

January 26 Current Affairs 2018

(TNPSC, SSC, BANK, UPSC, RAILWAY)



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1. Nation Celebrates 69th Republic Day

- The Country celebrates its 69th Republic Day on 26th January in Rajpath, New Delhi to be resplendently displaying the country's pride and glory. Heads of ten ASEAN countries are chief guests at Republic Day.
- **This year, the guests of honour are-**

1. **Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah**-Sultan of Brunei,
2. **Hun Sen**- Prime Minister of Cambodia,
3. **Rodrigo Roa Duterte**- President of The Philippines,
4. **Joko Widodo**- President of Indonesia,
5. **Najib Razak**- Prime Minister of Malaysia,
6. **Nguyen Xuan Phuc**- Prime Minister of Vietnam,
7. **Halima Yacob**- President of Singapore,
8. **Htin Kyaw**- President of Myanmar,
9. **Aung San Suu Kyi**- state counsellor of Myanmar,
10. **Prayuth Chan Ocha**- Prime Minister of Thailand and
11. **Thongloun Sisoulith**- Prime Minister of Laos.

- The R-Day parade is being led by Parade Commander Lt. Gen. Asit Mistry. The family members of Corporal Jyoti Prakash Nirala (Posthumous) of the Indian Air Force (IAF), who died fighting militants in Kashmir valley, received India's highest peacetime gallantry award, Ashok Chakra. This is the third Ashok Chakra for the IAF and its first for ground combat.

2. Kolkata Becomes 1st Indian Metro To Get A Floating Market

- Kolkata has become the first Indian Metro to get a Floating Market. The market will be located on a water-body with boats doubling up as shops. The market, located on the eastern fringes of the city, was inaugurated by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.
- The aim is to rehabilitate over 200 shopkeepers from a nearby market that was demolished for the widening of the Eastern Metropolitan Bypass. The market will host at least 114 boats, each one accommodating two shops

3. Usha Ananthasubramanian Becomes 1st Woman IBA Chief

- Usha Ananthasubramanian, MD and CEO, Allahabad Bank, has been elected the first woman chairman of Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Usha was elected IBA Chairman for the year 2017-18 by its Managing Committee.
- IBA Chairman's position fell vacant following the superannuation of Jatinder Bir Singh. Rajnish Kumar, Chairman, State Bank of India, was elected Deputy Chairman of IBA for the year 2017-18.

4. Robotic technology deployed to test railway bridges

- The Southern Railway has deployed a Robotic Remote Operated Vehicle to assess the strength of bridge substructures under water. The new technology provides accurate images and data of damage such as erosion or formation of cavities on pillars under water
- "When we deployed divers to assess the strength of the substructure under water it used to take at least ten days to complete one bridge. Now it takes just one day. The findings are accurate and corroborated with photographs and videos. We are now able to get the dimensions and exact location of cavities for corrective measures," a senior Railway official said on Thursday.

5. Polymerised road a non-starter

- Road works using shredded plastic remains a non-starter in Kochi Corporation despite a government directive that it should be encouraged as a sustainable solution to the issue of plastic refuse. Road works to the tune of 100 crore were being carried out in Kochi Corporation in a financial year.
- A circular issued by the chief engineer of the Local-Self Government Department on June 20 last year had directed the executive engineers of three-tier panchayats and superintending engineers of municipalities and corporations to strictly ensure that shredded plastic was used in 20% of . Officials said the corporation could save at least 22 by using 1 kg of shredded plastic for 1 kg of bitumen for road laying, which costs around 45 per kg.

6. Forest Department to get a 24x7 helpline

- Forest Department which set up the first helpline in January 2017, is encouraging. Barely a few months after the helpline was launched, a tip-off led to an inquiry against two forest officials accused of corruption.
- Punati Shridhar, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife), said the helpline would complement a proposed wildlife crime control cell that will act as an intelligence and coordinating body between agencies such as forest mobile squads, police, and the CID's wildlife crime cell.

7. India, ASEAN eye quick RCEP closure

- Commit to use India's \$1-billion line of credit to enhance connectivity as per master plan for 2025. With an aim to further trade ties, India and ASEAN on Friday agreed to target a swift conclusion to the comprehensive and mutually beneficial Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2018.
- Both sides also reaffirmed their commitment to enhance physical and digital connectivity in line with the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025 and the ASEAN ICT Masterplan (AIM) 2020 by availing the \$1-billion line of credit

Takeaways

1. The ASEAN–India Free Area emerged from a mutual interest of both parties to expand their economic ties in the Asia-Pacific region.

8. Govt. relaxes Atal pension plan norms

- Payment banks can offer the productThe Centre would now allow small finance banks and payment banks to offer the Atal Pension Yojana (APY), which is expected to significantly increase the coverage of the scheme.
- “To strengthen the existing channels of APY distribution, it is felt that these new payments banks and small finance banks will provide a boost to the outreach of subscribers under APY,” the Ministry of Finance said in a statement

9. Moss that can remove lead from water identified

- Scientists have identified a type of moss that can efficiently absorb a large amount of lead, providing a green alternative for decontaminating polluted water and soil. Lead-contaminated water is a serious environmental concern that has recently proved to be disastrous when left untreated.

10. Indonesia Masters: Saina, Satwik-Chirag enter semis

- Former World No 1 Saina Nehwal asserted her supremacy over Olympic silver medallist P V Sindhu with a straight game victory to enter the semifinals of the \$ 350,000 Indonesia Masters, in Jakarta on Friday.

- London Olympics bronze medallist Saina, who is coming back from an ankle injury, gave ample display of her powerful game as she overcame Sindhu 21-13 21-19 in an all-Indian women's singles quarterfinal clash.

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