

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 1, 2019

TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu Government's order banning Manufacturing, trade and use of 14 kinds of plastic products – kicks off on January 1 in the state**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Garbage bags ■ Compostable bags ■ Plastic water bottles and PET bottles ■ Plastic pots, buckets, mugs ■ Packaging for milk, oil, grocery items ■ Plastic office folders ■ Plastic wrappers for school notebooks and textbooks 	<p>ITEMS THAT ARE BANNED</p> <p>① Plastic sheets used for food wrapping/ dining table ② Thermocol plates, plastic coated plates ③ Plastic coated cups, plastic tumblers, thermocol cups ④ Plastic bags of all thicknesses ⑤ Water packets ⑥ Plastic straw ⑦ Plastic flags</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plastic carry bags irrespective of thickness ■ Non-woven polypropylene carry bags ■ Plastic cups, plates, cutlery ■ Plastic water pouches ■ Thermocol cups, plates ■ Plastic straws ■ Plastic sheets used in wedding halls 	
		<p>ALTERNATIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plantain, areca nut plates ■ Aluminium foil ■ Lotus leaves ■ Glass/ metal tumblers ■ Paper straw ■ Cloth, jute, paper bags ■ Ceramic ware ■ Edible cutleries, earthen pots

- ✓ The state will decide on the penalty for the users who violate the ban after studying the models of other states, including Karnataka
- ✓ In Karnataka, a fine of Rs 2 lakh is imposed for the first time violators followed by Rs 5 lakh for subsequent offences
- ✓ Similarly, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh also have provisions for violations
- ✓ The banned 14 items constitute only 5% of the total plastic manufactured in the state
- ✓ The Union environment ministry had earlier notified the Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2018 – which mandates the phasing out of manufacture and use of non-recyclable multi-layered plastic within 2 years

◆ **Central Government – releases a fund of Rs 1,146 crore for the Gaja relief works from the National Disaster Response fund**

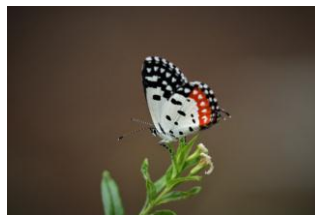


- ✓ The release was approved by a panel headed by Rajnath singh, union home minister
- ✓ Earlier, the centre had released Rs 353.70 crore on December 3 as an interim relief for the 12 districts affected by the cyclone that claimed 46 lives
- ✓ Tamil Nadu government had sought Rs 14,910 crore from the centre towards permanent restoration and migration along with Rs 1,432 crore for temporary restoration
- ✓ Of the requested amount, Rs13,000 crore is required for the restoration of power infrastructure and housing alone in the affected districts

◆ **Tamil Nadu Government – sanctions Rs 86 crores – to increase water supply to Chennai under the special initiative programme**

- ✓ The Government has given its nod for the Chennai Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (CMWSSB) to replicate the IIT-Madras successful model of 'recycling and reusing' sewage water to rejuvenate the water bodies
- ✓ At present, CMWSSB supplies 650 MLD of water as against the normal requirement of 850 MLD of day

◆ **Tamil Nadu – carries out a 'Butterfly' census for the first time in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve**



- ✓ It was carried out by the Erode district forest department along with Tamil Nadu Butterflies Society (TNBS)
- ✓ The team had spotted 150 varieties of butterflies along with 241 varieties of birds in the forest during the census

◆ **M Krishnan, former Head of the department of environmental biotechnology of Bharathidasan University – appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of Madurai Kamaraj University**



- ✓ He will hold the position for a period of 3 years
- ✓ He had earlier served as a professor of the Central University in Ajmer, Rajasthan
- ✓ Krishnan was a fellow of Royal Entomological Society, London, Society for Science and Environment, India, a Commonwealth Fellow, UK and of Japan Prize Foundation
- ✓ He has a teaching experience of 28 years and is a visiting professor of various universities such as the Okayama University of science, Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of biomedicine, Helsinki and University of Exeter, University of Edinburgh, Scotland
- ✓ He has presented 128 research papers in international conferences, published 60 research articles in UGC listed journals and authored 2 books in the field of molecular biology

STATES

◆ **Rajasthan – to install free sanitary napkin vending machines in all its 189 Government colleges from the next academic year starting July 2019**

- ✓ If it goes as per the plan, the state will become the first in the country to provide free sanitary napkins to college students
- ✓ A budget allocation of Rs 2.5 crore has been allotted for the purpose by the state's department of higher education

NATIONAL

◆ **The revised GST rates – comes into effect from January 1, 2019**

- ✓ The new rates follow the recommendations made by the last meeting of the GST council headed by Arun Jaitley, Union Finance Minister
- ✓ It will change the rates for air travel, third-party insurance, leasing and rental of goods and the cost of cinema tickets

◆ **Government – declares Nagaland as 'Disturbed area' for 6 more months till June 2019**

- ✓ The entire state is placed under the control of 'AFSPA', which empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice

◆ **Narendra Modi, Prime Minister – is likely to inaugurate the newly built, National War Memorial in New Delhi by January 25**



- ✓ It is established adjoining the India Gate complex on the majestic Rajpath
- ✓ It was first proposed around 60 years ago to honour over 22,600 soldiers who had laid down their lives in wars and operations since Independence
- ✓ India Gate itself was constructed by the British to honour the 84,000 soldiers killed fighting for the British empire in World War I and Afghan campaign
- ✓ Amar Jawan Jyoti was built later under the arch of India Gate to honour the 3,843 soldiers who died in the Bangladesh liberation war of 1971
- ✓ The National War memorial was built at the cost of Rs 176 crore after approved by the Government in October 2015
- ✓ The memorial has the names of martyrs and busts of 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees inscribed in it
- ✓ It was initially slated for inauguration on August 15, 2018 but could not be completed fully by that time

◆ **Government – ties up with JICA, Japanese funding agency – to manufacture 75% of Metro rail coaches in India - either by setting up its own plant or by collaborating with Indian firms**

- ✓ Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is funding the second phase of Chennai Metro Project
- ✓ It will provide a funding of Rs 20,196 crore for the 52-km of the Phase 2 of the project
- ✓ The move, a first of kind in the country, aims to push the 'Make in India' initiative for future Metro and other rail projects
- ✓ During December 2018, BEML, a public sector undertaking had bagged the contract for Rs 3,015 crore for Mumbai Metro Corridor – under the 'Make in India' initiative

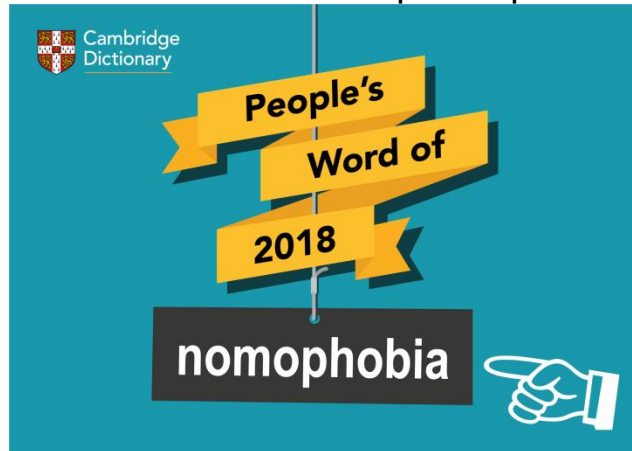
◆ **Ministry of Home Affairs – designates Port Blair Airport – as an authorized immigration check post**

- ✓ The move paves way for the direct entry and exit of foreign tourists to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

INTERNATIONAL

◆ **Nomophobia – has been named as Cambridge Dictionary’s Word of 2018**

- ✓ It means ‘a fear or worry at the idea of being without your mobile phone or unable to use it’
- ✓ It is derived from the root word ‘No mobile phone phobia’ as No-mo-phobia



- ✓ The word, which is not a scientific term and referred as ‘Smartphone separation anxiety’, was selected in a public vote from a list of 4 shortlisted words – ecocide, no-platforming, Gender gap and Nomophobia

◆ **Italian tourist attraction, City of Venice – to impose a new ‘entry fee’ tax from July 2019 – to help cover the costs of keeping the city ‘clean and safe’**



- ✓ The tax ranges from 2.5 to 10 euros (\$2.9 to 11.5) depending on the season
- ✓ The charges would cover all the visitors to the city, irrespective of overnight stay or not
- ✓ As per the city’s officials, the tax would generate revenue of 50 million euros a year

PERSONALITIES

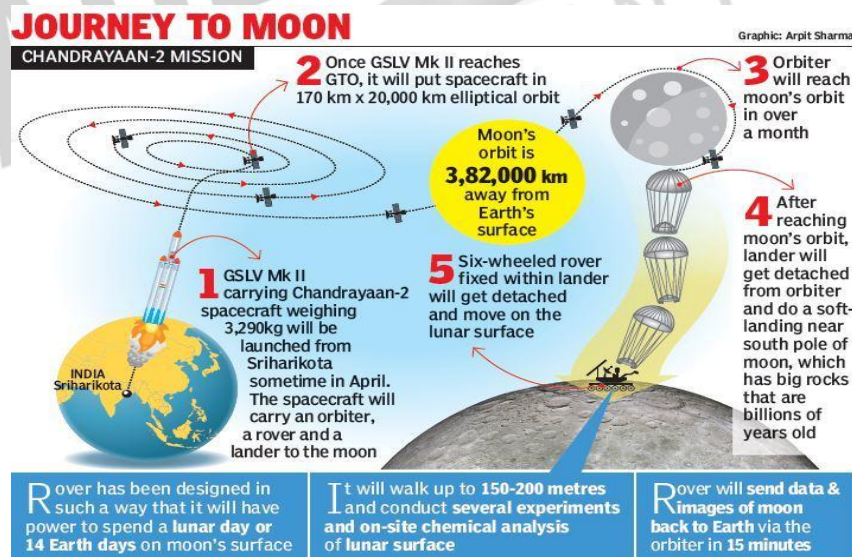
- ◆ **Sudhanshu Mani, General Manager of ICF, Perambur – retires from service on January 1, 2019**



- ✓ Mani, the architect of India's first train-set 'Train-18', developed Train-18 within a cost of Rs 100 crore in a record time of 18 months
- ✓ He was also instrumental in developing the state's first 'Rail Museum' in ICF
- ✓ During his tenure, ICF surged ahead to produce 3200 coaches a year against 1000 coaches produced earlier

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

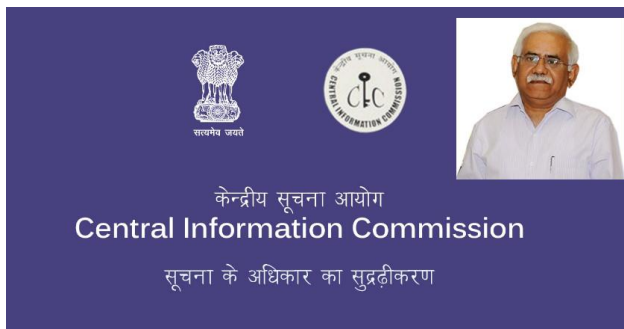
- ◆ **ISRO – confirms that it would not launch Chandrayaan-2 on January 3 as announced earlier**



- ✓ The reschedule is due to the soft-landing of Chinese space probe, Chang'e 4 on December 31 on the far, unexplored side of the moon for the very first time
- ✓ The final launch date is yet to be decided by the space agency
- ✓ Chandrayaan-2 had earlier missed 2 planned launch windows in 2017 and 2018
- ✓ The mission, unlike Chandrayaan-1, involves a soft-landing on the Moon and the unloading of a rover to study and take measurements from lunar surface
- ✓ The orbiter will remain in a trajectory around the Moon

APPOINTMENTS

◆ **Sudhir Bhargava – appointed as the new Chief Information Commissioner**



- ✓ Bhargava, a retired bureaucrat, has been Information commissioner since 2015
- ✓ He was a former secretary to the Ministry of Social justice
- ✓ He will assume office on January 1, becoming the 9th Chief of the CIC
- ✓ He replaces R K Mathur, who retired recently
- ✓ Along with Bhargava, 4 other bureaucrats have also been appointed by the President as the new 'Information Commissioners'
- ✓ The newly appointed ICs are –
 - ✓ Yashwardhan Kumar Sinha, former IFS officer
 - ✓ Vanaja N Sarna, ex-IRS officer
 - ✓ Neeraj kumar gupta, former IAS officer
 - ✓ Suresh Chandra, former law secretary
- ✓ The total strength of CIC is 11, including the Chief
- ✓ With these appointments, its current strength lies at 8 with 3 more vacancies left

◆ **V K Yadav – appointed as the new Chairman of Railway board**



- ✓ He succeeds Ashwani Lohani, who retired recently
- ✓ Yadav was the current GM of the South Central Railway
- ✓ He had started his career as an assistant electrical engineer in February 1982
- ✓ He held several positions in Railways, including additional divisional railway manager (operation) of Delhi division, divisional railway manager of Lucknow and chief electrical engineer of planning/traction distribution in Northern Railway

SPORTS

◆ **Smriti Mandhana, India's T20I vice-captain – was voted as the ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year 2018**



- ✓ She was also named ODI Cricketer of the Year for accumulating 669 runs off 12 one day internationals
- ✓ She also scored 622 runs in 25 T20 matches this year
- ✓ Mandhana, 22, is only 2nd Indian woman to win an International Cricket Council award after fast bowler, Jhulan Goswami, who was named the Women's player of the year in 2007
- ✓ Australia's wicketkeeper-batter 'Alyssa Healy' was voted T20 player of the year
- ✓ India's Harmanpreet Kaur – was named the captain of the ICC Women's T20I Team of the year, which featured 2 of her compatriots Smriti Mandhana and Poonam Yadav
- ✓ Smriti Mandhana and Poonam Yadav also featured in the ICC Women's ODI Team of the year

◆ **Magnus Carlsen, Chess legend from Norway – retains his World Blitz chess title**



- ✓ In the blitz version, he was undefeated with 17 points and retained his crown
- ✓ Carlsen, top seed also in the Rapid event, finished with 10.5 points with just 0.5 points behind the Champion Daniil Dubov
- ✓ Last year's Rapid world champion, V Anand finished 23rd in the event

◆ **Mashrafe Mortaza, Bangladesh's ODI Captain – becomes the first active cricketer in the country to win the Elections**



- ✓ Mortaza, an Awami League candidate for Narail-2 constituency, polled 96% votes in his constituency and won
- ✓ The 35-year old pace, known as the 'Narail Express', is the 2nd national cricket team captain after Naimur Rahman Durjoy to become an MP
- ✓ PM Sheikh Hasina's ruling 'Awami League-led alliance' won 288 seats in the 300-member house in the recently concluded General elections in the country

