

CURRENT AFFAIRS



BANK NAUKRI

CAC – 18th September 2017:

1. Sushma Swaraj in New York to Attend UNGA Session

- i. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj arrived in New York to represent India at the annual UN General Assembly, UNGA, session.
- ii. In the first move, Mrs. Swaraj would kick off her official engagement with a trilateral meeting of foreign ministers of India, US, and Japan to give momentum to their cooperation. India is among the 120 countries that have supported the reform efforts of the UN Secretary-General.

Pro Tip:

India's Permanent Representative to the UN is Mr. Syed Akbaruddin.

2. Railways Cuts Down Sleeping Hours for Passengers

- i. According to a circular issued by the railway board, the passengers in the reserved coaches can only sleep between 10 pm and 6 am to allow others to sit in the seats for the rest of the time.
- ii. Until the circular was issued, the existing permissible time for sleeping was between 9 pm and 6 am. The new provision replaces paragraph 652 in the Indian Railways Commercial Manual, Volume I. This provision is applicable to all reserved coaches with sleeping accommodation.

Pro Tip:

Mr. Piyush Goyal is the Present Railways Minister of India.

3. Indigenous Artillery Gun Sets New World Record in Range

- i. An indigenous artillery gun, Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has set a new world record in range by hitting targets at a distance of 48 km.
- ii. During trial firings at Pokhran ranges, ATAGS registered the longest ever distance of 48.074 km, surpassing the maximum range of 35-40 km fired by any artillery gun system in this category.

Pro Tip:

ATAGS is a 155mm, 52 calibers towed artillery gun being developed in mission mode by DRDO as a part of the Army's artillery modernization program.

4. Long-Endangered Snow Leopard Upgraded to 'Vulnerable' Status

- i. The elusive snow leopards, long considered an endangered species, has been upgraded to 'vulnerable'. But experts warned the new classification does not mean they are safe.
- ii. The animals still face serious challenges including poaching and loss of prey in their high Himalayan habitat. Using improved methods for counting cat numbers, experts now estimate there are about 4,000 snow leopards in the wild.

Pro Tip:

Snow leopards had been listed as endangered since 1972.

5. NASA's Cassini Spacecraft Ends 20-year Journey

- i. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) \$3.9-billion Cassini spacecraft ended its 20-year-long ground-breaking journey with a fiery plunge into the Saturn's crushing atmosphere.
- ii. Operators deliberately made Cassini dive into the gas giant to ensure that the planet's moons remain pristine for future exploration. No spacecraft has ever ventured so close to the planet before.

Pro Tip:

Robert M. Lightfoot Jr. is NASA Acting Administrator.
NASA was established in 1958.

6. Russia, Iraq Restore Air Travel After 13-Year Freeze

- i. Russia and Iraq restored scheduled commercial airline services for the first time since 2004. This move has been hailed as a sign of stability returning to the war-torn country.
- ii. Russia suspended regular flights to Iraq in 2004 after the US-led invasion in 2003 plunged the Arab country into war.

Pro Tip:

Haider al-Abadi is the Prime Minister of Iraq.
Baghdad is the capital of Iraq.
Vladimir Putin is the President of Russia.
Moscow is the Capital of Russia.

7. Amazon Ties up With Bank of Baroda To Offer Micro-Loans To Sellers

- i. Amazon has tied up with Bank of Baroda for the loans, which can go up to Rs. 25 lakh.
- ii. The Indian arm of the US e-commerce giant, Amazon plans to provide unsecured micro-loans, as low as 1 lakh, at interest rates as low as 10.45-11 percent at a short span of 3-5 days.

8. India, Japan sign Open Sky Agreement

- i. India and Japan today signed an agreement that will allow their airlines to operate the unlimited number of flights between the two countries.
- ii. The National Civil Aviation Policy, 2016, allows the government to enter into an 'open sky' air services agreement on a reciprocal basis with SAARC nations as well as countries beyond a 5,000-kilometre radius from New Delhi.

9. PM Modi inaugurates country's biggest dam, Sardar Sarovar Dam, Called 'Gujarat's Lifeline'

- i. Prime Minister Narendra Modi today launched the Sardar Sarovar Dam - the world's second-biggest - on the river Narmada in Gujarat.
- ii. The 1.2-km-long dam, which is 163 meters deep, will irrigate over 18 lakh hectares in the state, the water from the Narmada will flow into over 9,000 villages through a canal network, Sardar Sarovar Nigam Limited (SSNL).

10. Only Marshal of IAF, hero of 1965, Arjan Singh Passed Away

- i. THE sole Marshal of the Indian Air Force, Arjan Singh, passed away at the Army's Research and Referral Hospital. He was 98 years old.
- ii. Arjan Singh had the honor of leading the fly-past of more than a hundred IAF aircraft over the Red Fort on India's first Independence Day, August 15, 1947. In 2002, on the occasion of Republic Day, he was granted the honorary rank of Marshal, the highest military rank attainable, which before him only two Army chiefs, K M Cariappa and Sam Manekshaw, had achieved.

11. PV Sindhu wins gold!

- i. PV Sindhu becomes the first Indian to win the Korea Open Superseries with an outstanding win over Nozomi Okuhara in the much-talked-about women's singles final in Seoul.
- ii. Olympic silver medallist shuttler P V Sindhu beat world champion Nozomi Okuhara in a thrilling final to clinch the women's singles title at the Korea Open Super Series today.

12. Google Tez UPI-Based Digital Payments App Launched in India

- i. Google Tez has become the latest UPI-based payments app in the country. The new Google Tez app can be used to pay for movie tickets, utility bills, and make other transactions online.
- ii. Tez means fast in Hindi, which the company stated was one of the selling points of its new app. Google Tez is a standalone payments app, available on Android and iOS, and is powered by UPI, a payments protocol built by government-backed organization NPCI. The company has partnered with HDFC Bank, ICICI, and State Bank of India for backend processing.

Pro Tip:

Sundar Pichai is the Present CEO of Google.
Alphabet Inc. is the Parent company of Google.

13. Airtel Payments Bank, First Payment Bank to Integrate UPI on its Digital Platform

- i. Sunil Mittal-driven Airtel Payments Bank integrated the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) on its digital platform, allowing customer choice and convenience to facilitate secure digital payments.
- ii. Airtel Payments Bank has become the first payments bank in India to integrate the UPI on its digital platform. In January 2017, Bharti Airtel launched Payments Bank in India to enable transactions on digital platforms.

Pro Tip:

Airtel Payments Bank is India's first Payment Bank.

14. 69th Emmy Awards:

- i. The 69th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards were announced at the Microsoft Theater, Los Angeles, California, U.S. The Handmaid's Tale became the first web television series to win the award for Outstanding Drama Series.
- ii. Westworld and Saturday Night Live were the most nominated programs, each with 22 nominations. Stephen Colbert was the Host of 69th Emmy Awards.

15. President's Medal for Former DIG D Roopa

- i. Former DIG D Roopa, who highlighted in a report alleged irregularities at the central jail in Karnataka, was conferred the President's Medal.
- ii. The award was presented to Roopa for her meritorious service by Governor Vajubhai Vala at a ceremony at Raj Bhavan in the presence of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

Pro Tip:

Siddaramaiah is the CM of Karnataka.
Vajubhai Vala is the Present Governor of Karnataka.

16. Iron Union 5: US and UAE Joint Military Exercise

- i. The US and UAE's ground forces had begun a joint military exercise in Abu Dhabi, as part of efforts to consolidate their bilateral relations and exchange training and military expertise. Code-named Iron Union 5, the drill is an extension of a series of Iron Claw exercises.
- ii. The exercise aims to upgrade and boost the readiness of the UAE's armed forces and to allow both armies to promote their international co-operation in joint military operations.

Pro Tip:

Abu Dhabi is the Capital of United Arab Emirates (UAE).

17. Peruvian President Appoints Mercedes Araoz Fernandez as New PM

- i. The President of Peru, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski has appointed a former Economy Minister Mercedes Araoz Fernandez as new Prime Minister of Peru.
- ii. She served as an economy minister during part of the 2006-11 administration of President Alan Garcia. Araoz replaced Fernando Zavala, who lost the vote of confidence by lawmakers recently.

Pro Tip:

Lima is the Capital of Peru.

18. Y.C Modi Named NIA Chief, Rajni Kant Misra D-G of SSB

- i. Senior IPS officer Y.C Modi has been named the chief of the National Investigation Agency (NIA). The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved Mr. Modi's appointment as Director General of the NIA. He will take over from Sharad Kumar after he completes his tenure on October 30.
- ii. Another senior IPS officer, Rajni Kant Misra, has been appointed Director General of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Mr. Misra is at present the Additional Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF).

Pro Tip:

Mr. Modi will hold the post till his superannuation, i.e. May 31, 2021.

Mr. Misra has been appointed Director General of the SSB till the date of his superannuation, i.e. August 31, 2019.

Mr. Modi is at present special director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

19. Iceland's PM Bjarni Benediktsson Resigns

- i. Prime Minister of Iceland Mr. Bjarni Benediktsson has resigned from the post. He lost his nine-month-old, center-right coalition after one party quit.
- ii. The President of Iceland, Gudni Th. Johannesson accepted the resignation of the PM. Benediktsson took office in January 2017, uniting his Independence Party, the Reform Party, and the centrists.

Pro Tip:

Iceland is a wind-lashed island near the Arctic Circle with a population of 320,000.

20. Infosys Senior VP Sanjay Rajagopalan Quits

- i. Infosys Senior Vice President Sanjay Rajagopalan has resigned from his post. The decision has come a month after Vishal Sikka stepped down as the company's MD and CEO.
- ii. He was employed with Infosys from August 2014 to September 2017.

Pro Tip:

Nandan Nilekani has been recently appointed as the New Chairman of Infosys. Infosys is country's no. 2 software services exporter.

21. 'Father of nephrology in India' Dr KS Chugh dies of cancer at 85

- i. Dr. KS Chugh, the “father of nephrology in India”, breathed his last at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh. He was 85.
- ii. He was a recipient of several national and international awards, including the Padma Shri, the fourth-highest civilian award, in 2000.

