observed across the world **ON 16TH SEPTEMBER**

The theme and the slogan for the year 2015 are 30 Years of Healing the Ozone Together and Ozone: All there is between you and UV respectively.

- World's longest Continental Volcanic Chain discovered in Australia
- Mount Aso, the largest volcano of Japan erupted
- Hindi Divas observed on 14 September across India **ON 14TH SEPTEMBER**

The day was observed to promote the Matra Bhasha – the mother tongue of India and show its importance as a language in the country and the world at large.

- SpiceJet became first-ever airline to make night landing at Port Blair's Veer Savarkar Airport
- Flavia Pennetta won 2015 US Open Women's Singles title
- Novak Djokovic defeated Roger Federer to win 2015 US Open Men's Singles title
- Leander Paes, Martina Hingis won US Open Mixed Doubles Title 2015
- World Suicide Prevention Day observed with theme Preventing Suicide: Reaching Out and Saving Lives **ON 10TH SEPTEMBER**

The 2015 theme, Preventing Suicide: Reaching Out and Saving Lives, encourages us all to consider the role that offering support may play in combating suicide.

- President conferred Gandhi Peace Prize on ISRO
- Queen Elizabeth II became longest-reigning UK monarch
- International Literacy Day 2015 celebrated across the world **ON 8TH SEPTEMBER**

The theme of International Literacy Day 2015 is Literacy and Sustainable Societies.

- Teacher's Day celebrated across India on birth anniversary of Dr S Radhakrishnan **ON 5TH SEPTEMBER**
- Logo for 2020 Tokyo Olympics Games scrapped amid plagiarism accusation
Belgian designer Olivier Debie claimed that the design was similar to his 2013 logo for the Theatre de Liege.
- Swachhata Sangraam Abhiyaan in Indore to make it open defecation-free
- Tejinder Pal Singh named as Australian of the Day by Commonwealth Bank

October 2015 Current Affairs

- National Unity Day observed across India **ON 31ST OCTOBER**
- **On this occasion of 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, PM Narendra Modi flagged off Run for Unity at Rajpath in New Delhi.**
- China abandoned its decades old 'One Child Policy'
The restriction was introduced in 1980 as a way to curb the population and limit demands for water and other resources.
- Russia to launch manned moon missions by 2029
- India is World's largest remittance recipient: World Bank
- Doordarshan emerged as most watched Hindi channel
- World Polio Day observed globally **ON 30TH OCTOBER**
World Polio Day was established by Rotary International over a decade ago to commemorate the birth of Jonas Salk, who led the first team to develop a vaccine against poliomyelitis.
- PM Narendra Modi laid foundation stone of Amaravati, new capital of Andhra Pradesh
Amaravati is the fifth preceded capital city built in independent India followed by Gandhinagar, Chandigarh, Bhubaneswar and Naya Raipur.
- Saina Nehwal lost World No. 1 ranking to Carolina Marin
According to the latest Badminton World Federation (BWF) rankings, Nehwal dropped to No. 2 spot in women's singles with 81782 points.
- Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day observed on 21 October
Almost one-third of world's population is exposed to the risk of iodine deficiency disorders. Iodine deficiency is also the world's single greatest cause of preventable mental retardation.
- AB de Villiers named brand ambassador of MRF
- World Statistics Day observed across the world **ON 29TH OCTOBER**
This year celebrations mark the second observance of the World Statistics Day with the theme Better Data, Better Lives.
- Urvashi Rautela crowned Miss Diva 2015
- VK Malhotra appointed as head of the All India Council of Sports
- Novak Djokovic won 2015 Shanghai Rolex Masters tennis title
- Nobel laureate Kailash Satyarthi conferred Harvard University's 2015 Humanitarian of the Year Award
- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty observed globally **ON 17TH OCTOBER**
The theme of the day was Building a sustainable future: Coming together to end poverty and discrimination.

- World Food Day observed with the theme Social Protection and Agriculture **ON 16TH OCTOBER**
- Arun Jaitley chosen 'Finance Minister of the Year, Asia' by Emerging Markets
- **List of Nobel Prize Winners 2015**

Nobel Prizes 2015 was announced by the Nobel Assembly from 5 October to 12 October 2015. The prizes were announced in different sections, namely Physics, Chemistry, Physiology, Literature, Peace and Economics.

The Nobel Peace Prize 2015

- **Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet**



It was awarded for its decisive contribution to the building of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia in the wake of Jasmine revolution of 2011.

- **The Nobel Prize in Literature 2015**
Svetlana Alexievich (Belarus)



- **The Nobel Prize in Physics 2015**

Arthur B McDonald (USA) and Takaaki Kajita (Japan)



- **The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2015**
William C Campbell (Ireland), Satoshi Omura (Japan) and Youyou Tu (China)



The 2015 prize was divided, one half jointly to William C Campbell (Ireland) and Satoshi Omura (Japan) for their discoveries concerning a novel therapy against infections caused by roundworm parasites and the other half to Youyou Tu (China) for her discoveries concerning a novel therapy against Malaria.

- **The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel 2015**
Angus Deaton (UK)



- **The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2015**

Tomas Lindahl (UK), Paul Modrich (USA) and Aziz Sancar (USA)



Tomas Lindahl, Paul Modrich and Aziz Sancar were on 7 October 2015 jointly awarded with the 2015 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for having mapped how cells repair damaged DNA and safeguard the genetic information at a molecular level.

How cells repair damaged DNA?

Each day our DNA is damaged by UV radiation, free radicals and other carcinogenic substances, but even without such external attacks, a DNA molecule is inherently unstable. Thousands of spontaneous changes to a cell's genome occur on a daily basis.

Defects can also arise when DNA is copied during cell division, a process that occurs several million times every day in the human body. The reason our genetic material does not disintegrate into complete chemical chaos is that a host of molecular systems continuously monitor and repair DNA.

However, these three pioneering scientists have mapped that how several repair systems

function at a detailed molecular level. Tomas Lindahl demonstrated that DNA decays at a rate that ought to have made the development of life on Earth impossible. This insight led him to discover molecular machinery named Base Excision Repair which constantly counteracts the collapse of our DNA.

Aziz Sancar mapped Nucleotide Excision Repair, the mechanism that cells use to repair UV damage to DNA. People born with defects in this repair system will develop skin cancer if they are exposed to sunlight. The cell also utilises nucleotide excision repair to correct defects.

Furthermore, Paul Modrich demonstrated how the cell corrects errors that occur when DNA is replicated during cell division. This mechanism, Mismatch Repair, reduces the error frequency during DNA replication by about a thousand fold.

- 2015 Annual meetings of World Bank Group and IMF held in Peru
- NASA released Plan outlining Next Steps in the Journey to Mars with an aim to establish colonies by 2030s
- Fourth International Day of the Girl Child observed across the world **ON 12TH OCTOBER**
The theme for the 2015 International Day of the Girl Child is The Power of Adolescent Girl: Vision for 2030.
- Sania Mirza-Martina Hingis won women's doubles title of China Open
- Kerala Government launched Operation Valsalya to track missing children
- World Egg Day Observed across the world **ON 9TH OCTOBER**
As decided by the Union Government, the 20th World Egg Day was celebrated in four cities of the country- Bhubaneswar, Lucknow, Mumbai and Vijayawada.
- World Post Day observed globally
- Music composer AR Rahman named as Cultural Ambassador of Seychelles
- World Sight Day observed on 8 October with theme Eye care for all
- 83rd Air Force Day observed across India **ON 8TH OCTOBER**
- Sergey Karjakin won the 2015 FIDE World Chess Cup
- Second phase of Mission Indradhanush launched in 352 districts
The second phase of the programme aims at achieving more than 90 per cent full immunization in the country by 2020.
- World Habitat Day observed across the world **ON 8TH OCTOBER**
The theme of 2015 World Habitat Day is Public Spaces for All, an aim to recognize the challenges and issues around Public Spaces.

- National Anti-Drug Addiction Day observed on 2 October
It was observed to mark the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi who condemned the use of drugs.
- Sania Mirza-Martina Hingis won women's doubles title of Wuhan Tennis Open
- Shashank Manohar elected BCCI President
- International Day of Non-Violence observed across the world **ON 2ND OCTOBER**
It was celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, a pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.
- World Vegetarian Day observed globally
World Vegetarian Day initiates the month of October as Vegetarian Awareness Month, which ends with November 1, World Vegan Day, as the end of that month of celebration
- International Day of Older Persons observed across the world **ON 1ST OCTOBER**
The theme of the International Day of Older Persons 2015 was Sustainability and Age Inclusiveness in the Urban Environment

November 2015 Current Affairs

- India defeated Bangladesh to win Under-19 Tri-Series cricket title
- World Robot Olympiad, 2015 held in Doha; 2016 session to be held in Delhi
- 2015 likely to be the warmest year on record: WMO
- National Milk Day observed in India **ON 26TH NOVEMBER**
The Day was observed to mark 94th birth anniversary of the Father of the White Revolution Dr Verghese Kurien.
- International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women observed **ON 26TH NOVEMBER**
- Operation Inherent Resolve to tackle ISIS
OIR is the US military operation name for the intervention against ISIS, including both the campaign in Iraq and the campaign in Syria
- Djokovic became 1st player to win ATP World Tour Finals for 4th consecutive time
- World Toilet Day observed on 19 November with the theme Sanitation and Nutrition
- Delhi Government approved Jan Lokpal Bill, 2015
- Justice T S Thakur appointed Chief Justice of India
- WHO launched World Antibiotic Awareness Week with the theme Antibiotics: handle with care
The aim of the campaign is to check growing antibiotic resistance across the world.
- Siril Verma clinched silver at World Junior Badminton Championships

- International Day for Tolerance observed across the world **ON 16TH NOVEMBER**
World Pneumonia Day observed with the theme Every Breath Counts: Stop Pneumonia Now **ON 14TH NOVEMBER**
- **Pneumonia is the biggest infectious killer of children under 5 accounting for 16 percent of deaths.**
- Children's Day observed across India on 14 November
Every year, the day is celebrated to pay tribute to the memory of late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on his birth anniversary.
- Abraham M Keita from Liberia won the 2015 International Children's Peace Prize
- World Science Day for Peace and Development 2015 observed **ON 10TH NOVEMBER**
- The theme for 2015 is Science for a Sustainable Future.
- WHO officially declared Sierra Leone Ebola-free
- Indian Army successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile in Rajasthan
- FIFA World Rankings 2015: Belgium topped for first time
- Hindi largest spoken Indian language in US: Census Bureau of US
- Maharashtra approved APJ Abdul Kalam Amrut Yojna for pregnant and lactating women
- Roger Federer won 2015 Swiss Indoors men's singles title by defeating Rafael Nadal
- Sania Mirza-Martina Hingis won women's doubles title of Singapore Open

December 2015 Current Affairs

- China amended One Couple, One Child Policy
The amended policy is aimed at balancing the country's population structure by allowing all couples to have two children.
- Good Governance Day observed on 25 December
The day was observed to mark the birth anniversary of former-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- 30th National Consumers Right Day observed **ON 24TH DECEMBER**
- National Mathematics Day observed to commemorate birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan **ON 22ND DECEMBER**
- Andy Murray won 2015 BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award
- Cow named Yahoo's Personality of the Year
- UN launched 2016 International Year of Pulses
- International Migrants Day observed across the world **ON 18TH DECEMBER**
- French President Francois Hollande to be Chief Guest at Republic Day in India
- Vijay Diwas observed across the country to commemorate India's victory in 1971 war **ON 16TH DECEMBER**

The end of the India- Pakistan war 1971 resulted in subsequent secession of East Pakistan into Bangladesh.

- Salman Rushdie honoured with Mailer Prize for Lifetime Achievement
- Naseeruddin Shah honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award at Dubai International Film Festival
- World's first dengue vaccine, Dengvaxia, approved for use in Mexico
- TIME Magazine named German Chancellor Merkel as 2015 'Person of the Year'
- Human Rights Day observed across the world **ON 10TH DECEMBER**
- International Anti-Corruption Day observed across the world **ON 9TH DECEMBER**
- Delhi Government announced vehicle rationing scheme to curb air pollution
- Armed Forces Flag Day observed across India **ON 7TH DECEMBER**
- **The total forest and tree cover in India is 79.42 million hectare, which is 24.16 percent of the total geographical area.**
- International Volunteer Day observed globally on **5th December with theme of The world is changing. Are you? Volunteer!**
- 44th Navy Day observed on 4 December
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities observed with theme Inclusion Matters on **3rd December**
- World AIDS Day observed across the world on **1st December with theme "Getting to zero"**
- Union Government launched IPV injection as part of Global Polio Endgame Strategy

January 2016 Current Affairs

- Anti-Leprosy Day observed on 30 January 2016
Annually, the day is celebrated in the memory of Mahatma Gandhi in order to re-memorize his selfless efforts and care for the people affected by the infectious disease leprosy
- Sania Mirza, Martina Hingis won 2016 Australian Open women's doubles tennis title
- Human Rights up Front: An initiative to strengthen United Nations preventive work
The initiative was launched by Secretary General Ban-Ki moon in December 2013 to prevent and respond to serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law.
- Madhya Pradesh to impose ban on polythene from January 2017
- India successfully test fired Akash missile at Chandipur
- Ashok Chakra awarded posthumously to Lance Naik Mohan Nath Goswami
- President Rule imposed in Arunachal Pradesh
- International Customs Day observed on 26 January

- Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes Amendment Act, 2015 came into force
The act came into force on 26 January 2016 to ensure more stringent provisions for prevention of Atrocities against Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.

67th India's Republic Day celebrated

- **Who:** 67th India's Republic Day
- **Where:** Across India
- **What:** Celebrated
- **When:** 26 January 2016



- **Main Highlights of 2016 Republic Day Parade**

- For the first time since 1950, a foreign army contingent marched down the Rajpath during the Republic Day parade. The 76-member French Army contingent was the participant of the parade.
- The parade witnessed participation of some of India's most highly trained dogs from the army's Veterinary Corps, after 26 years.
- The celebration was curtailed by 25 minute. The duration was brought down to 90 minutes from 115 minutes, but the format will remain the same.
- For the first time, an all-women stunt contingent named 'Women Daredevils CRPF' comprising of 120 soldiers will performed stunts on bikes. Apart from this women officers were also 2nd in command to the contingents of Air Force, Coast Guard and Navy.
- For the first time, the tableau of ex-servicemen of Army veterans was also showcased in the parade.
- The VVIP enclosure had a motorised glass roof so as to protect them from rain and cold weather, as in 2015 Chief guest Barack Obama and Michelle Obama held umbrellas to protect themselves from the drizzle at the Republic Day parade event.

- 9th National Girl Child Day observed on 24 January
- India won Blind T20 Asia Cup
- Rahul Thakkar won an Oscar Award for technical achievement

- 2015 is Earth's warmest year since 1880: NOAA
- PSLV-C31 successfully launched IRNSS-1E satellite

The Indian Regional Navigational Satellite System (IRNSS) 1-E satellite is the fifth of the seven-satellite constellation IRNSS.

- Sikkim declared first organic farming state of India
- PM Narendra Modi launched Start-up India initiative

As part of the initiative, a slew of financial, policy and regulatory measures were announced to give impetus to startup ecosystem in the country.

- Sania Mirza, Martina Hingis won 2016 WTA Apia International Sydney Title
- 68th Army Day celebrated on 15 January
- WHO declared end of Ebola outbreak in West Africa

The declaration came 42 days (two 21-day incubation cycles of the virus) after the last confirmed patient in Liberia tested negative for the disease 2 times.

- Union Cabinet approved Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana to boost the farming sector
- Kerala became first State to achieve 100% primary education
- National Youth Day observed on 12 January to mark birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda
- 11th World Hindi Day observed on 10 January

73rd Annual Golden Globe Awards announced in California

- **Who:** 73rd Annual Golden Globe Awards
- **Where:** California
- **What:** Announced
- **When:** Honour the best in Motion Pictures and Television for the year 2015
- The 73rd Annual Golden Globe Awards were announced on 11 January 2015 at Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, California, the US. These annual awards honour the best in Motion Pictures and Television for the year 2015.
- The Revenant won the Best Motion Picture – Drama while best Actor and best Director Awards were conferred to Leonardo DiCaprio and Alejandro Inarritu for the same movie. Brie Larson won the best actress award for 'The Martian' Movie.
- **List of winners of the 73rd annual Golden Globe Awards:**

Category	Film	Name
Picture, Drama	The Revenant	

Picture, Musical or Comedy	The Martian	
Actor, Drama:	The Revenant	Leonardo DiCaprio,
Actress, Drama:	Room	Brie Larson,
Director	The Revenant	Alejandro Inarritu,
Actor, Musical or Comedy	The Martian	Matt Damon
Actress, Musical or Comedy	Joy	Jennifer Lawrence


- Stanislas Wawrinka won third consecutive Chennai Open title
- Sania Mirza-Martina Hingis won Brisbane Tennis trophy
- Operation Green Hunt to hunt Maoists
The operation along five states in the Red Corridor since 2009 came in news after Maoists called a two-day bandh opposing it in Nuapada, Malkangiri and Kalahandi districts of Odisha.
- Wattan Ko Jano initiative: A programme that aims to expose youth from J&K to rest of India
- US President Barack Obama unveiled Steps to Reduce Gun Violence
The executive actions will require more gun sellers to get licenses and gun buyers to undergo background checks.
- World Braille Day observed on 4 January
The day was observed to commemorate the birth anniversary of Louis Braille who invented the Braille script to help visually challenged.
- India successfully test-fired indigenously developed MBRL Pinaka II at Pokhran
- WHO officially declared Guinea Ebola-free

February 2016 Current Affairs

Union Budget 2016-17: Agriculture and Farmer Welfare

- **Who:** Union Budget 2016-17
- **Where:** Lok Sabha
- **What:** Presented

- **When:** 29 February 2016
- The Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on 29 February 2016 presented **the Annual Financial Statement or the Union Budget for 2016-17** in the Lok Sabha. In his budget speech the minister listed **nine pillars** on which the Government will focus **to transform India into a developed nation**.
- **The nine pillars are** - Agriculture and farmers' welfare, rural sector, social sector including healthcare, education, skills and job creation, infrastructure, financial sector reforms, ease of doing business, fiscal discipline, tax reforms to reduce compliance burden.
- Herein we present the new initiatives proposed and allocation made to rejuvenate agriculture sector and improve the livelihoods of farmers.
- **Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare**
- **Vision & Objective:** The vision is to move beyond the traditional idea of food security to income security. It will be achieved by making farmers profitable and agriculture profitable.
- The objective is to reorient Government's interventions in the farm and non-farm sectors so that the income of the farmers will be doubled by 2022. Total allocation for Agriculture and Farmers' welfare in 2016-17 will be 35984 crore rupees.
 - **New initiatives:** A dedicated **Long Term Irrigation Fund** will be created in **NABARD** with an initial corpus of about **20000 crore rupees**.
 - In order to ensure the benefit of MSP reaches farmers in all parts of the country **3 specific initiatives** will be taken up in 2016-17. They initiatives are
- Encouraging remaining States to take up decentralized procurement
- Undertaking an online Procurement System through the Food Corporation of India
- Taking up effective arrangements for pulses procurement
 - 850 crore rupees will be spent on **4 new dairying projects**. They are –
- **Pashudhan Sanjivani**, an animal wellness programme and provision of Animal Health Cards (**Nakul Swasthya Patra**)
- Programme on Advanced Breeding Technology
- Creation of **E-Pashudhan Haat**, an e market portal for connecting breeders and farmers
- **Nakul Swasthya Patra**, E-Pashudhan Haat and National Genomic Centre for indigenous breeds
 - **A Unified Agricultural Marketing ePlatform** will be set up to provide a common emarket platform for wholesale markets. It will be dedicated to the nation on the birthday of Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar on 14 April 2016.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total allocation - ₹35,984 cr. • 'PM Krishi Sinchai Yojana' in mission mode - 28.5 lakh hectares under irrigation • Long Term Irrigation Fund in NABARD - initial corpus of ₹20,000 cr. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89 languishing irrigation projects covering 80.6 lakh hectares fast-tracked • Soil Health Card scheme - to cover all 14 cr. farm holdings • Unified Agricultural Marketing ePlatform - common platform for wholesale markets • ₹15,000 cr. fund for interest subvention to reduce burden of loan repayment on farmers • PM Fasal Bima Yojana - allocation of ₹5,500 cr.
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- **Irrigation:** Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana will be implemented in mission mode. Under the scheme which was approved by the Union Government in July 2015 28.5 lakh hectares will be brought under irrigation.
- Implementation of 89 irrigation projects covering 80.6 lakh hectares under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP), which are languishing for a long time, will be fast tracked.
- 5 lakh farm ponds and dug wells in rain fed areas and 10 lakh compost pits for production of organic manure will be taken up under MGNREGA.
- **Credit facilities:** Against the target of 8.5 lakh crore rupees in 2015-16, the target for agricultural credit in 2016-17 will be an all-time high of 9 lakh crore rupees.
- To reduce the burden of loan repayment on farmers, a provision of 15000 crore rupees has been made towards interest subvention in the BE 2016-17.
- **Insurance:** Allocation under Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana will be 5500 crore rupees. The scheme was approved by the Union Government in January 2016.
- **Price Stabilization:** 500 crores rupees have been allotted under National Food Security Mission to augment production of pulses. The number of districts covered increased to 622.
- **Soil Fertility:** Soil Health Card scheme will cover all 14 crore farm holdings by March 2017. 368 crore rupees has been provided for National Project on Soil Health and Fertility.
 - 2000 model retail outlets of Fertilizer companies will be provided with soil and seed testing facilities during the next three years
 - Promote organic farming will be promoted through **Parmparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana** and **Organic Value Chain Development** in North East Region.

- **Mobilisation of resources: Krishi Kalyan Cess** of 0.5 percentage will be imposed on all taxable service starting from 1 June 2016. The proceeds would be exclusively used for financing initiatives for improvement of agriculture and welfare of farmers.
- Surcharge levied at 7.5 percentage of undisclosed income will be called **Krishi Kalyan Surcharge (KKS)** to be used for agriculture and rural economy.
- National Science Day observed with theme Scientific Issues for Development of the Nation
The day is observed annually to mark the discovery of the Raman Effect (phenomenon of scattering of photons) by Indian physicist Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman on 28 February 1928.
- Mumbai won Ranji Trophy for the 41st time
- Lok Sabha passed Election Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Rail Budget History and Important facts

- In technical sense, Railway Budget is an annual financial statement that shows estimated receipts and expenditures related to the Indian Railways in the coming financial year.
- However, in the real sense, it is treated as a key policy document that unveils the Government's initiatives and programmes related to the development of the Indian Railways.
- Railway Budget is a unique feature of the Indian Parliamentary system. Probably, India is the only country in the world to have a budget dealing with a specific segment of the transport sector. A separate budget for the Railways also signifies the fact that the central role the Railways play in the economic and social life of the country.
- **Key facts related to Indian Railway Budget**
 - A separate Railway Budget, which is different from the General Budget, was first introduced in 1924 on the basis of recommendations of the 10-member Acworth Committee.
 - The committee, which submitted its report in 1921, was headed by British railway economist William Mitchell Acworth. It was appointed by the British Government to suggest measures for improving financial performance of the Railways.
 - It is presented by the Union Railway Minister annually as a money bill in the Lok Sabha. The first ever live telecast of the Railway budget took place on 24 March 1994.
 - Though the term Railway Budget is nowhere mentioned in the Constitution of India, it is introduced and passed in the Lok Sabha under the Articles 112 and 204 of the Constitution that govern the General Budget.

- Usually, the Rail budget is presented annually few days prior to the presentation of the General Budget. It precedes the submission of the Economic Survey of the previous financial year.
- The Indian Railways is one the largest Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) in India. It holds the distinction of providing employment to around 1.36 million.
- The first passenger train under the tag name of Indian Railways ran on 16 April 1853 between Bombay and Thane in present day Maharashtra.
- The Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) located in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi introduced Computer reservation system for the first time in July 1986.
- Lalu Prasad Yadav holds the record of presenting the budget for six years in a row. He was the Union Minister of Railways between 2004 and 2009 under the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government.
- In 2002, Mamata Banerjee became the first women minister to present the budget. She also holds the distinction of presenting the budget under two different governments – National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the UPA.
- In 2014, Railway Minister D V Sadananda Gowda presented the first railway budget, under the NDA Government headed by Narendra Modi.

- Union Government launched Swachh Paryatan Mobile App
- World Day of Social Justice observed on **22nd February**

The day was observed with the theme A Just Transition - environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

- Former French Open champion Francesca Schiavone won Rio Open Title
- International Mother Language Day observed on February 21
The theme for the year 2016 is Quality education, language(s) of instruction and learning outcomes.
- PM Narendra Modi launched Rurban Mission in Chhattisgarh
The Rurban Mission seeks to develop smart village on the line of smart cities and reduce the burden of migration to the cities through adopting 'cluster approach'
- PM Modi released guidelines for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana at Kisan Mela in MP
- West Bengal government launched Utkarsh Bangla Scheme for school-dropouts

58th Annual Grammy Awards announced

- **Who:** 58th Annual Grammy Awards
- **Where:** Los Angeles, California
- **What:** Announced

The 58th Annual Grammy Awards were held on 15 February 2016 at the Staples Center in Los Angeles, California. The ceremony recognized the best recordings, compositions and artists of the eligibility year, which was from 1 October 2014 to 30 September 2015.

The nominations of the award were announced on 7 December 2015.

List of Top Grammy Awards Winners

Category	Album	Artist
Record of the Year	Uptown Funk	Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars
Album of the Year	1989	Taylor Swift
Song of the Year	Thinking Out Loud	Ed Sheeran & Amy Wadge

- **Indians in 58th Annual Grammy Awards**

- **Indo-British filmmaker Asif Kapadia won Grammy Award** for Best Music Film for his documentary Amy.
- Amy is a 2015 British documentary film that depicts the life and death of British singer-songwriter Amy Winehouse. It was directed by Asif Kapadia.

- **About Grammy Awards**

- A Grammy Award was originally called Gramophone Award.
- It is an accolade by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) of the United States to recognize outstanding achievement in the mainly English-language music industry.
- The first Grammy Awards ceremony was held on 4 May 1959 to honour the musical accomplishments by performers for the year 1958.
- Following the 2011 ceremony, NARAS overhauled many Grammy Award categories for 2012.

- Results of Swachh Survekshan 2016 announced; Mysuru declared cleanest city in India
- India successfully test-fired indigenously developed Prithvi II missile from Chandipur

- Sania Mirza, Martina Hingis won 2016 St. Petersburg Ladies Trophy
- World Radio Day observed with theme Radio in Times of Emergency and Disaster **on 14th February**
- Union Health Minister launched National Framework for Elimination of Malaria 2016-2030
- National Deworming Day observed on 10 February
The day is observed to combat parasitic worm infections among preschool (anganwadi) and school-age children.
- Project Sunrise to improve HIV interventions among PWID in North-Eastern states launched
- UNPA unveiled commemorative stamps to promote LGBT equality
- World Cancer Day 2016 observed with theme We can. I can
- India's first Ayurvedic anti-diabetic drug, BGR-34, launched by CSIR
BGR-34 is designed for type 2 Diabetes mellitus, has been scientifically validated for its efficacy and safety.
- Alphabet Inc. became world's most valuable company
- UK granted licence to use gene editing techniques on human embryos
- Archana Ramasundram became 1st woman to head paramilitary force
- Aditya Mehta won 83rd Senior National Snooker Championship
- Novak Djokovic won the 2016 Australian Open Men's Singles Title

March 2016 Current Affairs

- Asia's biggest telescope ARIES launched at Devasthal in Uttarakhand
- Haryana launched Project Salamati for injectable contraceptive
With this launch, Haryana became the first State in the country to launch injectable contraceptive as part of a government initiative.
- P Susheela entered Guinness World Records for recording highest number of songs in several languages
- Telecom Commission approved 112 as Single Emergency Number for India
- Haryana cabinet approved draft bill on reservation to Jats and four other castes
The Bill proposes reservation for Jats and four other castes Jat Sikhs, Rors, Bishnois and Tyagis by creating a new classification in the Backward Classes category.

63rd National Film Awards announced

- **Who:** 63rd National Film Awards
- **What:** Announced
- **When:** 28 March 2016

The 63rd National Film Awards were announced on 28 March 2016.

The awards will be presented by Directorate of Film Festivals of India to honour the best films of 2015 in the Indian cinema. The award ceremony will be held on 3 May 2016.

- **list of winners**

Award	Winner
Best Feature Film	Baahubali: The Beginning
Indira Gandhi Award for Best Debut Film Of A Director	Neeraj Ghaywan for Masaan
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	Bajrangi Bhaijaan
Best Children's Film	Duronto
Best Direction	Sanjay Leela Bhansali for Bajirao Mastani
Best Actor	Amitabh Bachchan for Piku
Best Actress	Kangana Ranaut for Tanu Weds Manu Returns

- International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations observed

The day was created by the United Nations in recognition of the important work and values of human rights crusader Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, of El Salvador, who was assassinated on 24 March 1980.

- World Tuberculosis Day 2016 observed with theme Unite to End TB
The theme was selected against the backdrop of the adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.
- Union Government launched Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bhima Yojana
The revamped agriculture insurance scheme is aimed at reducing distress in the farm sector and to boost the agricultural sector in the country.
- World Meteorological Day 2016 observed with the theme Hotter, Drier, Wetter. Face the Future
- 8th BRICS Summit to be held in Goa

The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship is Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions.

- World Water Day 2016 observed with the theme Water and Jobs **on 22nd march**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Kisan Suvidha mobile app
Kisaan Suvidha is an omnibus mobile app developed to help farmers by providing relevant information to them quickly.
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2016 observed
- **On 21st march**
- International Day of Happiness 2016 observed **on 20th march**
Red, the leader of the Angry Birds mobile game characters, was as appointed by the United Nations an envoy to inspire climate action toward a sustainable and happier future for all.
- World Consumer Rights Day 2016 observed on 16th march with theme Antibiotics off the Menu
- World Kidney Day 2016 observed on 16th march with theme Kidney Disease & Children. Act Early to Prevent It!
- Services won Santosh Trophy of Football 2-1
- Lok Sabha passed Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Bill, 2016
- Maria Sharapova provisionally suspended after failing drug test at Australian Open
The International Tennis Federation said Sharapova, a five time Grand Slam champion, is provisionally suspended from 12 March 2016 pending further action
- India won Asia Cricket Cup for record Sixth time
- National Safety Day and National Safety Week observed **on 4th march**
- Delhi became first state to launch HPV vaccine as public health programme in schools
- World Wildlife Day observed on 3rd march with theme The future of wildlife is in our hands
- Zero Discrimination Day observed on 2nd march with theme Stand out
- Kerala declared first digital state of India by President Pranab Mukherjee

ZIKA VIRUS

World Health Organisation (WHO) on 1 February 2016 declared Public Health Emergency of International Concern over the explosive spread of the mosquito-borne Zika virus. Incidentally, the declaration came just two weeks after **the end of Ebola outbreak in West Africa** that killed around 11000 people in the region.

- Against this backdrop, it is pertinent to understand the nature of the Zika virus, its spread and ways to mitigate its potential outbreak.

- **Where does Zika virus occur?**

- Zika virus occurs in tropical areas with large mosquito populations and is known to circulate in Africa, the Americas, Southern Asia and Western Pacific. The virus was discovered in 1947, but for many years only sporadic human cases were detected in Africa and Southern Asia.
- In 2007, the first documented outbreak of Zika virus disease occurred in the Pacific. Since 2013, cases and outbreaks of the disease have been reported from the Western Pacific, the Americas and Africa.
- Given the expansion of environments where mosquitoes can live and breed, facilitated by urbanisation and globalisation, there is potential for major urban epidemics of Zika virus disease to occur globally.

- **How do people catch Zika virus?**

- People catch Zika virus by being bitten by an infected Aedes mosquito – the same type of mosquito that spreads dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.

- **Where can the Aedes mosquito survive?**

- There are **2 types of Aedes mosquito** capable of transmitting the Zika virus – **Aedes aegypti** and **Aedes albopictus**. In most cases, Zika spreads through **the Aedes aegypti** mosquito in tropical and subtropical regions. The Aedes aegypti mosquito does not survive in cooler climate temperatures. **The Aedes albopictus mosquito** can also transmit the virus. This mosquito can hibernate and survive cooler temperature regions.

- **Can the Aedes mosquito travel from country to country and region to region?**

- The Aedes mosquito is a weak flyer; it cannot fly more than 400 meters. But it may inadvertently be transported by humans from one place to another, for example in the back of the car and plants.

- **What are the symptoms of Zika virus disease?**

- Zika virus usually causes mild illness; with symptoms appearing a few days after a person is bitten by an infected mosquito. Most people with Zika virus disease will get a slight fever and rash. Others may also get conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, and feel tired. The symptoms usually finish in 2 to 7 days.

- **What might be the potential complications of Zika virus?**

- Because no large outbreaks of Zika virus were recorded before 2007, little is currently known about the complications of the disease. During the first outbreak of Zika from 2013 - 2014 in **French Polynesia**, which also

coincided with an ongoing outbreak of dengue, national health authorities reported an unusual increase in **Guillain-Barré syndrome**.

A similar observation of increased Guillain-Barré syndrome was also made in 2015 in the context of the first Zika virus outbreak in **Brazil**.

In 2015, local health authorities in Brazil also observed an increase in **babies born with microcephaly** at the same time of an outbreak of Zika virus. Health authorities and agencies are now investigating the potential connection between microcephaly and Zika virus, in addition to other possible causes. However more investigation and research is needed before we will be able to better understand any possible link.

- **What is Guillain-Barré syndrome?**

- It is a condition in which the body's immune system attacks part of the nervous system. It can be caused by a number of viruses and can affect people of any age. Exactly what triggers the syndrome is not known. The main symptoms include muscular weakness and tingling in the arms and legs. Severe complications can occur if the respiratory muscles are affected, requiring hospitalisation.

- **What is microcephaly?**

- It is a rare condition where a baby has an **abnormally small head**. This is due to abnormal brain development of the baby in the womb or during infancy. Babies and children with microcephaly often have challenges with their brain development as they grow older. Microcephaly can be caused by a variety of environmental and genetic factors such as Down's syndrome, exposure to drugs, alcohol or other toxins in the womb and rubella infection during pregnancy.

- **Can El Niño have an effect on Zika?**

- The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito breeds in standing water. Severe drought, flooding, heavy rains and temperature rises are all known effects of El Niño—a warming of the central to eastern tropical Pacific Ocean. An increase in mosquitoes can be expected due to expanding and favourable breeding sites.

- **What is the situation in India?**

- So far there were no reported incidents of the virus in India. However, to contain its transmission the Union Government on 29 January 2016 formed a technical expert group to suggest measures to deal with the virus.

- **How is Zika virus disease diagnosed?**

- For most people diagnosed with Zika virus disease, diagnosis is based on their symptoms and recent history like mosquito bites or travel to an area where Zika virus is known to be present. A laboratory can confirm the diagnosis by blood tests.
- **How is Zika virus disease treated?**
- The symptoms of Zika virus disease can be treated with common pain and fever medicines, rest and plenty of water. If symptoms worsen, people should seek medical advice. There is currently no cure or vaccine for the disease itself.
- **How to protect oneself from the virus?**
- The best protection from Zika virus is preventing mosquito bites. Preventing mosquito bites will protect people from Zika virus, as well as other diseases that are transmitted by mosquitoes such as dengue, chikungunya and yellow fever.

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