
WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS JANUARY 2018: WEEK 2

BANKING AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS:

- India has emerged as a top borrower from the China-sponsored Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) with USD 1.5 billion worth of loans last year and USD three billion more in the pipeline.
- IndusInd Bank and Dynamics Inc. at the 2018 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) announced plans to introduce the first battery-powered, interactive payment cards to the Indian market in 2018.
- 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).
- Retail inflation crossed the RBI's comfort level and rose to 5.21 percent in December on rise in prices of food items, egg and vegetables, dashing hopes of interest rate cut in the near future. The retail inflation, based on Consumer Price Index (CPI), was 4.88 percent in November.
- In the financial year 2016-17, total FDI of US \$ 60.08 billion has been received, which is an all-time high. The Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi has approved amendments in FDI Policy and further liberalized few of the policies of FDI.
- World Bank has projected India's growth rate at 7.3 percent in 2018 and 7.5 for the next two years. According to the 2018 Global Economics Prospect release, despite initial setbacks from demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST), India's economy is estimated to have grown at 6.7 percent in 2017.
- The provisional figures of Direct Tax collections up to December 2017 show that net collections are at Rs. 6.56 lakh crore which is 18.2% higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.

APPOINTMENTS

- Diplomat T S Tirumurti has been appointed as the Economics Relations Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry.
- The Chief Minister of Sikkim Pawan Chamling officially declared A R Rahman to be the new Brand Ambassador of Sikkim.
- Dilip Asbe has been appointed as the new MD and CEO of NPCI (National Payments Corporation of India), an umbrella organization for retail payment systems in India.

- Rocket scientist K. Sivan, currently Director of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre has been appointed as the Chairman of the Space Commission and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for three years.
- The Indian Olympic Association appointed Harjinder Singh as the Chef De Mission for the 23rd Winter Olympic Games to be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea in February 2018.
- Supreme Court collegium recommended senior advocate Indu Malhotra as the first woman lawyer to be directly appointed as a judge of the apex court.

HONOUR AND AWARDS

- Ravi Menon Named Best Central Bank Governor in Asia-Pacific.

MOU'S AND AGREEMENT

- India and Saudi Arabia signed the Bilateral Annual Haj 2018 Agreement.
- A memorandum of understanding was signed between the GCCI (Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and South Korea for Business Corporation

IMPORTANT NEWS- WORLD

- The Himalayan Hydro Expo 2018 concluded in Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Iceland becomes the first country in the world to legalize equal pay in the workplace for equal work.
- The world's largest ice festival "International Ice and Snow Festival" was organized in China's Harbin.
- The Bloomberg Billionaires Index showed that the founder and CEO of Amazon, Jeff Bezos has become the richest man in the history.
- American and Japanese military forces have launched joint exercise named Iron Fist. The 13th annual Iron Fist exercises kicked off in the U.S. western state of California.
- China became Nepal's second internet service provider, breaking India's monopoly in providing internet access to Nepal.
- UN Environment and the World Health Organization have agreed a new, wide-ranging collaboration to accelerate action to curb environmental health risks that cause an estimated 12.6 million deaths a year.

IMPORTANT DATES

- With an aim to make India a better country with the involvement of youth, National Youth Day is celebrated across the country on 12th January every year.

OBITUARIES

- Baldev Raj, the director of the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru, and a renowned administrator of nuclear power technologies in the country has passed away. He was 70 years old.
- Powerlifting world champion Saksham Yadav died of his injuries after road accident near Delhi. He was injured in car accident.
- Peter Sutherland, the first Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), has passed away in Dublin, Ireland. He was 71.
- Legendary astronaut John Young, who walked on the Moon and later commanded the first space shuttle flight, has died at 87.

IMPORTANT NEWS- INDIA

- The Union Minister for Human Resource and Development (HRD), Prakash Javadekar released the AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) for the year 2016-17 in New Delhi.
- The Sports Minister launched the Khelo India logo at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi, which has three-stroke Khelo India logo designed by Ogilvy India, has built-in modularity, which offers flexibility in adapting to numerous pictorial forms.
- Centre Proposes e-Sansad and e-Vidhan for Paperless Functioning on 18th Whips Conference started in Udaipur from 8th January 2018.
- The Supreme Court has modified its November 30, 2016, interim order and made it optional for the cinema halls to play the National Anthem before every show.
- The Research arm of the Ministry of Railways, RDSO (Research Design and Standards Organization) has launched the New Online Vendor Registration System.
- First PIO (Persons of Indian Origin) Parliamentary Conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra at Chanakyapuri, New Delhi.
- The Ministry of Railways has launched the Smart Freight Operation Optimisation & Real Time Information (SFOORTI) Application.
- A new concept of Virtual ID is introduced by the UIDAI to address the privacy concerns. From 1st June 2018, it would be mandatory for all agencies that undertake authentication to accept the Virtual ID from their users.
- President Ram Nath Kovind inaugurated the 4th International Dharma-Dhamma Conference on "State and Social Order in Dharma-Dhamma Traditions" at Rajgir in Nalanda district.

- The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE)'s India International Exchange listed the first bond on its Global Securities Market.

BUSINESS, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Flipkart's payment arm PhonePe has partnered with mobile wallet company FreeCharge to allow the customers of FreeCharge pay for transactions at PhonePe's partner merchants.
- India unveils 'Pratyush' its fastest supercomputer. 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.

IMPORTANT NEWS- STATES

- The Chief Minister of West Bengal, Mamta Banerjee unveiled the official emblem of the state government which has features the Ashoka Pillar on the top with the theme of "Biswa Bangla" at the centre and was recently approved by the centre.
- Haryana has become the first state in India to launch the High-Risk Pregnancy (HRP) Portal.
- India's second FTII (Film and Television Institute of India) to be set up in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The Karnataka government announced that Karnataka International Travel Expo (KITE) which will be the largest B2B event of the country will be held from 28th February 2018.
- Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) Index- Gujarat tops.

SPORTS NEWS

- Vidarbha Claims Maiden Ranji Trophy in the 84-year long history of the Indian domestic tournament by Delhi by nine wickets at the Holkar Stadium in Indore.
- India's Aanchal Thakur created history by winning a medal at the Alpine Ejder 3200 Cup in Turkey organised by The Federation Internationale de Ski, which is International Medal in Skiing.
- Professional player Aditya Mehta won the Kolkata Open 2018 International Invitation Snooker Championship in the capital city of West Bengal, Kolkata.
- Team Liverpool sold Brazilian football player Philippe Coutinho to Team Barcelona for 160 million Euros (\$192 million). With this, transfer of Philippe Coutinho has become the 2nd Most Expensive transfer in World Soccer History.

- Gilles Simon of France has lifted the inaugural Tata Open Maharashtra Tennis trophy. In the summit clash in Pune, the unseeded French player defeated second-seeded Kevin Anderson in straight sets

