

Current Affairs 4 January 2019 with PDF

Economy

Government increases fuel supply to power plants

- The government on January 3, 2019 **said that coal stock and coal supply to power plants has been increased to meet the energy demands in the country.**
- According to the Ministry of Coal, **the increase is about 25 per cent as compared to last year.**
- The Ministry said that with the focus on boosting the domestic Coal Supply, the Coal stock in power plants as on December 31, 2018 was over 16 million tonne as compared to December 2017 which was around 13 million tonne.
- The Coal Stock in power plants on December 31, 2018 was sufficient for ten days.

PM Modi inaugurates development projects in Manipur

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 4, 2019 **inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 12 development projects worth Rs 1,500 crore in Manipur.**
- The Prime Minister unveiled the plaque to mark the inauguration of various projects including **Integrated Check Post at Moreh, the Dolaithabi Barrage project, FCI food storage godown at Sawombung, Eco Tourism Complex at Thangal Surung and various water supply schemes.**
- PM Modi also dedicated the 400kV double circuit Silchar-Imphal line and laid the foundation stone of projects like Infrastructure Development of Dhanamanjuri University, Imphal and sports facilities.
- The Prime Minister said that as per the Centre's vision of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas, it is ensured that no region or person is excluded from development.

India and states

Saubhagya Scheme: Arunachal Pradesh's East Siang District achieves 100% electrification

- **The East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh achieved 100 percent electrification under the Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana (Saubhagya Scheme).**
- The information was given by the **Arunachal Pradesh's Power Department on January 2, 2019.**
- **The Pasighat Electrical division of the state** has electrified 2,662 households which were earlier left out till the end of December 2017.
- The division has achieved the target covering a total 71 villages under the district, **excluding Pangin sub-division Nari-Koyu.**
- It covered 29 villages in Ruksin, 23 in Pasighat and 19 in Mebo sub-divisions of East Siang District bordering Assam.
- The department has almost completed installation of transformers to energise the covered villages.

FSSAI notifies new food packaging norms, asks food businesses to comply with norms by July 1, 2019

- The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) on January 3, 2019 **notified the new food packaging regulations, replacing all provisions regarding the packaging requirements prescribed in the Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011.**

- While notifying the new packaging norms, **the regulator asked food businesses to comply with new regulations by July 1, 2019.**
- The new regulations **bar the use of recycled plastics and newspapers to wrap food articles.**
- The regulations prohibit packaging material made of recycled plastics including carry bags for packaging, storing, carrying or dispensing articles of food.
- Considering that the inks and dyes may lead to formation of Cancer, the norms also prohibit the use of newspaper and such other materials for packing or wrapping of food articles.
- The new regulations also prescribe overall migration and specific migration limits of contaminants for plastic packaging materials.
- It specifies the suggestive list of packaging materials to be used for different food product categories.

HRD Ministry constitutes task force to look into suicides of JNV students

- The Union Human Resource Development Ministry on December 31, 2018 **constituted a task force to look into the issues of suicides of the students in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.**
- The task force has been constituted under the **Chairmanship of Psychiatrist, Dr Jitendra Nagpal.**
- The task force will look into the circumstances leading to the **suicidal deaths of students residing in the hostels of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas residential schools.**
- It will also suggest ways and means to arrest the trend of suicides by students.

Appointments

Democrat Nancy Pelosi elected Speaker in US House of Representatives

- In the United States, veteran democratic leader **Nancy Pelosi**, considered an ardent supporter of India-US ties, **has been elected as Speaker of the House of Representatives for the second time**, thus becoming the most powerful elected woman in America.
- Pelosi, second in line for the presidency, **took the spot as Democrats regained control of the House of Representatives in the new Congress after the mid-term elections.**
- With 235 seats, Democrats now enjoy the majority in the US House of Representatives. Republicans now have 199 seats in the 435-member House after the November elections.

World

Pakistan abolishes visa on arrival for Afghans

- **Pakistan** on January 3, 2019 **abolished the long-standing facility of visa on arrival for nationals of Afghanistan.**
- The Immigration Wing of the Federal Investigation Agency cited increased security risks from the western border as a reason for the move.
- Furthermore, **the government also restricted the movement of Afghan nationals in Pakistan and stopped issuance of visas at airports and border crossing points.**
- The move to restrict Afghans came as Pakistan has already decided to issue 'on-arrival' visas to citizens of 24 other countries to increase tourism and investments.

Arunima Sinha becomes first woman amputee to scale Mount Vinson

- **Arunima Sinha**, the Indian mountaineer who became the world's first woman amputee to climb Mount Everest in 2013, has now **become the first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, highest peak of Antarctica.**
- Sinha is a national level volleyball player who had one of her legs amputated in 2011 after she was pushed from a running train by dacoits she had resisted.
- She had earlier said that she planned to scale six peaks in six continents. A Padmashri awardee, Sinha had earlier scaled five peaks including Mt Everest, Mt Kilimanjaro, Mt Ebrus, Mt Kosciuszko and Mt Aconcagua.

Awards

Government honours outstanding young entrepreneurs with National Entrepreneurship Awards

- **The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship hosted the third edition of the National Entrepreneurship Awards in New Delhi** on January 4, 2019.
- The awards recognise and honor outstanding **young first-generation entrepreneurs and those who have contributed immensely in building the entrepreneurship ecosystem.**
- A total of 43 awards were presented this year, which include 39 awards for Young Entrepreneurs in different sectors and four awards for Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Builders.
- **The winners received a trophy, certificate and cash prizes ranging from Rs 5-10 lakhs.** There were also special awards for women, persons with disability, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and entrepreneurs from areas with limited opportunities.
- The National Entrepreneurship Awards is a platform focused on driving innovation, ushering in a positive change for youth in entrepreneurship across all the industries.

Days

First World Braille Day observed on 4 January 2019

- **The first official World Braille Day is celebrated on 4 January 2019.**
- World Braille Day is observed in order to raise awareness of the importance of braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people.
- **In November 2018 the General Assembly decided to proclaim 4 January as World Braille Day in recognition that promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms** in the context of access to written language is a critical prerequisite to the full realization of human rights for blind and partially sighted people.