

Weekly Current Affairs

January 2019: Week II

NATIONAL EVENTS

The Lok Sabha has passed the 124th Constitutional Amendment Bill to provide reservations to the 'Economically Weaker Sections' of society.

The Bill amends **Article 15** of the Constitution to provide reservations to economically weaker sections **for admission to educational institutions including private educational institutions**, whether aided or unaided by the State, other than the minority educational institutions

The Bill also **amends Article 16** of the Constitution to provide reservations to people from economically weaker sections in government posts.

The Bill caps the reservation to economically weaker sections at **10%**.

National Clean Air Programme

The Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan launched the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP).

It is a five-year action plan with a tentative target of 20-30% reduction in concentrations of PM10 and PM2.5 by 2024, with 2017 as the base year.

Campaign Web-Wonder Women

The Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched an online **campaign Web-Wonder Women**

The campaign will discover and celebrate the exceptional achievements of women, who have been **driving positive agenda of social change via social media**

Rashtriya Gokul Mission

The Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare is implementing the scheme of Rashtriya Gokul Mission to conserve and develop indigenous **bovine breeds** in a focused and scientific manner.

About Rashtriya Gokul Mission

- Launched in 2014
- It is a focussed project under National Programme for Bovine Breeding and Dairy Development, with an outlay of Rs 500 crore during the 12th Five Year Plan.
- The scheme comprises of two components namely National Programme for Bovine Breeding (NPBB) and National Mission on Bovine Productivity (NMBP).
- It is proposed to establish Integrated Indigenous Cattle Centres or Gokul Grams in the breeding tracts of indigenous breeds.

An e-market portal “E-Pashu Haat”-
Nakul Prajnan Bazaar for connecting
breeders and farmers

Guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

The operational guidelines of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana prescribed the timeline of **two months** of completion of Crop Cutting Experiments/harvesting period for settlement of claims by insurance companies

Provision of 12% interest rate per annum to be paid by the Insurance Company to farmers for any delay in settlement of claims beyond 10 days of prescribed cut off date for payment of claims.

State Governments are required to pay 12% interest rate for delay in the release of the State share of Subsidy beyond three months of prescribed cut off date/submission of requisition by Insurance Companies.

350th Birth Anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a commemorative coin and stamp on Guru Gobind Singh to mark the 350th birth anniversary

The front side of the coin bears the rupee symbol and denominational value '350'

The reverse side bears the picture of "Takht Shri Harimandir Ji Patna Sahib" in the centre and the years '1666' and



Manufacturing Lighthouse

The **World Economic Forum** has recognised **Tata Steel's plant at IJmuiden** in the **Netherlands** as Manufacturing Lighthouse

Reason: Successful adoption and integration of the cutting-edge technologies of the future and drive financial and operational impact.

Miscellaneous

The Airports Authority of India has banned the single-use plastic items at its 129 airports across the country.

Khelo India Youth Games 2019 are being held at Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex in Pune.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has launched 70-Point Grading Index to assess the quality of school education in the states.

The Atal Tinkering Lab Handbook Naye Dishayen, Naye Nirman, Naya Bharat was released by the NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission.

The National Wildlife Board has given its approval for the Trishna Gas project of ONGC which falls in the Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary in the Gomati district of Tripura.

Norway Prime Minister **Erna Solberg** arrived in New Delhi for a three-day state visit to India.

Rail Kumbh Seva Mobile App has been launched by the North Central Railway (NCR) to help the devotees arriving in Allahabad for the Kumbh Mela.

STATE EVENTS

The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu inaugurated India's longest single-lane steel cable suspension bridge called **Byorung bridge** over Siang River. The bridge is 300-metre-long.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Gangajal Project** which aims to improve water supply to the city of **Agra**.

The High Court of **Kerala** has set a seven-day notice period for political parties and individuals to call for hartal and general strike in the State.

The government of **Odisha** has launched the scheme **Ama Ghare LED** to provide LED bulbs at free of cost to about 95 lakh families in the state.

The government of **West Bengal** has decided to exit from the Centre's ambitious **Ayushman Bharat- Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana**.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

The **Global Innovation Policy Center (GIPC)** of the United States Chamber of Commerce has launched a new innovation initiative **Fair Value for Innovation** at the **Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi**.

It will examine **economic underpinnings** that would enable breakthrough innovation, and explore how policymakers can harness innovation capital in India and around the globe through research, advocacy, partnerships, and programs.

The **Sino-Indian Digital Collaboration Plaza (SIDCOP)** has been launched by the **National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM)** in association with Municipal Governments of Guiyang and Dalian.

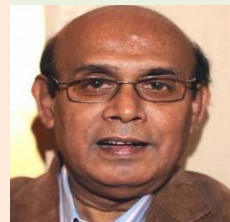
The initiative aims to bring Indian IT companies and Chinese enterprises closer to each other on a single AI enabled platform.

AWARDS AND HONOURS



Writer **Namita Gokhale** was awarded in the ‘**Best Book of Fiction** Written by a Woman Author’ category at the inaugural edition of **Bhopal Literature and Art Festival (BLF)** .She has won the **Sushila Devi Literature Award** for her novel “**Things to Leave Behind**”.

National award-winning filmmaker **Buddhadeb Dasgupta** was conferred the **Lifetime Achievement Award**, in the name of late **Satyajit Ray**, by the **West Bengal Film Journalists Association (WBFJA)** in Kolkata.



SPORTS



Gurgaon's **8-year-old Kartik Singh** won the **under-8 category** Junior world title at the **Kids' Golf World Championship** organised by **US kids Golf in Malaysia** to become the *youngest Indian to win the title*

Virat Kohli and coach **Ravi Shastri** received honorary membership of the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) for their contribution to the sport of cricket.



M C Mary Kom attained the first position in the latest women ranking released by the International Boxing Association (AIBA)



SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

First India-Central Asia Dialogue	Samarkand, Uzbekistan
25th edition of the Partnership Summit	Mumbai, Maharashtra
India-Norway Business Summit	New Delhi
2+2 Inter-Sessional Meeting of US & India	New Delhi
Women of India Organic Festival'	Chandigarh

APPOINTMENTS

Pranav R Mehta	President of the Global Solar Council
Kumar Rajesh Chandra	Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal
Gita Gopinath	Chief Economist of IMF
Nicolas Maduro	President of Venezuela
Tseng-chang	Prime Minister of Taiwan

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Hindi Day	10 th January	create awareness about the language
Pravasi Bhartiya Divas	9 th January	contribution of the overseas Indian community
National Youth Day	12 th January	Birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda

MOUS AND AGREEMENTS

Indian Highways Management Company Limited (IMHCL)	Oil Marketing Companies	for sale of FASTags through their petrol pumps
India	Japan	\$75-billion bilateral currency swap arrangement
Indian Army	Punjab National Bank	Defence Salary Package.
IRCTC	Bharti AXA	provide free travel insurance to the air travellers

COMMITTEES



Market regulator SEBI has set up a **Research advisory committee(RAC)** that will help and analyse the **new methods of policy making for the development of capital market**. The committee formed will be headed by **Sankar De**

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has constituted a high-level committee under **Nandan Nilekani** to suggest measures to **strengthen the safety and security of digital payments in the country**.



Bihar Deputy Chief Minister **Sushil Modi** will head the **seven-member committee** to look into **revenue shortfall being faced by the states** after the GST roll-out, and suggest steps for augmenting collections

The Government has set up a committee headed by former Union tourism secretary M.P. Bezbaruah to review the implementation of clause 6 of the Assam Accord.



Gold Monetisation Scheme

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Wednesday made some changes in the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) by including charitable institutions and the central government.
 - The scheme could now be availed by charitable institutions, the central government, the state government or any other entity owned by the central government or the state government
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- The scheme was launched in 2015 with tagline **earn while you secure.**
 - The scheme provides the dual benefit of, interest (denominated in gold) on the gold deposited and an option of encashing the gold at maturity.
 - All the scheduled commercial banks **except the RRBs** are authorised to implement the scheme.
 - The gold deposits can be made under 3 term deposit plans: *Short term:1 to 3 years Medium term:5 to 7 years Long term:12 to 15 years. Short-term deposit rates are decided by the banks concerned*, while the medium and long-term deposit interest rates are decided by the **Central Government.**
 - The minimum deposit one can make in a gold monetisation scheme is **30 grams** of any purity and there is no maximum limit.

BANKING AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

GST Council Decisions

- The exemption limit for Goods and Services Tax (GST) registration has been **increased to Rs 40 lakh** from the current Rs 20 lakh to ease the cost of compliance for small taxpayers or micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- The increased exemption limit of Rs 40 lakh is applicable for those businesses who deal in goods and also do intra-state trade and not for those who do inter-state transactions.
- The small States which have a small assess base have been given the option to 'opt in' or move to a lower exemption and registration limit.
- The threshold limit for the compensation scheme under which small traders and businesses pay a 1 per cent tax based on turnover has been increased to Rs 1.5 crore.
- Kerala has been allowed to levy a 1 per cent calamity cess on the intra-state sale of goods and services for a period of up to two years

REPORTS AND INDICES

Henley Passport Index

Japan retained its top spot as the world's most travel-friendly passport due to the document's access to 190 jurisdictions. India jumped two positions from 81st in 2018 to 79th this year.

Democracy Index

- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) has released the Democracy Index which ranks 167 countries by 60 indicators across five broad categories.
- The index classifies each country either as a full democracy, flawed democracy, hybrid regime or authoritarian.
- Only 4.5% of the world's people live in a full democracy.
- Australia and New Zealand are the only "full democracies" in the entire Asia-Pacific region.
- India was at the 41st place with a score of 7.23/10 and was placed in the flawed democracies category.

REPORTS AND INDICES

Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has released the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2018 which draws information from 142 countries, examining trafficking trends and patterns. Regions of **Asia and the Americas witnessed the largest increase in the numbers of victims detected.**

CSO Data

- The Central Statistics Office (CSO) under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has released the first advance estimates of National Income for 2018-19.
- The Indian economy is expected to grow at **7.2 per cent** in the financial year 2018-19 .
- The Real GVA (Gross Value Added) is expected to grow at 7 per cent in the current fiscal as against 6.5 per cent in 2017-18.

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