

# APPLO STUDY CENTRE

## CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 2017

### JANUARY 1 - 5

#### NATION

**Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)** - launched in October 2014, to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to put focus on sanitation. It aims to achieve Swachh Bharat or make India clean by 2019, as a fitting tribute to the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

#### **Swachh Survekshan 2018 (cleanliness survey)**

- The Swachh Survekshan 2018 will rank 500 cities on national level which have more than 1 lakh population, while 3,541 cities with less than 1 lakh population will have State and Regional ranking.
- The 2017 edition was conducted in January-February 2017 covering 434 Urban Local Bodies. Indore emerged as the cleanest city in the country in that survey.

#### **First digital Online Oncology Tutorial**

- Designed by the Tata Memorial Center in collaboration with the Health Ministry.
- Aims to train the doctors across the country to educate them in early detection, prevention, palliation, rehabilitation and treatment of various cancers.
- This is part of a national program that will be rolled out across the country by Tata Memorial Centre in collaboration with state governments.

## **Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana**

- Announced in 2003.
- Its objectives are correcting regional imbalances in the availability of affordable/reliable tertiary healthcare services and augment facilities for quality medical education in the country.
- It establishes AIIMS in various regions of India apart from different government colleges.
- It is funded from different centrally sponsored schemes relating to creating infrastructure on health.

**National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has approved five projects worth Rs. 295.01 crore.**

- Three projects pertain to sewage management in West Bengal at an estimated cost of Rs 278.6 crore, one relates to sewage management in Uttarakhand at an estimated cost of Rs 4.68 crore and one project worth Rs 11.73 crore is related to ghat improvement works in Varanasi.
- With these approvals, all projects related to sewage management in high pollution load towns along river Ganga have been sanctioned.

**Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Scheme (DDRS)** - Provides grant-in-aid to non-governmental organizations for various projects relating to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. The objective of the scheme is to enable persons with disabilities to reach and maintain their optimal, physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric or social functional levels.

### **Online portal 'NARI'**

- Developed by the Ministry of Women & Child Development.
- The portal will provide women citizens with easy access to information on government schemes and initiatives for women.
- The NARI portal summarizes over 350 government schemes and other important information for the benefit of women, with more being added every day.

**e-Samvad portal** - A platform for NGOs and Civil Societies to interact with the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

Government of India has announced to launch of 7.75% Savings (Taxable) Bonds, 2018 commencing from 10th January 2018 to enable resident citizens/HUF to invest in a taxable bond, without any monetary ceiling.

Centre releases Rs 24,500 crore to compensate states post GST. As per the details of GST compensation released to states as on November 30, Karnataka got maximum compensation from the Centre at Rs 3,271 crore, followed by Gujarat and Punjab.

The Union Cabinet has approved the construction of Asia's longest bi-directional Zojila Pass tunnel (14.2-km long tunnel project) at an estimated cost of Rs 6,089 crore, which will reduce the travel time between Srinagar and Leh to 15 minutes from the current 3.5 hours.

The Union Cabinet has approved the signing and implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Ministry of Road Transport & Highways and 'Transport for London', a statutory body established under the Greater London Authority Act, 1999 (UK) to improve Public Transport in India.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved implementation of Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP) For capacity augmentation of navigation on 1,380-km Haldia-Varanasi stretch of National Waterway-1 (NW1) on Ganga River.

The Union Government has announced details of, electoral bonds for political funding that can be routed by donors to political parties. The electoral bonds scheme was announced in Union Budget 2017 with an aim for increasing transparency in political funding. It makes India first country in the world to have such unique bonds for electoral funding.

India ranked 90th among 163 countries in the positive peace index.

India Cancels \$500 Million Deal For Israeli Anti-Tank Missiles.

## **BILLS IN PARLIAMENT**

### **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment) Bill 2017**

- Lok Sabha has passed The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (Amendment) Bill, 2017 to allow government to take up infrastructure projects within prohibited areas around protected monuments. The Bill amends the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains (AMASR) Act, 1958.
- **AMUSR Act 1968** - The AMASR Act provides for preservation of ancient and historical monuments and archaeological sites and remains of national importance. It provides for the regulation of archaeological excavations and for protection of sculptures, carvings and other like objects. It was passed in 1958.

### **NABARD (Amendment) Bill, 2017**

- The Parliament has given its nod to a Bill that allows the central government to increase from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 30,000 crore the limit to which it can increase the capital of NABARD.
- The bill seeks to amend the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development Act, 1981.
- The 1981 Act provides for the establishment of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), responsible for providing and regulating facilities like credit for agricultural and industrial development in the rural areas.

**Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code Amendment Bill, 2017** - The Bill amends Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016 and replaces Ordinance promulgated in November 2017 to pave way for tightening loopholes in existing code and make resolution process more effective.

## STATES

1. GAIL commissions India's second largest rooftop solar plant in **Uttar Pradesh**.
2. The entire Nagaland has been declared as "disturbed area" for six more months, till June- end, under the controversial AFSPA, which empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice.
3. Arunachal Pradesh has been emerged as the second state in the Northeast, after Sikkim, to be declared Open Defecation Free.
4. Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das has launched "Saubhagya Yojana", a programme that would provide electricity to all.
5. Cabinet approves setting up of new AIIMS in Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh.

## WORLD

1. Iceland has become the first country in the world to legalize equal pay for men and women equally.
2. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates introduced value-added tax, a first for the Gulf which has long prided itself on its tax-free.
3. China has successfully developed new underwater surveillance network to help its submarines get stronger lock on targets while protecting nation's interests along maritime Silk Road, which also includes Indian Ocean.
4. Ripple becomes second-largest crypto currency by market cap, surpassing ethereum.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. **New Ginger Species** - Botanical Survey of India (ESI) scientists have discovered two new species of ginger named *Hedychium chingrmeianum* and *Caulokaempferia dinabandhuensis* in easternmost districts of northeast India. Both the plants belong to the family of *Zingiberaceae*, to which the commonly found ginger (*Zingiber officinal*) belongs.

2. **Night frog species** - Scientists have discovered new species of frog named Mewa Singh's night frog (*Nyctibatrachus mewasingtii*) in Kozhikode's Malabar Wildlife Sanctuary, Kerala in Western Ghats. It has been named in honour of wildlife scientist Mewa Singh for his contributions to behavioural ecology and primate studies.
3. **Schistura Larketensis** - New species of blind fish discovered inside Meghalaya cave. The fish has been named after Larket village, where the cave has been found to encourage local people to take up biodiversity conservation.
4. **Four new balsam species** - From various locations in Eastern Himalayas in northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh. They are *Impatiens haridasanii*, *Impatiens pseudocitrina*, *Impatiens nilalohitae* and *Impatiens roingensis*.
5. **Parker Solar Probe** - NASA to launch Parker Solar Probe to explore sun's outer atmosphere in 2018. It will be launched onboard of Delta IV Heavy launch vehicle. It will perform its scientific investigations in a hazardous region of intense heat and solar radiation.

## PERSONS IN NEWS

1. AB Mathur - Government interlocutor for talks with the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA).
2. Vijay Keshav Gokhale - Foreign secretary
3. Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga - Mali's new PM
4. Rajinder Khanna - Deputy National Security Advisor
5. Salil Parekh - Infosys CEO and MD
6. Eminent Urdu poet Anwar Jalalpuri dies at 71

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust, India's Premier Container Port, has won the '**Samudra Manthan - Caring Organisation of the Year**' award.

## SPORTS AND GAMES

1. **Ranji Trophy** - Vidarbha beat Delhi to win maiden title.
2. **61st National Shooting Championship (NSCC)** - Held in New Delhi. Shahzar Rizvi Wins Men's 10m Air Pistol Gold
3. **Golf** - Indian golfer Shiv Kapur won the Royal Cup at Pattaya, which is his third Asian Tour title of 2017.

## JANUARY 6 - 10

### NATION

Income Tax Department launched an on-line chat service on its national website with a prominent icon stating 'Live Chat Online- ask your query'.

Atal Pension Yojana (APY) - operational from June 1,2015; with an aim to provide affordable universal access to essential social security protection to unorganized work force of country, which makes major chunk of labour force [83%).

e-Sansad and e-Vidhan - They are mission mode projects of Union Government under Digital India to make the functioning of Parliament and State Legislatures paperless. They aim to digitise and make available Parliament and state legislature documents, including debates, speeches, committee reports and questions on internet.

The Supreme Court has ruled that playing national anthem before screening movies in cinema halls is optional and not mandatory. The ruling modifies apex court's earlier November 2016 order that made the playing of national anthem in cinemas mandatory.

The Union Defense Ministry has sanctioned raising of Territorial Army (TA) battalion comprising ex-servicemen of Indian Army as part of its mission to clean the Ganga by 2020. It has been named as *Composite Ecological Task Force (CETF) battalion* of TA for National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), the nodal agency for cleaning Ganga. The CETF battalion will be raised in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh as a pilot project.

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is going to roll out *National Programme for Control of Viral Hepatitis*, a new scheme free treatment of Hepatitis C from the 2018-19 financial year. Under the new scheme, the focus will be on anti-viral treatment of Hepatitis C which will be provided free at all government health set-ups.

The subcommittee of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) looking into issues of girl's education has recommended free and compulsory education for girls up to post-graduate level across the country.

New Rs 10 currency notes under the Mahatma Gandhi series. - The new banknotes will have chocolate brown colour as the base and will also bear the picture of Odisha's Konark Sun Temple on the reverse side.

Operation Alert - The Border Security Force (BSF) has launched "Operation Alert" along the over 200 kilometer long International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir to curb the increasing movement of infiltrating terrorists from across the border.

Punjab National Bank (PNB) and National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) have tied up to provide financial assistance for economic empowerment of persons belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) families living below Double Poverty Line (DPL).

## **STATES**

Vulnerable Odisha tribe Mankidia - denied habitat in Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Odisha under historic Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. Mankidia is one of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) and is a marginalised group that critically depends on making rope with siali fibre that's richly available in Similipal.

Tamil Nadu has emerged as the leader in the country in terms of Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education. GER for higher education is calculated with reference to the age group 18-23.



The West Bengal government has launched its official emblem. Conceptualised and designed by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The state emblem is the "Biswa Bangla" logo with Ashoka Pillar of the national emblem.

Bengaluru has emerged as the most well read city in India, while Mumbai and Delhi stands at second and third position, respectively, according to a survey conducted by Amazon India's Annual Reading Trends Reports for 2017.

Gujarat tops in logistics ease across different states index, closely followed by Punjab and Andhra Pradesh.

Arunachal Pradesh to get its first Film and Television Institute. This would be the second such one in the country.

India's first National Park for differently abled people inaugurated in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Gudiya - 24X7 helpline for women in Himachal Pradesh.

Defence Innovation Centre - to be set up at Coimbatore.

## **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **Pratyush**

- India's fastest and first multi-petaflops (PF) supercomputer named Pratyush was unveiled at Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). The supercomputer has been named as 'Pratyush' meaning Sun.
- It will help India with better forecasts in terms of monsoon, extreme events, cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes, air quality, lightning, fishing, hot and cold waves, flood and drought among others.
- Pratyush - an array of computers that can deliver a peak power of 6.8 petaflops.
- Pratyush is the fourth fastest supercomputer in the world dedicated for weather and climate research, and follows machines in Japan, USA and the United Kingdom.
- One petaflop is a million billion floating point operations per second and is a reflection of the computing capacity of a system.

**Charlie-435:** Patrol vessel of Indian Coast Guard. Commissioned at Karaikal in the Union Territory of Puducherry. The vessel will strengthen coastal security between Chennai and Kanyakumari in the Eastern Coastal region. It will be also of great help in rescuing fishermen in sea due to bad weather.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will launch two missions – GOLD and ICON later this year, to explore the ionosphere.

Scientists from Duke University in North Carolina, US for the first time have developed working human skeletal muscle from stem cells in the laboratory.

## **PERSONS IN NEWS**

K. Sivan (Tamil Nadu) - Secretary of the Department of Space and Chairman of Space Commission and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Arun Jaitley committee - to decide what to do with old, pre-existing projects in ports, which have become unviable.

B.R. Sharma committee - **To take a call on National Anthem in cinema halls.**

Dilip Asbe - MD & CEO of National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

T S Tirumurti - Economic Relations Secretary

Indian-origin businessman Sunny Varghese - Chairman of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

**A R Rahman - Sikkim's brand ambassador.**

Astronaut of NASA John Young, who walked on the moon and later commanded the first space shuttle flight passed away in Houston, US.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

**Bihar CM Nitish Kumar** - 1st Mufti Mohammad Sayeed Award for Probity in Public Life.

### **Golden Globes 2018**

- Best actress in a limited series or television movie: Nicole Kidman
- Best supporting actor in a motion picture (drama): Sam Rockwell
- Best supporting actor in a series, limited series or TV film: Alexander Skarsgård
- Best actor (comedy/musical): James Franco
- Best animated film: Coco
- Best foreign film: In the Fade
- Best film director: Guillermo del Toro
- Best actress in a film (comedy/musical): Saoirse Ronan
- Best film (comedy/musical): Lady Bird
- Best actor (drama): Gary Oldman
- Best actress (drama): Frances McDormand
- Best film (drama): Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri

## SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

World Book Fair 2018 - New Delhi. The theme of the event is "Environment & Climate Change". European Union will be the guest of honour for this year.

ASEAN India Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas 2018 - Singapore.

The first-ever Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) - Parliamentarian Conference - New Delhi.

**Annual Meeting 2018 of World Economic Forum** - Davos in Switzerland with the theme of 'Creating a Shared Future in a Fractured World'.

18th All India Whips'Conference's - Udaipur, Rajasthan

Conference of Director Generals of Police and Inspector Generals of Police - Delhi.

**First Health Ministers Roundtable on Food Safety & Nutrition** - New Delhi.

The third edition of the Science Film Festival of India - Goa.

2<sup>nd</sup> Goa Bird Festival - Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary, Canacona.

International kite festival - Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

## WORLD

China-led Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is planning to issue its first US dollar-denominated bond with minimum worth of \$1 billion by June 2018.

The US has placed Pakistan on a 'Special Watch List' for "severe violations" of religious freedom.

Iran has banned teaching the English language in primary schools, calling the subject a "cultural invasion".

## SPORTS AND GAMES

Host of 39<sup>th</sup> National Games in 2022 - Meghalaya.

Gilles Simon (France) defeated Kevin Anderson (South Africa) to lift the inaugural Tata Open Maharashtra trophy.

**Aditya Mehta wins Kolkata Open** 2018 International Invitation Snooker Championship.

Switzerland's Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic beat Germany's Alexander Zverev and Angelique Kerber to win the Hopman Cup.

# JANUARY 11 - 15

## NATION

### National Youth Festival

- The Festival will commence on the occasion of birth anniversary (January 12) of Swami Vivekananda, the youth icon of India.
- This is the first time that the National Youth Festival is being organized in National Capital Region.
- The objective of organizing NYF is to provide a platform to bring the youth of the country together in an attempt to provide them opportunity to showcase their talents in various activities.
- National Youth Festival (NYF) is the biggest Youth Festival of its kind in the Country.
- This is the 22nd National Youth Festival. The 1st National Youth Festival was held in 1995 in Bhopal.

### SFOORTI Application

- In a major digital initiative to help plan the traffic flows and optimize freight operations, Ministry of Railways have launched Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information (SFOORTI) App.
- This is an app for Freight Managers which provides features for monitoring and managing freight business using Geographic Information System (GIS) Views and Dashboard.

Jains are the wealthiest religious community in India. Delhi and Punjab are the richest states. Bihar is the poorest - These are the findings of the fourth round of National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), recently released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Delhi's Teen Murti Chowk renamed Teen Murti Haifa Chowk, as a symbolic gesture of friendship with Israel, India renamed the iconic Teen Murti Chowk, a war memorial, during the visit of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

India's first-ever FDI in fertiliser sector: Norwegian fertiliser giant Yara International.

NITI Aayog tank to rank 115 backward (aspirational) districts by April 2018.

The World Economic Forum [WEF] has ranked India at 30th position among 100 countries on its Global Manufacturing Index (GMI). Top 2 countries in GMI: Japan and South Korea.

World Bank projects 7.3% growth for India.

## **STATES**

India's first plant to convert coal to synthetic gas is to be set up in Odisha by GAIL.

## **WORLD**

China has successfully launched two BeiDou-3 satellites to provide navigation and positioning services to countries along Belt and Road initiative (BRI) by the end of 2018.

World's largest solar thermal plant to be built in South Australia.

Nepal starts receiving internet connection from China.

## **INDIA AND THE WORLD**

India, UK ink MoUs to enable return of illegal Indian migrants and sharing of criminal records.

India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements for collaboration in Information and communication technology (ICT) sector between both countries.

India contributes \$50,000 to UN Youth Envoy's office to help with its mission of involving young people in the world body's goals.

India top borrower from China-sponsored AIIB in 2017.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### PSLV-C40

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched its 100th satellite on January 12 from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C40), on its 42nd mission, will carry 'Cartosat-2', a weather observation satellite and 30 other satellites.
- This is ISRO's first launch in 2018.
- It is also the first after the unsuccessful mission of IRNSS-1H in August last year.

**Rizhao:** A new missile frigate of China. It is China's indigenous missile frigate named after Rizhao city in Shandong Province of China.

*Elcysma ziroensis* - New moth species discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

Indian Navy decommissions **INS Nirbhik** and **INS Nirghat** warships.

## PERSONS AND PLACES IN NEWS

**Indu Malhotra** - First woman lawyer directly appointed for SC judgeship

**Anil Khanna** - Chairman of the Finance Commission of the Indian Olympic Association.

**Umesh Sinha committee** - to suggest new poll rules (to study how social media and other digital platforms are used ahead of polls and make suggestions on how to adapt the Model Code of Conduct to these changes).

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

**Actress Kajol** - An advocacy ambassador for a Swachh Aadat Swachh Bharat initiative.

**Shahrukh Khan** - The Crystal Award at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in Davos. He will get the award for "his leadership in championing children's and women's rights in India".

The first all-women station in India, **Matunga** (Maharashtra) on Central Railway (CR), manned by a staff of 41 women, has entered the Limca Book of Records.

**Indian Air Force Conquers 'Seven Summits'** - An expert team of IAF mountaineers had successfully scaled highest peaks of six different continents earlier and had recently embarked upon its culminating expedition to Mt Vinson in Antarctica to complete Mission Seven Summits.

### SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

- The 4th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference on "State and Social Order in Dharma-Dhamma Traditions" was held at Rajgir in Nalanda district, Bihar.
- 65th meeting of Central Advisory Board of Education - New Delhi
- International Workshop on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure - New Delhi
- Fourth ASEAN-India Ministerial Meeting on Agriculture & Forestry - Delhi
- The 5th Bilateral Technical Meeting on cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine between Govt. of India and Malaysia - New Delhi
- 7th edition of 'Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav-2018' - Karnataka
- Economic Democracy Conclave - Thane, Maharashtra.

### SPORTS AND GAMES

- Hyderabad Hunters - Won the third Premier Badminton League (PBL) in Hyderabad.
- Sarjubala Devi (48kg), representing Manipur, claimed the gold as well as the best boxer trophy in the National Women's Boxing Championships.
- Aanchal Thakur (Himachal Pradesh) made history by winning India's first-ever international medal in skiing. She clinched bronze in the coveted Alpine Ejder 3200 Cup organized by the Federation International de Ski in Turkey.