

Daily Current Affairs 20 January 2018

Finance

ONGC to acquire govt entire stake in HPCL for Rs 36,915 cr

- State-owned ONGC on Saturday said it will acquire the government's entire 51.11 per cent stake in HPCL for Rs 36,915 crore.
- ONGC will pay the government Rs 473.97 per share, a premium of over 10 per cent of the 60-days weighted average of HPCL's scrip.
- In a stock exchange filing, ONGC said "shares will be acquired against cash" and the transaction will be closed before month-end.
- ONGC's share had closed at Rs 193.60 on BSE on Friday, down 0.23 per cent over its previous close.
- HPCL shares traded last at Rs 416.55, up 1.34 per cent.

CBEC to set up training centre for National Academy of Customs in Hyderabad

- Vanaja N. Sarna, Chairman, Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), New Delhi, laid the foundation stone for the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes and Narcotics (NACIN) for its Zonal Training Centre at Attapur in Hyderabad.
- The new project which entails construction of the modern training facility is expected to be developed with an outlay of Rs. 47 crore and is scheduled for completion within two years.
- The Institute is expected to augment the training infrastructure in the area of GST and taxpayer services.
- The proposed campus will consist of separate blocks for training, administration, and hostel, besides sports and recreational facilities, according to a statement.
- NACIN is the apex Institute of Central Government which takes care of capacity building of civil servants in the field of indirect taxation, particularly in the areas of GST, Customs and Narcotics.
- As a nodal agency for training of the GST stakeholders, NACIN has been playing a crucial role in training of GST officers of the Centre and States.

India

Union Government launches Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative

- The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched Cyber Surakshit Bharat initiative in association with National e-Governance Division (NeGD) and industry partners at an inaugural event in Delhi on 19th January 2018.
- The move is aimed at strengthening the cybersecurity ecosystem in India, in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for a 'Digital India'.
- The initiative was inaugurated by the Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Tourism (Independent Charge), K J Alphons in the presence of Union Information Technology Secretary Ajay Prakash Sawhney and Law Secretary Suresh Chandra and various renowned industrialists.
- Speaking on the occasion, K J Alphons said that Digital India has led to a rapid transformation in the governance system and to ensure good governance, the private corporate sector must come forward.

Rajasthan to have candidates' picture on EVMs in upcoming bypolls

- Rajasthan's Chief Election Officer Ashwani Bhagat announced on 19th January 2018 that the Electronic Voting Machines in the state's by-polls would carry photographs of candidates contesting elections.
- The by-polls are due on 29th January in Ajmer and Alwar Parliamentary seats along with Mandalgarh Assembly seat.
- Although, the same procedure was followed in the Dholpur Assembly by-poll in Rajasthan in 2017, this will be the first that it will be done in a Lok Sabha election.
- Under the new system, a 2.5 cm size photograph of the candidate contesting will be displayed on the EVM along with the name, photo and election symbol of the candidate. However, for NOTA option the space for photo will be left blank.

President to felicitate women achievers at Rashtrapati Bhawan

- President Ram Nath Kovind would be felicitating exceptional women achievers who are the first to set a milestone in their respective fields at Rashtrapati Bhawan on 20th January 2018.
- The information was shared the Women and Child Development Ministry through an official release. The statement read that 112 women have been selected after an extensive research process by the Ministry.
- The women being felicitated are those who have been the first in any field like the first woman judge, first woman porter, first woman to head a missile project, first para-trooper and first Olympian. For the same, a list of 227 women was compiled through various sources including Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Sports, Limca Book of Records, press clippings and internet.
- The final 112 names were finalised by the Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi along with an esteemed panel of judges. The selected women rose through barriers, standards and oppressive notions to become the first women to excel in the fields.

Sports

India beat Pakistan by two wickets to retain Blind Cricket World Cup title

- Sunil Ramesh slammed a superb 93 as India defeated arch rivals Pakistan by two wickets in a thrilling summit clash to retain the Blind Cricket World Cup title here today.
- Batting first, Pakistan amassed 308 runs, courtesy some useful contribution by Badar Munir (57), Riasat Khan (48) and captain Nisar Ali (47).
- Ramesh then led the run chase as India overhauled the target with eight balls to spare to retain the trophy that they had won in 2014 after beating the same opponents at Cape Town, South Africa.
- India struggled in the final stages of their run chase as Pakistan claimed three successive wickets to gain an upper hand over their arch-rivals.
- However, a wide delivery rolled on to the boundary and the pendulum swung back in India's favour.
- India had beaten Pakistan on January 13 in the group stage. The defending champions had beaten Bangladesh by seven wickets in the semi-final.

India's Manav Thakkar becomes World No 2 in latest International TT rankings

- India's Manav Thakkar climbed to World Number 2 spot in the boys' under-18 category while Diya Chitale rose to Number 5 in the girls' under-15 category in the International Table Tennis Federation rankings.
- Thakkar's jump has been particularly phenomenal as he moved from 18th to his current position. According to an official release by the ITTF, the top place is within striking distance of Thakkar, which will become India's moment of crowning glory.
- Previously, Thakkar also broke into the top 15 in the boys' under-21 rankings. Among other successes, recently crowned Junior National Champion Payas Jain climbed to the 11th spot, followed by Jeho H at rank 12.
- In the girls' under-18 category, Karnataka's Archana Girish Kamath moved up from 34th rank to the 18th spot. Archana has also earned a spot in the top-50 of the under-21 category.

World

Britain announces world's first public register against money laundering

- Britain has announced the world's first public register that requires overseas companies that own or buy property in the country to provide details of their ultimate owners.
- The government is set to publish relevant draft laws and the register will go live by early 2021. Speaking on the development, British Business Secretary Greg Clark said that this register

will build on their reputation for corporate transparency as well as help create a hostile environment for economic crimes like money laundering.

- In Britain, properties worth 250 million dollars have been under criminal investigation for being linked to corruption since 2004. Over 75 per cent of the properties currently under investigation have been suspected of being used as off-shore corporate secrecy, a tactic regularly seen by investigators pursuing high-level money laundering.

Japan launches New Earth Observation Satellite into Space

- Japan successfully launches an earth observation satellite with third generation Epsilon rocket from the Uchinoura Space Center, located in Kagoshima, Japan.
- It was also confirmed that after approximately 52 minutes into the flight, ASNARO-2 successfully separated from the rocket.
- Built by the Japanese tech firm NEC, the satellite orbits at an altitude of about 500 km.
- ASNARO-2 was scheduled to be launch in November 2017 but due to a defect in an electric system on the launch vehicle - Epsilon, the launch was postponed to January 2018.