

## Daily Current Affairs 16-17 December 2018 with PDF

### Finance and Banking

#### *India decides to extend 1.4 billion dollar aid to Maldives*

- **India** and **Maldives** underscored the need for strengthening and reforming of multilateral financial institutions and enhancing the voice and participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making.
- In his press statement after delegation-level talks with President Solih, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, **India has decided to extend 1.4 billion dollars financial assistance to the Maldives as budget support, currency swap and line of credit for the social and economic development of Maldives.**
- President Solih reaffirmed his government's "India-First Policy" and commitment to working closely with India.

#### *PM Modi inaugurates 175 Km Sewerage Network in Prayagraj; NMCG sanctions funds for Kumbh Mela*

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 16, 2018 inaugurated various projects **worth Rs 199.65 crore under Namami Gange Programme in Prayagraj, including 175 KM of sewerage network.**
- **The projects will prevent 7.8 crore litres of sewage from flowing untreated into Ganga River every day.** Now, this untreated sewage water will be carried every day to existing Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) at Salori, Kodra & Ponghat for treatment.
- The projects were inaugurated in the- presence of UP Governor Ram Naik, UP CM Yogi Adityanath, Deputy CM Keshav Prasad Maurya, and Minister of Urban Development Suresh K Khanna.
- Prime Minister Modi also laid the foundation stone for two projects in the Trans Ganga/Yamuna area under '**One City-One Operator Scheme**' with **sanctioned cost of Rs 767.59 crore.**
- The project is based on Hybrid Annuity based PPP mode that includes Operations and Maintenance of the entire sewerage infrastructure for 15 years.
- These projects include Intersection and diversion (I&D) of sewage network, **7 sewage pumping stations and 3 STPs of total capacity 72 million litres per day (MLD).**

### India and states

#### *PM Modi held delegation-level talks with Maldivian President; signs 4 MoUs*

- **India and Maldives signed four agreements** on various fields in New Delhi.
- The agreements were signed after delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih.
- **Prime Minister Modi said India will extend 1.4 billion dollars financial assistance to the Maldives.**
- Both sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral ties. **They welcomed new visa agreement between India and Maldives.**
- Maldivian President Solih arrived in New Delhi on December 16 on a three-day visit to India. His visit comes nearly a month after Modi attended Solih's swearing-in ceremony in Male, Maldives.

#### ***IAF flies India's first bio-jet fuel blended Aircraft***

- A team from the **Aircraft Systems and Testing Establishment (ASTE)**, Indian Air Force's (IAF) premier testing establishment, **flew India's first military flight using blended bio-jet fuel on Russian-made An-32 transport aircraft here on Monday.**
- The aircraft was flown by experimental test pilots and test engineers from ASTE. The project is a combined effort of **IAF, Defence Research, and Development Organisation (DRDO), Directorate General Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DGAQA)** and **CSIR-Indian Institute of Petroleum.**
- The IAF carried out extensive engine tests of the sortie on the ground. This was followed by flight trials using 10 per cent bio-jet blended ATF. The fuel is made from Jatropha oil sourced from Chhattisgarh Biodiesel Development Authority (CBDA) and then processed at CSIR-IIP, Dehradun.

#### ***Severe Cyclonic Storm 'PHETHAI' over west central Bay of Bengal weakens into a cyclonic storm***

- The Severe Cyclonic Storm **'PHETHAI'** over west central Bay of Bengal moved further northwards with a speed of 24 kmph, weakened into a cyclonic storm and lay centred over west central Bay of Bengal.
- Due to unfavourable environmental conditions, it is likely to slightly weaken further before landfall and cross coast as a cyclonic storm with a wind speed of 70-90 kmph gusting to 100 kmph.
- Cyclone **'PHETHAI'** is also being tracked by DWR Chennai, Machilipatnam and Vishakhapatnam apart from Satellite and other observations.

#### ***IIT Bhubaneswar's solution wins first IoT innovation challenge***

- **An Internet of Things (IoT)-based solution from IIT Bhubaneswar that can store, track and analyse data related to consumers' LPG consumption** has won the first edition of **'The Grand India IoT Innovation Challenge'** by **Tata Communications.**
- The winner **Prajawala** from IIT Bhubaneswar received Rs 5 lakh as top prize in the 4-month long contest organised in partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- The second winner was the **"Dominators"** team from the Army Institute of Technology which designed an IoT device that can be plugged to a streetlight, creating a heat map of mosquitoes.

- The third prize was jointly awarded to Sanrakshak from Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) Chennai and the "Short Circuits" team from BITS Pilani.

#### ***Rs 100 coin with Atal Bihari Vajpayee's portrait to be launched soon***

- ***A new 100-rupee coin with the image of former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be launched soon.***
- The coin will weigh 35 grams.
- One side of the coin will have a portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee with his name inscribed in the Devanagari script as well as English.
- His birth and death year, 1924 and 2018, will be inscribed at the bottom of his picture.
- The other side of the coin will bear the Lion Capitol of Ashoka Pillar in the centre with "**Satyameva Jayate**" inscribed below in the Devanagari script.

## **Appointments**

#### ***Kamal Nath takes oath as Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh***

- Senior Congress leader **Kamal Nath was sworn in as the 18th Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh on December 17, 2018.**
- The swearing-in ceremony took place at the Lal Parade Ground in Bhopal, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh.
- Madhya Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office to Nath in the presence of several senior Congress leaders including Digvijaya Singh and Mallikarjun Kharge, party president Rahul Gandhi.

#### ***Bhupesh Baghel sworn in as Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh***

- Chhattisgarh Congress president **Bhupesh Baghel was on December 17, 2018 sworn-in as the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.** Governor Anandiben Patel administered the oath of office and secrecy to Baghel at swearing-in ceremony held in Raipur.
- By swearing-in, **Baghel became the third Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh since its inception in the year 2000.**
- Baghel was named for the post after four days of discussions with legislators and Congress President Rahul Gandhi and AICC observer Mallikarjun Kharge. Baghel had staked claim to form the government in the state after his election as leader of the Congress Legislature Party.

#### ***Sandip Somany takes over as FICCI President; Uday Shankar as Vice President***

- The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) **elected Sandip Somany, Vice Chairman and Managing Director of HSIL Limited, as its President for 2018-19.**
- The decision was taken at its 91st Annual General Meeting held on December 14-15.

- Somany will be working closely with government and business leaders towards spearheading the country's economic growth and promote inclusiveness. He was previously working as the Senior Vice President, FICCI.
- Sangita Reddy, Joint Managing Director of the Apollo Hospitals Group was elevated as the Senior Vice President of FICCI for 2018-19.
- **Uday Shankar, Chairman and CEO of Star India, joined the chamber as the Vice President.**

## Sports

### *PV Sindhu claims maiden BWF World Tour Finals Title*

- Olympic silver medallist **PV Sindhu made history** on December 16, 2018 **by becoming the first Indian to win the BWF World Tour Finals.**
- **Sindhu claimed the coveted gold medal with a win over 2017 world champion Nozomi Okuhara in straight sets of 21-19, 21-17.** In both games, Sindhu made a fast start but Okuhara managed to stay within touching distance. Sindhu, though won points at crucial junctures to maintain her dominance in the match. The 23-year-old had beaten Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon 21-16, 25-23 in the semi-final, held on December 15.
- With the win, **Sindhu claimed her 14th title overall and the first for this year, which had followed up with a series of disappointments after she was unable to win even a single tournament.**
- Sindhu had lost out on the gold and had to settle for silver in many championships in 2018 including the World Championships, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Thailand Open and India Open.

### *Belgium crowned 2018 Hockey World Champions*

- **In Hockey, Belgium has claimed their first ever World Cup title. They defeated Netherlands 3-2 in a dramatic shoot-out in the final of the Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar** yesterday. Both the teams, goalless at full time, were at level 2-2 after five penalties.
- **Belgium has won the trophy after sixteen years.** The win proved to be third time lucky for the Red Lions, who finished runners-up at both the Rio 2016 Olympic Games and the Euro Hockey Championships in 2017. Earlier, the last edition champions Australia secured a consolation bronze medal after mauling England 8-1.

## World

### *'Justice' is Merriam-Webster's word of the year after spike in searches*

- **Merriam-Webster has chosen "justice" as its 2018 word of the year.**
- Editor at large Peter Sokolowski said ahead of Monday's announcement the word experienced specific spikes in lookups on the company's website for much of the year.

- It also consistently bubbled up in the rankings from somewhere in the top hundreds of searches into the top 20 or 30 through 2018.
- Merriam-Webster's word of the year follows the **Oxford Dictionaries choice of "toxic" and Dictionary.com's pick of "misinformation."**

### ***Sri Lankan President reinstates ousted PM Ranil Wickremesinghe***

- Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena on December 16, 2018 **reappointed Ranil Wickremesinghe as the Prime Minister of the country**, after suddenly dismissing him from the post nearly two months ago.
- The President clarified that his move to terminate the Prime Minister was done in "good faith" and the reinstatement was done to uphold parliamentary traditions and democracy. A new cabinet comprising 30 lawmakers is also expected to be sworn in soon.

### **COP24: Member countries finalise 'Katowice package' rules to implement 2015 Paris Climate Agreement**

- The UN Climate Conference (COP24) on December 14, 2018 saw the adoption of '**Katowice package', the rulebook for implementation of the 2015 Paris climate agreement.**
- The Ministers of 200 nations reached consensus on rules after two weeks of intense negotiations during **the 24th Conference of the Parties (COP24) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that took place during December 2-14, 2018 in Katowice, Poland.** The meeting was presided by Polish President, Michal Kurtyka.
- The adopted guidelines package aims to encourage greater climate action ambition and benefit people from all walks of life, especially the most vulnerable.

## **Days**

### ***Nation celebrates Vijay Diwas to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war***

- **The nation celebrated Vijay Diwas on 16 December, 2018 to commemorate India's victory over Pakistan in 1971 war.** Rich tributes are being paid to the Martyrs who laid down their lives during the war.
- President Ram Nath Kovind, Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi also paid tributes to the soldiers who sacrificed their lives for the nation during the war. In a tweet, Mr Kovind said, the nation remembers with gratitude the Armed Forces who defended the nation and upheld universal values of human liberty in 1971.

## **Awards & Honors**

### ***Miss Philippines Catriona Gray crowned Miss Universe 2018***

- **Miss Philippines Catriona Gray was crowned Miss Universe after she won the final round of the Miss Universe 2018 pageant**, held in Bangkok, Thailand on December 17, 2018. **Outgoing Miss Universe Demi Leigh Nel Peters from South Africa crowned her successor.**
- Miss Philippines made it to the **Top 5 along with Miss Puerto Rico, Vietnam, Philippines, South Africa and Venezuela**. The top five were then asked questions that were crafted by fellow contestants and had to answer it in 30 seconds or less. This determined the Top 3.
- The final three contestants included Miss Philippines, South Africa and Venezuela. During the final round, each contestant was asked the same question. While one was asked the question, the other two were required to wear headphones to keep them from listening to the question and answer.

## Obituaries

### *Renowned classical singer Pandit Arun Bhaduri passes away*

- Renowned classical singer **Pandit Arun Bhaduri** passed away in Kolkata after a prolonged illness. He was 75 and survived by wife and son.
- Pandit Bhaduri, considered to be one of the masters of Bengali songs and Bhajans, was suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed grief over the demise of Pandit Bhaduri.