

# Daily Current Affairs 25-26 December 2018 with PDF

## Finance and Banking

### *RBI to soon issue new Rs 20 note*

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon **introduce a new Rs 20 currency note with additional features**, as per a document of the central bank.
- The central bank has already issued new look **currency notes in the denominations of Rs 10, Rs 50, Rs 100 and Rs 500, besides introducing Rs 200 and Rs 2,000 bank notes.**
- The new look notes are being introduced since November 2016 under Mahatma Gandhi (New) series. These are different in size and design compared to the notes issued previously.
- The currency notes, except for banned Rs 500 and Rs 1,000, issued under old series continue to remain legal tender.

### *MSME Ministry proposes to establish governing council to boost shipments*

- **The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has proposed to establish a governing council to ensure efficient delivery of all export-related interventions**, as a part of its action plan to boost shipments from micro, small and medium enterprises.
- The governing council shall be **chaired by Secretary, MSME and co-chaired by Development Commissioner in MSME Ministry.**
- It shall comprise senior officials and members from MSME Ministry, Commerce Ministry, MSME Export Promotion Councils, Export Development Authorities and Commodity Boards.
- Under MSMEs' action plan, the National Resource Centre for MSME Exporters will engage with various international agencies including UN organisations to promote procurement from Indian MSMEs and further enhance their capabilities.
- The ministry has recommended a detailed analysis of various trade agreements, including FTAs and bilateral and multilateral trade agreements, to identify areas of concern for MSMEs in the strategic action plan titled 'Unlocking the Potential of MSME Exports'.

## India and states

### **PM Modi inaugurates Bogibeel Bridge in Assam; flags off first passenger train**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 25, 2018 inaugurated **India's longest rail-road bridge 'Bogibeel Bridge' over the Brahmaputra River in Assam** to boost defence along the border with China.
- This 4.94 kilometre long bridge over the Brahmaputra river took nearly two decades and **over Rs 5900 crore to get completed.**
- The bridge was inaugurated on the birth anniversary of former **PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, under whose government the work for the bridge began in 2002.

- Located just over 20 kilometres from the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border, the Bogibeel Bridge will connect the south bank of the Brahmaputra river in Assam's Dibrugarh district with Silapathar in Dhemaji district, bordering Arunachal Pradesh, making travel to Pasighat easier.
- The bridge includes the main bridge, dykes on the north and south banks, road network of 30 kilometres, rail network of 74 kilometres and six new railway stations.
- The Prime Minister also flagged off the **Tinsukia-Naharlagun Intercity Express**. The train will run five days a week.
- The rail journey from **Dibrugarh to the Arunachal Pradesh capital Itanagar will now be cut by 750 kilometres**.
- The rail line will be linked to Chowalkhowa, which is 5.83 kilometres from Dibrugarh, on the south bank and between Sisi Borgaon and Sirpani on the north bank.

#### ***Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana launched in Uttarakhand***

- **The Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana has been launched in Uttarakhand.** Under the scheme, each household in the state will be able to avail medical **treatment of up to 5 lakh rupees annually**.
- **The scheme will benefit 23 lakh households and cover 1,350 critical diseases.** Launching the Yojna in Dehradun, Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat distributed scheme-related golden cards to beneficiaries.
- The CM also signed Memoranda of Understanding with private hospitals and announced that soon free of cost OPD facilities will be available for children and elderly people in the state.
- All households have been included under the Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana as the government wants that everyone should be able to afford medical treatment.

#### ***UP Police bans namaz in public places***

- **The Uttar Pradesh Police has reportedly issued an order banning namaz at a public park in Noida's Sector-58.** According to the reports, police banned the prayers or any religious activities in the park following a complaint.
- The police order is addressed to offices and firms in the area, warning them of strict action if their employees were caught offering prayers at the park. It said that companies will be held liable if their employees are found breaching the order.
- The companies in the area had earlier sought district magistrate's permission for their employees to offer Friday prayers at the open grounds, but had to come back empty handed.

#### ***Patna Zoo closed after deaths of peacocks due to H5N1 Virus***

- **Patna Zoo has been closed for an indefinite period following the confirmation of H5N1 virus killing six peacocks in the zoo.**
- The zoo had been closed following deaths of six peacocks between December 16 and 24. The bodies of the peacocks were sent to **National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases in Bhopal where it was confirmed that birds died after being infected with H5N1 virus.**
- Currently, the process of immunisation and disinfection is on and the zoo would only be re-opened when it is established that it has been freed from the virus following laboratory test.

### ***Maharashtra CM launches Vajpayee International Schools in Mumbai***

- Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on December 25, 2018 launched **Atal Bihari Vajpayee International Schools in Mumbai**, on the occasion of the 94th birth anniversary of the late Prime Minister.
- The State aims to introduce international curriculum in 100 schools run by civic bodies, the tribal development department, the social justice department and the education department.
- The schools will be affiliated to the newly formed Maharashtra International Education Board (MIEB) and the curriculum will be first implemented in the mother tongue in 13 Zilla Parishad schools.

## **World**

### ***Thailand approves medical use of marijuana***

- **Thailand** on December 25, 2018 approved **the licensed use of marijuana for medical use and research**.
- The changes will legalise the production, import, export, possession and use of marijuana products for medical purposes.
- The recreational use of the drugs, however, will remain illegal and subject to prison terms and fines commensurate with the quantities involved.
- With this, **Thailand has become the first country in Southeast Asia to take such action**. Marijuana has been traditionally used as a stimulant and painkiller in the nation.

### ***Iraq declares Christmas as a public holiday***

- The Iraqi government has declared **Christmas Day a national holiday across the country**.
- The declaration came after the Iraqi Cabinet approved a law to mark December 25 as an official holiday across the country **“on the occasion of the birth of Jesus Christ”**.
- The Cabinet voted on an amendment to the national holidays law in the country that Christmas Day is a holiday for all Iraqis and not only for the Christian community, as it had been for decades.

### ***Japan announces withdrawal from IWC to resume commercial whaling***

- **Japan** on December 26, 2018 announced its decision to **withdraw from the International Whaling Commission and said that it will resume commercial whaling from July 2019**. The withdrawal will come into effect by June 30, 2019.
- The withdrawal from the International Whaling Commission means that the Japanese whalers will be able to resume hunting of minke and other whales, which are currently protected by the IWC, in the Japanese coastal waters.
- Japan clarified that commercial whaling will be limited to Japan's territorial waters and exclusive economic zones and not in the Antarctic waters or in the southern hemisphere.

## Awards & Honors

### *Mamata Banerjee is the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year*

- **West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been conferred the Skoch Chief Minister of the Year Award** for her contribution in the overall development of the state and emerging as the best chief minister in the country.
- **The state has this year bagged 31 Skoch Awards for its performance across different fields** besides implementing unique projects.
- Banerjee has been conferred with the prestigious award on the basis of the state's performance in the field of governance, culture, finance, urban and rural development, the organisation had tweeted recently.

## Days

### *Good Governance Day 2018: Nation remembers former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee; 'Sadaiv Atal' samadhi dedicated to nation*

- **India observed the Good Governance Day on December 25, 2018** to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee who passed away on August 16, 2018 at the age of 93.
- The Good Governance Day was established in 2014 to honor former-Prime Minister Vajpayee by fostering awareness among the Indian people of accountability in governance.
- To mark the Good Governance Day 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 24, 2018 released **a 100-rupee commemorative coin in honour of Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee.**
- To mark the birth anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, his **Samadhi 'Sadaiv Atal'** was dedicated to the nation. President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid floral tributes at the Samadhi.

## Appointments

### *IL&FS appoints retired IAS official Bijay Kumar as Deputy Managing Director*

- **Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Ltd** said on Wednesday it appointed retired **Indian Administrative Service official Bijay Kumar as its deputy managing director.**
- The debt-laden company also appointed N Srinivasan as a non-executive director.