

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JAN 23, 2020**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **The Tamil Nadu's tableau at this year's Republic Day parade - will showcase a statue of Iyyanar, the guardian deity of villages**
- ✓ It will also highlight and present some of the folk dances of Tamil Nadu during the parade
- ✓ The front of the tableau would have a model of deity Iyyanar riding a horse, surrounded by his attendants.
- ✓ The second portion will have a live performance of Pinnal Kolattam, while the third portion will feature a model of musicians playing kombu
- ✓ The fourth portion will display a model of Thappattam and the fifth portion will feature a model of Oyilattam
  
- **The Southern Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) - has directed the setting up of a joint committee to monitor the mixing of sewage in Tamirabarani river**



- ✓ It will comprise of the Tirunelveli collector, senior officer of the Central Pollution Control Board, executive engineer of the public works department, TNPCB senior scientist and Tirunelveli Corporation commissioner
- ✓ The Bench directed the Committee to find out if sewage still continued to enter the river and if so what action had been taken by the local authorities to curtail it.
- ✓ The committee has been advised to submit an action taken report to prevent the same within two months' time.
- ✓ The rampant discharge of untreated sewage into the Tamirabarani in Tirunelveli district was the main source of pollution of the river.

- ✓ A bench comprising of Justice K Ramakrishnan and expert member Saibal Dasgupta directed the formation of the committee, as directed by the principal bench of the NGT, New Delhi
- ✓ TNPCB will be the nodal agency for coordination and provide logistics to undertake the study.
- **Tamil Nadu – to purchase equipment at a cost of ₹110.13 crore to implement the Safe City Project under the Nirbhaya Fund**
  - ✓ The surveillance cameras, women police patrol, cyber-crime lab and other infrastructure will be established to make Chennai safer for women under the project.
  - ✓ The first phase of allocation is part of the ₹425.06-crore fund under the Centre-sponsored Nirbhaya Fund scheme.
  - ✓ The Chennai police have already purchased 45 Toyota Innova (Crysta) 7-seater vehicles for patrolling the crowded locations in the city.
  - ✓ The Commissioner of Police has formed a committee to purchase the equipment in a fair and transparent manner
  - ✓ The project is likely to be completed in six months.
- **The Water Resources Department - has finalised a tie-up with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Development Bank (AIIB) for the ₹3,000-crore flood mitigation flagship project.**

## Getting Chennai rain-ready

The ₹3,000-crore project aims to take up works to mitigate flood risks in locations prone to inundation

- WRD has already completed ₹100 crore-worth projects in the first phase. This included deepening of lakes such as Adanur and Nanman-galam and formation of a channel between Narayanapuram lake and Pallikaranai swamp

- Works are under way as part of the second phase; some of the projects include a riverine reservoir across Somangalam and improving the Keelkattalai surplus course

- Works worth ₹285 crore to be implemented in the third phase
- The entire project is expected to be completed in three years



- ✓ The Department has already commenced works as part of the comprehensive flood mitigation projects
- ✓ They are undertaken in Greater Chennai and its peri-urban areas in Kancheepuram and Tiruvallur districts and vulnerable pockets in northern districts in phases.
- ✓ Of the total project cost, nearly ₹900 crore would be contributed by the State.
- ✓ About 70% of the project cost would be funded by AIIDB.
- ✓ The various proposals planned under the project include creating reservoirs, constructing canals to bridge missing links between lakes and improvement of surplus channels.

➤ **Tirumurai, a Tamil compendium of hymns in praise of Lord Shiva - will be recited on the day of consecration (kumbabishekam) of the Brihadeeswarar temple in Thanjavur on February 5.**

- ✓ This is apart from the routine Sanskrit invocations to be recited as per the temple's custom and usage.
- ✓ The recital will be done both at the yagasalai and during the mahabishekam on the day of consecration, similar to the consecration in June 1997
- ✓ The government had already set up a 21-member committee of senior officials to monitor arrangements for the consecration and ensure that the event was conducted "peacefully and successfully".
- ✓ It will be headed by K.Shanmugam, Chief Secretary of the Government.
- ✓ The panel includes 12 secretaries of various departments such as Finance, Home, Revenue, Municipal Administration and Water Supply apart from the Director-General of Police, the Director of Fire and Rescue Services, the General Manager of the Southern Railway and the Superintending Archaeologist of the Archaeological Survey of India.
- ✓ In the last 40 years, this will be the third time that the temple is going to have the consecration.
- ✓ On April 3, 1980, the event took place after 177 years.
- ✓ In 1997, it was originally planned for June 8, but was held the next day as a fire broke out at the yagasalai on the evening of June 7

## STATES

➤ **The Madhya Pradesh government - has made the recitation of the preamble to the Constitution compulsory in all government schools every Saturday.**

- ✓ The move has been initiated to create an awareness among students about the principles and spirit of the Constitution
- ✓ The MP school education department passed the order on January 22
- ✓ Earlier on January 21, the Maharashtra government made it mandatory in government schools in the state to read out the preamble in morning assemblies from January 26.

- **The Maharashtra cabinet - has approved the 'Mumbai 24 hours' policy, a pet project of Tourism Minister Aaditya Thackeray since 2013**
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- ✓ The new policy allows food courts, shops and cafes in malls, multiplexes and shops in non-residential areas and inside gated mill compounds in Mumbai to remain open 24x7 from January 27
- ✓ Only eateries, shops and cafes can remain open, as per the policy, which is not 'mandatory' for all the establishments
- ✓ However, it had mandated the bars serving liquor to be closed at 1.30am, without making any relaxation in excise rules
- ✓ The establishments can either have private security or can pay Mumbai police for it
- ✓ They will have to follow labour laws by bringing in workers in three shifts.
- ✓ Two areas, Nariman Point and Bandra-Kurla Complex, have been shortlisted for food trucks to be allowed to run through the night
- ✓ The state is expending a growth similar to London, whose nightlife economy is worth £5 billion

## NATIONAL

- **Interpol - has issued a blue corner notice seeking information about controversial self-styled godman, Nithyananda**
- ✓ The controversial seer had fled the country after allegations of wrongful confinement of children emerged from the relatives of inmates in his Ashram.
- ✓ Earlier, the Gujarat Police had requested the CBI, the nodal body for Interpol matters in India, seeking a blue corner notice against Nithyananda
- ✓ The police are working on the proposal to get Interpol issue a red corner notice, a global arrest warrant, against Nithyananda.
- ✓ Earlier, the Gujarat Police had registered an FIR against Nithyananda after two girls went missing from his ashram in Ahmedabad.
- ✓ He was charged with kidnapping and wrongful confinement of children to make them collect donations from his followers
- ✓ A blue corner notice is issued by the international police cooperation body (Interpol) to collect additional information from its member countries about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a crime.
- **The Union Cabinet - approved ₹4,371.90 crore for setting up permanent campuses for 6 National Institutes of Technology (NITs) on January 22**
- ✓ The Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved funds for the National Institutes of Technologies in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Puducherry and Delhi
- ✓ These NITs have been functioning from temporary structures, ever since they were set up in 2009

## **SUPREME COURT VERDICT**

- **The Supreme Court - refused to stay the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) without hearing the views of Government**
- ✓ It had set aside repeated pleas for deferment of processes relating to the National Population Register (NPR) as a corollary of CAA
- ✓ On January 22, a bench of CJI S A Bobde and Justices S Abdul Nazeer and Sanjiv Khanna announced that the petitions would be heard by a five-judge Constitution bench
- ✓ It had also granted the Centre four weeks to file a comprehensive response regarding the contentious Act
- ✓ The bench was dealing with a record 144 petitions, the largest number concerning a law, represented by more than 300 advocates in the Court
- ✓ The National Population Register (NPR) exercise is scheduled to commence in April.
- ✓ The CAA law allows Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian minority communities who came to India after facing religious persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan on or before December 31, 2014 to get Indian citizenship.
- ✓ The Kerala Government has also filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the law invoking Article 131.

## **INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES**

- **Ghana - has sought to replicate the Indian Government's 'Ujjwala' scheme to provide access to clean cooking fuel (LPG) for poor households at affordable rates**
- ✓ It had sought India's assistance for building systems and infrastructure to promote LPG as household, industrial and commercial fuel in that country.
- ✓ Indian Oil and National Petroleum Authority of Ghana exchanged an MoU in the presence of oil minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Ghana high commissioner Michael Aaron in New Delhi on January 22
- ✓ The MoU allows India's largest state-run oil refiner and fuel retailer, Indian Oil, to help the African country implement its National LPG Promotion Policy.
- ✓ It also provides Indian Oil the option to open a business in Ghana.
- ✓ Ghana has around 23% of LPG coverage in the country
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana is an ambitious social welfare scheme of Narendra Modi Government launched on 1st May 2016 from Ballia in Uttar Pradesh.

## **COMMITTEES**

- **The Union Cabinet - approved a six-month extension in the tenure of the commission to examine sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBC) on January 22.**

- ✓ The commission is headed by the G. Rohini, former Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court.



- ✓ The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a proposal to extend the commission's term till July 31, 2020
- ✓ It has also approved an addition to the commission's terms of reference.
- ✓ The commission will now also "study the various entries in the Central list of OBCs and recommend correction of any repetitions, ambiguities, inconsistencies and errors of spelling or transcription"
- ✓ The Commission was appointed in 2017 with an initial time frame of 12 weeks.
- ✓ It has been appointed to look into the existing list of OBCs and categorise the castes that have not benefited from the existing reservation in government jobs and education.
- ✓ It is also expected to give its recommendations regarding the benefits of various schemes enjoyed by these marginalised communities

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **Vyom Mitra, the prototype with feminine features – has been unveiled by Isro for the first unmanned human spaceflight programme, Gaganyaan, slated for 2022**



- ✓ It will be able to monitor crew module parameters, alert Isro and perform life-support operations.
- ✓ It will also simulate human functions required for space, much earlier to the journey of real astronauts before August 2022
- ✓ The aim of sending a humanoid was to make sure that the mission demonstrates India's ability to send humans and bring them back safely.
- ✓ Vyom Mitra has anthropomorphic (having human characteristics) proportions with two arms and a torso without any legs
- ✓ It can perform all crew functions, which include switch panel operations, environmental control and life support system (ECLSS) functions etc
- ✓ Vyom Mitra is the result of a year-long hard work of the ISRO Inertial Systems Unit, Thiruvananthapuram
- ✓ Two trial flights without crew will take place with a humanoid — the first around December 2020 and the second around July 2021

## ECONOMY

- **The Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) – has been named as the fastest growing brand of the decade by brand valuation firm Brand Finance in its 2020 Global 500 report.**
- ✓ Its brand value has increased nearly sixfold since 2010 to \$13.5 billion in 2019.
- ✓ The company is also ranked among the top three brands in IT services globally
- ✓ TCS's year-on-year brand value grew from \$12.8 billion to \$13.5 billion, making it the fastest-growing among the top three IT services brands for the consecutive second year
- ✓ The Brand Finance's Brand Guardianship Index has also named TCS CEO, Rajesh Gopinathan among the top 100 global CEOs worldwide.
- ✓ The index rates CEOs on how well they were ranked as brand ambassadors, based on marketing investments, growth in stakeholder equity and business performance.
- ✓ However, Gopinathan's 2020 ranking has dropped to 69, from 53 in 2019.

## AWARDS

- **President Ram Nath Kovind- awarded the Bal Shakti Puraskar to 49 children in the age group of 5-18 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on January 22.**



- ✓ Speech and Hearing impaired badminton champions from Meerut, Aarushi Sharma and Vinayak Bahadur, students of Dewan Public School and Shanti Niketan Vidyapeeth respectively were among the winners
- ✓ Aarushi has won the bronze medal in the 5th Asian Pacific Deaf Badminton Championship
- ✓ A Class IX student of Dewan Public School, Aarushi was born with hearing impairment.
- ✓ At the national level, Vinayak Bahadur has bagged four gold medals, three silver medals and one bronze medal
- ✓ Bengaluru's Yash Aradhya became the first Indian motorsports star to win the prestigious Award.
- ✓ The 17-year-old has 13 Championship wins, including over 65 podium finishes, to his credit.

- ✓ Ishaan Sharma, who saved a Russian tourist from two robbers, Omkar Singh, who holds the world record for the youngest theoretical author, and Gauri Mishra, youngest pianist in India, were among the winners of the prestigious Award
- ✓ The other winners included Darsh Malani, 12, who has performed over 50 magic shows worldwide.
- ✓ Manoj Kumar Lohar, 11, won the award for “tabla vadan.”
- ✓ Korok Biswas, a dancer with Down syndrome and 50% intellectual disability, won the award in the art and culture category.
- ✓ Lalkansung, 10, who saved three girls from drowning in a pond in Manipur, and Pema, who saved two girls when the boundary wall of her school collapsed in heavy rain, were among those awarded in the bravery category.
- ✓ The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar award is India’s highest civilian honour conferred to exceptional students from various fields under the age of 18
- ✓ It is awarded to children in the fields of innovation, social service, scholastic, sports, art and culture and bravery.
- ✓ The award consists of cash prize of Rs 1 lakh, a medal, a certificate, a citation and a tablet.

## SPORTS

- **Maharashtra - retained Khelo India Youth Games champions trophy with a huge collection of 256 medals, including 78 gold**

<b>KHELO INDIA TABLE</b>				
State	G	S	B	Total
M'shtra	78	77	101	256
Haryana	68	60	72	200
Delhi	39	36	47	122
K'taka	32	26	22	80
UP	29	28	30	87
TN	22	32	22	76
Assam	20	22	34	76
WB	19	14	20	53
Gujarat	16	16	20	52
Punjab	16	15	28	59

- ✓ After the completion of 13 days of sporting extravaganza, Maharashtra won its second Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) trophy in a row by grabbing 78 gold, 77 silver and 101 bronze medals.
- ✓ It is followed by Haryana and Delhi
- ✓ Hosts Assam finished at 7<sup>th</sup> spot, behind Karnataka, UP and Tamil Nadu.



- **Apurvi Chandela and Divyansh Singh Panwar – won two gold medals each in the women’s and men’s air rifle events in the Meyton Cup International shooting championship**



- ✓ World Championship silver medallist, Anjum Moudgil bagged the bronze in the event.
- ✓ Deepak Kumar, who also has won the Olympic quota like the other three Indian shooters, finished with two bronze medals.
- ✓ In men’s air pistol, Sagar won a gold in the competition.

- **Australia - is set to host the 11th edition of the Indoor Cricket World Cup from October 10 to 17 this year.**

- ✓ The tournament will be held at the state-of-the-art indoor cricket venues in Melbourne — Casey Stadium and CitiPower Centre
- ✓ Australia is the reigning men’s and women’s champion
- ✓ The last edition of the event was held in Dubai in 2017
- ✓ Australia has the distinction of never losing a World Cup in either division in the 25-year history of the tournament.
- ✓ Cricketers from up to 10 countries will compete in the tournament in four divisions - under-21 men and women and open men and women.

- **The Ministry of Sports – has de-recognised the Rowing Federation of India (RFI) on January 22**

- ✓ The move is attributed to the violation of the Sports Code of 2011 during its elections held in December.

## **RANKINGS**

- **India - has slipped 10 places to stay at 51<sup>st</sup> position among 167 countries on the Democracy Index, primarily due to an “erosion of civil liberties in the country”.**

- ✓ India’s score dropped from 7.23 (out of 10) in 2018 to 6.9 in 2019, the lowest since the index began in 2006.
- ✓ India’s highest score was 7.91, which was achieved in 2014.
- ✓ Norway is on the top of the EIU’s democracy index, while North Korea is at the bottom with the 167th position.

## India falls 10 places to 51st position

India slipped 10 places to 51st position in the 2019 Democracy Index's global ranking, according to The Economist Intelligence Unit, which cited "erosion of civil liberties" in the country as the primary cause for the downtrend. India's overall score fell from 7.23 in 2018 to 6.90.

### Top 5

Rank	Country	Score
1	Norway	9.8
2	Iceland	9.58
3	Sweden	9.39
4	New Zealand	9.26
5	Finland	9.25

### Bottom 5

163	Chad	1.61
164	Syria	1.43
165	Central African Republic	1.32
166	Dem Republic of Congo	1.13
167	North Korea	1.08

### Saarc nations

Rank	Country	Score
51	India	6.90
69	Sri Lanka	6.27
80	Bangladesh	5.88
91	Bhutan	5.30
92	Nepal	5.28
108	Pakistan	4.25
141	Afghanistan	2.85

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit Report



- ✓ Norway was followed by Iceland and Sweden at second and third positions respectively.
- ✓ Pakistan is at the 108th position on the list and China fell to the 153rd position
- ✓ As per the report, India's "democratic regression" was attributed to the scrapping of J&K's special status, suspension of internet in the newly formed UT and protests over the CAA and the National Register of Citizens.
- ✓ However, India remains well above the 2019 global average of 5.44, the worst ever, down from 5.48 in 2018
- ✓ In the Asia and Australasia region, India ranks eighth, behind Taiwan and Timor-Leste.
- ✓ India was graded in electoral process and pluralism (8.67), government functioning (6.79), political participation (6.67), political culture (5.63) and civil liberties (6.76).
- ✓ The index is a global ranking of the "most and least" democratic countries prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit, the research and analysis division of The Economist Group, which is the sister company to The Economist newspaper

