




THE JANUARY HINDU REVIEW 2016

1. Union Government re-appointed Dr Urjit R Patel, as Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), for a second three-year term. Patel is the fourth deputy governor and the other three are HR Khan, R Gandhi and SS Mundra.
2. Devender Kumar Sikri was appointed as Chairman of fair-trade regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI). He succeeds Ashok Chawla.
3. Amitabh Kant was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog.
4. Dr Achyuta Samanta was elected as the General President of the 105th Indian Science Congress Association.
5. Filippo Grandi took over as the new High Commissioner for the United Nations Refugee Agency.
6. Former Defence Secretary Radha Krishna Mathur was sworn in as the eighth Chief Information Commissioner.
7. Senior revenue service officer Atulesh Jindal was appointed chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes.
8. Noted environmentalist Ravi Chellam took charge as the Executive Director of Greenpeace India.
9. Additional Secretary of Home Affairs, Sailesh was appointed as the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India.
10. Moldovan parliament appointed Pavel Filip as the Prime Minister.
11. Economist Paul Kaba Thieba was named as the Prime Minister of Burkina Faso.
12. Arunima Sinha, the amputee mountaineer who set a record by climbing the Mount Everest conquered Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.
13. India's Dinesh Sharma was elected to the 12-member board of directors of the China-sponsored Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). It is the first Board of Directors of AIIB in which 57 nations are founding members including India.
14. Opposition candidate of Democratic Progressive Party Tsai Ing-wen won a landslide victory in Taiwan's presidential election, making her the island's first female president.
15. Giorgi Kvirikashvili was elected as the Prime Minister of Georgia.
16. Atul Sobti took charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of state-owned power equipment maker Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited.
17. Gautam H Bambawale was appointed as the High Commissioner of India to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
18. Senior IAS officer Pawan Kumar Agarwal was appointed as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of food regulator Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
19. BJP suspended its Darbhanga MP Kirti Azad, who has been making public statements that there was "corruption" in the Delhi and District Cricket Association (DDCA) when Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was heading it.
20. Actor Sanjay Dutt, serving the remainder of his five-year term in Yerwada jail in Pune, is set to walk free on February 27, nearly 103 days before the end of his term, on account of "good conduct".
21. Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to New Delhi after conclusion of his official visit to Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan.
22. The Reserve Bank of India Governor Raghuram Rajan was felicitated with the Central Banker of the Year Award (Global and Asia Pacific) for 2016.
23. Former Indian Wicket-Keeper Syed Kirmani was awarded with the 2015 Col. CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award. On the other hand, Test captain Virat Kohli bagged the Polly Umrigar Trophy for Cricketer of the Year in the BCCI awards.
24. British writer Kate Atkinson won the novel-of-the-year prize at Britain's Costa Book Awards 2015 for the second time in three years.
25. Eminent Gujarati litterateur Raghuvir Chaudhary was selected for the 51st Jnanpith award for his contribution to the Indian literature.
26. Person of Indian Origin Rahul Thakkar was named as one of winners of the Scientific and Technical Awards given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, famously called Oscar Awards.

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27. Bollywood actress and former Miss World, Priyanka Chopra, has won the 'Favourite Actress in a New TV series' award at the People's Choice Awards 2016 in Los Angeles, for her leading role in American TV thriller series Quantico.
28. Indian author Anuradha Roy won the prestigious DSC Prize for South Asian Literature for her novel Sleeping on Jupiter at the Galle Literary Festival in Sri Lanka.
29. David Beckham was presented with the Danny Kaye Humanitarian Leadership Award at the sixth biennial UNICEF Ball in Los Angeles.
30. Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur, Rajasthan won the award of the world's best hotel at the Travellers' Choice award organised by TripAdvisor.
31. The Nati folk dance of Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh was listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest folk dance in the world.
32. Employees' Provident Fund Organization won the National Award on e-Governance 2015-16 for launching the Universal Account Number (UAN).
33. Sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik's Santa Claus sculpture found a place in Limca Book of World Records. Pattnaik claimed that he had created a 45 feet high sand Santa Claus at Puri beach.
34. The Union Government decided to institute a new award category under the National Film Awards titled The Most Film Friendly State/UT.
35. Sikkim was declared as the first organic farming state of India.
36. Kerala became the first state in the country to achieve 100 percent primary education.
37. The 20th National Youth Festival was inaugurated by Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari at Rajyostav Sthal in Naya Raipur, Chhattisgarh to mark the National Youth Day.
38. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed passed away at the AIIMS hospital in New Delhi.
39. Ex-Chief Justice of India Sarosh Homi Kapadia passed away.
40. Legendary dancer and Padma Bhushan recipient Mrinalini Sarabhai passed away.
41. Former Maharashtra health minister and Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Dr Daulatrao Aher died.
42. Veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Sikkim Governor Ventrapragada Rama Rao passed away.
43. Mohammed Abdul Rahim Qureshi, Assistant General Secretary and Spokesman of All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), died.
44. Bollywood actor Rajesh Vivek Upadhyay died due to a heart attack in Hyderabad.
45. Lieutenant General Jacob-Farj-Rafael Jacob (retired), hero of 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War and former Governor of Goa and Punjab, died on 13 January 2016 after prolonged illness in New Delhi. He was 92.
46. Noted Hindi writer and journalist Ravindra Kalia passed away.
47. Maria Teresa de Filippis, the first woman to compete in a world championship Formula One grand prix, passed away.
48. Cinematographer Vilmos Zsigmond, winner of an Oscar for Steven Spielberg's Close Encounters of the Third Kind, passed away on 1 January 2016 in California, United States.
49. Veteran Communist Party of India (CPI) leader Ardhendu Bhushan Bardhan passed away.
50. Grammy-winning singer Natalie Cole passed away.
51. Ian Murdock, best known for founding one of the world's best known Linux distributions, passed away.
52. Veteran British character actor Alan Rickman, known for his memorable portrayal of screen villains, has died.
53. General Om Prakash Malhotra, former Punjab Governor and ex-Chief of Army, passed away.
54. Veteran Indian actress Sadhana Shivdasani died on 25 December 2015 in Mumbai, Maharashtra after a brief illness.
55. INSEAD, one of the world's leading and largest graduate business schools, on 19 January 2016 launched the Global Talent Competitiveness Index (GTCI) 2015-16. It was released in Davos, Switzerland on the sidelines of the 46th annual summit of the World Economic Forum (WEF). The report measured the ability of 109 countries, across the globe, to compete for talent and was prepared with the theme Talent Attraction and International Mobility. Among the 109 countries surveyed, the countries that ranked high in global talent competitiveness were- Switzerland (1), Singapore (2), Luxembourg (3), the USA (4) and Denmark (5) Compared to its 78th rank in the 2014-15 report, India slipped 11 places to rank 89th in the GTCI 2015-16.
56. Oxfam released a report titled An Economy for the 1%. The report analysed growing trends of concentration of wealth across the world and suggested remedies to correct the anomaly.
57. The World Tourism Organization released the World Tourism Barometer, which reviewed trends in tourism at the regional and global level for 2015 and enumerated prospects for 2016.
58. The World Bank released a report titled World Development Report 2016. In relation to India, the

- authors of the report that included Kaushik Basu, Senior Vice President and Chief Economist of World Bank appreciated the Aadhaar scheme as it saved 1 billion US dollars by bringing down corruption.
59. The 21-member committee was constituted by the SEBI in March 2015 under the chairmanship of N R Narayan Murthy, co-founder of Infosys, to suggest measures for development of the alternative investment funds (AIFs) and startup eco-system in the country.
 60. Union Ministry of Finance released the draft report of Justice R V Easwar (Retd) Committee to simplify the provisions of Income-tax Act, 1961.
 61. The Union Ministry of Finance released the report of the Committee on Revisiting and Revitalising Public Private Partnership (PPP) Model.
 62. The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries released the 2015 OPEC World Oil Outlook (WOO).
 63. Union Government formed a five-member high level committee to monitor the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Corridor (bullet train project). The committee will be headed by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya.
 64. Department of Posts formed a one-man committee to study issues related to Gramin Dak Sevaks including wage structure and service conditions. The panel will be headed by Kamlesh Chandra.
 65. Union Government constituted Shyam Benegal Committee for holistic interpretation of the provisions of the Cinematograph Act, 1952.
 66. Conference of Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) on Afghan Peace and Reconciliation process was held in Islamabad on 11 January 2016.
 67. The Indian Space Research Organization and Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.
 68. The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Airports Authority of India and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise in Civil Aviation.
 69. The Civil Aviation Ministry gave clearance for four greenfield airports. The three airports will be located in Andhra Pradesh and one international airport at Dholera, Gujarat.
 70. The Union Cabinet gave its ex-post facto approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in governance reforms.
 71. Operation Green Hunt, an all-out offensive by India's paramilitary forces and the state's forces against the Naxalites came in news on 8 January 2016.
 72. The term River Information System (RIS) was in news in the first week of January 2016 as the Union Ministry of Shipping is set to launch the system for Inland Waterways in the country.
 73. Gujarat Chief Minister Anandiben Patel inaugurated the 28th edition of International Kite Festival at Sabarmati River front in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
 74. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the New Crop Insurance Scheme, 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' to boost the agricultural sector. Farmers will pay a uniform premium of only 2 percent for all Kharif crops and 1.5% for all Rabi crops. In case of annual commercial and horticultural crops, farmers will pay a premium of only 5 percent.
 75. The Union Government and World Bank signed the Financing Agreement for World Bank (IDA) assistance of 250 million US dollars for Bihar Kosi Basin Development Project.
 76. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs gave its approval for setting up over 5000 MW of Grid-Connected Solar PV Power Projects on build, own and operate basis. The work will be implemented by Solar Power Developers (SPDs) with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) under Batch-IV of Phase-II of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission (JNNSM).
 77. The Union Cabinet approved amendments in Power Tariff Policy to ensure 24X7 affordable power for all. The amendments aim at promoting clean energy, better regulation of discoms and faster rollout of investments.
 78. The Union Government decided to rollout a LPG-like direct benefit transfer (DBT) scheme for kerosene. The scheme will be started from 1 April 2016.
 79. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Start-up India initiative to augment startup ecosystem in the country. Prime Minister also unveiled Start-up India, Stand-up India Action Plan. A separate fund will be created with 10000 crore rupees corpus for development and growth of innovation driven

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- enterprises. It will be 2500 crore rupees a year for four years. Profits of Start-up units will be made tax-free for 3 years and there will be a moratorium on labour inspections for the first 3 years of operations. Capital gains tax to be exempted for venture capital investments. New scheme will be launched to provide Intellectual Property Rights protection to start-ups and new firms. A new mobile app to enable start-ups to register themselves within a day and a portal to apply for clearances online will be operation from 1 April 2016.
80. The Coast Guards of India and Japan conducted their 15th joint exercise off the coast of Chennai.
 81. DRDO successfully test-fired Nag anti-tank missile at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan. The test was conducted during a night trial to validate the enhanced 4-km range capability of Imaging-Infrared seeker, which guides the missile to the target after its launch.
 82. DRDO successfully test fired the new Penetration-Cum Blast (PCB) and Thermobaric (TB) Ammunition tank at Chandipur, Odisha. This was specially designed for Arjun Main Battle Tank (MBT).
 83. India and France started their eight-day counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency joint exercise Shakti-2016 in Rajasthan.
 84. Long Range Surface-to-Air Missile (LRSAM), the missile co-developed by India and Israel, was successfully test-fired on 30 December 2015 on the Western Sea Board.
 85. Indigenously developed Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile, Astra, was successfully test fired. The test was conducted by the Indian Air Force off the coast of Odisha near the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Balasore.
 86. Amament Research and Development Establishment successfully test-fired Pinaka II multi barrel rocket launcher System.
 87. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book titled The Z Factor: My Journey as the Wrong Man at the Right Time in New Delhi. The book is the autobiography of the promoter of Essel/ Zee Group Subhash Chandra.
 88. The book titled Jawaharlal Nehru and The Indian Polity in Perspective was released by the Vice President of India Hamid Ansari at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.
 89. Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a book titled "MARU BHARAT SARU BHARAT" (My India Noble India) written by Jain Acharya Ratnasundersurisarji Maharaj.
 90. The book Go Set a Watchman written by Harper Lee was in news as it topped the 2015 US bestseller list.
 91. President Pranab Mukherjee promulgated the Enemy Property (Amendment and Validation) Ordinance, 2016 to make amendments to the Enemy Property Act, 1968.
 92. Several heavily armed terrorists belonging to Jaish-e-Mohammed, an Islamist militant group, on 2 January 2016 attacked Pathankot Air Force Station, part of the Western Air Command of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
 93. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has decided to deploy about 300 women commandos for undertaking anti-Naxal operations in select Left-wing Extremism-affected states.
 94. The world's largest blue star sapphire that weighs 1404.49 carats was discovered in a mine in Sri Lanka.
 95. The French soldiers will march down the Rajpath on Republic Day along with Indian troops in the presence of President Francois Hollande. Hollande is the Chief Guest for 26 January 2016 celebrations. This is the first time that a foreign army will participate in the 26th January Parade, since 1950.
 96. The Union Government merged the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs with the Ministry of External Affairs.
 97. The Union Government allowed the conduct of the traditional bull-taming sports, Jallikattu, in Tamil Nadu.
 98. Union Government launched the Phase-I of the River Information System of India in New Delhi. The Phase-I of the RIS was launched on the Sagar-Farakka stretch of National Waterway-1 on River Ganges to facilitate safe and accurate navigation.
 99. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh approved the 33 percent posts at constable level to be filled up by women.
 100. The Union Government granted Infrastructure Status to the Shipyard Industry in a bid to ease its financial stress.
 101. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved development of the six laning of Aurangabad- Bihar/Jharkhand Border- BarwaAdda section on National Highway-2 in Bihar and Jharkhand.
 102. The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog announced that it collaborated with the IDFC Bank Ltd to conduct an enterprise survey of manufacturing firms.
 103. French President Francois Hollande declared a state of economic and social emergency to redefine country's economic and social model.
 104. The World Health Organisation declared West Africa free from Ebola outbreak.

- 105.** The US Citizenship and Immigration Services notified revised petition fees for H-1B and L-1 visas. As per the revision, the petitioners must submit an additional fee of 4000 US dollars for certain H-1B visas and 4500 US dollars for certain L-1A and L-1B visas.
- 106.** The Somnath Temple Trust is all set to become Gujarat's first temple to deposit its idle gold in the Gold Monetisation Scheme as its trustees including Prime Minister Narendra Modi have given their nod to invest the yellow metal reserves in the scheme. The trust has around 35 kg of gold and will deposit the gold which is not in day-to-day use of the temple.
- 107.** The union government is working on issuing a unique identification number 'Unorganised Workers Identification Number' (U-WIN card) for the workforce engaged in unorganised sector to facilitate them to access social schemes and benefits.
- 108.** Government decided to implement stricter emission norms of Bharat Stage (BS) VI from April 1, 2020 by skipping BS-V altogether. At present, BS IV norms are followed in parts of India and by April 1, 2017.
- 109.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared Sikkim as the first organic state in the country.
- 110.** The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India extended the last date for submission of comments on its paper on differential data pricing to January 7 from December 30.
- 111.** The regulation that mobile phone users be paid a compensation of Rs. 1 for every call dropped, up to a maximum of three calls a day, will come into effect from January 1, TRAI Chairman R.S. Sharma said.
- 112.** Urging lawmakers to legalise betting in cricket for all except cricket players, officials and administrators, the Supreme Court-appointed Justice R.M. Lodha Committee report said that government servants and ministers should be banned from holding posts in the BCCI.
- 113.** A friendship bus service between India and Nepal via Champawat in Uttarakhand resumed after a gap of 27 years.
- 114.** Dharavi in Mumbai is to get the world's first slum museum, organisers said.
- 115.** Twenty cities will be selected on January 26, 2016 and become the first lot of cities on their way towards being "Smart". The remaining 77 applicant-cities will go back to the drawing board to enhance their potential and plan better to qualify in the next phase of selection.
- 116.** The Government of Haryana in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is all set to unfold 'The Happening Haryana Global Investors' Summit 2016' slated to be held at Gurgaon on March 7 and 8, 2016.
- 117.** India's grid-connected solar power generation capacity has crossed the 5,000 MW mark, with Rajasthan on top with 1,264.35 MW capacity followed by Gujarat.
- 118.** Government is targeting to reach the 50-crore internet subscribers mark in the next 6-7 months, besides installing 2,500 wi-fi hotspots at 256 places by the next fiscal, Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said.
- 119.** To reduce the number of vexatious and malicious complaints the government has decided to encourage the complainants to mention their Aadhaar card numbers while filing grievances on governance-related matters through an online platform.
- 120.** Passengers travelling in trains will now have the option of enjoying food prepared by some women's self help groups as Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is planning to tie up with them to enhance its e-catering portfolio.
- 121.** A committee headed by former finance secretary Vijay Kelkar that reviewed the public-private partnership (PPP) model for infrastructure projects has recommended several measures for easy financing of these.
- 122.** Uttar Pradesh is implementing the food security law from 1st January 2016.
- 123.** The Centre tabled the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Bill, 2015 in the Lok Sabha.
- 124.** The Rajya Sabha cleared the Juvenile Justice (Amendment) Bill, 2015, lowering the age of a legally defined juvenile from 18 to 16 in the case of heinous crimes.
- 125.** Beginning 2017, thermal power plants across India will have to cut particulate matter emissions by as much as 40 per cent and reduce their water consumption by nearly a third, according to rules notified by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change.

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- 126.** Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced that from January 1, all police stations in Maharashtra will start registering First Information Reports (FIRs) online and the complainant will get a copy of the complaint on WhatsApp, along with a SMS confirming the filing.
- 127.** A plot of land for India to build its first naval base in the Indian Ocean region has been allocated by the Seychelles government in the Assumption Island.
- 128.** The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India sent a reminder to Reliance Communications (RCom) to submit details about its proposed Facebook Free Basics service, as the operator had failed to meet an earlier commitment to share details with the regulator by December 9.
- 129.** India needs a new Parliament building as the current one is in great "distress," according to Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan in a proposal to the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD).
- 130.** The Centre announced Rs. 5083 crore as financial assistance to the drought hit States of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
- 131.** The Supreme Court decided to hear in open court the separate petitions filed by the CBI and the family members of the 1997 Uphaar fire tragedy victims to review its judgment allowing real estate magnates Gopal and Sushil Ansal to get off by paying a fine of Rs. 60 crore for negligence leading to the death of 59 people in the incident.
- 132.** Wipro's billionaire Chairman Azim Hashim Premji (70) has been ranked the 'most generous Indian' for the third consecutive year by Hurun India Philanthropy List 2015, which was released.
- 133.** The Supreme Court asked the Centre and public sector banking authorities to consider providing reservation to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes employees in promotion to officers' ranks at all levels.
- 134.** Lalu Prasad is set to be re-elected president of the Rashtriya Janata Dal for the ninth consecutive time, with no other leaders filing nominations for the post.
- 135.** The government has issued challans to 14 construction sites of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) and 42 major construction projects of various authorities, including private builders, for violating dust control measures.
- 136.** After a gap of years, dogs of the Indian Army trained for bomb disposal and counter-insurgency, will march on the Rajpath as part of the Republic Day parade on January 26.
- 137.** Investigating agencies are in the process of producing messages posted by individuals on Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms as evidence in court against those arrested for supporting or joining the Islamic State (IS) or any other terrorist outfit.
- 138.** Delhi High Court held that private unaided schools functioning from the land allotted to them by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) cannot increase their fees without prior sanction of the government.
- 139.** The Department of Posts (DoP) plans to open 1,000 ATMs and bring all 25,000 departmental post offices under core banking system by March this year.
- 140.** The Reserve Bank has fixed the public issue price at Rs 2,600 per gram for the sovereign gold bonds. Applications for the bonds will be accepted for five days beginning January 18 to 22. Aimed at providing an alternative to buying physical gold, the gold bond scheme will offer investors an interest rate of 2.75 per cent and a choice to buy bonds worth 2 grams of gold, up to a maximum of 500 grams.
- 141.** Country's retail payment platform NPCI and CSC eGov have jointly launched Aadhaar enabled payment system that will facilitate government entitlements such as NREGA as well as old age pension.
- 142.** Cabinet approved Rs 8,000- crore funds that will stand guarantee for loans to new ventures and also announced 'Stand up India' scheme for credit facilities to SC, ST and women entrepreneurs at lower rates. While the Rs 3,000 crore MUDRA Credit Guarantee Fund (CGF) will act as hedge against default of Rs 50,000 to Rs 10 lakh loan extended to small entrepreneurs, the Rs 5,000 crore Stand Up India CGF will stand guarantee for Rs 10 lakh to Rs 1 crore loans to be provided to least 2.5 lakh SC/ST and women.
- 143.** State Bank of India will raise up to Rs.12,000 crore by issuing bonds that are Basel-III compliant.
- 144.** Entities that received in-principle approval for setting up payments banks and small finance banks can join any payment system only after getting the final licence, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.
- 145.** Government has said that the Reserve Bank of India would continue to regulate MFIs registered as non-banking finance companies with the central bank. MFIs will not be regulated by the Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank, as proposed by the finance ministry earlier.
- 146.** India Post, which was among the eleven applicants to have received approval from RBI for payment banks in August, will start its service by March 2017.
- 147.** ICICI Bank will partner FINO PayTech to foray into the payments bank space. RBI regulations also mandate 51 per cent of the equity of the payments bank should be with domestic entities, In FINO PayTech, about 70 per cent stake is with foreign entities.

- 148.** State Bank of India unveiled a dedicated advisory services branch for startups and wealth management service for high net worth individuals.
- 149.** The Reserve Bank of India released the Report of the Committee headed by RBI Executive Director Deepak Mohanty on Medium-term Path on Financial Inclusion.
- 150.** The Reserve Bank of India extended the deadline for exchanging pre-2005 currency notes of various denominations by another six months to 30 June 2016.
- 151.** Andhra Bank on 6 January 2016 launched Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) across all its branches in association with the National Payments Corporation of India.
- 152.** RBI imposed monetary penalty of one crore rupees on State Bank of Travancore for violation of its instructions.
- 153.** India's current account deficit may narrow to 0.5 per cent of GDP in 2016 from 0.7 per cent in 2015 owing to lower commodity prices, particularly oil.
- 154.** Exports contracted for 13th month in a row in December 2015 as outward shipments shrank 14.75 per cent to \$22.2 billion amid a global demand slowdown.
- 155.** Wholesale price inflation hit -0.73% in December — retreating from -1.99% recorded in the previous month but still remaining in the negative zone for 14 months in a row — mainly on a spurt in food prices and an unfavourable base, showed the official data released.
- 156.** After scaling a five-year-high growth of 9.9% in October, industrial output contracted 3.2% in November, its first drop since October 2014.
- 157.** The government said it has mopped up Rs 2,428 crore from 644 taxpayers who have opted for the one-time black money compliance window under the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015.
- 158.** Nearly 1,200 companies listed on the BSE together spent one billion dollars or Rs.6,400 crore towards corporate social responsibility activities in 2014-15, with majority of funds utilised for education, skills, health and sanitation sector.
- 159.** India will be the world's fastest growing large economy at 7.3 per cent in 2016.
- 160.** Central Board of Direct Taxes decided that quoting of PAN will be required for transactions of an amount exceeding Rs. 2 lakh regardless of the mode of payment from January 1, 2016.
- 161.** Securities and Exchange Board of India has put in place a new form for ASBA (Application Supported by Blocked Amount) facility. ASBA facility has become mandatory for all categories of investors applying for a public issue for making payment.
- 162.** The country's foreign exchange reserves, which were \$350.4 billion as on September 2015, were able to support imports for 9.8 months, up from 8.9 months as on end March, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in its Half Yearly Report on Management of Foreign Exchange Reserves.
- 163.** The NDA Government will present Budget 2016-17 in Parliament on February 29.
- 164.** India and Russia decided to expand cooperation in various sectors as they signed 16 pacts, including on joint manufacture of 226 military helicopters and construction of 12 atomic plants with involvement of local companies in India.
- 165.** China-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) in which India and 56 countries have joined as founding members was formally opened by President Xi Jinping. The bank was formally established in Beijing on December 25, 2015.
- 166.** The IMF kept unchanged its growth forecasts for India at 7.5% for the next two years.
- 167.** Foreign tourist arrivals last year grew by 4.4 per cent at 80.16 lakh against 76.79 lakh in 2014.
- 168.** China officially ended its controversial one child policy. Chinese lawmakers passed a historic decision allowing all couples to have two children from January 1.
- 169.** North Korea declared that it had detonated its first hydrogen bomb.
- 170.** The Union Cabinet approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Singapore for operating and maintaining the terminal building of airports at Jaipur and Ahmedabad.
- 171.** The World Health Organisation declared an end to the deadliest Ebola outbreak ever after no new cases emerged in Liberia.
- 172.** The World Bank and the Indian Railways will work together to create a Railway Development Fund that will partly finance the \$142 billion investment plans for the core infrastructure sector announced by the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- 173.** The U.S. removed a wide range of sanctions against Iran after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that Tehran had met its commitments to roll back its nuclear programme, under an agreement with China, France, Russia, the U.K., the U.S. and Germany on July 14 last year.
- 174.** Afghanistan will hold its delayed parliamentary elections on October 15.
- 175.** China's economy grew by 6.9 per cent last year, in line with the official projection of "around 7 per cent."

176. Sri Lanka began the process to formulate new constitution.
177. The 14th Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas (PBD) was held on 9 January 2016 in New Delhi.
178. Nepal was elected to the UNICEF executive board, representing the group of Asia-Pacific countries for the term 2016-2018.
179. The Union Cabinet gave ex-post facto approval for signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) among BRICS countries on BRICS Network University.
180. Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir announced that his country has broken off diplomatic ties with Iran. The announcement was made amid a row over the Saudi execution of a prominent Shia Muslim cleric.
181. The Union Cabinet approved Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Jordan for promoting cooperation in the field of information technology and electronics.

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182. Russia's Rostech State Corporation tied up with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to manufacture at least 200 Kamov 226T light helicopters.
- 183.
184. WHO declared the end of Ebola virus transmission in the Republic of Guinea.
185. The 18th Session of the India-Iran Joint Commission Meeting was held in New Delhi.
186. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Afghanistan's newly-built Parliament House in Kabul.
187. Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa announced that the country has planned to adopt the Chinese Yuan as legal tender.
188. The Philippines became the first Asian country to approve the sale of the world's first-ever dengue vaccine, Dengvaxia.

189. Actors Amitabh Bachchan and Priyanka Chopra will replace Aamir Khan as new ambassadors of the Incredible India campaign to market the country to tourists abroad.
190. The RBI today said it has received complaints about notes of Rs 1,000 denomination without the security thread being in circulation and has asked banks not to issue them in case these are found.
191. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 20 January 2016 released a book titled The Z Factor: My Journey as the Wrong Man at the Right Time in New Delhi. The book is the autobiography of the promoter of Essel/ Zee Group Subhash Chandra.
192. While the on-screen award categories at the Oscars this year might be an all-white affair, much to our disappointment, but India is shining bright at the Scientific and Technical Awards being given by The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Rahul Thakkar of Indian origin has joined the elite list of Academy Award winners after Bhanu Athaiya, Satyajit Ray, Resul Pookutty, A.R. Rahman, and Gulzar, for his contribution to cinema through 'groundbreaking design'
193. The Union Cabinet on 20 January 2016 gave its ex-post facto approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and United Kingdom on cooperation in governance reforms. The MoU, which was signed in November 2015, seeks to extend bilateral cooperation in public administration and governance reforms.
194. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 20 January 2016 gave its approval for setting up over 5000 MW of Grid-Connected Solar PV Power Projects on build, own and operate basis.
195. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Kuwait Institute of Scientific Research (KISR) on 20 January 2016 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.
196. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on 20 January 2016 released the first report of the Alternative Investment Policy Advisory Committee (AIPAC) for comments from the stakeholders. The 21-member committee was constituted by the SEBI in March 2015, under the chairmanship of N R Narayan Murthy, to suggest measures for development of the alternative investment funds (AIFs) and startup eco-system in the country.
197. The annual World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting has started in Swiss resort of Davos, Switzerland with participation of political leaders and business from around the world. In this edition of WEF

- meeting, the agenda includes the outlook of the global economy and measures to fight terrorism.
198. Eminent danseuse Mrinalini Sarabhai, wife of the late Dr Vikram Sarabhai, father of India's space programme, passed away here on Thursday following age-related health complications. She was 97.
 199. Three Mi-25 gunship helicopters supplied by India are to officially join the Afghan Air Force today. The gunships, delivered at the end of December last year, have been in the assembly process.
 200. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) has signed an interim consultancy agreement with Kerala Rapid Transit Ltd (KRTL) for the Rs. 6,728-crore 'light metro' in Thiruvananthapuram and Kozhikode.
 201. Uttar Pradesh on 20 January 2016 won its maiden Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy with a 38-run win over two-time champions Baroda in the final played at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.
 202. The nineteenth edition of National Conference on e-Governance has begun on 21 January 2016 in Nagpur, Maharashtra. It was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari and the Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions Dr. Jitendra Singh.
 203. Moldovan parliament on 20 January 2016 appointed Pavel Filip as the Prime Minister. He would be the third prime minister of Moldova in less than a year.
 204. Noted environmentalist Ravi Chellam on 20 January 2016 took charge as the Executive Director of Greenpeace India, a Non-Government Organisation (NGO). Chellam succeeds former Executive Director Samit Aich, who had resigned in June 2015 following an internal review of the organisation's handling of two sexual harassment cases.
 205. The Nai Manzil scheme was on 20 January 2016 launched for the first time in Jammu and Kashmir. The scheme was launched for girls in Srinagar in three institutions- Skill Development Centre, University of Kashmir and two Madarsas.
 206. Senior revenue service officer Atulesh Jindal on 21 January 2016 was appointed chairman of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT). Jindal will succeed A K Jain, who completes his term at the end of January 2016.
 207. Italian director Ettore Scola passed away on 19 January 2016 following a prolonged illness in Rome.
 208. Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur, Rajasthan, on 21 January 2016 won the award of the world's best hotel at the Travellers' Choice award organised by TripAdvisor. The winners of Travellers' Choice Award, which entered its 14th year, were determined on the basis of the reviews and opinions collected in a single year from TripAdvisor travellers worldwide.
 209. The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation has won the National Award for e-Governance 2015-16 for its Universal Account Number programme.
 210. Deposits in accounts opened under the government's flagship financial inclusion programme — Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) — have crossed the Rs. 30,000 crore mark. As many as 20.38 crore bank accounts were opened under the PMJDY as on the January 20, as per the latest data available. These bank accounts had deposits of Rs. 30,638.29 crore (about \$4.5 billion).
 211. Google India and Indian Railways' telecom arm RailTel has launched free Rail Wire Public Wi-Fi service for railway passengers at the Mumbai Central Station. This service was launched by Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu.
 212. Former Deputy Speaker of Gujarat Assembly and Social Activist Nirmala Gajwani passed away on 21 January 2016 in Rajkot, Gujarat. She was 87. Gajwani was a reputed social worker and one of the leading lights of the Sindhi community in the state.
 213. The Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Department of Telecommunication (DoT) on 22 January 2016 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop and implement National Action Plan for Skill Development in Telecom Sector.
 214. The term BEPS is an acronym of Base Erosion and Profit Shifting and it was in news in the third week of January 2016 as India decided to implement these guidelines.
 215. BJP chief Amit Shah became the party President again today. Top party leaders led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a bevy of Union ministers and chief ministers of BJP-ruled states proposed his name for the party president's post during the nomination process.
 216. BJP chief Amit Shah became the party President again today. Top party leaders led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a bevy of Union ministers and chief ministers of BJP-ruled states proposed his name for the party president's post during the nomination process.
 217. India's digital payment startup company TranServ has launched country's first Social Mobile Wallet named Udio. The digital wallet seeks to address the gap between real and virtual modes of payment as it has more social experience.
 218. As per recently released United Nations (UN) World Economic Situation and Prospects 2016 Report, India will be the fastest growing big economy in the world in 2016. The report has projected India's

growth rate by 7.3 % in the year 2016 and 7.5 % in 2017 slightly up from an earlier estimated 7.2 % rate in 2015.

- 219. Mosquito-borne Zika virus has created a panic over thousands birth defects in the Latin America countries.
- 220. Sri Lanka has maintained its high ranking in 2015 human development index (HDI) in the South Asia Region.
- 221. 6th National Voters' Day (NVD) was observed across the country on 25 January 2016 by the Election Commission of India. The theme for the 6th National Voters' Day is 'Inclusive and Qualitative Participation'.
- 222. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa on 24 January 2016 won the Presidential election of Portugal. Sousa, a centre-right Social Democrats candidate and a former journalist, won the election by securing 52 percent of votes.

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- 223. The Andhra Pradesh Government on 22 January 2016 launched Giriputrika Kalyana Pathakam Scheme to support the tribal women in their quest for livelihood. The scheme was launched by Andhra Pradesh Minister for Social Welfare Ravela Kishore Babu.
- 224. Eminent Tabla player Pandit Shankar Ghosh passed away on 22 January 2016 in Kolkata following a prolonged illness.
- 225. National award-winning actress Kalpana, who appeared in 300 films including recent superhit "Charlie", died this morning in Hyderabad due to a heart attack.
- 226. Alice Vaidyan has been appointed Chairman and Managing Director of General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re), the National Reinsurer. She will hold office till July 31, 2019.
- 227. Now, LPG users can pay online for their cylinder refills on the website www.mylpg.in soon after booking their refill for delivery. This is the latest part of the online refill booking facilities that the three

public sector oil marketing companies have introduced in the past two years.

- 228. Japan's Izumo Takuto and Hong Kong's Zhu Chengzhu on 24 January 2016 became champions in the boys' and girls' categories, respectively, in the 11Even Sports 2015 ITTF World Junior Circuit Finals at the Abhay Prashal Stadium, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- 229. India on 24 January 2016 won the first T20 Asia cup cricket for Blind. In the final clash played at Jawaharlal Nehru stadium of Kochi, India defeated Pakistan by 44 runs.
- 230. Republic Day 2016 was celebrated on 26 January 2016 across the nation. This was the 67th Republic Day of India. President of France Francois Hollande was the Chief Guest at 67th Republic Day parade.
- 231. Manipal Hospitals Bangalore becomes the first centre in Karnataka for conducting the MRCP practical assessment of examination skills (PACES) mock exam in collaboration with UK-based Royal College of Physicians Federation.
- 232. Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with the President of France François Hollande, on 25 January 2016 laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) headquarters in National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurgaon.
- 233. Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with the President of France François Hollande, on 25 January 2016 laid the foundation stone of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) headquarters in National Institute of Solar Energy (NISE) in Gwalpahari, Gurgaon. They also inaugurated the interim Secretariat of the ISA at the same place.
- 234. Marvin Minsky, the pioneer of artificial intelligence, died at Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital due to cerebral hemorrhage. The mathematician and the computer scientist died at the age of 88.
- 235. Veteran Bollywood actress Rekha on 25 January 2016 was honoured with the third Yash Chopra Memorial Award in Mumbai.
- 236. A Kerala dentist Sajeev Koshy settled in Melbourne on 26 January 2016 was honoured with the highest civilian honour, the Order of Australia. Koshy was given the award for his service to dentistry in Victoria, Australia. He was honoured on the Australia Day Awards 2016, by the Governor General of Australia.
- 237. Actor Abe Vigoda, known for his work in The Godfather and on the television series Barney Miller, passed away on 26 January 2016 in New Jersey following natural causes. He was 94. He was best known for his roles as mobster Tessio in the movie The Godfather.

- 238.** President Pranab Mukherjee on 26 January 2016 approved the Union Cabinet's recommendation for the imposition of President's rule on Arunachal Pradesh.
- 239.** The International Hockey Federation (FIH) on 26 January 2016 announced the winners of its Hockey Stars awards for 2015. The Netherlands' Robert Van der Horst and Lidewij Welten won the men's and women's FIH Player of the Year awards, respectively, for their performances in 2015.
- ✓ Goalkeeper of the year (Women) - Joyce Sombroek (The Netherlands)
 - ✓ Goalkeeper of the year (Men) - David Harte (Ireland)
 - ✓ Rising Star of the Year (Women) - Lily Owsley (Great Britain)
 - ✓ Rising Star of the Year (Men) - Christopher Rühr (Germany)
- 240.** The West Indies batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul on 22 January 2016 announced his retirement from international cricket almost 22 years after making his debut.
- 241.** 150th birth anniversary of great freedom fighter Lala Lajpat Rai, also known as Punjab Kesri is being celebrated 28th January 2016. To celebrate this occasion a state level function has been organised in Punjab and special event will be held at village Dhudi Ke, the birth place of Lala Lajpat Rai in Moga district.
- 242.** Ministry of Culture on 28 January 2016 released a commemorative coin of 150 rupees and a circulation coin of 10 rupees on Lala Lajpat Rai. The Commemorative Coin of 150 rupees is made of Quaternary alloy with diameter of 44 mm and weight of 35 grams.
- 243.** International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust was observed on 27 January 2016 across the world. The day was proclaimed so by the United Nations General Assembly. The theme for the Holocaust remembrance and education activities in the year 2016 including the Holocaust Memorial Ceremony is The Holocaust and Human Dignity.
- 244.** The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Thaawarchand Gehlot on 27 January 2016 launched the National level Job portal www.disabilityjobs.gov.in for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).
- 245.** The Union Cabinet has approved proposal of raising of 17 Indian Reserve Battalions (IRBs) in Jammu & Kashmir and 4 Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected states.
- 246.** Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) has signed cybersecurity agreement with its counterparts in Malaysia, Singapore and Japan.
- 247.** Rajasthan Government along with its power distribution companies (DISCOMS) has signed a MoU to join UDAY (Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojana) Scheme.
- 248.** India and Armenia has signed a Protocol to amend the existing Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC) to curb instances of tax evasion. The Protocol amends the Article on Exchange of Information for tax in the bilateral DTAC signed between India and Armenia and has been in existence since September 2004.
- 249.** India has overtaken Thailand as the world's largest rice exporter in the year 2015 by shipping (exporting) 10.23 million tonnes of rice. It was announced by the Bangkok based Thai Rice Exporters Association Chairman Charoen Laodhammatas.
- 250.** United States (US) based software services exporter Cognizant Technology Solutions (CTS) has acquired cloud-based computing firm KBACE Technologies. This acquisition will help Cognizant to strength and expands its digital capabilities from its critical business applications to cloud-based IT infrastructures.
- 251.** India on 28 January 2016 test fired its indigenously-built surface-to-air Akash missile from complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR).at Chandipuri in Odisha. It was as part of a user trial mission.
- 252.** Aparna Kumar, IPS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, became India's first civil servant to scale Mount Vinson Massif, the highest peak in the Antarctica. She hoisted the Tricolour and the flag of the Uttar Pradesh Police Service on Mount Vinson Massif.
- 253.** Chennupati Jagadish and Jay Chandra, Indian-origin persons, were on 26 January 2016 honoured with the Order of Australia, highest civilian honour of Australia on the occasion of the Australia Day. They were awarded for their contribution in the fields of physics, engineering and medicine.
- 254.** Indian lawyer and human rights defender Henri Tiphagne on 26 January 2016 was selected for the 8th Human Rights Award by Amnesty International Germany.
- 255.** Australian batsman David Warner on 27 January 2016 defeated captain Steve Smith for the prestigious Allan Border Medal for 2016.
- 256.** Union Ministry of Urban Development on 28 January 2016 announced the 1st batch of 20 smart cities from 11 States and Union Territory of Delhi under the Smart Cities Mission. The 20 cities were selected through the Smart City Challenge competition that saw the participation of 1.52 crore citizens from 97 cities and towns.

- 257.** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a \$80-million loan agreement with the Centre to help continue improving infrastructure in the two North-Eastern cities of Agartala and Aizawl. The loan is the third tranche of \$200-million financing facility under the North Eastern Region Capital Cities Development Investment Program.
- 258.** Kerala will host a three-day 'Nypunyam International Skill Summit and Skill Fiesta 2016' next month with a view to bridging the gap between the job market requirement and the skill level of available workforce.
- 259.** Iran and Airbus on 28 January 2016 signed two agreements covering new aircraft orders and a comprehensive civil aviation co-operation package. The agreement includes purchase of 118 new Airbus aircrafts.
- 260.** Gurdeep Singh on 28 January 2016 was appointed as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of NTPC Ltd. Singh will be the first person to be appointed to the top job at a Maharatna company through a search committee route.
- 261.** Nisid Hajari on 28 January 2016 won the 2016 William E. Colby Award for his book, Midnight's Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition. Hajari will be presented with the award and honorarium at Norwich University, the USA in April 2016.
- 262.** India on 28 January 2016 test fired its indigenously-built surface-to-air Akash missile from complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range (ITR).at Chandipuri in Odisha.
- 263.** Justice Sanjay Mishra was on 28 January 2016 appointed as Lokayukta of Uttar Pradesh.
- 264.** Punjab's Navneet Kaur on 28 January 2016 won two gold medals in the 34th Senior National Rowing Championship at Hussainsagar Lake, Hyderabad. It was her maiden gold at the country's highest level in the senior category.
- 265.** Sania Mirza and her Swiss partner Martina Hingis on 29 January 2016 won the 2016 Australian Open title of tennis in the women's doubles category.
- 266.** Uttar Pradesh became the fourth state to join the Centre's scheme to revive state electricity distribution utilities on Saturday. The state government signed a memorandum of understanding with the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Ltd, the holding company of the various electricity distribution utilities in the state.
- 267.** Cabinet of Somalia agreed on Election Model outlined by the Mogadishu Declaration. The declaration, which was adopted in December 2015, calls for the electoral process in Somalia to establish a new, bicameral Federal Parliament in 2016, based on inclusivity and representation.
- 268.** Lt Governor of Puducherry launched the MITRA mobile application to ensure safety and security of women in the Union Territory. The app was launched in the presence of the Chief Minister N Rangasamy in Puducherry.
- 269.** The Dharwad-headquartered Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB) has set up a separate cell for monitoring progress under all the government-sponsored schemes, according to Ashok Reddy, Chairman of the bank.
- 270.** Goa Chief Minister Laxmikant Parsekar launched Goa e-Suvidha Portal, an online project tracking mechanism to fast track projects.
- 271.** Prince Mahidol Award 2015 was conferred upon Professor Morton Mower and Sir Michael Marmot for outstanding achievements in medicine and public health worldwide.
- 272.** In a bureaucratic reshuffle, the government has transferred Central Provident Fund Commissioner KK Jalan as Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).
- 273.** Amid the high-decibel debate around Net neutrality, call drops and the upcoming mega spectrum auction, Telecom Secretary Rakesh Garg was moved to the low-profile Minority Affairs Ministry, as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle.
- 274.** Leslie Berland appointed as the Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) of Twitter Inc, an online social networking site. Before Berland's appointment, the marketing operations was overseen by the Twitter's CFO Anthony Noto.
- 275.** Former Army Chief General K V Krishna Rao, who played a key role in the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War, died at the military hospital following a cardiac arrest. He was 92.
- 276.** Angelique Kerber became the first German to win a Grand Slam title since her childhood idol Steffi Graf in 1999 when she upset world number one Serena Williams 6-4 3-6 6-4 to clinch the Australian Open on Saturday.

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