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### **Current Affairs:- January 01 – January 10, 2019**

- The country achieved yet another milestone in the power sector with the completion of electrification in 100% households in 25 states at year end. Now, only about 10.48 lakh households are left to be electrified in 4 states- Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Chhattisgarh. Note: The central government launched 'Pradhan Mantri Sahaj Bijli Har Ghar Yojana' (Saubhagya) in September 2017 to achieve the goal of universal household electrification in the country by 31 March, 2019.
- Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan launched 'Ujjwala Sanitary Napkins' initiative. Under the novel initiative, which will cover 93 blocks in 30 districts of Odisha, oil marketing companies (OMC) will set up 100 manufacturing units at the Common Service Centres (CSC) at an estimated cost of Rs 2.94 crore.
- Qatar has withdrawn its membership from Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).
- The United States and Israel officially quit the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), accusing it of bias against Israel.
- V K Yadav assumed charge of New Railway Board Chairman.
- Jair Bolsonaro was sworn in as Brazil's President

- Justice Thottathil Bhaskaran Nair Radhakrishnan was sworn in as the first Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.
  - Allahabad Bank and SBI Life Insurance came together and signed a bancassurance pact, to offer a holistic financial planning solution to consumers. Note: SBI Life MD and CEO: Sanjeev Nautiya, Headquarters in: Mumbai.
  - Syndicate Bank and SBI Life Insurance signed a bancassurance pact aiming to offer a comprehensive financial planning solution to its customers.
  - Jasprit Bumrah became the highest international wicket-taker across formats in 2018. He took a total of 78 wickets in the calendar year.
  - The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) set up an expert committee under former SEBI chairman U.K. Sinha to suggest long-term solutions for the economic and financial sustainability of the MSME sector.
  - Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair has been declared as an authorized Immigration Check post for entry into/ exit from India with valid travel documents for all classes of passengers. This decision of the Union Government will open up the Port Blair Airport for direct international flight and immigration facilities.
  - The West Bengal government announced two welfare initiatives for farmers. Both initiatives are part of the 'Krishi Krishak Bondhu' scheme. The first of the two initiatives will provide Rs.2 lakh to the family of a deceased farmer. Under the second initiative, farmers would get Rs.2,500 twice a year for growing a single crop on one acre of land.
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- Veteran cricket coach Ramakant Achrekar, who trained Bharat Ratna Sachin Tendulkar and Vinod Kambli, among others, passed away following a heart attack.
- The Union Home Ministry has approved the Uttar Pradesh government's proposal to rename Allahabad as Prayagraj. Note: Agartala Airport renamed as Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Kishore Airport. British-era railway station Robertsgang renamed as Sonbhadra. Iconic Mughalsarai junction renamed after Deen Dayal Upadhyay. Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai renamed as Chhatrapati Shivaji 'Maharaj' International Airport.
- The cabinet has approved the merger of Vijaya Bank & Dena Bank with Bank of Baroda. After this merger, Bank of Baroda will become the third biggest public sector bank. The merger will be effective from April 1.
- The Indian Parliament passed the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018 that seeks to do away with the no-detention policy in schools. Under the current provisions of the Act, no student can be detained up to class VIII.
- Arunima Sinha, the first female amputee to have conquered Mt Everest, created yet another record as she became world's first woman amputee to climb Mount Vinson, the highest peak in Antarctica.
- HDFC Mutual Fund has pipped ICICI Prudential MF to become the country's largest asset management company.
- The National Green Tribunal has imposed a fine of 100 crore rupees on Meghalaya government for its failure to curb illegal coal mining in the state.
- ICICI Bank, in a first-of-its-kind programme, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Small Business FinCredit India Pvt. Ltd. (SBFC), a systemically important

Non-Banking Finance Company for entrepreneurs, to jointly provide credit worth up to Rs.1 crore to MSMEs for a tenure of 15 years.

- Andhra Pradesh emerged on top of Asia Competitiveness Institute (ACI), Singapore's 2018 Ease of Doing Business (EDB) Index
  - Vijay Mallya became the first tycoon to be charged under a new anti-fraud law, with a court in Mumbai naming him as an offender under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018. According to the new law, a fugitive economic offender is a person against whom an arrest warrant has been issued for his or her involvement in economic offenses involving at least Rs.100 crore or more and has left India to avoid prosecution.
  - Prime Minister of Norway Erna Solberg arrived on a three-day state visit to India.
  - The government had notified a High-Level committee for implementation of Clause 6 of Assam Accord. Retired IAS officer M.P. Bezbaruah is chairman of the 9-member Committee. The committee will examine the effectiveness of actions since 1985 to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord.
  - The government has amalgamated three Regional Rural Banks - *Punjab Gramin Bank, Malwa Gramin Bank and Sutlej Gramin Bank* - into a single RRB.
  - Sheikh Hasina was sworn-in as the Bangladesh Prime Minister for the fourth term.
  - Malaysia's king Muhammad V became 1st monarch to resign before completing tenure
  - World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim has made the surprise announcement that he is stepping down after six
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years in the post. His resignation will take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> February.

- The Citizenship Amendment bill seeking to provide Indian citizenship to persecuted minorities from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan was passed by Lok Sabha. The Bill provides for Indian citizenship to such immigrants after six years of residence in India instead of 12 years currently. The Bill seeks to amend the Citizenship Act of 1955 in order to grant citizenship to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis and Christians from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan if they have lived in India for six years.
  - Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has constituted a High-Level Committee on Deepening of Digital Payments to encourage digitisation of payments and enhance financial inclusion. The five-member committee will be headed by UIDAI's former Chairman Nandan Nilekani.
  - The interim budget for 2019 will be presented on 1 February during the budget session of the parliament. The budget session of the Parliament will be held from 31 January to 13 February.
  - The second edition of Khelo India Youth Games has officially begun in Pune, Maharashtra.
  - The 124th Constitution Amendment Bill, 2019 to award 10% reservation to 'economically backward' upper castes was passed in Rajya Sabha. It was already passed in Lok Sabha. The government has announced reservation in jobs for those belonging to the upper castes and earning less than Rs.8 lakh per year.
  - The government launched *Web-Wonder Women Campaign* to celebrate the exceptional achievements of women who have influenced and impacted society through social media.
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- Sri Lanka's Central Bank announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has agreed to provide USD 400 million under a swap arrangement to boost the island nation's reserves. The RBI has agreed to provide the funds under its SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Swap Facility.
  - Andaman will be the first island to operate Seaplanes under the Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme.
  - Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has announced that India has allowed an Iranian bank, Pasargad Bank, to open a branch in Mumbai. Alongside, India's UCO Bank will open a branch in Iran.
  - India has taken over operations of the Chabahar port in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran, the first time India will operate a port outside its territory.
  - Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), the Railways' subsidiary, will offer insurance of up to INR 50 lakh for free for air passengers who book their tickets through its portal. IRCTC has tied up with Bharti-Axa for the offer.
  - Nobel Peace Prize winner and Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai pens a new book, titled 'We Are Displaced: My Journey and Stories from Refugee Girls Around the World,' charting her experiences travelling the world and visiting refugee camps.
  - World Hindi Day was celebrated on January 10. World Hindi Day and National Hindi Diwas are completely different. National Hindi Diwas is celebrated every year on September 14. On that day in 1949, the constituent assembly adopted Hindi, written in Devanagari script, as the official language of the Union.
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