



Monthly Updates On **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

JANUARY 2019

NATIONAL

- Gujarat has become the first state to implement 10 percent reservations in government jobs and higher education for the economically weaker sections in the general category. The Constitution (103rd Amendment) Act, 2019, providing 10 percent reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of General Category, came into effect on January 14, 2019.
- India's longest 300-meter single lane steel cable suspension bridge was inaugurated by Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu in January 2019. The bridge lies across the Siang river at Yingkiong in the Upper Siang district and has been named as the Byorong bridge. The bridge has reduced the distance from Yinkiong to Tuting by almost 40 km.
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced that it would send astronauts to space by December 2021. If India successfully launches this mission, it would become the fourth nation to do so after the United States, Russia and China.
- The Ministry of Culture announced that Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared six monuments as protected and of national importance under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958, in December 2018. These sites are 125-year-old Old High Court Building in Nagpur, Maharashtra; The Group of Temples in Ranipur Jharail in Bolangir district of Odisha; two Mughal era monuments in Agra—Haveli of Agha Khan and Hathi Khana; The Neemrana Baori in Alwar district of Rajasthan; The Vishnu Temple in Kotali, Pithoragarh district in Uttarakhand.

ECONOMY

- The 11th edition of Global Democracy Index 2018 was released by the Economist Intelligent Unit compiling the state of democracies in 167 countries in the world. India is ranked at 41 – a notch above last year. It is still classified as a 'flawed democracy' according to the index. India achieved a score of 7.23 on the index to maintain its position.
- In a bid to give relief to small businesses, the GST Council doubled the limit for exemption from the payment of GST to Rs. 40 lakh. For the north eastern states, the exemption would now be Rs. 20 lakh. Erstwhile, businesses with a turnover of up to Rs. 20 lakh were exempted from the GST registration, while the limit for hilly and north eastern states was Rs. 10 lakh.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Indian Railways has renamed the indigenously manufactured Train 18 as Vande Bharat Express. The train is set to run between Delhi and Varanasi at a maximum speed of 160 kmph. The 16-coach train, built in 18 months at a cost of Rs. 97 crore by the Integral Coach Factory, Chennai, is regarded as a successor to the 30-year-old Shatabdi Express. It is also the first locomotive-less train in the country.

SPORTS

- Indian ace shuttler, Saina Nehwal has been declared the winner of Women's Singles in the Indonesian Open 2019, after her opponent, Carolina Marin pulled out with a thigh injury in Jakarta. In the men's singles, Anders Antonsen of Denmark has defeated Kento Momota of Japan.
- Australian Open, which is the first of the four Grand Slam tennis event, concluded at Melbourne in January 2019. Serbian tennis player, Novak Djokovic, has retained his Men's Singles title. Naomi Osaka of Japan has retained the Women's Singles title.
- MC Mary Kom has attained number one position in the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) latest world ranking released in January 2019. She became the most successful boxer in world championships' history when she claimed the 48 kg category top honours in Delhi in November 2018.

PERSONS IN NEWS

- The International Cricket Council appointed the media professional Manu Sawhney as its new chief executive officer, replacing the incumbent, David Richardson. Sawhney was the former CEO of Singapore Sports Hub and the Managing Director of ESPN Star Sports.
- The world's oldest man, Masazo Nonaka died at his home in northern Japan at the age of 113. He was certified by Guinness World Records in April 2018 as the world's oldest living man at 112 years and 259 days. The world's oldest living person is also Japanese Kane Tanaka, a 116-year-old woman from Fukuoka on the southern main island of Kyushu.
- Satyarup Siddhanta from Kolkata created a world record by becoming the world's youngest mountaineer to climb seven highest mountains and seven highest volcanoes in seven years. He reached the peak of Antarctica's highest point, the 4,285 m Mount Sidley in January 2019.
- In January 2019, Ashok Chawla has resigned from the post of Public Interest Director/ Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Stock Exchange of India Ltd with immediate effect in light of the recent legal developments. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has been probing the alleged lapses in high-frequency trading offered through NSE's co-location facility.
- Vinod K. Yadav, General Manager of South Central Railway (SCR), took charge as the Chairman, Railway Board in January 2019. He succeeded Ashwani Lohani. He is an electrical engineer and belongs to the 1980 batch of the Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers.
- Senior IPS officer, Prabhat Singh, has been appointed as the Director General (Investigation) in the National Human Rights Commission. He has been appointed to the post for a period up to April 30, 2020. NHRC is an autonomous public body constituted on 12 October 1993 under the Protection of Human Rights Ordinance of 28 September 1993.

PLANS AND POLICIES

- On the occasion of Republic Day, Madhya Pradesh's Chief Minister, Kamal Nath, launched the 'Yuva Swabhiman Yojana' for youths from the economically weaker sections in urban areas. Under this scheme, 100 days of employment will be provided to youths from economically weaker sections in urban areas. They will also be given skill training.

- Madhya Pradesh chief minister, Kamal Nath, has launched ₹. 50,000-crore farm debt-waiver scheme named 'Jai Kisan Rin Mukti Yojana' in January 2019. It will benefit 55 lakh small and marginal farmers. Only those farmers who have not registered themselves to pay GST and income tax can avail benefits under this scheme.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Awards	Recipients	Contribution
Sansad Ratna Award	Anurag Thakur	Distinguished performance as a parliamentarian
Cricketer of the year- Sir Garfield Sobers trophy, Best test player of the year and the ODI player of the year	Virat Kohli	Outstanding batting performance
Ashok Chakra	Lance Naik Nazir Ahmad Wani	Peace time gallantry award
Japan Prize	Dr. Rattan Lal	Soil Science
Gandhi Peace Prize	Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari(2015), Akshaya Patra Foundation (2016), Ekal Abhiyan Trust (2017) Shri YoheiSasakawa (2018)	Contribution in rural development, education, and development of natural resources; Improving the condition of sanitation in India and emancipation of manual scavengers; Providing education for rural and tribal children in remote areas across India; Contribution in Leprosy eradication in India and across the world.
Philip Kotler Presidential award	PM Narendra Modi	Outstanding leadership for the nation and for his self less service towards India, combined with his tireless energy, which has resulted in the extraordinary economic, social and technological advances in the country.
Bharat Ratna	Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh and singer Bhupen Hazarika	