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Ajey Jhankar – The Noted Scriptwriter passed away

Ajey Jhankar, the noted author and filmmaker passed away on April 3, 2017. He was born on September 1, 1959 in Pune.

ii. He served as a Director of MM Activ Sci-Tech Communications Pvt. Ltd from January 2000.

He was the writer of Marathi novel "Sarkarnama".

In 1998, Jhankar produced the Marathi movie in the name Sarkarnama relating it to his novel.

Film-fare Award, 1998, Screen Award, 1998 and Maharashtra State Film Award, 1998
Kishori Amonkar a Hindustani classical vocalist passed away

Classical singer Kishori Amonkar passed away at the age of 84 at her house in Mumbai on April 3, 2017.

Beside a singer, Amonkar was also a popular speaker and traveled throughout India giving lectures, most notably on the theory of rasa in music.

Amonkar received Padma Bhushan in 1987 and Padma Vibhushan in 2002.

In 2010, she became a fellow of the Sangeet Natak Academy, the national academy of music, arts, and dance.

She also received Sangeet Natak Academy award in that year
Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh inaugurated 'India Steel 2017' in Mumbai

3rd edition of International Conference and Exhibition on Steel Industry 'India Steel 2017' was held at Mumbai Exhibition center in Mumbai.

It was inaugurated by Union Steel Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh.

India is the Third largest producer of crude steel in the world.

This exhibition-cum-conference has been organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) along with Union Ministry of Steel.
The objective was to provide a platform for stakeholders in Steel Industry to interact with each other and explore mutually beneficial business opportunities.

A Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet, which is first-of-its-kind in steel sector was also organised, wherein International buyers from Middle East, South East Asia, Africa, Australia and SAARC countries were invited.

During the inaugural address, Mr. Singh mentioned about five thrust areas which Union Steel Ministry has been focusing since July 2016.
These thrust areas have been summed up as PRIDE:

P – Production and Productivity Increase

R – Research and Development

I – Indian-Made steel concept

D – Demand boost for steel

E – Excellence in Quality and Efficiency
Mumbai, Chennai among top 20 tourist destinations in APAC

The rankings have been based in terms of total number of international overnight arrivals, number of nights spent at each destination and cross-border spending, according to Mastercard Asia Pacific Destinations Index 2017.

Overall, Bangkok remains the most visited destination in Asia Pacific in the list of 171 destinations across 22 countries in the Asia Pacific region.
It is the world's fastest growing region for international tourism by GDP contribution, with tourism making up 8.5 per cent of Asia Pacific's GDP and 8.7 per cent of total employment last year.

With 5.2 million international overnight arrivals, Chennai ranked at 14th place, while Mumbai bagged the 15th spot with 4.9 million arrivals.

In terms of total night spent, Mumbai ranked at 13th place with tourists stayed for 30.7 million nights in 2016, while Chennai was at 15th position with 29.6 million nights.

Chennai has been ranked 13th with an expenditure of USD 4.6 billion by international tourists, and Mumbai stood at 15th place with USD 4.4 billion spend.
Chennai has been ranked 13th with an expenditure of USD 4.6 billion by international tourists, and Mumbai stood at 15th place with USD 4.4 billion spend.

Overall, overnight arrivals to the 171 Asia Pacific destinations in 2016 stood at 339.2 million led by Bangkok which attracted 19.3 million visitors. Singapore (13.1 million) came in second place, followed by Tokyo (12.6 million), Seoul (12.4 million) and Kuala Lumpur (11.3 million).

In 2016, visitors to the region stayed for a total of 1,768.7 million nights. Bangkok took the lead with 87.6 million nights followed by Sydney (87.5 million), Kuala Lumpur (76.7 million), Tokyo (74.3 million) and Melbourne (62.9 million).
Overall tourism expenditure in the Asia Pacific region stood at USD 244.9 billion.

When it comes to overall spending, Singapore attracted the highest spending visitors at USD 254 per day, followed by Beijing (USD 242), Shanghai (USD 234), Hong Kong (USD 211)) and Taipei (USD 208).
Maharashtra bans junk food in school canteens

Maharashtra government today imposed a ban on sale of ‘High in Fat, Salt and Sugar’ (HFSS) food at school canteens across the state.

A Government Resolution (GR) issued gave a list of 12 categories of foods which cover potato chips, noodles, carbonated soft drinks, pizza, burger, cakes, biscuits, buns, pastries, etc., which can not be sold.

It also gives a list of 20 items that can be sold.
Union Government had set up a Task Force under the chairmanship of Director, National Nutrition Institute, Hyderabad to promote consumption of healthy food by children in schools and to ban sale of junk food.

The task force in its report said that junk food containing high levels of fat, salt and sugar and very little nutritional content leads to obesity, dental diseases, diabetes and heart ailments in later life.
Pune doctors successfully perform country's first uterus transplant

A team of city doctors successfully performed country's first womb (uterus) transplant on a 21-year-old Solapur woman.

The woman, who suffers from congenital absence of uterus since birth, was fitted with her mother's womb so that she can conceive normally.

The minimally invasive retrieval of the womb carried out mainly through key hole surgery and its subsequent transplant performed only through open surgery took nine hours.
The surgery has opened up another way to motherhood besides surrogacy or adoption for Indian women who do not have a uterus, or who have a uterus that does not function.

**Pune's Galaxy Care Laparoscopy Institute (GCLI),** where the surgery was done, has been granted a licence by the state's Directorate of Health Services to carry out the **uterus transplant.**

**Oncosurgeon Shailesh Puntambekar** who performed the surgery along with team of 11 other doctors

The complicated surgery took nine hours
Around 80 percent of the retrieval of organ (uterus) was done laparoscopically and only towards the tail end of the surgery when we had to take out the organ (womb) from donor's body that we adopted open surgery method by taking a small incision so that vessels supplying blood to the uterus are not squeezed and damaged,

Since the majority of the retrieval part was done through minimally invasive key hole surgery medically known as laparoscopic surgery, the donor did not even require blood transfusion.
President Ramnath Kovind on his maiden visit to Maharashtra declared the urban areas of the state as Open Defecation Free (ODF).

Two years ago, chief minister Devendra Fadanvis had announced the Swachcha Maharashtra abhiyan in line with the Swachcha Bharat abhiyan.

The government urban development department then took up the task of ensuring toilets to all in the 384 urban areas in the state.

the percentage of toilets in rural areas had gone up from 44% to 88%.

Fadanvis said the entire state will be ODF by 2019.
Maharashtra Govt Forms 'Good Morning Squad' To Monitor Open Defecation

The Maharashtra government has decided to form ‘good morning’ squads to monitor and prevent open defecation in villages and districts across the state.

These squads will comprise representatives of local bodies, self-help groups, NGOs, students and social workers working in the area of sanitation and cleanliness.

These squads have been asked to keep an eye on the areas where this practice is prevalent and to ensure that locals have access to toilets there.
Fadnavis launch Samwad Sabha to reach out to farmers

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis launched a ‘Shivar Samwad Sabha’ to reach out to farmers in the state and address their issues.

The four-day initiative was being launched amid the rising resentment among farmers across the state over delay in procurement of tur this year.

Nearly 4,000 elected representatives of the party will participate in the campaign and hold meetings with farmers at various locations.
Nagpur will be the first Indian city to get electric radio cabs

With India's pledge to go all electric by 2030, Nagpur becomes the first city in the country to adopt electric radio cabs as the country moves a step closer to its goal.

The pilot project will see around 200 e-cabs in Nagpur with the local body to provide for the charging stations across the city. While the trial runs are ongoing for the grand event, there are some technical glitches.

While the taxi permit rules specify that the taxis should have cubic capacity to be listed as a cab, the electric vehicles do not fall under the same category as other CNG-fitted cabs and could be a major issue for the initiative.

The central government is working on ways to make amendments to this rules, so that the electric radio cabs are able to function without disrupting the current laws.
To promote the usage of electric and hybrid cars in the country, the government of India had passed the FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) India scheme in 2015.

Under the FAME India scheme, around 99,000 hybrid/electric vehicles (xEVs) are currently given direct support by way of incentives since the launch on April 1, 2015.

The Department has also approved pilot projects, charging infrastructure projects and technological development projects aggregating to nearly Rs 155 crore.

Currently, Mahindra and Honda are few of the car-manufacturers who have electric and hybrid vehicles in their line-up.
India’s First Bio Refinery Plant inaugurated in Pune

Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and Shipping Nitin Gadkari has inaugurated India’s First Integrated Bio-refinery for Renewable Fuels & Chemicals for producing ethanol from a variety of biomass.

The plant is situated at Rahu in Pune district of Maharashtra.

The demonstration plant has been built by Praj industries.
The inaugurated Bio-refinery plant is capable of producing one million litres of ethanol per annum by processing a variety of biomass like rice and wheat straw, cotton stalk, bagasse, cane trash, corn cobs & stover with superior product yields.

In 2015, the Government has asked Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to target 10% blending of ethanol in as many States as possible.

The fuel doping programme that required blending of 5% ethanol had started in November 2012.

It was notified under the Motor Spirits Act on January 2, 2013.
The Government has also allowed the OMCs to procure ethanol produced from other non-food feedstocks, like cellulosic and lignocellulosic materials including petrochemical route.

Biofuel is cost-effective and pollution-free. Ethanol blending is the practice of blending petrol with ethanol.

Globally many countries including India have resorted to ethanol blending to reduce vehicle exhaust emissions.

The inauguration of the refinery paves the way for stepping up 20% ethanol blending program and can reduce the import burden of crude petroleum.
Maharashtra becomes first Indian state to use Automated Weather Station

Devendra Fadnavis, Maharashtra CM inaugurated the state's first automatic weather stations for farmers in Dongargaon, Nagpur.

Around 2,065 such weather stations will come in Maharashtra on PPP (public private partnership) models in this year and 1000 of these will be set up by June 2017.

The Automated Weather Stations (AWS) will be helpful in measuring the wind direction, wind speed, air temperature, relative humidity, and record the amount of rainfall.

The gathered information will be shared among the farmers by making them available on Mahavedh portal (Maharashtra agriculture weather information network) as well as on the Skymet mobile application.
The Automated Weather Stations and their usage:

1. Skymet Weather Private Ltd, a weather forecasting firm will be setting up these weather stations.

2. Farmers of the state can make use of this information for sowing in a much better and planned way, according to the weather conditions.

3. These weather stations are significant because the IMD forecast is limited to only four zones and is not made available at the taluka level. However, AWS will provide forecast up to the taluka level. Around 12*12 km area of the taluka will have one AWS, promised the CM.

4. Digital kiosks will also be set-up in every Gram Panchayat to give out weather related information and expert advice on crop patterns to be followed by the farmers.
During the first phase, the information will be shared via SMS. In the second phase, half hourly updates will be provided to all the Gram Panchayats.

The AWS sensors will be able to record important farming parameters such as temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and direction, rainfall, solar radiation, leaf wetness, soil moisture, atmospheric pressure and evapotranspiration.

The state government intends to use the AWS data for better preparation for location-specific agriculture advisories, better disaster management, designing crop insurance schemes and for establishing a weather database bank.
Second-tallest' flag post comes up in Kolhapur, Maharashtra

On May 1st 2017 (Maharashtra day), India’s second tallest flag pole has been inaugurated in Kolhapur at Western Maharashtra.

The pole is 90 feet long and 60 feet wide, weighs 24 tone, and it cost around 1.1 crore for the installation.

The pole which is 303 feet high has been constructed at the Police Garden located opposite of Superintendent of Police headquarters in the Kasaba Bawada area.

On March 6th 2017, the flag pole with 360 foot long is located at the Indo-Pak Attari Border inaugurated the First tallest Flag pole.
Nagpur becomes first city with electric mass mobility system

Nagpur earned the distinction of becoming the country’s first city with electric fleet of 200 electric vehicles, including taxis, buses, e-rickshaw and autos.

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari along with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, inaugurated India’s first multi-modal electric vehicle project at the Nagpur Airport Complex

The pilot project will commence with a 200-strong fleet, including 100 of Mahindra’s new e2o Plus vehicles.

The rest will consist of vehicles sourced from other OEMs, including Tata Motors, Kinetic, BYD and TVS, among others.
The size of the automobile industry, which is at Rs 4.5 lakh crore, is estimated to grow to Rs 25 lakh crore and stress should be laid on promoting environment-friendly vehicles that causes minimum pollution.

With an eye on promoting eco-friendly transport, the government will be ready with its electric vehicle policy by December.

Accelerated adoption of electric and shared vehicles could save USD 60 billion in diesel and petrol cost while cutting down as much as 1 gigatonne (GT) of carbon emission for India by 2030.

The NITI Aayog report estimates that India can conservatively save up to 64 per cent of anticipated passenger mobility-related energy demand and 37 per cent of carbon emissions by 2030. At current oil prices, this will imply a net fuel cost saving of approximately Rs 3.9 lakh crore by 2030,
Maharashtra Government Unveils the Portrait of Social Reformer ‘Prabodhankar Thackeray at BMC

The Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis unveiled the portrait of social reformer ‘Prabodhankar Thackeray’ in the general assembly hall of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

Keshav Sitaram Thackeray, famously known as Prabodhankar was born in September 1885. He was a social reformer, author and key leaders of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti which successfully campaigned for the linguistic state of Maharashtra.

He is the father of late Shiv Sena supremo Bal Thackeray.
Before this, the corporation hall had only two portraits, one of philanthropist and pioneer of Mumbai’s development Nana Shankarseth and other of Dadasaheb Donde, one of the leaders of the Samyukta Maharashtra movement.
Gujarat has maximum of 12 cities among the top 50 cleanest, followed by Madhya Pradesh with 11 and Andhra Pradesh with eight.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>National Rank</th>
<th>City</th>
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<th>Overall Score</th>
<th>Municipal Self Declaration</th>
<th>On-Site Observation</th>
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Swacch Sarveskshan 2017

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<td>Gonda</td>
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Maharashtra Government Bans use of Purse Seine Nets for Fishing

Purse seine nets are large fishing nets used to catch fish in bulk.

Maharashtra Government has banned the use of Purse Seine Nets for fishing across Maharashtra from January 1, 2017 to safeguard the Fingerlings, a fish species.

The move is aimed at curbing the exploitation of fish by safeguarding the fingerlings and its eggs to increase their population.

The decision is expected to benefit the traditional fisherman community that use much smaller nets in shallow waters.

It will increase fish catch and protect the fish population as larger pores will allow fishlings and eggs to slip out during the daily catch.
NGT orders stay on Pune Metro Rail work

The Pune Metro Rail project hit a major roadblock with the Western Zone Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) issuing an interim stay on the proposed portion of the metro route passing through the Mula –Mutha river bed in the city.

A two-judge Bench of justices U.D. Salvi and Dr. Ajay Deshpande passed the directive acting on an Environmental Interest Litigation (EIL) filed in the NGT by a group of prominent personalities.

The proposed metro rail alignment, a 1.7 km stretch passing through the left bank of the Mula-Mutha river could spell the death knell for the riverbank ecosystem along that route.
Pune Metro
China's Jinhua and India's Pune

Pune Metro is a metro rail based rapid transit system under construction to serve the city of Pune, India.

It is estimated to cost ₹114.20 billion (US$1.73 billion).

On 7 December 2016, the Government of Maharashtra gave approval for the project, while the Ministry of Urban Development had already given approval for the project.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone on 24 December 2016 on his visit to the city.

The project is expected to be completed by December 2021.
Project is divided into two phases

<table>
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<td></td>
<td>Line 4</td>
<td>ASI Hinjawadi</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2021</td>
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Maharashtra launched India’s first 24×7 helpline for forests.

The Forest Ministry launched the state-wide 'Hello Forest' helpline a day earlier than previously announced.

The Hello Forest’ helpline number can be reached by dialling '1926' from any phone. As reported earlier, it will be operated on a 24-hour basis by an agency located in Goregaon, Mumbai with the option of three languages - Hindi, Marathi, and English.

In case of an emergency such as straying wild animals, the forest officer of that region will immediately be contacted and briefed about the situation.

"The caller will also be given the officer's contact details but action will be initiated right after the helpline call. All calls will be recorded and their responses will be checked."
A website from where citizens can enroll for the 'Green Army', a voluntary forest help service, was also launched at the occasion.

Tata Group interim chairman Ratan Tata was present when Tata Trust signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the forest department for development of employment through the **Bamboo Research and Training Centre in Chandrapur.**
Maharashtra Government Launches Country’s Largest WiFi Service

Maharashtra Government launched India’s largest public WiFi service called ‘MumbaiWifi’ in state capital Mumbai with aim to empower people digitally.

It is also claimed to be one of the largest wifi service in the world. The facility was inaugurated by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

Initially in first phase it will provide 500 Wifi hotspots across various locations across Mumbai.

In second phase, sate Government will provide 1200 WiFi hotspots.
Manohar Parrikar inaugurates International Conference & Exhibition on Reinforced Plastics (ICERP)

EX Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar inaugurated the 8th edition of the International Conference & Exhibition on Reinforced Plastics (ICERP) at the Bombay Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) in Mumbai, India.

The three day international event provided an ideal opportunity for the Global Composites Industry to focus its attention to India.

The conference focused on the latest developments on mechanization, automation and innovation to meet growing challenges of end user requirements.
About ICERP:

The International Conference and Exhibition on Reinforced Plastics (ICERP) event is organized by FRP Institute once in every two years.

The first event on the ICERP series was held in 2002. The current event, ICERP 2017 is the 8th in the series.
International conference on Disability Communication held in Mumbai

The International Conference on ‘Disability Communication: Perspectives and Challenges in the 21st Century (ICDC-2017)’ was held at Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The purpose of the ICDC-2017 was to establish a forum for dialogue on the study of interaction, learning and identity formation.

The main aim of the conference is to build a foundation for the master’s degree in Dis/Ability communication and the main area of interest is accessibility for those who want to deal with dis/ability communication and explore in this field.
The 2011 census of India highlighted that there were 26,810,557 persons with disabilities in the sub-continent of India.

The 11th plan in India estimates that approximately 5-6% of the total population comprises of persons with disability.
Ashish Shelar has been appointed as Maharashtra Cricket Association (MCA) president.

Shelar takes over from the former ICC president and political heavyweight Sharad Pawar.

He is the president of Mumbai unit of Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)

He has been appointed as the MCA president after Pawar stepped down from the post officially due to the reforms announced by the Lodha panel.

Pawar’s age made him ineligible to continue in the post, as Lodha panel had recommended that BCCI office bearers should not be over the age of 70, had stepped down after heading the state association for over 15 years.

The Pune City Police has launched the “Beat Marshall Monitoring Mobile App” on experimental basis to map the real-time locations of patrolling teams from police stations.

The application will be installed on the cell phones of Beat Marshals or patrolling cops so their movements can be mapped real-time by the control room staffers.

The data collected would then be used for effective response during the emergencies. The app would make the dispatch of patrolling parties easier in times of emergency.

The App has been developed by Pune based IT firm “Sapience” and is being used by Pune City Police on experimental basis.
Former Minister of Maharashtra Chandrakant Chhajed passes away

Senior Congress leader and former Maharashtra minister Chandrakant Chhajed passed away in Pune, Maharashtra. He was 67.

Chandrakant was a former Minister of State for Tourism in 2003

He served the party as a state unit general secretary and co-ordinator of the Congress Legislature Party till the last.
Maharashtra Approves Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme

Maharashtra Government has approved Rs. 250 crore Cloud Seeding Programme during 2017 monsoon season to produce sufficient rain.

Under this programme, weather scientists using aircrafts will spray chemicals (silver iodide) over clouds hovering above Solapur district, a rain shadow region of Western Ghats in the state.

This programme is coordinated by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, will be the first controlled experiment to quantify the extent to which clouds form water drops large enough to make rain.
Seeding involves spraying chemicals into clouds.

China used the technique during the 2008 Olympics to veer rain away from the inaugural venue and now has a full-fledged department that blasts rockets into clouds to induce rain and control pollution.

**Cabinet’s plan**

Maharashtra has frequently toyed with the idea of cloud seeding because of droughts over the Vidarbha region.

The State approved a plan to seed clouds for 113 hours with a rainfall level of 1,381mm, at Rs. 28 crore. However above-normal rains pushed the plan to the back-burner.
For their experiment, scientists will fly two aircraft and spray dry ice and silver iodide on 100 clouds and compare them with 100 unseeded clouds.

Ground radar will track the clouds and verify which ones contributed rain and by how much.

The programme will account for the natural variability of the monsoon.

The move is part of a larger experiment of the Earth Sciences Ministry to understand how clouds and aerosols (fine particles in vehicle exhaust, deodorants and so on) interact and influence climate.
How cloud seeding works

1. Silver iodide is released by a plane or ground-based generator.

2. Silver iodide particles reach the targeted cloud.

3. The silver iodide aids in the formation of ice crystals.

4. The ice crystals become large enough to fall and create snow.
Ex Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu unveils Antyodaya Express for common man

The train is equipped with cushioned seats, aluminium composite panels, and LED lights, the Antyodaya Express, a new fully unreserved train for the common man with specially designed colourful coaches.

The first Antyodaya Express was launched between Mumbai and Tatanagar, and the second will be between Ernakulam and Howrah shortly.

In the Rail Budget(2016-17) govt had decided to launch four new passenger services. These were: Humsafar, Antyodaya, UDAY and Tejas

First Humsafar was launched and now Antyodaya.

The fare structure will be between 10 per cent and 15 per cent more than the regular fare.
MEA & Gateway House Co-Hosts 2\textsuperscript{nd} Gateway of India Geoeconomic Dialogue

The Ministry of External Affairs co-hosted the Second Gateway of India Geoeconomic Dialogue with Gateway House in Mumbai.

\textbf{Theme :} \textit{Where Geopolitics meets Business}

This is India’s premier geo-economics conference with the focus on building synergies between business and foreign policy.

The conference will have various several panel discussions on topics like Sovereign Funds, Global Taxation, Digital Economy, Indo-Pacific, India’s Defence-Industrial Base
Mumbai richest Indian city with wealth of $820 billion: Report

According to the latest New World Wealth report, India's financial capital here is home to 46,000 millionaires and 28 billionaires, and is followed in terms of wealth by Delhi in second place and Bengaluru in third place.

Delhi is home to 23,000 millionaires and 18 billionaires with total wealth of $450 billion.

While Bengaluru has 7,700 millionaires and 8 billionaires and an aggregate wealth of $320 billion.
Home to 9,000 millionaires and 6 billionaires, Hyderabad is next with a total wealth of $310 billion.

Pune, with a total wealth of $180 billion, has 4,500 millionaires and 5 billionaires

The total wealth held in India as of December 2016 amounts to $6.2 trillion, while the country is home to 264,000 millionaires and 95 billionaires, the report added.
Three Poets From Maharashtra Conferred with Vishakha Awards

Three poets from Maharashtra have been conferred with the Vishakha Awards on February 26, 2017 at the Kalidas Kalamandir Hall in Maharashtra during the occasion of Marathi Bhasha Gaurav Din.

‘Marathi Bhasha Diwas’ is celebrated on February 27 every year to mark the birth anniversary of noted Marathi litterateur V.V. Shirwadkar alias ‘Kusumagraj’.

Kusumagraj, born on 27 February 1912, was an eminent Marathi poet, playwright, novelist, short story writer and humanist. In his writings, he wrote about freedom, justice and emancipation of the deprived.
The government started celebrating the birth anniversary of Kusumagraj as Marathi Rajbhasha Gaurav Din after the Jnanpeeth awardees demise in 1999.

Marathi ranks 19th in the list of most spoken languages in the world and has the fourth largest number of native speakers in India.

The first prize of Rs 21,000 was given to Dr Yogini Satarkar-Pande from Nanded for her book ‘Janivanche Hirve Komb’. She is an English professor at Swami Ramanand Teerth Marathwada University.

The second prize of Rs 15,000 was given to Mohan Kumbhar from Sindhudurg for his book ‘Jagnyache Gatha’. He is a professor at B V Desai College, Kankavli.

The third prize of Rs 10,000 was given to Vishnu Thore of Nashik for his book ‘Dhulpera Usvata’. He is a farmer and an artist from Chandwad tehsil town and has designed over 450 book covers.
Sachin Tendulkar adopts another village for transformation

After transforming the lives of villagers in Puttamraju Kandriga in Andhra Pradesh, Indian cricket icon and Rajya Sabha MP Sachin Tendulkar has now adopted Donja in Osmanabad (Maharashtra) under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna.

Tendulkar has sanctioned over Rs 4 crore from his MPLAD fund for development of Donja.

The amount will be spent on development of a new school building, a water Supply scheme that would provide potable water to each household, concrete roads and a sewage line attached to the same
Central Railway unveils India’s first air-conditioned rail ambulance.

Central Railway zone of Indian Railway has unveiled India’s first air-conditioned rail ambulance that will rush to the aid of injured passengers during the vital 'golden hour'.

The four-coach AC ambulance will be stationed at Kalyan (Maharashtra).

It is modified version of AC coaches used for passenger services. This rail ambulance can carry and treat 50 patients at one time.
It also has in house operation theatre to carry out minor surgeries and provide immediate relief.

It will be mainly be used during train accidents as it can carry accident victims to hospital in a short time.

However, in normal times, it will be used for providing medical facilities in large congregations

This rail ambulance was designed at the rail workshop at Matunga in Mumbai
First fully India-made train flagged off at Dadar station

The much-awaited made-in-India rake, Medha, is on tracks of the Western Railway.

Ex Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu, via videoconferencing, flagged off the maiden run of the train from Dadar to Borivali, at Lokmanya Tilak Terminus.

The 12-coach train on the fast track halted at Bandra and Andheri stations.

Medha rake costs ₹43.23 crore, which is approximately ₹1 crore less than German-made Bombardier rake, which is ₹44.36 crore. The cost will come down if more rakes are ordered.
Medha has been manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) in Chennai, which has installed LED lighting to reduce energy consumption.

This will save energy by approximately 30-35% as compared to the existing rakes. This rake has in-built systems to minimise breakdowns during the travel.

The rake can run at a speed of 110 kmph, whereas local trains don’t run above 90 or 100 kmph.

Also, there is a GPS-based information system to indicate the stations

The rake has a capacity of 6,050 passengers and the number of seats is 1,168.
18th edition of Asia’s largest convention on the business of media and entertainment “FICCI Frames-2017

The 18th edition of Asia’s largest convention on the business of media and entertainment “FICCI Frames-2017” took place in Mumbai.

The theme of this year’s convention is “Digital-Divide or Dividend”.

Canada is partnering the event for the first time this year.

The 3-day international convention will covers the entire spectrum of Media & Entertainment like Films, Broadcast (TV & Radio), Digital Entertainment, Animation, Gaming, Visual Effects, etc.

with nearly 2000 Indian and 800 foreign delegates encompassing the entire universe of media and entertainment expected to attend the event.
The 2017 International Diamond Conference was held at Hotel Hyatt, Mumbai.

The Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council of India (GJEPC) hosted the International Diamond Conference on 19-20 March 2017 at Hotel Grand Hyatt, Mumbai.

**Theme: Mines to Market 2017**

The conference was held with an objective of bringing together the leading Miners, Diamantaires, Retailers, Bankers and Analysts from across the globe on a platform to discuss the supply and demand issues faced by the Global Diamond Industry.

“India is the largest cut and polished diamond manufacturer in the world. 93 per cent of its production is exported.”
About GJEPC

♦ The Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) was set up by the Ministry of Commerce and industry, Government of India (GoI) in 1966. It is headquartered at Mumbai.

♦ It was launched by the Indian Government to boost the country’s export thrust, when India’s post Independence economy began making forays in the international markets.

♦ The GJEPC is the apex body of the gems & jewellery industry and today it represents over 6,000 exporters in the sector.
Mohan Bhagwat Gets Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat was conferred honorary degree of Doctor of Science (DSc) by the city-based Maharashtra Animal and Fishery Sciences University.

Maharashtra Governor Vidyasagar Rao awarded the degree to Bhagwat, a veterinary doctor by training, at the convocation of the varsity.

He was conferred the degree for his contribution in the field of veterinary sciences and social work.
Inclusion Of Five Indian Cities In World Heritage Site

i. In recent news, UNESCO (UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC and CULTURAL ORGANISATION) has added five Indian cities in its list of tentative world heritage site.

These cities include

1. Historic City of Ahmedabad,
2. Delhi – A Heritage City,
3. Jaipur City, Rajasthan,
4. Ekamra Kshetra- The Temple City, Bhubaneswar
5. The Victorian & Art Deco Ensemble of Mumbai.
Shiv Sena nominee Vishwanath Mahadeshwar was elected the new mayor of Mumbai in an election which had turned predictable after the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) pulled out of the contest.

Mahadeshwar’s elected as the 76th mayor of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, India’s richest civic body.

The BJP, in an apparently friendly gesture towards the Sena, voted for Mahadeshwar in an election which was conducted through a show of hands.

Mahadeshwar secured 171 votes defeating Congress candidate Vithal Lokhare who received 31 votes at the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).
MIT Pune & IBM Jointly Unveils Robot ‘Chintu’

Maharashtra Institute of Technology (MIT), Pune, in collaboration with IBM introduced Chintu -- a robot designed to assist senior citizens in conducting everyday tasks.

Chintu, who was unveiled during the ongoing MIT Tech Fest 'Texephyr', can do everything from setting reminders to dancing to Gangnam Style.
About Chintu:

Chintu is two-foot tall and weighs around 5 kgs. It has a microphone, multiple cameras, multiple on-board sensors and an internal memory of 8GB. The MIT team is working on not only enhancing existing features, but adding new ones too.

Chintu gets its intelligence from IBM Watson -- a cognitive technology that can think like a human -- and the IBM Bluemix Cloud platform. Watson APIs powered by IBM Bluemix guide the robot through solving day to day problems, the American technology giant said in a statement.

With support from Watson, Chintu is perfectly capable of reading text and can thus help the elderly in reading newspapers, books
Meteorologist Sikka Passes Away

Former director of Pune based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology Dev Raj Sikka was passed away on March 19, 2017. He was 85.

Sikka has proposed a link between the El Nino phenomenon and the Indian monsoon and he was the first Meteorologist to report this connection in 1982.

He was also the Chairman of the Monsoon Mission of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, a programme to improve monsoon-related forecasts.
Eminent Jurist and Senior Advocate, Tehmtan R. Andhyarujina passed away

He has been an integral part of the legal and constitutional history of India. At the age of 38, he was designated as the senior advocate.

Andhyarujina served as the Solicitor General of India from 1996 to 1998. Before that he was the Advocate General of Maharashtra from 1993-95.

His first legal Constitutional case was the Kesavananda Bharati Case popularly known as the fundamental rights case, which led to the introduction of the Doctrine of Basic Structure or Framework of the Constitution.

He has also authored “The Kesavananda Bharati Case: The untold story of struggle for supremacy by Supreme Court and Parliament “about the landmark Judgment in Kesavananda Bharati Case.
Maharashtra to stage special drive for transgenders to register as voters for the first time

Maharashtra was the first state to launch a special awareness drive to ensure that transgenders in the state register as voters in greater numbers. The state branch of the Election Commission of India (ECI) launched the drive on April 15, celebrated as Third Gender Day.

According to ECI officials, despite the approximate population of third genders in Maharashtra being pegged at more than 10 lakh, only about 1,700 are registered voters.
The ECI has prepared a two-and-a-half-minute film, slated to run in 400 theatres four times a day over the next week. The commission has also put up posters on two 12-rake locals asking transgenders to register as voters.

It is to be noted that 15th April is celebrated as ‘Third Gender Day’ to commemorate Supreme Court judgement in 2014 to recognise transgenders as ‘Thrd Gender’.
India’s first sea ropeway to link Mumbai and Elephanta island

India’s first and longest ropeway to connect Mumbai with the famous Elephanta Island in the Arabian Sea is planned to be constructed by the Mumbai Port Trust.

The 8-km ropeway will begin from Sewri in Mumbai’s east coast and end at Raigad district’s Elephanta Island, globally renowned for Elephanta Caves, a Unesco World Heritage site.

Known locally as Gharapuri Caves, the small 16 sq. km island has several archaeological remains pointing to its rich cultural heritage, including the famous temples carved out of rocks.
E-taxi trial run to begin in Nagpur

The country’s first electric taxi trial in the country was launched in Nagpur.

The first project of its kind will be undertaken by Nagpur Municipal Corporation.

Mahindra and Mahindra is set to provide 200 taxis for the initiative.

Government strives to address tackle increasing pollution in the country by unveiling various schemes.

Electric car taxi is one of the ambitious projects and forms as a part of its UNDP millennium goals to tackle pollution.
India's first book village to come up in Maharashtra's Bhilar

Bhilar is a small hamlet in the Satara district of Maharashtra, located near the scenic hill station of Panchgani and the British-era hill station of Mahabaleshwar. The village, which is popular for its strawberries, will soon get another identity as India's first 'book village'.

Led by Education Minister Vinod Tawde, the project was undertaken by the Marathi Bhasha department.

Inspiration: Hay-on-Wye

The concept is inspired by Britain's Hay-on-Wye, a Welsh town known for its book stores and literature festivals. It is one of the world's largest second-hand and antiquarian book centres.
Know about the initiative:

1. Under this initiative, tourists and locals can come and read books, magazines and newspapers stacked at 25 artistically decorated locations around the village.

2. The subjects of the displayed books will include literature, poetry, religion, women and children, history, environment, folk literature, biographies and autobiographies to festival specials.

3. The state has also provided several other facilities, such as chairs, tables, decorated umbrellas and glass cupboards to village locals to enhance the reading experience of literary enthusiasts who come to visit.
All these books will be available to read free of cost. Anybody can pick up a book of their choice and read is for as long as they want, and keep it back for others.

The government is also planning to hold literary festivals in the village during summers since a lot of tourists visit Panchgani and Mahabaleshwar, the neighbouring hill stations.

These festivals will include talk with authors and poets, reading sessions, presentation of essays, teaching workshops and exhibitions where people can participate freely.

There's another city of books in India. The 'Boi para' or the Colony of Books is a 1.5 km long street in Central Kolkata lined on both sides by bookstores-- carrying both new and second hand books.

College Street is the world's largest second-hand book market and has attracted the city's intelligentsia for decades.
Advanced Farming – Enriched Farmers Scheme in Maharashtra

The state government of Maharashtra has announced a new scheme for to increase the farmer’s income.

Named as “Advanced Farming – Enriched Farmers”, the scheme aims to double the income of farmers by increasing the output and cutting the cost of production.

The scheme will be launched from the upcoming Kharif season in the state.

Under the Advanced Farming – Enriched Farmers scheme, the state government would declare each tehsil of the state as a unit which will be used for planning on agri-development.
Following are the main tasks which will be performed under the scheme:

- Increasing the production of major crops in the state.
- Diversification of the crops.
- Making farmer’s aware of the marketing techniques.
- Generating a unit among farmers through farm producer companies.
- Making farmers financial stable.
Mechanisation of farming on tractors, machines for polishing, grading and packing of produces, power tillers and transplanters would get 60% more funds which will be transferred directly to the bank account of the farmer linked with Aadhaar.

The state government would also run a campaign named as “Farmer Outreach Campaign” under the scheme.

In the campaign, the farmers would be informed about the latest techniques which can be used during the Kharif season to increase productivity and efficiency.

Under the scheme, each unit will be given a target to produce more crops so that the income generated by the farmer’s is more than the amount of loan taken by them.
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