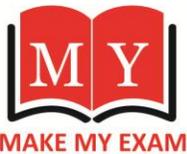


Weekly Current Affairs

20 January – 26 January 2019

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National News

1. PM Modi inaugurates National Museum of Indian Cinema in Mumbai

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced a pan-country single window system for film permissions and also that his government began the process of amending the cinematography act, 1952 to make piracy a stricter offence.
- ✦ Modi was in Mumbai to inaugurate the first-ever National Museum of Indian Cinema (NMIC) at Peddar road and will also support if anyone from the film industry wants to develop a communication and entertainment university in the country.
- ✦ The state-of-the-art museum has been built at a cost of Rs 140.61 crore and is housed in two buildings – the New Museum Building and the 19th century historic palace Gulshan Mahal – in the Films Division campus in Mumbai.

2. PM Modi Inaugurates India's 1st Private Sector Howitzer Gun-Making Unit

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Armoured Systems Complex of Larsen and Toubro in Gujarat, the first private facility in the country where the K9 Vajra self-propelled Howitzer guns will be manufactured.
- ✦ L&T had in 2017 won the Rs. 4,500-crore contract from the Ministry of Defence to supply 100 units of K9 Vajra-T 155 mm/52 calibre tracked self-propelled gun systems to the Indian Army under the Centre's "Make in India" initiative.
- ✦ The prime minister shared a short video on his Twitter handle of himself standing in a tank. Checking out the tanks at L&T's Armoured Systems Complex in Hazira.

3. Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced extension of free health services under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

- ✦ Odisha Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik announced the extension of free health services under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) to all medical colleges and hospitals of Odisha from 1st February 2019.
- ✦ Under the scheme, all the patients irrespective of APL or BPL category will be eligible to avail the free health services at government medical colleges and hospitals.
- ✦ An Additional provision of over Rs 100 crore was made for this scheme by the state government from its budget.

4. PM Modi hoists tricolour at Red Fort to honour Subhas Chandra Bose

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi joined a flag-hoisting ceremony at the Red Fort to mark the 75th anniversary of the 'Azad Hind government' headed by Subhas Chandra Bose.
- ✦ Survivors of the Azad Hind Fauj or Indian National Army (INA) Netaji's grand-nephew and BJP Bengal vice-president Chandra Kumar Bose had planned to unfurl the tricolour at Red Fort and had written to the PM to join them in the celebrations.

- ✦ Subhas Chandra Bose popularly known as Netaji was born on 23rd January 1897 and died on 18th August 1945.

5. Nitin Gadkari Lays Foundation Stones for Namami Gange Projects in Agra and Mathura

- ✦ Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Road Transport & Highways and Shipping Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stones of six Namami Gange projects in Agra and Mathura.
- ✦ The government is steadfastly working on cleaning the river Ganga and its 40 tributaries and major drains. The four projects in Mathura have a sanctioned cost of Rs 511.74 crore.
- ✦ These include two sewerage projects - an integrated sewerage infrastructure for the city on Hybrid Annuity Mode with 'One-City-One-Operator' approach and reuse of treated sewage water in Mathura refinery at a sanctioned cost of Rs 460.45 Crore.

6. PM Narendra Modi launches Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana

- ✦ Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22, 2019 launched the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana under which a group of Indian diaspora will be taken on a government-sponsored tour of religious places in India twice a year.
- ✦ The first batch of 40 Indian-origin people are at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and they would be beginning their tour from there.
- ✦ He also released two books 'Kashi: The Universe of Crafts and Textiles' and 'Indian Textiles: History, Splendour, Grandeur'.

7. 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 from 23-25 January, 2019 in Goa

- ✦ Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, will inaugurate the 2nd World Integrated Medicine Forum 2019 on the 'Regulation of Homeopathic Medical Products; Advancing global collaboration' being organized from 23-25 January, 2019 in Goa.
- ✦ The themes of the forum are: Regulatory collaborations, Converging on minimum regulatory & legal standards, Advancing safety and quality standards and Veterinary homeopathy.
- ✦ The forum will explore and illustrate the potential benefits and pitfalls of bilateral/multilateral collaboration and advance global cooperation on a synergistic basis.

8. Nitin Gadkari inaugurates bridge over Ravi river in J&K

- ✦ Union minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated a bridge over the Ravi river in Jammu & Kashmir which will reduce the distance between Kathua in Jammu and Pathankot in Punjab to 8.6 km from 45 km.
- ✦ The bridge over the Ravi river at Keerian - Gandial will benefit over 2.2 lakh people living on the two sides.
- ✦ It has been constructed at a cost of Rs 158.84 crore to improve inter-state connectivity, the Road Transport and Highways.

9. India to remain fastest-growing economy in 2019, 2020

- ✦ India will continue to remain the world's fastest-growing large economy in 2019 as well as in 2020, much headed in china.
- ✦ According to the UN's World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2019, India's GDP growth is expected to accelerate to 7.6 per cent in 2019-20 from an estimated 7.4 per cent in the current fiscal ending March 2019.
- ✦ In the case of China, the growth is estimated to decelerate to 6.3 per cent in 2019 from 6.6 per cent in 2018. It may further go down to 6.2 per cent in 2020.

10. Telangana to set up 'Save Tiger Protection Force'

- ✦ The Telangana government has decided to form a 'State Tiger Protection Force' to save the Big Cat population in the State.
- ✦ The State Forest Protection Committee headed by Chief Secretary S K Joshi took the decision to form the STPF at its meeting
- ✦ The 112-member-armed STPF will be headed by an Assistant Conservator of Forests to protect tiger population in Amarabad and Kawal Tiger Reserves.

11. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launches new reforms, guidelines to strengthen Jan Shikshan Santhans

- ✦ In a bid to boost skill training and entrepreneurship in the remotest corners of the country, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, announced comprehensive reforms for Jan ShikshanSansthan (JSS).
- ✦ The Ministry also released the new JSS site (www.jss.gov.in) which will furnish information and facts on action ideas, databases of beneficiaries and stakeholders, details of finance and expenditure and other ongoing development projects that are on process.
- ✦ The announcements were made during the National Conference for Jan ShikshanSansthan (JSSs).

12. Supreme Court Upholds Insolvency And Bankruptcy Code In Its Entirety

- ✦ The Supreme Court of India upheld the two-year old insolvency code in its entirety, quashing petitions which challenged the law saying it was discriminatory.
- ✦ The two-judge bench headed by Justice Rohinton Nariman also upheld the ban on promoters' bids for the defaulting company undergoing the insolvency process.
- ✦ The constitutional validity of IBC was questioned as a violation of Article 14 of the Constitution.

13. Kerala government to launch NRI pension scheme

- ✦ The Kerala government will soon launch a 'Pravasi Dividend Pension Scheme' to provide regular pension to Non Resident Keralites on a one-time payment of Rs 5 lakh.
- ✦ He announced the scheme during his address to the state Assembly.

- ✦ The one-time payment of Rs 5 lakh will be deposited with KIIFB (Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board) for financing infrastructure projects.

International News & Foreign Affairs

1. India okays Aadhaar as a valid travel document for Nepal and Bhutan

- ✦ India's Ministry of Home Affairs has approved the use of Aadhaar — the 12-digit unique identification number — as an identity proof for Indian citizens under 15 and above the age of 65 while travelling to Nepal and Bhutan
- ✦ Indian proof including Aadhaar. travellers will not be required to have a visa if they have a passport and valid photo identity
- ✦ For families visiting the two countries, only one adult member needs to carry the relevant travel documents, but, are required to have identity proofs.

2. World's longest 3D printed concrete bridge opened in china

- ✦ 3D printing technology is being used in construction and world's largest 3D-printed concrete bridge was recently completed in Shanghai.
- ✦ The Bridge is designed by Professor Xy Weiguo from Tsinghua University in China.
- ✦ The concrete units for the bridge were printed by two robotic arms, which took about 19 days time.

3. Nepal, India to set up energy banking system to utilise surplus electricity

- ✦ Nepal and India have agreed to set up an 'Energy Banking' mechanism that would help the Himalayan country export its surplus electricity to neighbour India during the monsoon season and import power during its lean season in winter.
- ✦ The agreement on the 'Energy Banking' mechanism was arrived at during a meeting between the Nepali and Indian Energy Secretaries in Pokhara.
- ✦ The agreement is based on the nature of demand and supply.

Banking

1. IDFC First Bank gets RBI approval for appointment of MD & CEO

- ✦ IDFC First Bank announced that the Reserve Bank of India vide its letter dated 17 January 2019, has given its approval for the appointment of V. Vaidyanathan as the Managing Director & CEO of the Bank for a period of 3 (three) years.
- ✦ His tenure is effective from December 19, 2018.

- Last month, IDFC Bank and non-banking financial company Capital First completed their merger, creating a combined loan asset book of Rs 1.03 lakh crore for the merged entity IDFC First Bank.

2. SBI Card and Etihad Guest Launches Visa Credit Cards for International Travellers

- SBI Card Etihad Guest, the loyalty programme of Etihad Airways, has launched a travel specific Visa credit card for members and Indian travellers.
- The card which will be available in two variants, Etihad Guest SBI Card and Etihad Guest SBI Premier Card, will offer rewarding experiences to Etihad Guest members and international Indian travellers.
- Travel is a key spend category for Indian consumers, with 33 per cent of overall card spends in the SBI Card portfolio made within the travel industry.

New Appointments & Person in News

1. Sweden: PM Stefan Lofven elected for a second term

- In Sweden, Prime Minister Stefan Lofven has been elected for a second term, ending a four-month political vacuum. Lofven's minority centre-left government, comprising his Social Democrats and the Greens, won the backing of the Centre and Liberal parties.
- The Prime Minister is expected to formally present his new government and its full programme
- It will be one of the weakest administrations in Sweden in 70 years, with just 32.7 per cent of voters having cast ballots for the two parties.

2. Ravneet Gill to replace Rana Kapoor as YES Bank MD & CEO

- YES Bank has appointed Deutsche Bank's Ravneet Singh Gill as its MD and CEO, who will succeed Rana Kapoor.
- Gill, who is the CEO of Deutsche Bank's India operations, will join the private lender on or before March 1, 2019. As the news became public, the stock shot up by over 14 per cent.
- YES Bank had time till February 1 to announce a successor to Kapoor, whose term ends on January 31.

3. Parthasarathi Mukherjee to head Lakshmi Vilas Bank for another two years

- Private sector Lakshmi Vilas Bank has reappointed Parthasarathi Mukherjee as its managing director when the lender is struggling to raise Rs 2000 crore from investors.
- Previously, he served in Axis Bank and SBI in several positions.
- Mukherjee joined the bank on January 25, 2016 for three years and had brought positive changes initially before the piling up bad loans hit profitability.

Science Tech & Defence

1. ISRO to launch two unmanned space missions in 2020 and 2021

- ✦ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced that it will send two unmanned mission to space in December next year and in July 2021.
- ✦ Country's first manned space flight - Gaganyaan - will send three humans into space for seven days by December 2021. Dr Sivan said ISRO's unmanned test missions for Gaganyaan in 2021 will carry humanoids not animals.
- ✦ Dr Sivan said 32 planned missions including Chandrayaan-2 are in the pipeline. He said Chandrayaan-2 is a complex and challenging mission and it will land near south pole.

2. Arunachal Pradesh: Defence Minister inaugurates Diffo Bridge

- ✦ In Arunachal Pradesh, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Diffo Bridge over Chipu River in Lower Dibang Valley District. The bridge is 426 mts in length and its work started in 2011.
- ✦ Speaking on the occasion, Smt. Sitharaman said that with the inauguration of the bridge traveling from East to West in Arunachal Pradesh will become very convenient as it is also connecting highways. She said it is another milestone for the State.
- ✦ Appreciating the Border Roads for good quality roads and speedy completion of projects, Mrs. Sitharaman also said that apart from strategic point of view the bridge will be a boon for the people residing in the distant border villages.

3. Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurates Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor

- ✦ Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor, taking a step forward to boost indigenous production of defence equipment.
- ✦ Total investments worth over Rs 3,038 crore in this defence corridor were announced during the inauguration.
- ✦ The Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor — also called the Tamil Nadu Defence Production Quad as the nodal cities form a quadrilateral with one of them at the centre — includes Chennai, Hosur, Salem, Coimbatore and Tiruchirappalli as nodes.

4. Microsoft launches e-comm platform for handloom weavers

- ✦ Microsoft India has launched a new e-commerce platform re-weave.in for handloom weavers under its Project ReWeave, part of its philanthropic initiatives.
- ✦ This e-commerce platform will help connect artisans to buyers directly, enabling them to expand to newer customers and markets.
- ✦ The new e-commerce website hosts signature collections created by weaver communities and showcases traditional designs and products created from natural dyes.

5. India Puts 'Microsat R' & Students-Built Nano-Satellite 'Kalamsat' Into Orbit

- ✦ India opened the year's space campaign by putting into orbit defence imaging satellite 'Microsat R' for the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and students-built nano-satellite 'Kalamsat' in a copybook style.
- ✦ The notable aspects of this space mission are flying of a new variant of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV), switching off and on of the fourth stage engine couple of times, and use of the fourth stage as an orbital platform carrying Kalamsat.
- ✦ ISRO trusted workhorse PSLV-C44 carrying military satellite Microsat-R and student's payload 'Kalamsat' lifts off from the first launch pad at the spaceport of Sriharikota.

6. Methanol-blending in petrol reduces carbon dioxide emission

- ✦ Methanol (M-15) blended with petrol and used in the existing BS-IV standard cars reduces carbon dioxide emission, a study conducted by Pune-based Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) has shown.
- ✦ Pune-based Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) conducted a study using 15% M-15 methanol blend in vehicles and tested them for 3,000km to evaluate emissions in real-world conditions as well as check the performance of the vehicles.
- ✦ NITI Aayog has drawn up a comprehensive plan to replace 20 per cent of crude imports from methanol alone.

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Important Days**1. 9th National Voters' Day to be celebrated across country on 25 January**

- ✦ The 9th National Voters' Day will be celebrated across the country for enhanced participation of citizens in the electoral process.
- ✦ The National Awards for the Best Electoral Practices will be conferred on Officers for their outstanding performance in the conduct of elections.
- ✦ President Ram Nath Kovind will be the Chief Guest at the main function being organized by Election Commission in New Delhi.

2. National Girl Child Day being observed on 24 January

- ✦ National Girl Child Day is being observed on 24 January.
- ✦ The theme this year is 'Empowering Girls for a Brighter Tomorrow'.
- ✦ The Women and Child Development Ministry has organised an event in Delhi to observe the anniversary of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme. Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi will be the Chief Guest.

3. National Voters' Day: Mizoram launches helpline, mobile app

- ✦ Mizoram Governor Kummanam Rajasekharan launched the voters' helpline number '1950' and mobile app for people with disabilities as part of the National Voters' Day celebrations.
- ✦ The governor appealed to all voters to exercise their franchise in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections and ensure peaceful conduct of the polls.
- ✦ Mizoram governor appealed to all the voters to cast their votes in the Lok Sabha elections expected to be held in May-June 2019 and ensure peaceful conduct of the poll.

Books and Authors

1. Vice President Releases the book titled 'Universal Brotherhood Through Yoga'

- ✦ Addressing the gathering after releasing the book 'Universal Brotherhood through Yoga' the Vice President said that Yoga has the power to bring in the essential transformation required to change the way people live, think and interact with fellow human beings.
- ✦ The Vice President said that an understanding of the underlying theory and Philosophy of Yoga was essential for any practitioner to appreciate Yoga in its true sense.
- ✦ The group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices ingrained in Yoga allows people to practice self control, exercising dominion over senses and of helps in maintaining balance, he added.

Obituaries

1. Mary Oliver, Pulitzer prize-winning poet, dies aged 83

- ✦ Mary Oliver, the Pulitzer prize-winning poet whose rapturous odes to nature and animal life brought her critical acclaim and popular affection, has died.
- ✦ Author of more than 15 poetry and essay collections, Oliver wrote brief, direct pieces that sang of her worship of the outdoors and disdain for greed,
- ✦ One of her favorite adjectives was "perfect", and rarely did she apply it to people. Her muses were owls and butterflies, frogs and geese, the changes of the seasons, the sun and the stars.

2. CIA officer who inspired Oscar-winning film Argo dies, aged 78

- ✦ A former CIA technical operations officer who helped rescue six US diplomats from Iran in 1980 and was portrayed by Ben Affleck in the film Argo has died at the age of 78.
- ✦ He had suffered from Parkinson's disease, according to the statement.

- ✦ Specialising in covert operations, Mendez helped devise the plan under which six diplomats who were in hiding were disguised as a Canadian film crew so they could board a flight and escape the country amid the Iran hostage crisis.

Awards

1. President to confer Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhawan

- ✦ The President of India, Ram Nath Kovind will confer the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2019 at Rashtrapati Bhawan.
- ✦ The awards will be given to 26 shortlisted awardees including one joint award for National Child Award (now renamed as Bal Shakti Puraskar) under the category of innovation, scholastic, sports, arts & culture, social service and bravery.
- ✦ A total of 783 applications were received for the Baal Shakti Puruskar this year. 2 individuals and 3 institutions will also be awarded under National Child Welfare Awards category (now renamed as BalKalyanPuraskar).

2. Pranab Mukherjee, Nanaji Deshmukh, Bhupen Hazarika Awarded Bharat Ratna

- ✦ Pranab Mukherjee, India's 13th President and one of the Congress' tallest leaders for decades, has been awarded the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour.
- ✦ Along with Mr Mukherjee, social activist and one of the BJP's senior-most leaders Nanji Deshmukh and music maestro from Assam, Bhupen Hazarika, have been awarded posthumously.
- ✦ In a political career spanning nearly five decades, Mr Mukherjee has served as the Finance Minister, Defence Minister and also the Foreign Minister during the UPA's rule at the centre.

Sports

1. Aparna Kumar Becomes First Female IPS Officer To Reach South Pole

- ✦ Aparna Kumar has become the first woman IPS DIG and Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) officer to successfully complete the South Pole expedition.
- ✦ Ms Kumar has successfully reached the South Pole after covering 111 kilometres of walking on the snow. She also carried equipment weighing 35 Kilograms along with her.
- ✦ She has already scaled the top six mountain peaks of the six continents of the globe.

2. Khelo India Youth Games: Maharashtra finish top with 228 medals

- ✦ The Khelo India Youth Games concluded in Pune with the hosts Maharashtra walking away with the overall trophy.
- ✦ They amassed 228 medals, comprising 85 gold, 62 silver and 81 bronze. Haryana, were second with 62 gold, 56 silver and 60 bronze for a total of 178 medals, while Delhi were third with 48 gold, 37 silver and 51 bronze for a total of 136 medals.
- ✦ The glittering Trophy was presented to the Maharashtra sportspersons and officials by Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Prakash Javadekar, and Maharashtra's Minister of Sports and Youth Welfare, Vinod Tawde, at a closing ceremony held at the Shree Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Complex.

3. Mohammed Shami becomes fastest Indian to reach 100 ODI wickets

- ✦ Mohammed Shami became the fastest Indian to claim 100 wickets in One-day Internationals, reaching the mark in the opening match against New Zealand here.
- ✦ Shami's wicket number 100 was New Zealand opener Martin Guptill, who played onto his stumps a delivery that moved in after pitching on a good length.
- ✦ Shami is part of arguably India's best ever fast bowling attack in Test matches. In 2018, Shami picked up 47 wickets in 12 games with two five-wicket hauls. He is also an integral part of the one-day squad.

4. Virat Kohli wins all major awards at ICC Awards 2018, fans cheer with hilarious memes

- ✦ Virat Kohli bagged all the major laurels during the ICC Awards 2018 that were declared by becoming the first to win the International Cricket Council's (ICC) cricketer, test and one-day international (ODI) player of the year awards.
- ✦ Kohli became the first player in history to win the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Cricketer of the Year, the ICC Men's Test Player of the Year and the ICC ODI Player of the Year awards following an extraordinary 2018.
- ✦ He also became the fastest to reach the milestone of 10,000 runs in the format.

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