

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JAN 17, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - announced the winners of the Thiruvalluvar Day awards and Chithirai Tamil New Year awards for the years 2019 and 2020**
- ✓ The awards for individual winners carry a prize money of ₹1 lakh, while the award for associations will be ₹5 lakh.
- ✓ The awardees named include former Union minister Gingee N Ramachandran, N Nithyanadabharathi, professors K Arjunan, K Samarasam, S Sundarajan and writer Liyaquat Ali Khan.
- ✓ Chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami will present the awards at a function in Chennai on January 20.
- ✓ These annual awards have been named after Ambedkar, former chief ministers C N Annadurai, K Kamaraj, as well as Bharathiyar and Bharathidhasan, among several other prominent personalities.
- ✓ During the event, Tamil scholars will also be awarded, along with prominent foreign litterateurs from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, France and the US.

NATIONAL

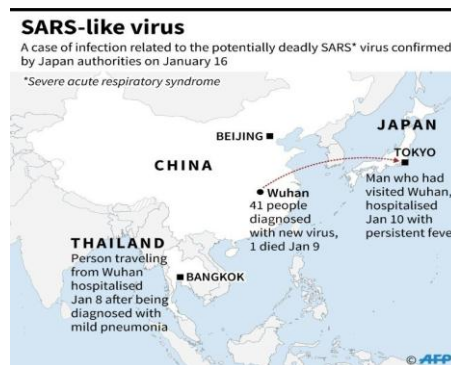
- **A quadripartite agreement - was signed between the Centre, the State governments of Tripura and Mizoram, and Bru-Reang representatives on January 16**
- ✓ It facilitates permanent settlement of Bru refugees in Tripura
- ✓ The Government has also agreed to provide a ₹600 crore rehabilitation package for the refugees.
- ✓ The agreement brings an end to the 23-year-old Bru-Reang refugee crisis
- ✓ It will benefit around 34,000 Bru refugees living in 6 camps in Tripura
- ✓ Reangs or Brus are the second largest ethnic group in Mizoram



- ✓ They were forced to leave Mizoram following violent clashes with the Mizo groups in Mamith subdivision, a Reang-dominated area, in 1997.
- ✓ These refugees were living in temporary shelters at Kanchanpur, in North Tripura.
- ✓ Union Home minister Amit Shah presided over signing of the “historic” pact.
- ✓ Others present during the signing of the agreement included Tripura CM Biplab Kumar Deb, Mizoram CM Zoramthanga, North-East Democratic Alliance chairman Himanta Biswa Sarma, Tripura royal scion Pradyot Kishore Deb Barman and Bru representatives.
- ✓ As per the new agreement, each Bru family living in Tripura would be given a 40x30 sqft residential plot
- ✓ Apart from the land, they will be provided a fixed deposit of ₹4 lakh, ₹5,000 cash aid per month for two years, free ration for two years and ₹1.5 lakh aid to build a house.
- ✓ The Tripura government would provide the land under this agreement.
- ✓ The funds to buy land would be jointly shared by the Centre and the State government.
- ✓ Earlier, in 2018, an agreement was signed and a package was sanctioned, but only 328 families moved back to Mizoram.
- ✓ Bru tribes are ethnic tribes living in India, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand.
- ✓ They speak Khatuic language and follow Animism religion or Buddhism

INTERNATIONAL

- **Japan - reported its first case of a new corona virus on January 16**
- ✓ The reported virus is said to be from the same family as the deadly SARS pathogen
- ✓ The virus has sickened 41 people in China, indicating the spread of the virus outside Chinese borders
- ✓ The infected person, a resident of Kanagawa, had moved to Japan on January 6 after travelling to the Chinese city of Wuhan, the epicenter of the outbreak.
- ✓ As per WHO, it was likely that the virus had spread from a seafood market in Wuhan



- ✓ It was the second confirmed case of the new corona virus outside China after a Chinese woman tested positive for the virus in Thailand

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- The Ministry of External Affairs – announced that Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will be invited to participate in the Heads of Government Council meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) that will be hosted in India this year



Regional power play

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) annual Heads of Government Council meeting will be hosted by India later this year. Here is a brief look at the organisation

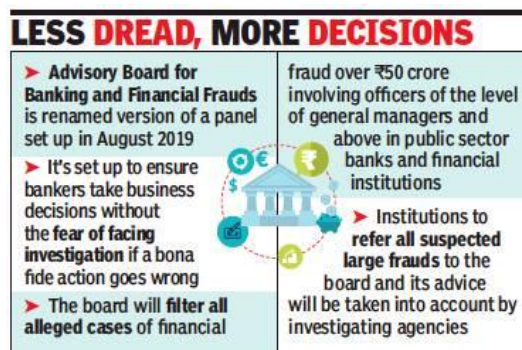
- **Current SCO members:** India, China, Pakistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan
- **Observer states:** Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia
- **SCO dialogue partners:** Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Sri Lanka
- **SCO permanent bodies:** Secretariat - Beijing; and Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) - Tashkent
- **Founded on June 15, 2001**
- **8-9 June 2017:** India and Pakistan became full SCO members at the Astana summit

Imran Khan has not been invited to India after he assumed office as Pakistan PM in 2018

- ✓ Though his predecessor Nawaz Sharif had visited India in May 2014 for the “mini-SAARC summit”, the incumbent PM Imran Khan has not been invited to India till now.
- ✓ After becoming full-time member of the SCO in 2017, both India and Pakistan have participated in multiple meetings of SCO and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) meetings.
- ✓ The Heads of Government Council meeting will be attended by the Prime Minister-level leaders of the member states
- ✓ The meeting also decides on SCO’s annual budget.
- ✓ The relations between India and Pakistan were on a low key after India scrapped the special status of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019

COMMITTEES

- The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) - has constituted an advisory board that will serve as the first level of scrutiny in cases of banking and financial frauds above ₹50 crore in state-run banks and financial institutions



LESS DREAD, MORE DECISIONS

- **Advisory Board for Banking and Financial Frauds** is renamed version of a panel set up in August 2019
- It's set up to ensure bankers take business decisions without the fear of facing investigation if a bona fide action goes wrong
- The board will filter all alleged cases of financial fraud over ₹50 crore involving officers of the level of general managers and above in public sector banks and financial institutions
- Institutions to refer all suspected large frauds to the board and its advice will be taken into account by investigating agencies

- ✓ The five-member panel will be headed by T M Bhasin, Ex-Chairman & Managing Director of Indian Bank and a former vigilance commissioner
- ✓ The panel will assess cases of financial fraud involving General Managers in state-run banks and financial institutions before any further action is taken by the organizations
- ✓ It will also provide advice on all cases of financial fraud under the relevant laws.
- ✓ The advisory board was constituted by CVC after consultations with the RBI based on the recommendations of the expert committee on NPAs and frauds
- ✓ The new panel is a follow-up of a committee under Bhasin, which was set up last August.

DEFENCE

- **Indian and Japanese coast guard – have conducted a joint exercise 'Sahyog-Kaijin' on January 16 off Chennai port**
- ✓ Japanese CG ship 'Echigo' arrived to participate in the exercise
- ✓ Four Indian CG ships, three aircraft and a vessel from National Institute of Ocean Technology have also took part in the naval drill.
- ✓ Earlier, India and Japan had signed a cooperation agreement in 2006 to conduct such joint exercises and training exchanges.



- ✓ The exercise is aimed at improving interoperability in communication and sharing of best practices between the two fleets.
- ✓ India and Japan have conducted the “Shinyuu Maitri”, a joint Air Force exercise that was held in October 2019 for the first time.
- ✓ Both the countries also hold a maritime exercise called “JIMEX”, which was first conducted in 2013.
- ✓ “Dharma Guardian” is the military exercise that is conducted between the armies of both the countries.

SPORTS

- **Norway’s Chess genius, Magnus Carlsen - sets a world record of 111 unbeaten classical games during the fourth round of Tata Steel Masters chess tournament at Wijk Aan Zee, Netherlands on January 14**



- ✓ Carlsen broke the record of 110 games set by Russia’s Sergei Tiviakov in 2005.
- ✓ He had last lost a game in July 2018 to Azerbaijan’s Shakhriyar Mamedyarov
- ✓ The 29 year old World Champion, Carlsen’s record was achieved against a higher calibre of opponent than Tiviakov

- ✓ The average Fide rating of greater than 2700 was faced by Carlsen when compared with an average rating of 2476 faced by Sergei Tiviakov.
- **Abhijeet Gupta – clinched a clinical win over Aleksey Aleksandrov to regain the title in the Delhi International Open Grandmasters chess tournament in New Delhi**



- ✓ Winner in 2008 and 2014, Abhijeet scored 8.5 points from 10 rounds to bag the richest prize-money event in the country.
- **Indian skipper Virat Kohli - was named captain of both ICC Test and ODI teams of 2019 and also awarded ICC 2019 'Spirit of Cricket' award**
- ✓ Rohit Sharma was named as the winner of ICC ODI Cricketer of the year 2019 award
- ✓ Deepak Chahar's spell of 6/7 in India vs Bangladesh T20 match in November 2019 clinched him the ICC award for the T20I Performance of 2019

ICC ANNOUNCED ITS AWARDS OF THE YEAR FOR MEN CRICKET



- ✓ England's all-rounder Ben Stokes was named as the winner of the biggest ICC award- Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for being the ICC Cricketer of the Year 2019
- ✓ Australia's Pat Cummins bagged the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year 2019 for taking 59 Test wickets in 2019
- ✓ Australia's Marnus Labuschagne won the ICC Men's Emerging Cricketer award
- ✓ Richard Illingworth won ICC 2019 Umpire of the Year award.

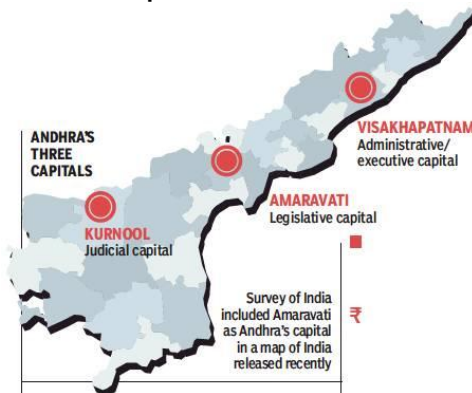
- **RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group and Mohun Bagan Football Club (India) Private Limited - have merged to establish a new football club.**



- ✓ The new club will come into existence from June 1 and is set to be known as ATK Mohun Bagan
- ✓ RPSG Group will be the majority shareholder with 80% shares while Mohun Bagan Football Club (India) Private Limited will own 20%.
- ✓ The new team will feature in the ISL from the next season (2020-21) as well as other important AIFF competitions
- ✓ RPSG Group owns and runs Indian Super League side, ATK FC
- ✓ Mohun Bagan Football Club (India) Private Limited manages the affairs of the Mohun Bagan football team

THE 3 CAPITAL TALE OF ANDHRA PRADESH – A REPORT

- **The State Government of Andhra Pradesh - has decided to create three capital cities with “decentralised” development in its three regions — north coast, south coast and Rayalseema**
- ✓ The decision has pushed the state into fresh confrontation with farmers
- ✓ The farmers who gave land for the construction of Amaravati have threatened agitation at the scrapping of Amaravati as the dream capital of the State.
- ✓ The move will be finalised in a special session of the assembly on January 20.



➤ **What is the three-capital plan?**

- ✓ This is the brainchild of Andhra chief minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy.
- ✓ The plan aims to create “equitable” development of 3 regions - north coastal Andhra, south coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema by splitting the ‘state capital’ into three — as an administrative or executive capital, a judicial capital and a legislative capital.
- ✓ This means, basically, shifting the state administration out of the present capital, Amaravati.
- ✓ As per the plan, most of the government offices, including chief minister’s office, Raj Bhavan and the secretariat will be shifted to Visakhapatnam.
- ✓ The High court will also be moved to Kurnool.
- ✓ Amaravati will serve as a mere ‘legislative’ capital, being the seat of state assembly meeting whenever the assembly is in session.

➤ **What makes this a political wrangle?**

- ✓ The move is seen by the Opposition as the one which may affect investments and development of the bifurcated state.
- ✓ The government may justify the shifting of the capital on grounds of equitable development, but, as per the opposition, it is a political conspiracy to “kill” Amaravati.
- ✓ According to the main opposition party TDP, the ruling party YSRCP does not want to credit former Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu, the chief architect behind Amaravati.
- ✓ Farmers view the move as a breach of trust by the state, as they argue that they had given land for the capital in the hope it would thrive for centuries.
- ✓ As per their stand, the change of government need not necessarily lead to change in capital.

➤ **What does a shift of state capital mean?**

- ✓ It leaves a massive financial burden on the state exchequer, which is already empty.
- ✓ The two proposed capital cities, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool, are at two ends of the state, at about 700 km apart.
- ✓ Moreover, thousands of state employees need to be relocated.
- ✓ However, the state has proposed financial sops, including land at a highly subsidised rate and loan of Rs 25 lakh each for the state employees.
- ✓ Also, it will be a challenge for officials to travel between Visakhapatnam and Kurnool and from Visakhapatnam to Amaravati when the assembly session is in progress, straining both human and financial resources.
- ✓ The government has to identify buildings on rent in Visakhapatnam till it constructs its offices for the secretariat, chief minister, governor and heads of departments.

✓ This, in effect, means money spent on buildings in Amaravati will be a ‘colossal’ waste.

➤ **Wasn’t Amaravati the dream capital?**

- ✓ A permanent capital city has eluded the state for centuries.
- ✓ In modern times, each time the state gets reorganised, it had lost its capital city.
- ✓ Andhra lost Madras to Tamil Nadu when the Andhra state was carved out in 1953.
- ✓ Then, they lost Kurnool in 1956 after Andhra was merged with Hyderabad state to form Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ Later, recently in 2004, Andhra once again lost its capital city — Hyderabad — when Andhra Pradesh was divided to create a new state, Telangana.
- ✓ Post-bifurcation, then Andhra CM N Chandrababu Naidu decided on a ‘greenfield’ capital city adjacent to Vijayawada.
- ✓ It was named Amaravati after an ancient Buddhist village just 30 km away.
- ✓ Singapore government prepared its masterplan, reflecting the history, culture and traditions of the Andhra people.
- ✓ About 33,000 acres of land was secured from farmers in probably the country’s biggest land-pooling exercise.
- ✓ Amaravati was supposed to be the ‘Clean and Green’ city with only battery-vehicles.

➤ **Was Vaastu and/or caste a factor behind the plan?**

- ✓ The ruling party, YSRCP and the main opposition, TDP have accused each other of “community” (caste) consideration on the choice of state capital.
- ✓ The leaders of the parties, Naidu and Jagan, belong to different social groups that have dominated Andhra politics since 1953.
- ✓ Amaravati is dominated by Naidu’s community.
- ✓ Jagan’s community has been long opposed to Amaravati since it is in the Vijayawada-Guntur region.
- ✓ The differences started way back in 1953 during the search for a new capital for Andhra state after separation from Madras Presidency.
- ✓ The initial choice for the capital was between Vijayawada and Kurnool, dominated by two social groups.
- ✓ Four Tamil legislators, who did not have voting right, had voted in favour of Kurnool.
- ✓ Vastu has also played a key role.
- ✓ Former CM, Chandrababu Naidu chose Amaravati as the Krishna river is present on its north.

➤ **Can the three-capital plan work?**

- ✓ As around 95% Government offices have already been shifted to Vishakhapatnam, it is a matter of time before Amaravati ceases to be the 'legislative capital' of the state
- ✓ The State Government has already formulated a legislation nullifying the AP Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) Act that will shift the "capital" status from Amaravati.
- ✓ The Bill is likely to be passed in the January 20 special session of the assembly.

- **How much has already been spent on Amaravati**
- ✓ A budget of Rs 5,500cr has been spent on the infrastructure of Amaravati, as per Jagan Mohan Reddy.
- ✓ As per Chandrababu Naidu's TDP, a whopping Rs 10,000cr has been spent on the construction of Amaravati
- ✓ At the outset, the project had an estimated cost of Rs 33,000cr with funding expected from various sources.
- ✓ Of late, completion of several buildings has been put on hold
- ✓ After the decision to shift the capital commenced, most of the funding has been withdrawn since then

