

## CIVIL SERVICE DIGEST (CSD-Daily)

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### **Venkaiah Naidu fixes time frame to decide defection cases**

- Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu on Wednesday stressed on the need for an amendment to the Anti-Defection Law, making it mandatory for the Speaker/Chairman of Assembly/Council to dispose of petitions on defections within a time frame.

#### **Details of Venkaiah Speech**

- Constituting special tribunals to deal with election-related petitions and criminal cases against the elected representatives were also necessary, he said. According to Supreme Court records, 4,127 cases, including some of strong criminal nature, were pending against public representatives.
- Sharing his views on the political scenario, Mr. Venkaiah Naidu said the anti-defection laws should be implemented in letter and spirit and expeditiously. There was a need for consensus to amend this law and insert time frame clause. “I could dispose of the petitions that I receive within this time-frame.
- “Everybody has a right to change the party. But after changing the party, by evening, one should quit the position that came because of it. This is not happening in most States,” he pointed out.

- The legislators and politicians should maintain restraint while speaking about the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister or the Leader of the Opposition. Otherwise, the people might soon lose faith in the political processes and institutions. All efforts should be made towards creation of a cleaner polity.
- Also, the political parties should take the State's finances into consideration before making tall promises and announcing freebies. People too must ensure that persons with the right antecedents were elected. They should elect their representatives based on conduct, calibre, capacity and character, but not on caste, region or religion. "You [people] have the power to change."

### **Anti-Defection Law**

- The 10th Schedule to the Indian Constitution popularly referred to as the 'Anti-Defection Law' was inserted by the 52nd Amendment (1985) to the Constitution.
- 'Defection' has been defined as, "To abandon a position or association, often to join an opposing group".
- The anti defection law was enacted to ensure that a party member do not violate the mandate of the party and in case he do so he will be disqualified from participating in the election.
- The Anti-Defection Law allows Parliament to announce those members defected who oppose or do not vote in line with party's decision.
- The aim of Anti-Defection Law is to prevent members of Parliament to change parties for any personal motive.

### **Grounds for disqualification:**

- If an elected member voluntarily gives up his membership of a political party
- If he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to any direction issued by his political party.

- If any independently elected member joins any political party.
- If any nominated member joins any political party after the expiry of six months.
- The decision on questions are to disqualification on ground of defection is referred to the chairman or the Speaker of such House, and his decision is final.
- All proceedings in relation to disqualification under this Schedule are deemed to be proceedings in Parliament or in the Legislature of a state.

### **SC expresses concern over deaths due to potholes**



- The Supreme Court on Thursday expressed concern over 14,926 people being killed in accidents due to potholes on roads across the country in the last five years.
- A bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur said a large number of deaths caused due to potholes was unacceptable and was probably more than those killed on the border or by the terrorists.

## All key policy rates unchanged || RBI



- The Reserve Bank of India, RBI, maintained status quo on all key policy rates in the fifth bi-monthly monetary policy review announced this afternoon. Subsequently, the repo rate remains unchanged at 6.5 percent and the reverse repo rate at 6.25 percent.
- Repo rate is the rate at which RBI lends to banks generally against government securities. The reverse repo is the rate at which RBI borrows money from banks. The RBI informed the marginal standing facility rate and the Bank Rate too remain at 6.75 percent.
- The six-member monetary policy committee headed by RBI Governor Urjit Patel unanimously voted to maintain the status quo on policy rates. In the last policy announced in October, RBI had kept all the policy rates unchanged.
- RBI has lowered its inflation forecast based on moderation in food inflation and the sharp decline in international crude oil prices.

Accordingly, inflation is projected to be in the range of 2.7 to 3.2 percent in the second half of this fiscal.

- Assuming a normal monsoon next year, RBI said that inflation will likely to stay in the range of 3.8 to 4.2 percent in the first half of next fiscal.
- On the growth front, RBI retained GDP growth rate projection at 7.4 percent for this fiscal and at 7.5 percent in the first half of 2019-20.
- RBI has said that lower RBI sowing, slowing global demand and rising trade tensions may adversely affect growth prospects while the decline in crude oil prices is expected to boost India's growth prospects.
- The next meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee is scheduled to be held between 5th and 7th February next year.
- Even after revising its inflation projection on the downside, RBI today said that volatile global markets and uncertainty regarding crude oil prices warrant the central bank's 'calibrated tightening' policy stance.
- Addressing the post-policy press conference, RBI Governor Urjit Patel said this stance gives the apex bank a chance to pause, reflect and undertake future policy action with more robust inflation signals.
- Announcing a couple of customer protection policies, RBI today said that it will notify an 'Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions' by end of January 2019; adding that this dedicated, cost-free and expeditious grievance redressal mechanism will help in strengthening consumer confidence in the digital transactions sector.

- Further guidelines for limiting customer liability in respect of unauthorised electronic transactions through credit and debit cards will also be issued soon.
- RBI today also said that a committee to look into the issues crippling MSME sector will also be set up by the end of this month. The next policy is scheduled for 7th February 2019.

### **GCC remains valid despite Qatar row**

- The United Arab Emirates said the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) remained valid despite a row with Qatar that has fractured the bloc ahead of an annual summit next week.
- Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and non-GCC member Egypt have imposed a diplomatic and economic boycott on Qatar since June 2017 over allegations Doha supports terrorism.
- Qatar denies the charges and says the boycott aims to curtail its sovereignty.
- UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash tweeted the main success of the council is in its economic aspects and the creation of a Gulf common market.

### **OPEC set to meet in Vienna**



- The members of Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and other oil-producing countries are scheduled to meet in Vienna on Thursday to discuss ways to manage the oil output, supply glut and demand slowdown.
- US President Donald Trump on Wednesday urged OPEC members not to slash production at their upcoming meeting, saying global oil prices should remain low.
- Over the past two months oil prices have plunged and a barrel of Brent crude, the European benchmark, currently stands at around 60US dollars.
- However, OPEC's third-biggest producer Iran has called to be excluded from any decision to cut production.
- **RBI to implement an Ombudsman scheme for digital transactions**



- Reserve Bank of India has said that it will implement an Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions covering services provided by entities falling under Reserve Banks regulatory jurisdiction.
- According to the central bank, the scheme will be notified by the end of January 2019. In a statement,
- RBI said, with the digital mode for financial transactions gaining traction in the country, there is an emerging need for a dedicated, cost-free and expeditious grievance redressal mechanism for strengthening consumer confidence in this channel. The scheme will be notified by the end of January 2019.
- In another customer protection initiative, the RBI said that it has issued instructions on limiting customer liability in respect of unauthorised electronic transactions involving banks and credit card issuing non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).