

1. Former Minister E Ahamed Dies After Suffering Cardiac Arrest

Former Union minister and Indian Union Muslim League leader E Ahamed has passed away after he suffered a cardiac arrest. Ahamed was put on life support at the hospital and died at 2.15 am on 01-02-2017. Mr Ahamed, who has served as Minister of State for External Affairs in Dr Manmohan Singh's government, represented Kerala in the Lok Sabha.

2. SAARC programming committee meeting Held in Kathmandu

The 53rd meeting of SAARC Programming Committee meeting held on 01-02-2017 and could mark revival of the regional bloc following the postponement of the 19th Summit that was scheduled in Pakistan in November last year after India and some others members expressed their inability to participate. During the two day meeting they will discuss about the budget allocation of five SAARC regional centres, some specialised bodies and their annual programme. It will definitely set a positive tone to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan and for resumption of the SAARC process.

3. H1B and L1 reform Bill introduced in US House of Representatives

A legislation was introduced in the US House of Representatives on 03-01-2017 which mandates the minimum salary of H-1B visa holders to be doubled to \$130,000. This is more than double of the current salary of \$60,000 which was established in 1989. The Lofgren bill, titled "High-Skilled Integrity and Fairness Act of 2017," has been introduced at a time when there are reports that President Donald Trump might come up with an executive order to clamp down H-1B and L1 Visas.

4. Ireland became the world's first country to stop investing in fossil fuels

Ireland has voted to be the world's first country to fully divest public money from fossil fuels. The Irish Parliament passed the historic legislation in a 90 to 53 vote in favour of dropping coal, oil and gas investments. Independent MP Thomas Pringle, who introduced the bill, said the bill would send a message to climate change deniers and lobbyists.

5. Govt proposes Payments Regulatory Board in RBI

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley today proposed creation of a six-member Payments Regulatory Board in the RBI, headed by its Governor, as part of bringing about structural reforms in the payment ecosystem. For the purpose, necessary amendments are proposed in the Finance Bill 2017 to create a Payments Regulatory Board in the Reserve Bank of India by replacing the existing Board for Regulation and Supervision of Payment and Settlement Systems.