

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 8, 2019

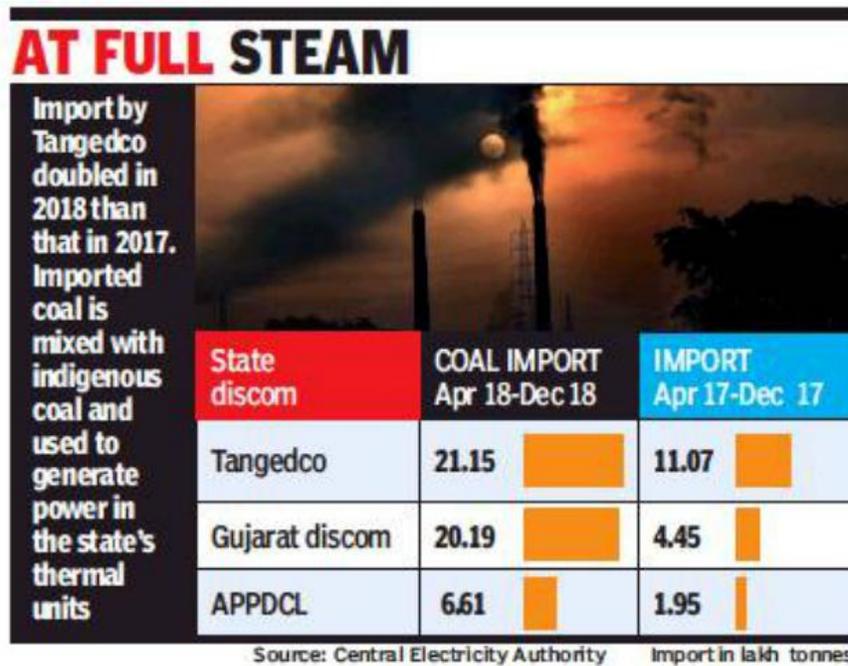
TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **Prime Minister Narendra Modi – is likely to inaugurate the ‘Tejas Express’ on February 27**



- ✓ The Railway Board has approved the Southern Railway to run the train from Chennai to Madurai, with stops at Trichy and Kodai Road, within 6 hours and 30 minutes
 - ✓ Tejas Express has onboard wifi, a CCTV system, modular toilets and better seating facilities
 - ✓ It will be the first premier train linking Chennai Egmore with southern districts
- ◆ **The last leg of 45 km Phase-I of the Metro Rail line – all set to be open for public from February 10**
 - ✓ It will be between Washermenpet to AG-DMS
 - ✓ Most stations on the line will be accessible at Rs 40, including a trip between any 2 major transit hubs of Chennai Central, Airport or Koyambedu
 - ✓ The longest distance from Washermenpet to Airport covering 22 km costs Rs 60

◆ **Tangedco – leads the state-owned discoms in the country in Coal import**



- ✓ Discoms owned by Maharashtra, West Bengal and Telangana have not imported any coal due to the availability of coal from mines in their states
- ✓ Tamil Nadu is dependent on thermal power for most part of the year, except from May to September when wind power is available
- ✓ The state needs about 26 million tonnes of coal for full capacity generation of power by North Chennai, Mettur, Ennore and Tuticorin thermal units
- ✓ Out of this, 20,445 million tonnes is met by indigenous coal and the balance 5.50 million tonnes is imported
- ✓ At present, the power demand in the state is 14,500 MW which will peak more in summer

STATES

◆ **Uttar Pradesh Government – proposes a new scheme, “Kanya Sumangala Yojana” at a cost of Rs 1,200 crore, in its annual budget announced on February 7**

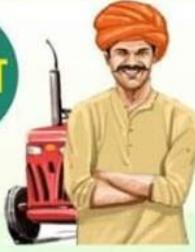
- ✓ It is aimed to raise health and educational standard of girls, brighten their future and bring in a positive change in the thinking towards women.
- ✓ The budget had set aside Rs 612 crore for stray cows -- Rs 247 crore was allocated for new cowsheds, Rs 200 crore for Kanha gaushalas and stray animal homes in urban areas and Rs 165 crore for unproductive and abandoned cows



- ✓ It had also allocated a big amount for religious tourism, vedic schools and cow protection

NATIONAL

- ◆ A dedicated web portal has been launched – for the beneficiaries of PM-KISAN



Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

 Direct income support of ₹6,000 p.a for farmers, effective 01.12.2018

 To benefit 12 cr small and marginal farmer families having cultivable land upto 2 ha

Direct transfer into the bank accounts in three equal instalments

First installment upto 31.03.2019, to be paid this year itself



 ₹75,000 cr in outlay for 2019-20 and ₹20,000 cr in RE 2018-19

- ✓ The Centre had launched the portal '<http://pmkisan.nic.in>' - for the purpose of getting the list of beneficiaries from the states by February 25
- ✓ It had recently released detailed operational guidelines specifying exclusion of certain categories of non-eligible landholder farmer families
- ✓ The ambitious programme of the government will benefit around 12 crore small and marginal farmers, who have cultivable land up to 2 hectares
- ✓ The Rs 75000 crore, fully centrally funded scheme, PM-KISAN, was announced by the Government in its interim budget for 2019-20 on February 1
- ✓ Under the scheme, the beneficiary will get Rs 6,000 per annum in 3 equal installments every four months in a financial year
- ✓ The Government has made the scheme operational with effect from December 1, 2018
- ✓ The first installment of Rs 2,000 will be transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries by March 31, 2019

◆ **India's own 'Air Force One' for President and Prime Minister's long-haul flights – is getting ready**



- ✓ Two new Boeing 777s are being retrofitted with advanced security measures including missile warning and counter-measure dispensing systems along with encrypted satellite communication facilities
- ✓ The soon-to-be-named 'Air India One' or 'Indian Air Force One' will be close to American president's 'Air Force One', the iconic 'flying Oval office' in terms of security
- ✓ The B777s were purchased from America at the cost of Rs 190 million in January 2018
- ✓ The B777 is equipped with 'large aircraft infrared counter-measures' (LAIRCM) self protection suites (SPS), which automatically detects and jams the missile threats
- ✓ They will replace the 26-year old B747 jumbo, currently used by the Prime Minister and the President for long international flights
- ✓ The B747 jumbo have the disadvantage of more fuel consumption, no advanced self-protection suites and needs a stopover in Europe for fuelling for the long air travels to the United States

◆ **India Meteorological Department officials – said that an ‘El Nino’, which has a negative influence on Indian monsoon – may never form in the next few months before monsoon in the equatorial Pacific Ocean**

- ✓ Currently, neutral ENSO conditions, which are neither El Nino nor La Nina, are prevailing in the Pacific Ocean

◆ **Smriti Irani, Union Minister of Textiles - launched the India Size project in Mumbai on February 6, 2019**



- ✓ It is a first-of-its-kind project that aims to arrive at a standard Indian Size for the ready-to-wear clothing industry, on the lines of the standardised sizes available in countries such as the USA and the UK.

◆ **UNESCO - joining hands with Sahapedia – to organize the 2nd India Heritage Walk Festival (IHWF) across 37 cities**



- ✓ The festival is being held from February 2-28, with a focus on heritage education and walks for people with special needs
- ✓ It is also supported by the National Mineral Development Corporation
- ✓ A primary objective of the festival, which will conclude with simultaneous walks in multiple cities, is to widen access to various aspects of India's tangible and intangible heritage
- ✓ The IHWF had received the PATA Gold Award 2018 for its maiden pan-India event last year
- ✓ It will kick-start with a heritage walk in Ahmedabad on February 2, focusing on the religious history and co-existence of multiple faiths in that city
- ✓ Sahapedia is an open online resource on the arts, cultures and heritage of India

- ◆ **Indian Coast Guard – signs MoU with Airports Authority of India - to coordinate the aeronautical and maritime Search And Rescue (SAR) operations – as per the International Aeronautical Maritime Search And Rescue (IAMSAR) standards**



- ✓ The MoU seeks to enhance Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC), Kolkata and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC), Port Blair

COURT VERDICT

- ◆ **The Supreme Court - has upheld the section 139AA of the Income Tax Act and said that linking of PAN with Aadhaar is mandatory for the filing of Income Tax returns**

- ✓ Section 139AA of the Income-Tax Act 1961 was introduced by the Finance Act, 2017
- ✓ The section makes it mandatory to quote Aadhaar / Enrolment ID of Aadhaar application form, for the filing of income returns as well as in the application form to enroll for PAN
- ✓ It also specifies that the PAN numbers must mandatorily be linked with Aadhaar, failing which the PAN number becomes invalid

- ◆ **The Kerala High Court - has said banks cannot be absolved of liability for unauthorised withdrawals from their customers' accounts.**

- ✓ Justice P B Suresh Kumar, while dismissing an appeal of SBI to compensate a customer who lost Rs 2.4 lakh through fraudsters in Brazil, made it clear that banks are liable for unauthorised withdrawals even if customers did not respond to SMS alerts.
- ✓ SMS alerts cannot be the basis to determine the liability of a customer, for there would be account holders who may not be in the habit of checking SMS alerts regularly, the court said.
- ✓ It also said it is the banks' obligation to create a safe electronic banking environment to combat all forms of malicious conduct resulting in losses to their customers.

INTERNATIONAL

◆ Macedonia - joins NATO to become its 30th member



- ✓ The Macedonia-NATO accord follows a deal with Greece ending a 27-year-old dispute over Macedonia's name
- ✓ Macedonia has recently changed its name to 'Republic of North Macedonia' in January 2019
- ✓ To acquire full membership, all 29 current members must ratify the accession protocol, even though Russia is against the move
- ✓ North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is a military and political alliance established through the Washington Treaty

◆ Thailand - has approved to name 'Siamese fighting fish' as the National Aquatic Animal – in a move which is expected to boost its conservation efforts as well as the commercial breeding

- ✓ The Siamese fighting fish was chosen as it's a unique native species found in Thailand waters apart from being an important animal for Thailand's economy



- ✓ It is native to the Mekong basin of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and mostly found at Chao Phraya river in Thailand
- ✓ The Siamese fighting fish was registered as intangible cultural heritage by the Cultural Ministry in 2013

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

◆ 2nd National Conference of Micro Missions of National Police Mission – held in New Delhi on February 7

- ✓ It was organized by the Bureau of Police Research and Development
- ✓ The two day Conference will discuss the issues of Skills and Competence at the grass-root level, attitudinal changes in police, gender sensitisation, harnessing technology and community policing
- ✓ National Police Mission Awards will be given to 9 officers for their contribution in Micro Missions
- ✓ The National Police Mission Division of BPRD strives to transform the Police Forces of the country into an effective medium for the maintenance of Internal Security.

PERSONALITIES

◆ US President, Donald Trump - has nominated senior Treasury official, David Malpass as the next chief of the World Bank



- ✓ He would replace Jim Yong Kim as the president if voted by the Directors of the World Bank Group.
- ✓ In his current capacity as the Under Secretary of the Treasury for International Affairs, 62-year-old Malpass oversees the working of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank

ECONOMY

◆ The 6-member RBI Monetary policy committee, headed by its Governor Shaktikanta Das – announced its 6th bi-monthly monetary policy on February 7

- ✓ Key policy decisions

Policy Rates	6 th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy (Feb 2019)	5 th Bi-Monthly Monetary Policy (Dec 2018)
Repo Rate	6.25%	6.50%
Reverse Repo Rate	6.00%	6.25%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate	6.50%	6.75%
Bank Rate	6.50%	6.75%

- ✓ Headline inflation estimates revised down to 2.8% in March quarter, 3.2-3.4% in first half of next fiscal and 3.9% in Q3 of FY'20
- ✓ Projects GDP growth to accelerate to 7.4% next fiscal, from 7.2% in 2018-19
- ✓ To revise definition of bulk deposits as single rupee deposits of Rs 2 crore and above from Rs 1 crore currently
- ✓ Hikes limit of collateral-free agricultural loans to Rs 1.6 lakh from Rs 1 lakh, to help small and marginal farmers
- ✓ Next meeting of the MPC will take place from April 2-4
- ✓ The implication of the RBI reducing the repo rate is that the EMIs are likely to become cheaper
- ✓ The MPC also said that it is changing its policy stance from 'calibrated tightening' to 'neutral'
- ✓ As per the committee, the decisions taken are to keep consumer price index (CPI) Inflation of 4% within +/- 2%
- ✓ Repo rate is the interest rate at which it lends money to banks
- ✓ Reverse repo rate is the interest rate at which banks lend money to the RBI

AWARDS

- ◆ **Father Francois Laborde, a 92-year-old priest, was conferred with the Legion d'Honneur, the highest civilian award of France**



- ✓ He was awarded in recognition of his work for specially-abled children in Howrah.
- ✓ Father Francois Laborde, French-origin with indian citizenship, is the third person from the state to be entitled with the Legion of Honor - after film maestro Satyajit Ray and actor Soumitra Chatterjee

SPORTS

- ◆ **Vidharbha – becomes 2018-19 Ranji Champions for the second consecutive year – and becomes the sixth team to defend the Ranji title successfully**



- ✓ They had defeated Saurashtra by 78 runs to win the final in Nagpur
 - ✓ Saurashtra have now lost all the three Ranji Trophy finals they have been a part of, twice by Mumbai (2012-13 and 2015-16) and now by Vidharbha
 - ✓ Aditya Sarvate of Vidharbha was adjudged the Man of the Match
 - ✓ Milind Kumar (Sikkim) scored the most runs (1331 runs) in the series, while Ashutosh Aman (Bihar) took the most wickets (68 wickets)
 - ✓ Mumbai, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Delhi are the other teams who have managed to win consecutive titles.
- ◆ **S Mirabhai Chanu, World Champion wrestler of India – won the Gold medal at the EGAT cup in Thailand**



- ✓ Chanu won the 48 kg category gold in the event, which is one of the qualifying competition for 2020 Tokyo Olympics
- ✓ She was battling lower back injury for the last 9 months, which had kept her out of action for the most part of 2018

RANKINGS

◆ Child Marriages – Report released by the National Family Health Survey-4 (NFHS-4) conducted in 2015-16

- ✓ West Bengal tops the entire country with the highest incidence of girls, aged between 15 and 19 years, getting married
- ✓ All other states showed a steady decline in the rate of child marriages, except a marginal increase in 2 states – Himachal Pradesh and Manipur
- ✓ The national average now stands at 11.9%, with an incidence of 14.1% in rural areas and 6.9% in urban areas
- ✓ In the district level, Murshidabad in West Bengal showed the highest percentage of 39.9% child marriages followed by Gandhinagar in Gujarat (with 39.3%) and Bhilwara in Rajasthan (with 36.4%)
- ✓ Bihar has the maximum districts (20) with high prevalence followed by Bengal (14) and Jharkhand (11)
- ✓ When the NFHS-3 was conducted in 2005-06, Bihar topped the entire country at 47.8% with Jharkhand at second position with 44.7% and Rajasthan at third position with 40.4% followed by West Bengal at fourth with 34%

APP
STUDY CENTRE

