

1-2 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) Which High Court came into existence on 1 January 2019 and thus became the 25th High Court of India? – **Andhra Pradesh High Court**

Explanation: The Andhra Pradesh High Court at the newly formed capital Amaravati came into existence from 1 January 2019. On the other hand the bifurcated High Court of Telangana also came into existence as a separate entity on the same date. Justice T B.N. Radhakrishnan was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court. Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan administered oath of office to him.

- The Governor administered oath to Justice C. Praveen Kumar as the new acting chief justice of the Andhra Pradesh high court on the same day. With this the erstwhile Hyderabad High Court ceased to exist.

- Telangana High Court thus became the 25th High Court of India. It is worth mentioning that the advocates and legal fraternity have been demanding separate high court for Telangana ever since the separate state was carved out in 2014. However, the things moved fast after Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu gave in writing that the High Court in his state Capital, Amaravati will be readied by 31 December 2018.

- The Supreme Court had directed the Centre to bifurcate the existing high court in Hyderabad. As per the notification, 12 judges, over 360 district and civil judges have been allotted to the new Telangana state.



2) Who took over as the new President of Brazil on 1 January 2019 replacing Michel Temer? – **Jair Bolsonaro**

Explanation: Jair Bolsonaro, a far-right politician vowing a crackdown on crime and corruption, was sworn-in as Brazil's new president in front of Congress in capital Brasilia on 1 January 2019.

- He took over from deeply unpopular centre-right president Michel Temer, who was effectively a caretaker figure following the impeachment of leftist leader Dilma Rousseff, booted from office in 2016 for fiddling the government books.

- 63-year old Bolsonaro is a former para-trooper and congressman for the past 27 years. He is the 38 President of Brazil and will have 4-year term.

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3) What is the name of the Indian-American who took over as the President and CEO of multinational courier behemoth FedEx Express (FedEx) on 1 January 2019? - **Rajesh Subramaniam**

Explanation: Indian-American Rajesh Subramaniam on 1 January 2019 took over as the new President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of US multinational courier delivery giant FedEx Express. He was till now the Executive Vice President, chief marketing and communications officer of the company.

- Subramaniam, an IIT-Bombay graduate from Thiruvananthapuram, has been with FedEx for more than 27 years. He has held various executive-level positions in the company. He replaced David L Cunningham.

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4) Renowned filmmaker Mrinal Sen passed away at his Kolkata residence on 30 December 2018. In

which year he was bestowed the Dada SahebPhalke Award? – **2005**

Explanation: MrinalSen, one of the towering figures of Indian cinema, passed away in the morning of 30 December 2018 at his south Kolkata residence. He was 95.

- Last of the triumvirate of legendary filmmakers from West Bengal comprising Satyajit Ray and RitwickGhatak, MrinalSen was recipient of various awards including Dada SahebPhalke award in 2005.

- Some of his well-known works include 'AakashKusum' (1965), 'BhuvanShome' (1969), 'Calcutta 71' and 'Interview' (1971), 'Khandhar' (1974), 'Chorus' (1975), 'Mrigaya' (1977), 'AkalerSandhane' (1981) and 'Ek Din Achanak' (1989). 'AamarBhuvan' (2002) was his last feature film.

3 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) What new record in UPI-based transactions was created during December 2018, as was disclosed by the data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) on 2 January 2019? – For the first-time ever over 600 million UPI transactions were recorded in a calendar month

Explanation: In a record of sorts, 620.17 million Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions worth Rs. 102,594.82 crore were conducted in December 2018, as compared to 524.94 million transactions valued at Rs. 82,232.21 crore in November 2018. This meant an increase of 18% in transaction amount.

- Thus December 2018 was the first month when over 600 million UPI transactions were recorded. UPI transactions had crossed the 500 million-mark for the first time in November 2018.

- UPI is a payments system launched by the NPCI, the umbrella organization for all retail payments in India. It facilitates instant fund transfer between two bank accounts on a mobile platform, without requiring any detail of the beneficiary's bank account.



2) Who took as the new Managing Director and CEO of Axis Bank from 1 January 2019? – Amitabh Chaudhry

Explanation: On 1 January 2019 Amitabh Chaudhry took over as the new Managing Director and CEO of Axis Bank, the third largest private sector bank of the country. He is a former MD and CEO of HDFC Standard Life Insurance Company, was in September 2018 named the MD and CEO of Axis Bank for a period of three years.

- Chaudhry replaced Shikha Sharma who retired from the post earlier on 31 December 2018.

- Shikha Sharma was at Axis Bank's helm since 2009 and she had completed three full terms of three years in May 2018. Axis Bank's revenue during 2018 was over Rs. 58,000 crore while bank's assets stood at Rs. 6.91 trillion.



3) Who was nominated as the new Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) as was announced on 1 January 2019? – Justice A.K. Sikri

Explanation: President Ram NathKovind nominated Justice Sikri as Executive Chairman of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) with effect from 31 December 2018. The post got vacant after the retirement of Justice Madan B Lokur. This announcement was made on 1 January 2019.

- The NALSA was constituted under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 to provide free legal services to the weaker sections of the society and to organise LokAdalats for amicable settlement of disputes.

4) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 2 January 2019 launched the 'Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)' that is expected to provide some idea about awareness and usage habits of digital payment products. Which agency has been engaged to conduct the fieldwork of the survey from 6 cities? - **Sigma Research & Consulting Pvt. Ltd.**

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will capture payment habits of individuals in six cities, including four metropolitan towns. For the purpose, the central bank has launched a 'Survey on Retail Payment Habits of Individuals (SRPHi)'.

- The RBI has engaged Sigma Research & Consulting Pvt Ltd. to conduct the fieldwork of the survey on behalf of the RBI.

- The survey will cover a sample of 6,000 individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds across six cities - Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Guwahati. This was announced by the RBI on 2 January 2019.



5) Ramakant Achrekar, who passed away on 2 January 2019, was an iconic coach associated with which sports? - **Cricketer**

Explanation: Ramakant Achrekar, the legendary coach known to have shaped the career of master-blaster Sachin Tendulkar, passed away at his Mumbai residence on 2 January 2019. He was 87.

- Besides Tendulkar, he also coached some prominent players in Vinod Kambli, Pravin Amre, Sameer Dighe, Ramesh Powar, Chandrakant Pandit, Ajit Agarkar and Balwinder Singh Sandhu.

- Achrekar was bestowed with country's fourth highest civilian award - Padma Shri in 2010 and Dronacharya Award (for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games) in 1990.

4 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) The 106th edition of the Indian Science Congress (ISC) was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 3 January 2019. This annual congregation of the top scientific minds of the country is being hosted by which institution? - **Lovely Professional University (Phagwara)**

Explanation: Phagwara (Punjab)-based Lovely Professional University (LPU) is hosting the 106th edition of the Indian Science Congress (ISC). The 5-day event was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 3 January 2019. The theme of this year's ISC is - FUTURE INDIA – Science and Technology. The Congress will conclude on 7 January 2019.

- ISC is an annual event hosted by the Indian Science Congress Association (ISCA), a premier scientific organisation of India with headquarters at Kolkata, West Bengal. The association started in the year 1914 in Kolkata and it meets annually in the first week of January. It has a membership of more than 30,000 scientists.



2) What is the name of the Chinese spacecraft that on 3 January 2019 became the first ever to land on the far side of the moon? - **Chang'e 4**

Explanation: Chang'e 4 is the name of the Chinese lunar exploration mission that achieved the first soft-landing on the far side of the Moon, on 3 January 2019. It was launched by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and this robotic probe landed in the unexplored South Pole-Aitken basin, the largest, oldest, deepest, crater on the moon's surface.

- It was launched from the Earth on 7 December 2018 and it entered Moon's orbit on 12 December

2018. Like its predecessors, the spacecraft is named after Change, the Chinese Moon goddess.

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3) The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 2 January 2019 set up a committee to address issues regarding the sustainability of MSMEs. Who is heading this 8-member committee? – **U.K. Sinha**

Explanation: Former SEBI Chairman UK Sinha is heading the 8-member committee constituted by the RBI on 2 January 2019 to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

- The committee will also examine factors affecting the availability of finance to MSMEs. The announcement of this committee came just one day after RBI allowed one-time restructuring of MSME loans of up to Rs. 25 crore on 1 January 2019.

- The U.K. Sinha-led MSME panel has also been asked to propose measures for leveraging technology in accelerating growth of the sector and suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.

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4) Which state government on 2 January 2019 introduced a 0.5% "GauRaksha" cess in the state to protect stray cows? – **Uttar Pradesh**

Explanation: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on 2 January 2019 announced levying a 0.5% "GauRaksha" cess in the state to protect stray cows. This move comes as the state now has a stray cattle problem following the aggressive crackdown on illegal cow slaughterhouses.

- This additional cess that will amount to an increase of 0.5% will be levied on excise items such as alcohol, and toll tax.

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5 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) Retired justice Chandrashekhar Shankar Dharmadhikari, who passed away on 3 January 2019, was renowned for which landmark verdict of his? – **Verdict on Human Rights during Emergency**

Explanation: In his landmark ruling during the Emergency, Justice Dharmadhikari had held that apart from constitutional rights, the Right to Life is natural and a human right, and therefore, even during the Emergency, a citizen could approach the high court. Accordingly, he entertained petitions and ordered the release of those against whom there was no evidence material.

- Dharmadhikari passed away at a private hospital in Mumbai on 3 January 2019. He was 91. He was also an eminent Gandhian, freedom-fighter, legal luminary and social activist. He was appointed a judge in Bombay High Court in July 1972. He served as Acting Chief Justice here and retired in November 1989.

- Justice Dharmadhikari was a recipient of many awards, including Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan.

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Food Safety and Standards
Authority of India

2) The Indian food regulator FSSAI on 3 January 2019 notified new packaging regulations which primarily prohibit use of newspaper or recycled plastics for packing. These regulations will come into effect from which date? – **1 July 2019**

Explanation: The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on 3 January 2019 notified new packaging regulations which prohibit use of newspaper or recycled plastics for packing, wrapping, storing, transporting or dispensing articles of food products.

- The new regulations will come into force from 1 July 2019.

- The new regulation defines standards for different materials used for packaging of food products. It has also prescribed overall migration and specific migration limits of contaminants for plastic packaging materials.

3) Which mutual fund entity overtook ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company (AMC) after a gap of over two years, as per the latest data ending December 2018 that was released on 3 January 2019? - HDFC Mutual Fund

Explanation: HDFC Mutual Fund has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company after a gap of over two years. As of December-end, HDFC MF manages assets to the tune of Rs 3.35 lakh crore, while those of ICICI Prudential MF stood at Rs 3.08 lakh crore.

- This was disclosed in the latest data available with Association of Mutual funds in India (AMFI).

- HDFC MF was the largest asset manager since October 2011 and it held the top position till March 2016, when ICICI prudential MF had overtaken the top spot.



4) Herb Kelleher, who died on 3 January 2019, was the co-founder of which iconic low-cost carrier? - Southwest Airlines

Explanation: Herb Kelleher, who co-founded pioneering low-cost carrier Southwest Airlines, passed away on 3 January 2019 at the age of 87.

- Kelleher set up Southwest with Rollin King, with the airline making its first flight in June 1971. Dallas-based Southwest is known for its quirky culture, closely connected with Kelleher's maverick image, as well as its fast growth from a regional carrier into one of the biggest in the United States.

- Southwest succeeded by a strategy of offering low fares to its passengers, eliminating unnecessary

services, and avoiding the typical scheduling system.



5) New York-based pharmaceutical giant Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. is acquiring which biotech entity for \$74 billion to create an oncology behemoth, as was announced on 2 January 2019? - Celgene Corp.

Explanation: New York-based pharmaceutical giant Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. on 2 January 2019 announced it would buy US biotech firm Celgene Corp. in a \$74 billion cash-and-stock deal. The companies expect to close the deal in the third quarter of this year.

- In the deal, Bristol-Meyers Squibb gains Celgene's incredibly popular Revlimid treatment for multiple myeloma.

6-8 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) The National Green Tribunal on 4 January 2019 imposed a fine of whopping Rs. 100 crore on which state government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state? - Meghalaya

Explanation: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) imposed Rs. 100 crore fine on the state government of Meghalaya. The fine was imposed as a "deterrent" and for its "inaction" to curb illegal mining in the northeastern state.

- It is worth mentioning that at least 15 miners are trapped in the 370 foot-deep illegal coal mine in Lumthari village of East Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya since 13 December 2018 and all efforts to pump the water out of flooded mine have been in vain.

2) Who became the first-ever person in India to be declared as a fugitive economic offender, as was declared by a Special Court in Mumbai on 5 January 2019? - **Vijay Mallya**

Explanation: A special court in Mumbai on 5 January 2019 declared absconding accused liquor baron Vijay Mallya as a fugitive economic offender under the new Fugitive Economic Offenders Act. He is the first person to be declared so and the government can now confiscate his properties.

- On 22 June 2018, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had filed an application at the PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act) court to declare Mallya a fugitive economic offender and sought orders to confiscate all his properties estimated to be around Rs. 12,500 crore.



3) India outclassed which team by 4-1 in the ongoing Asian Cup football tournament at Abu Dhabi on 6 January 2019 to record its first win in 55 years? - **Thailand**

Explanation: India outplayed Thailand by 4-1 to record its first victory in the Asian Cup football tournament since 1964 on 6 January 2019 at the Al Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

- Indian football's goal machine and captain Sunil Chhetri struck a brace to help the country score this pulsating win. Playing in his second Asian Cup and 105th match, Chhetri scored in the 27th (penalty) and 46th minutes for his 66th and 67th international goals.

- With his two strikes, the 34-year-old Chhetri went past Argentine superstar Lionel Messi, who has so far scored 65 goals from 128 matches. Portugal superstar Cristiano Ronaldo is the highest scorer with 85 from 154 matches.

- Midfielder Anirudha Thapa and second half substitute Jeje Lalpekhlua then struck in the 68th and 80th minutes to completely outclass Thailand.



4) Sultan Muhammad V, who on 6 January 2019 abdicated his post as the king of his country, was the 15 monarch of which country? - **Malaysia**

Explanation: Malaysia's King Sultan Muhammad V on 6 January 2019 announced his decision to abdicate from the post of country's monarch. He was the 15 monarch of Malaysia.

- Sultan Muhammad V's decision marks the first time a king has abdicated in the Muslim-majority country since Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. The announcement follows a leave of absence by the head of state and rumours he had married a former Russian beauty queen.

5) The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. (NSE) on 4 January 2019 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with which IIT to work together on cyber security solutions and practices? - **IIT Kanpur**

Explanation: The National Stock Exchange of India Ltd. (NSE), India's leading Stock exchange, on 4 January 2019 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIT Kanpur, one of the premier technology institute's in the country, to work together on industry-leading Cyber Security solutions and practices.

- Through this engagement, IIT Kanpur faculty would help NSE in the areas of Cyber Security. IIT Kanpur had earlier also provided cyber security monitoring facilities to the BSE, which had proved quite efficient and beneficial.



6) India scripted history winning the first ever Test series on Australian soil beating the home team 2-1 after the fourth and final Test ended in a tame draw in Sydney due to inclement weather on 7 January 2019. Who was declared the man of the series? - **Cheteshwar Pujara**

Explanation: CheteshwarPujara (India), who scored three centuries and amassed 521 runs in the series, was declared the man of the series of the India-Australia Test series that concluded on 7 January 2019.

- The fourth and final test ended in a draw at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG). India thus won the series 2-1 and created history by winning a Test series on the Australian soil for the first time. India won the Test matches at Adelaide Oval and Melbourne while Australia's lone win came at Perth.

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9-14 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) The Indian Parliament on 9 January 2019 passed the bill to provide 10% quota in educational seats and government jobs to economically weaker sections in the general category as the RajyaSabha passed the amendment bill on this day. Which Constitutional Amendment Bill was passed to ensure this? – **124th Constitutional Amendment Bill**

Explanation: Parliament on 9 January 2019 cleared the Constitutional Amendment Bill guaranteeing 10% quota in education and employment to economically weaker sections in the general category. This followed the approval of the bill by the RajyaSabha. The LokSabha had passed the bill a day earlier on 8 January 2019. Later on 12 January 2019 President Ram NathKovind signed the Bill to give it constitutional authority.

- The pertaining constitutional amendment bill is the 124 Amendment Bill that was introduced by Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Thawar Chand Gehlot in the Parliament on 7 January 2019.

- The reservation would be applicable to jobs in both Central and State governments. However, the legislation gives powers to States to determine the economic criteria for identification of beneficiaries.

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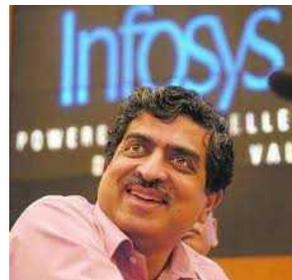
2) Which state government on 12 January 2019 launched “One Family, One Job” scheme to ensure job security for the state citizens? – **Sikkim**

Explanation: Sikkim Chief Minister PawanChamling launched the ambitious “One Family, One Job” scheme that envisions employment to a member of every family which does not have a government job in the state.

- The Chief Minister personally handed out temporary appointment letters to two beneficiaries from each of the 32 Assembly constituencies in the state as a token gesture to kick-start the scheme.

- At present recruitments are being made for Group C and Group D posts in 12 government departments. Under this scheme, all loan debts in the farming and agriculture sector would be revoked.

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3) Who was appointed as the Chairman of the newly constituted RBI committee to suggest measures to strengthen safety of digital payments ecosystem, as was announced on 8 January 2019? – **NandanNilekani**

Explanation: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed NandanNilekani, co-founder of Infosys, as the chairman of a five-member high-level committee that will work towards deepening digital payments in India.

- The committee's major role will be to review the existing status of digitisation of payments in the country, identify the current gaps in the ecosystem and suggest ways to bridge them.

- Other members of the committee are HR Khan, Former RBI Deputy Governor, Kishore Sansi, Former MD and CEO Vijaya Bank, Aruna Sharma, Former Secretary, Ministry of Information

4) The Supreme Court on 8 January 2019 set up a five-judge Constitution Bench to hear the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land title dispute case. Who are the five judges in this bench? - **Chief Justice RanjanGogoi, Justices S A Bobde, N V Ramana, U ULalit and D Y Chandrachud**

Explanation: Apart from Chief Justice RanjanGogoi, the other 4 members of the five-judge Constitution Bench to hear the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land title dispute case are - Justices S A Bobde, N V Ramana, U ULalit and D Y Chandrachud. The Constitution Bench was scheduled to hear the matter from 10 January 2019, but Justice U ULalit separated himself from the Bench. The SC thus gave 29 January 2019 as the new date of hearing.

- As many as 14 appeals have been filed in the apex court against the 2010 Allahabad High Court judgement, delivered in four civil suits, that the 2.77-acre land be partitioned equally among the three parties - the Sunni Waqf Board, the NirmohiAkhara and Ram Lalla.



5) Which Indian destination is listed at second place in the New York Times' list of '52 Places to Go in 2019' and is the only Indian destination to feature in the list? – **Hampi (Karnataka)**

Explanation: The tourist town of Hampi in Karnataka was listed at the second place in the New York Times' list of '52 Places to Go in 2019'. Hampi is the only Indian destination, which has managed to secure a place in the list. The top position is held by the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico, which was ravaged by Hurricane Maria in late 2017.

- Located in Hosapetetaluk of Ballari district, there are 57 major monuments in Hampi, most of which come under the core zone of Hampi, including four villages spread across 41.8 sq. km.

- It is best known for several Hindu temples that have been constructed in the Dravidian style of

15-18 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) On 15 January 2019 who became India's youngest chess Grandmaster (GM)? - **D. Gukesh**

Explanation: 12-year old D. Gukesh on 15 January 2019 became overall the 59 and the youngest chess Grandmaster (GM) from India as he defeated Dinesh Sharma in the ninth round of the Delhi International Open.

- He thus broke the record of R. Praggnanandhaa set in June 2018. For the record, Gukesh reached the landmark at the age of 12 years, seven months and 17 days. Praggnanandhaa did it in 12 years, 10 months and 13 days. Gukesh is now World's second youngest GM.

- It is worth mentioning that the record for world's youngest Grandmaster stands in name of Sergey Karjakin (Russia) at 12 years and seven months. This record was created in 2002.

2) The Union government on 16 January 2019 cleared the names of which two new judges for Supreme Court who were subsequently appointed judges in the apex court? - **Justice Dinesh Maheshwari** and **Justice SanjivKhanna**

Explanation: The elevation of the two justices, Justice Dinesh Maheshwari and Justice SanjivKhanna, was cleared by the government in separate orders on 16 January 2019.

- With the swearing-in of justices Maheshwari and Khanna on 18 January 2019, the strength of SC Judges has now gone up to 28. Their tenure as judges of the SC would be till 14 May 2023 and 13 May 2025 respectively. The total posts of judges in the apex court stands at 31.

- Justice SanjivKhanna, who was a judge in the Delhi High Court would be in line to become the Chief Justice of India after Justice DY Chandrachud in November 2024.



3) On 16 January 2019 who was appointed as the International Cricket Council's (ICC's) new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) replacing David Richardson? - **Manu Sawhney**

Explanation: Manu Sawhney, the India-born former managing director of ESPN Star Sports, has been appointed as the International Cricket Council's (ICC) new chief executive officer. He replaces David Richardson (South Africa), whose contract expires after the World Cup in the UK later this year.

- Sawhney was the unanimous choice following a global recruitment process led by ICC chairman ShashankManohar and the nominations committee.

4) The Union Cabinet on 16 January 2019 announced how much capital infusion in state-owned Exim Bank to expand its business? - **Rs. 6,000 crore**

Explanation: The Union Cabinet approved a capital infusion of Rs. 6,000 crore in state-owned Export Import Bank of India (EXIM) to expand its business on 16 January 2019. The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister NarendraModi, also approved an increase in the bank's authorised capital from Rs. 10,000 crore to Rs. 20,000 crore.

- The infusion of capital into Exim Bank would enable it to augment capital adequacy and support Indian exports with enhanced ability. Exim Bank is the principal export credit agency in India and the infusion will give an impetus to new initiatives.



5) ICICI Securities Ltd lost its position as the leader in retail broking segment to which entity for third quarter of 2018-19 as was reported in media reports on 15 January 2019? - **Zerodha**

Explanation: As per media reports of 15 January 2019, Broking firm ICICI Securities Ltd.'s active customer base grow at a modest 10% in the third quarter of 2018-19 while rival firm Zerodha's active customer base surge to 847,000 as of December, 'marginally higher than ICICI Securities' base of 845,000.

- Thus ICICI Securities Ltd. lost the crown of being the largest retail broking firm to Zerodha.

- The silver lining for ICICI Securities was that average daily trading volume continued to remain robust, providing some visibility on earnings from its broking operations.

19-24 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) 15th PravasiBharatiya Divas Convention was formally inaugurated on 22 January 2019 by Prime Minister NarendraModi. This annual event associated with the Indian diaspora was held in which city? - **Varanasi**

Explanation: Prime Minister NarendraModi inaugurated the 15th PravasiBharatiyaDivas convention in his parliamentary constituency of Varanasi on 22 January 2019. For the first time, the three-day-long convention was organised from 21 January to 23 January instead of 9 January to allow participants to visit the Kumbhmela in Prayagraj and attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi.

- The theme of this year's convention was "The Role of Indian Diaspora in building new India". The Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Jugnauth was the chief guest of the event while Himanshu Gulati, member of Parliament of Norway, was the special guest.



2) Which 5 institutions/personalities were awarded the prestigious International Gandhi Peace Prize for years 2015 to 2018? – **Vivekananda Kendra** (2015), **Akshaya Patra** and **Sulabh International** (for 2016), **Ekal Abhiyan Trust** (2017) and **Yohei Sarakawa** (2018)

Explanation: On 18 January 2019 a jury headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the winners of International Gandhi Peace Prize for years 2015 to 2018. The last edition of this prize was announced for year 2014. The prize for 2015 has been awarded to Kaniyakumari-based **Vivekananda Kendra**, a Hindu spiritual organisation based on the principles preached by Swami Vivekananda. On the other hand the prize for 2016 has been shared by **Akshaya Patra** and **Sulabh International**. Akshaya Patra is a non-profit organisation in India that runs school lunch programme across India while Sulabh International is a social service organization that works to promote human rights, environmental sanitation, non-conventional sources of energy, waste management and social reforms through education.

- The International Gandhi Peace Prize for 2017 has been conferred on **Ekal Abhiyan Trust**, trust that is engaged in providing education for rural and tribal children in remote areas pan India, rural empowerment, gender and social equality. The prize for 2018 has been awarded to **Yohei Sarakawa** of Japan, for his contribution in Leprosy Eradication in India and across the world.

- The other members of selection jury of prize includes Justice Ranjan Gogoi, the Chief Justice of India; Sumitra Mahajan, Speaker of Lok Sabha; Mallikarjuna Kharge, Leader of the single largest Opposition Party in Lok Sabha and L.K. Advani, Member of Parliament.



Reliance

Industries Limited 3) Which entity during January 2019 became the first-ever private company in India with a quarterly profit of over Rs 10,000 crore? - **Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL)**

Explanation: Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on 17 January 2019 posted an 8.8% rise in third-quarter profit at Rs. 10,251 crore, thus becoming the first Indian private company to post Rs. 10,000 crore profit in a quarter. - RIL's consolidated revenues spiked 55.9% to Rs 1,71,336 crore in Q3 FY19 vs Rs 1,09,905 crore in Q3 FY18. Reliance Jio Infocomm net profit for the reporting quarter stood at Rs 831 crore, up 65% from a profit Rs 504 crore in same quarter last year.



4) American investor and businessman John Bogle, who passed away on 16 January 2019, was the founder of which noted investor advisor firm? – **The Vanguard Group**

Explanation: John Bogle, the founder of Vanguard Group who popularised low-cost index funds, died of oesophageal cancer on 16 January 2019 at the age of 89.

- Vanguard, founded in 1974, is now the world's biggest mutual fund firm with around \$5 trillion in assets under management.

25 January 2019 Current Affairs



1) Which military satellite was successfully placed

into Earth's orbit by ISRO's PSLV C-44 in the late hours of 24 January 2019? - **Microsat-R**

Explanation: Microsat-R is the name of the defence application satellite that was successfully placed into Earth's orbit by Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's) PSLV C-44 in the late hours of 24 January 2019. Along with it a student satellite, Kalamsat, made by Space Kidz India, was also successfully placed in the orbit.

- It is worth mentioning that Microsat-R is the first Indian satellite that was placed by ISRO in a low orbit at an altitude of 274 km.

- The mission with the modified PSLV with just two strap-on motors, dubbed the PSLV-DL (dual strap-ons), marked another first for ISRO as it provided an alternative to its normal six strap-on motors. This will enable it to carry slightly higher payloads than its Core-Along version.



2) Which major port of the country became India's only port to get listed among the top 30 global container ports of Lloyd Report, as was announced by the Union Shipping Ministry during January 2019? - **Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT)**

Explanation: Mumbai's Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT), India's premiere container port got listed amongst the top 30 container ports globally, as per the latest Lloyds Report. JNPT notched up five spots, to be 28th on the list, compared to its previous ranking. This was announced by the Union Shipping Ministry on 22 January 2019.

- Various new processes activated by JNPT under the 'ease of doing business' initiative have not only helped in overall growth of the port business, but also allowed the EXIM (Export Import) trade to save time and cost.

- The JNPT also launched their App service to facilitate better tracking of consignment and ease the trade process for their EXIM partners.

3) On 23 January 2019 which entity received the CCI's approval to acquire majority stakes in Den Networks and Hathway Cable & Datacom? - **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)**

Explanation: Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on 23 January 2019 received the Competition Commission of India's (CCI) approval to acquire majority stakes in Den Networks (DEN), and Hathway Cable & Datacom (Hathway), two of India's largest cable operators.

- Reliance will take 66% stake in Den for Rs. 2,290 crore and 51.3% stake in Hathway for Rs. 2,940 crore. The acquisition will give RIL control of around 27,000 local cable operators.



4) On 24 January 2019 who was named new king of Malaysia to take place of Sultan Muhammad V who abdicated from the post earlier? - **Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah**

Explanation: Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, the hereditary ruler of the central Malaysian state of Pahang and a prominent adviser to several world sporting bodies, was on 24 January 2019 named the country's new king.

- He replaces the previous king, the flamboyant Sultan Muhammad V, who had stunned the country with his sudden abdication in early January 2019. The new king will be installed in a traditional ceremony on 31 January 2019.

- Malaysia's unique system of rotational constitutional monarchy requires the role of king to be passed between the heads of the country's nine royal households.



5) Leading budget airline IndiGo on 24 January 2019 named who as company's new CEO? - **Ronojoy Dutta**

Explanation: InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which runs IndiGo, India's largest airline in terms of passengers carried, on 24 January 2019 named industry veteran Ronojoy Dutta as chief executive officer (CEO).

- His appointment comes about nine months after IndiGo's president and whole-time director Aditya Ghosh, who managed the day-to-day operations at the airline, announced his decision to quit. Dutta, who has several decades of experience in the aviation sector, has been the president of United Airlines, after rising through the ranks in the company.

- InterGlobe also appointed former SEBI chairman M. Damodaran as chairman of the company's board. His appointment comes two months after the death of M.D. Mallya who had served as chairman of the company.

26th January 2019

1) India is celebrating 70th Republic Day.

Explanation: Theme: 'life of Gandhi' which is a tribute to the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. **Chief guest:** President Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa. This is **the second time a South African leader is Chief Guest at Republic Day**— Nelson Mandela was the chief guest in 1995.

Significance: Republic day in India is celebrated every year on 26th of January to honour the Constitution of India as it came into force on the same day in the year 1950.

Highlights of the republic day- key facts relevant for Competitions:

1. The 70th Republic Day parade had **the highest number of women officers participating** in the celebrations with Lt. Bhavana Kasturi leading a contingent of 144 male personnel. This was **the first time in the history of Indian Army that a woman will lead the Army services corps**.

2. **An all-women contingent of Assam Rifles, India's oldest paramilitary force**, participated for the first time. The contingent was opened for women in 2012.

3. The weapons which was showcased for the first time in a Republic day parade were **M777 and K-9 Vajraultra light howitzers along with the Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) missile** of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

4. For the first time in the Republic Day parade, An-32 aircraft was flying using a **mix of traditional and biofuel**.

5. Four former **Indian National Army (INA)** soldiers participated for the first time in the parade. INA was an armed force formed by Indian nationalist **Rash Behari Bose in 1942** in Southeast Asia during World War II.

6. '**Sankhnaad**', a martial tune created for the Indian armed forces, played for the first time on the 70th Republic Day parade. Since Independence, the Indian defence forces have been playing 'martial tune' created by the Britishers. '**Sankhnaad**' is **based on Indian classical music**.

2) **Parthasarathi Mukherjee** to head Lakshmi Vilas Bank for another two years.

Explanation: Private sector Lakshmi Vilas Bank has reappointed Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its managing director when the lenders struggling to raise Rs. 2000 crore from investors. Mukherjee will be at the helm for another two years from January 25. The decision was taken by the board. Reserve Bank of India has approved his reappointment.

3) Government to confer **4 Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan** awards this year

Explanation: The Government of India announced four Padma Vibhushan, 14 Padma Bhushan and 94 Padma Shri Awards for 112 personalities.

As many as 21 of the awardees are women. Folk artiste Teejan Bai, President of Djibouti Ismail Omar Guelleh, L&T chairman AM Naik and theatre artiste Balwant Moreshwar Purandare were awarded the Padma Vibhushan, India's second highest civilian award.

4) **Sam Stosur and Zhang Shuai** Australian Open women's doubles title.

Explanation: Former US Open women's singles winner Sam Stosur teamed up with Zhang Shuai to overcome defending champions Timea Babos and Kristina Mladenovic to claim the Australian Open women's doubles title.

This was the 34-year-old Australian's first Grand Slam title on home soil since 2005.

Notably, this was Zhang's first Grand Slam title of any kind.

27th & 28th January 2019

1) Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated **Atal Setu** in Goa.

Explanation: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated four-lane, 5.1 kilometre long "Atal Setu", the third Cable Bridge across river Mandovi in Panaji, Goa.

The bridge is a joint venture between the GSIDC

(Goa State Infrastructure Development Corporation) and Larsen and Toubro.

AtalSetu Bridge is the third longest cable stayed bridge in the country.

The construction lasted over four and a half years, having started on June 14, 2014 total worth of the project is over 600 crore Rupees.



2) 'Operation Olympics' commenced in Kerala

Explanation: Operation Olympics an expert programme to train athletes in 11 disciplines has commenced in Kerala. The Kerala sports department and the state sports council are preparing the 123 athletes who are participating in the programme, for the Olympics. The objective of 'Operation Olympics' is to provide international standard training with the help of eminent trainers from both India and abroad.

The programme includes expert training in athletics, boxing, cycling, swimming, shooting, wrestling, badminton, fencing, rowing and archery.



3) Novak Djokovic beats Rafael Nadal to win his 7th Australian Open title.

Explanation: Novak Djokovic defeated Rafael Nadal in Open Men's Singles title at Melbourne. World No. 1 outplayed the second-ranked Nadal 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 in a largely one-sided match.

In Women's Singles, Japan's Naomi Osaka clinched her maiden Australian Open Grand Slam Singles title in Melbourne. Osaka defeated Petra Kvitová of Czech Republic 7-6, 5-7, 6-4 in the summit clash.



4) Saina wins Indonesia Masters after injured Marin limps out of final.

Explanation: Aceshuttler Saina Nehwal won her first Indonesia Masters title after three-time world champion Carolina Marin limped out of the final due to a leg injury.

The Spaniard was leading 10-4 in the first game, after she retired with injury.



29th, 30th & 31st January 2019

1) Train 18 named **Vande Bharat Express**.

Explanation: India's first indigenously built engineless semi high speed train, Train 18, has been named 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.



2) Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced "Jiban Sampark" project.

Explanation: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced "Jiban Sampark" project in Partnership with UNICEF India to generate awareness about the development and welfare initiatives of state government among the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups of the state.

The announcement was made after Patnaik inaugurated the annual tribal fair popularly known as “AdivasiMela” the annual event which has 180 stalls to showcase tribal market, food, agriculture produce and forest products. “The Jiban Sampark’s focus areas will include skill development, empowering communities, cooperation and innovation among the groups of 15 tribal communities in the country, 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups residing in remote and far off areas of 12 district in Odisha.

3) Kia Motors India set to begin trial production.

Explanation: Kia Motors is eighth largest automotive company in the world. Kia Motors, the South Korean global automotive major, is all set to commence trial run of its \$1 billion green field plant in Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh. The company’s first car from the plant, SP2i, a sports utility vehicle showcased at the Auto Show as a SP concept, is poised to be rolled out by July this year for sale in India. Kia motors along with the auto ancillaries from South Korea is one of the largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in India in automobile sector. The Greenfield facility will have installed capacity of 300,000 vehicles annually from day one.



4) India replaces Japan as second largest steel producer.

Explanation: According to World Steel Association (worldsteel) India has replaced Japan as world’s second largest steel producing country. China is the largest producer of crude steel accounting for more than 51 per cent of production. “India’s crude steel production in 2018 was at 106.5 MT, up by 4.9 per cent from 101.5 MT in 2017, Japan produced 104.3 MT in 2018, down 0.3 per cent compared to 2017.



5) Suman Kumari becomes first Hindu woman judge of Pakistan.

Explanation: Suman Kumari has become the first Hindu woman in Pakistan to be appointed as a civil judge. She passed her LLB examination from Hyderabad and did her masters in law from Karachi’s Szabist University. Ratna Bhagwandas Chawla became the first Hindu woman elected to Pakistan’s Senate in 2006

Last year, Krishna Kumari Kohli, a Hindu woman became the first non Muslim female to win a women reserved seat in Senate of Pakistan. Suman, who hails from Qambar-Shahdadkot, will serve in her native district.



6) Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar Assumes Charge as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff.

Explanation: Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar, VSM assumed charge as the new Vice Chief of Navy Staff (VCNS). The ceremony took place at South Block lawns at Rashtrapati Bhavan in the national capital. G Ashok Kumar held the charge as the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff from June 6, 2016, he was commissioned into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy on 01 Jul 1982. After having completed his specialisation in Navigation and Direction at Kochi in 1989, he served as the Navigating Officer of Indian Naval Ships Beas, Nilgiri, Ranvir and Vikrant.



His other sea tenures include Commanding Officer of INS Kulish and Ranvir, and Executive Officer onboard INS Brahmaputra.

7) Global Corruption Index: India 78th Rank.

Explanation: According to the annual index by global watchdog Transparency International, India has improved its ranking on a global corruption index in 2018 by three points and moved to 78th position with a score of 41. In the list of 180 countries, China and Pakistan lagged far behind at 87th and 117th position, respectively. Denmark is the least corrupt country followed by New Zealand. Somalia, Syria and South Sudan are the most corrupt countries in the world.

8) PM Modi dedicated National Salt Satyagraha Memorial to the nation.

Explanation: Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the National Salt Satyagraha memorial monument to recall the historic Dandi Yatra on Mahatma Gandhi's death anniversary. Mahatma Gandhi began the march from Ahmedabad to Dandi near Surat on March 12th 1930 against the ban on Indians producing or selling salt.

The memorial has statues of Mahatma Gandhi and 80 Satyagrahis who had marched with him during the historic Dandi Salt March. The cost of Memorial is Rs. 110 Crores.



9) FDI grew 18% in FY18 to Rs 28.25 lakh crore: RBI data.

Explanation: According to RBI data on 'Census on Foreign Liabilities and Assets of Indian Direct

Investment Companies, 2011-18, foreign direct investment (FDI) during the previous fiscal grew 18 per cent to Rs 28.25 lakh crore, FDI increased by Rs 4,33,300 crore, including revaluation of past investments, during 2017-18 to reach Rs 28,24,600 crore in March 2018 at market value. Overseas direct investment (ODI) by Indian companies increased by 5 per cent to Rs 5.28 lakh crore. The census showed that Mauritius continued to be the largest source of FDI in India (19.7 per cent) followed by the US, the UK, Singapore and Japan.

In case of overseas investment by Indian companies, Singapore (17.5 per cent) was the major destination, followed by the Netherlands, Mauritius and the US.

