

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22ND TO 31ST DECEMBER 2019

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Sikkim IFFCO

- Sikkim IFFCO will mainly operate in commercial crops that are **ginger, turmeric, large cardamom and buckwheat**.
- **Sikkim was the first fully organic state of the country** where all farming is carried out without the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides.

NATIONAL NEWS

Govt norms for Fixation of Microdots Identifiers

- The **Ministry of Road Transport and Highways** has notified rules for **microdot identifiers on motor vehicles**.
- The microdots will be now affixed on the motor vehicles by spraying on the body and parts with microscopic dots to give a **unique identification for enhancing the security of vehicles**.

2nd Edition of Eat Right Mela

- The Union Minister launched **'The PURPLE Book'** a handbook on suitable diets for common medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer, gut disorders etc.
- Dr Harsh Vardhan also launched **NetSCoFAN (Network for Scientific Co-operation for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition)** which is a network of research & academic institutions with heads/Directors and lead scientists of lead working in the area of food & nutrition.

HRD Ministry Launched 5 Documents of Quality Mandate

- **The Higher Education Quality Improvement Programme Mandate** has been adopted by UGC to improve the quality in Higher Educational Institutions and equip the country's next-generation with vital skills, knowledge and ethics.
- UGC has developed a policy framework- **"MulyaPravah - Guidelines for Inculcation of Human values and Professionals Ethics in Higher Educational Institutions"** to inculcate the culture of human values and ethics in educational institutions.

JioMart Launched by Reliance

- The web portal JioMart will initially cater to online shoppers in **Mumbai suburban** areas including **Navi Mumbai, Thane and Kalyan** with the **tagline "India ki nayi dukaan"**.
- The company is signing up local merchants to offer them an **online-to-offline (O2O) marketplace**.

2nd Premium Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas Train

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- All passengers travelling on IRCTC train will be provided with **rail travel insurance of up to Rs 25 lakh free of cost by IRCTC.**
- The travel insurance also includes **coverage of Rs 1 lakh against household theft and robbery during the travel period of the passengers.**

BANKING

Cabinet approved Ordinance to Further Amend IBC

- The ordinance has been approved to help remove certain ambiguities in **the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016.**
- The amendment passed would **ring-fence successful bidders from criminal proceedings** against offences committed by previous promoters.

Census of India 2021

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the proposal for conducting **Census of India 2021** and updating **National Population Register (NPR).**
- The approval has been made for conducting the census 2021 at a cost of **Rs. 8,754.23 crore** and NPR at a cost of **Rs. 3,941.35 crore.**

RBI introduced New Payment Instrument

- **The banks and existing non-bank PPI players** can issue the new payment instrument and would verify the credentials of customers.
- The verification process involves the **use of an OTP sent to the user's verified mobile number** and a digital **identification document** recognized by the **Department of Revenue.**

CBIC issues SOP for GST Non-Filers

- Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (**CBIC**), **Ministry of Finance** has issued Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) to deal with **non-filers of GST returns.**
- After 15 days, if the return is not filed, the proper officer may proceed to **assess the tax liability of the person to the best of his judgment** and would issue an order under **Rule 100 of the CGST Rules in Form GST ASMT-13.**

SEBI penalised Rating Agencies over lack of Proper Due Diligence in IL&FS

- The rating agencies were also **found guilty for not noticing disparities** in public disclosures made by IL&FS.
- In case of IL&FS ratings, SEBI has rejected the settlement applications on **3 July 2019** and didn't allow the CRAs to settle the lapses against a fee without admission of guilt.

RBI Direction for Large Co-op Banks

- **Special Mention Account (SMA)** is an account which is exhibiting signs of incipient stress resulting in the borrower defaulting in timely servicing of her debt obligations, though the account has not yet been classified as NPA as per the extant RBI guidelines.
- The RBI has created a **Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC)** of commercial banks, all India financial institutions and certain non-banking financial companies.

20th Financial Stability Report: RBI

- The resilience of the banking sector has improved following **recapitalization of Public Sector Banks (PSBs)**.
- **Persistence of the risks** arising out of global or domestic economic uncertainties and geopolitical developments like a delay in the Brexit deal, trade tensions, whiff of an impending recession, oil-market disruptions and geopolitical risks.

FinMin announced no MDR on Transactions through RuPay and UPI

- Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has said that **no Merchant Discount Rate (MDR)** will be applicable on transactions through **RuPay and UPI platforms**.
- She said that no MDR charge would be charged from **1st January 2020**.

FinMin launched eBkay, a Common e-auction Platform

- The step has been taken for **transparent and clean online auction by banks** of an attached asset, for the improved realisation of value.
- **Public Sector Banks (PSBs)** have attached assets worth over **Rs. 2.3 lakh crore over the last three financial years**.

RBI buys Rs 10,000 crore Worth Long-Term Govt Securities in 2nd Special OMO

- It accepted **only Rs 8,501 crore worth of bids for the three securities** as against **Rs 38,551 crore bids it received in for four securities** in the OMO sale auction.
- The **cut-off yield** at which bids were accepted was **6.4874%**.

CBIC paid Rs 1.12 lakh crore as IGST Refund to Exporters

- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has paid **IGST refunds worth over Rs 1.12 lakh crore to exporters till date**.
- The release also said that **refunds of only Rs 3,604 crore are pending with Customs** and about **3.4% of total exporters including "Star exporters"** have been identified as **Risky i.e. Red flagged**.

INDEX AND RANKING

SDG India Index 2019-20

- NITI Aayog in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), the United Nations in India, and the Global Green Growth Institute has developed the **SDG India Index and Dashboard 2019-20**.
- The dashboard will rank **all states and UTs** and, analyse their progress on **100 indicators drawn from MoSPI's National Indicator Framework**.

Good Governance Index

- The Good Governance Index (GGI) has been launched on the occasion of **Good Governance Day, which is observed on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.
- The ranking was launched by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions**.

Sustainable Development Goals Index 2019-20

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- The SDG Index has been developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**), the **United Nations in India**, and the **Global Green Growth Institute**.
- The Index helps to track the progress across **all States and Union Territories on 100 indicators** to meet the SDGs target 2030.

REPORTS

IMF called for “Urgent Action” by India

- IMF has released its **annual review report on 23rd Dec 19** and pointed out that India is now in the midst of a significant slowdown and only quick policy actions can reverse the slowdown.
- The IMF has slashed its **Real GDP forecast for 2019 by nearly a full point to 6.1%** in October along with cutting the outlook for **2020 to 7.0%**.

'World Economic League Table 2020' Report

- The UK-based **Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR)** has released a report titled '**World Economic League Table 2020**'.
- According to the report, **India** will overtake Germany to become the **4th largest economy** in the world by the year **2026**.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Dr Monisha Ghosh	Chief Technology Officer at Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
Manuel Marrero Cruz	First Prime Minister of Cuba
Harsh Vardhan Shringla	Foreign Secretary Committee of the Cabinet
Hemant Soren	Chief Minister of Jharkhand
General Bipin Rawat	India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)
Amit Talgeri	Chief Risk Officer (CRO) of Axis Bank

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Award	Awardee
Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2018	Amitabh Bachchan

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
22 nd December 2019	National Mathematics Day	To raise awareness among people about the importance of mathematics for the development of humanity.
24 th December 2019	National Consumer Day	Theme: “alternate consumer grievance/dispute redressal”.

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MOU'S SIGNED

First Tripartite MoA signed under FIDF

- The tripartite MoA was signed between i) The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) ii) The **department of Fisheries**, Government of India iii) **Government of Tamil Nadu**.
- A dedicated fund with a total of **Rs. 7522.48 crore** has been created namely FIDF for addressing the infrastructure requirement for the fisheries sector.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Atal Bhujal Yojana

- The **Atal Bhujal Yojana (ATAL JAL)** is a **Central Sector Scheme** with a total outlay of **Rs.6000 crore**.
- The scheme will be implemented over a **period of 5 years (2020-21 to 2024-25)**.

DEFENCE

Pakistan at Risk of being Black Listed By FATF

- Global Watchdog for terror financing **FATF (Financial Action Task Force)** has sent **150 questions to Pakistan** seeking more clarifications from Pakistan on **actions taken against madrassas**.
- The FATF has told Pakistan to take action against **madrassas belonging to proscribed outfits**, with report submitting **deadline by 8th January**.

DefExpo India- 2020

- The 11th biennial edition of DefExpo India- 2020 is scheduled to be held in **Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh** from 5th to 8th Feb 2020.
- The **theme of the DefExpo is 'India: The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub'** and focus will be on **'Digital Transformation of Defence'**.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

QRSAM Missile Successfully Test Fired

- The QRSAM missile system is **indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation, DRDO**.
- The **objective** of the missile is to operate in the deployment mode intercepting the target mid-air.

China's Largest Carrier Rocket: Long March-5

- **The first attempt was made in 2016**, failed to reach the speed required for the early phase of the flight and so was the **second attempt** that also failed when a turbopump that injected fuel into the combustion chamber malfunctioned.
- The rocket was launched carrying the **Shijian-20 technological experiment satellite** which is the heaviest and **most advanced communications satellite of the country**.

SPORTS

India won the ODI Series

- **Virat Kohli** looks set to be the **highest runscorer of 2019 (2455 runs)** in all formats (Tests, ODI and T20I) combined, for the **4th year in a row**.
- **Rohit Sharma** had broken the record for scoring the **most number of runs as an opening batsman (2442 runs)** in a calendar year, a 22 year long period of former Sri Lanka's batsman Sanath Jayasuria in 1997.

ICC ODI Ranking

- **Batsman Lokesh Rahul** has been lifted by 17 ranks to 71st place while **Shreyas Iyer** jumped from 104 ranks to 81st rank.
- **Indian Women team** remains to hold **4th position in the Women T20 Team Ranking**.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

Nagpur Resolution Adopted by GOI

- The conference was organised by the **Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)** in collaboration with the Government of Maharashtra and the Maharashtra State Commission for Right to Public Services.
- In earlier occasions, the government of India has adopted the **Shillong Declaration and Jammu Resolution for Good Governance**.

