

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – AUGUST 20, 2019

TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **Tamil Nadu chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami – will be heading to the UK and US on a 13-day official foreign tour starting August 28 to bring foreign investment to the state and bond with the Tamil Diaspora.**
 - ✓ This is the first time that a chief minister from the state is undertaking an official foreign tour
 - ✓ The CM will lead a 21-member delegation to the US.
 - ✓ The delegation includes three ministers— industries minister M C Sampath, animal husbandry minister Udumalai K Radhakrishnan and revenue and IT minister R B Udhayakumar — besides secretaries to the government for industries, animal husbandry and IT as well as the executive director of guidance bureau
 - ✓ Prior to that, chief minister Palaniswami, accompanied by health minister C Vijayabhaskar and the secretary to government for health will head to the UK
 - ✓ In the UK, the Chief Minister will interact with investors in healthcare sector in London and also meet with investors in the energy sector in Glasgow.
 - ✓ In the US, the CM will be visiting Buffalo to seek views on development of the dairy industry and animal husbandry.
 - ✓ He will also meet the potential investors in New York and San Francisco apart from making a visit to the e-vehicle giant 'Tesla', followed by a halt at Los Angeles
- ◆ **Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - launched a new scheme 'Chief Minister Special Grievance Redressal Programme' on August 19**
 - ✓ As per the new scheme, the officials will meet people to receive petitions and redress their grievances in 30 days

- ✓ These petitions will be registered digitally and sent to the respective departments in a week for taking action



- ✓ He launched the programme at Vanavasi in his native Edappadi constituency in Salem.
- ✓ The scheme will be conducted by the Revenue and Disaster Management Department
- ✓ It would be held in each taluk of the State and ₹76.25 lakh was set aside for the scheme.

NATIONAL

◆ **The University Grants Commission (UGC) - has asked all universities in the country, including the 13 in Tamil Nadu, to implement 10% reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) from this academic year, i.e., 2019-20.**

- ✓ The Centre had earlier notified 10% reservation for EWS among the upper castes, through the 103rd Constitution amendment in January 2019

◆ **The Union Home Ministry - has fixed the retirement age of all Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel at 60 years**

- ✓ The move follows a January 2019 Delhi High Court verdict asking the Ministry to fix a uniform retirement age for all members of the CAPFs.
- ✓ Earlier, all personnel in the Central Industrial Security Force and the Assam Rifles retire at the age of 60
- ✓ However, in the other four forces — Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and Sashastra Seema Bal — those from the ranks of constable to commandant retire at 57, but those above them retired at 60
- ✓ Now, the MHA order fixes the retirement age uniformly at 60 years 'irrespective of rank'
- ✓ There are 7 Security forces working under CAPF, namely Border Security Force (BSF), Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), Assam Rifles (AR) and National Security Guard (NSG)
- ✓ The CAPF, formed in 1969, is responsible for a range of internal security duties like anti-Naxal operations, border-guarding, counter-terrorism and maintenance of law and order

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

◆ **India and France - will set up a joint 'constellation' of satellites for maritime surveillance in the Indian Ocean Region**

- ✓ The second phase of this ambitious project will be launched when Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on August 22
- ✓ The PM will also be discussing the progress of the Jaitapur nuclear power plant, which will have six EPR nuclear plants to be developed by Framatome of France, each of 1,650 MW, totalling 9,900 MW, possibly the largest in the world
- ✓ The PM will be on a two-day trip to France on August 22-23 and will later return to Biarritz in France to participate in the climate change and digital summits as part of the G7 summit.
- ✓ In between, the PM will be visiting the UAE and Bahrain on August 24
- ✓ In Abu Dhabi, Modi will receive the Order of Zayed, the highest civilian honour of the UAE government, announced in April 2019

COMMITTEES

◆ **The eight-member task force, 'The Direct Tax Code (DTC) panel - had submitted its report to Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on August 19, 2019**




- ✓ The panel was headed by Central Board of Direct Taxes member Akhilesh Ranjan
- ✓ It was set up by the government to make changes in the 58-year old Income Tax Act and draft New Direct Tax Law
- ✓ The Direct Tax Code 2.0 is expected to replace the 58-year old existing Income Tax Act, 1961
- ✓ The panel has recommended a substantial cut in personal income taxes and corporate tax rate
- ✓ It has also recommended a significant increase in the highest income tax slab.
- ✓ The panel has also reportedly proposed that dividend distribution tax (DDT) should be taxed only in the hands of the recipient and not companies
- ✓ The details of the report is yet to be shared by the Finance ministry

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

◆ **Russia's Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corporation (ASE) - has delivered the main equipment for the third Unit of Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tirunelveli district in southern Tamil Nadu.**

- ✓ The Kudankulam project is being jointly constructed by ASE and Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) under the Russia-Indian agreement signed on November 20, 1988, which was revised in 1998 and 2008
- ✓ Kudankulam is one of the largest nuclear power projects in the country
- ✓ It is scheduled to have six Russian VVER-1000 reactors with an installed capacity of 1,000MW each

PERFORMANCE WISE

<p>UNIT 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Date of commercial operation Dec 31, 2014 ➤ Power generated till July 2019 19,468 million units <p>Brief history The unit suffered inordinate delay due to changes in design by NPCIL officials in 2009 and protests by anti-nuclear activists</p>	<p>UNIT 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Date of commercial operation March 31, 2017 ➤ Power generated till July 2019 9,371 million units <p>Brief history Due to delay in commissioning of unit 1, NPCIL officials were not able to concentrate on unit 2. After commissioning, it suffered several shutdowns</p>	 <p>UNIT 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Scheduled to be commissioned by March 2023 ➤ Capacity 1,000 MW <p>Units 3 & 4 are to cost ₹39,747 crore and compared to Units 1 & 2, the cost is more than double</p>
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- ✓ The initial Unit 1 and 2 started commercial operation in December 2014 and March 2017 respectively
- ✓ Currently, construction of reactors for Units three and four, which was started in 2016, is going on and the preparatory work for Units 5 and 6 is also in progress.
- ✓ The ground-level work of the reactor for the third Unit has been completed.
- ✓ As per the schedule, Unit 3 is to be commissioned in March 2023 and Unit 4 in November 2023.
- ✓ NPCIL has given contract to erect the Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs) for the 3rd and 4th Units to BHEL

SPORTS

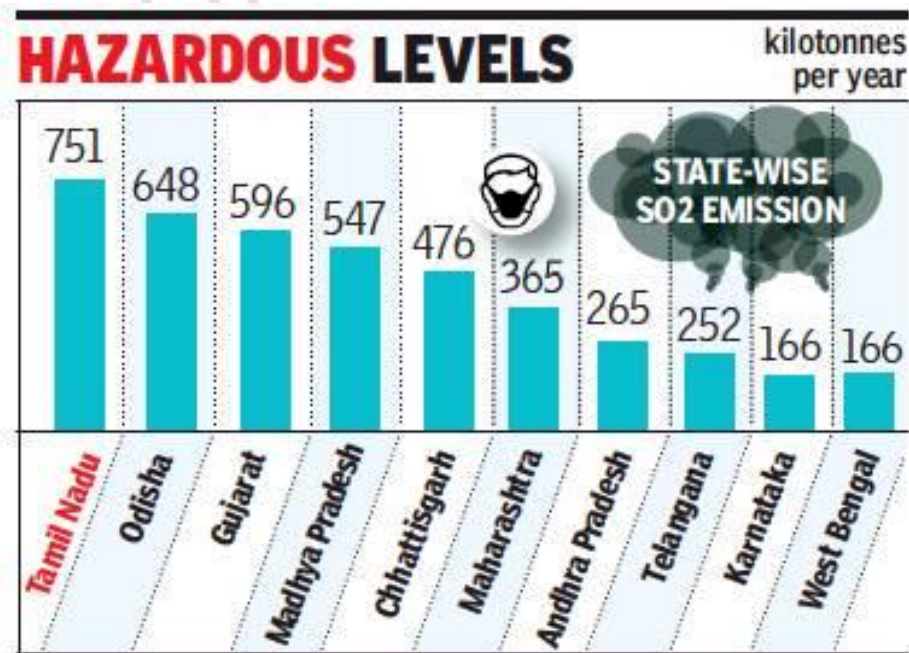
- ◆ **Former Tamil Nadu and South Zone allrounder D Vasu - was appointed coach of Tamil Nadu for a period of two years**



- ✓ D Vasu, succeeding Hrishikesh Kanitkar, is a level 3 qualified coach
- ✓ He was a coach at the National Cricket Academy and worked with International Cricket Council to help bowlers correct their action
- ✓ Vasu was also credited with correcting Pragyan Ojha's action in 2015
- ✓ He was part of the Tamil Nadu squad which won the Ranji Trophy in 1987-88
- ✓ Vasu was the second highest wicket-taker in the 1994–95 Ranji Trophy with 34 wkts
- ✓ R. Prasanna, former Tamil Nadu left-hander, will be the assistant coach.

SO₂ EMISSIONS – GREENPEACE REPORT

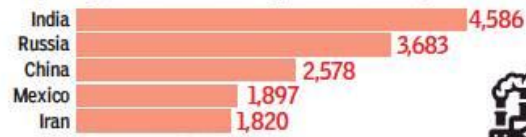
- ◆ **Tamil Nadu - is the highest emitter of anthropogenic sulphur dioxide in the entire country**
- ✓ Further, Chennai is ranked as the seventh highest SO₂ emission hotspot in the country and 29th globally
- ✓ The major contributor of SO₂ identified by the researchers in Chennai is found to be the North Chennai thermal power station.



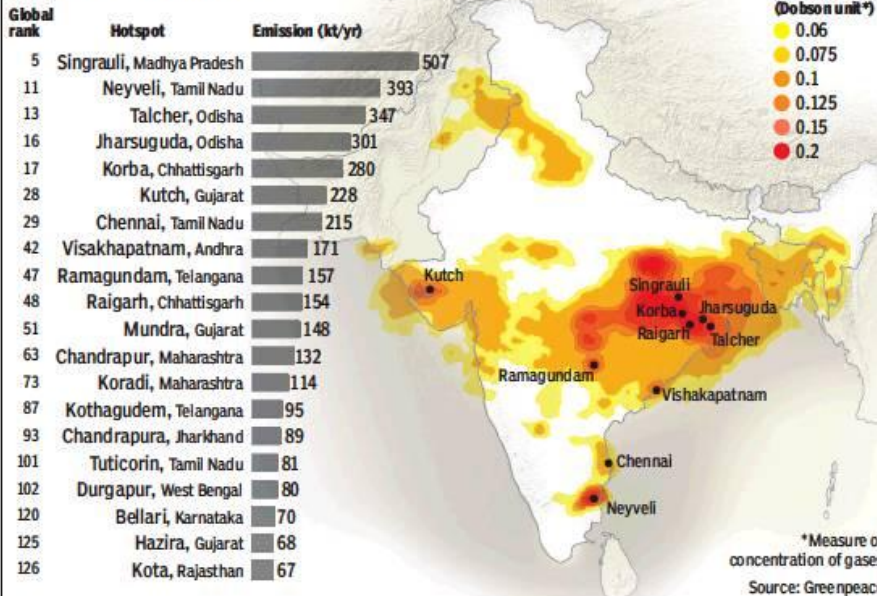
EASTERN INDIA WORST FOR EMISSIONS



Top SO₂ emissions hotspots in 2018 (kilotonnes/yr)



India's worst emitters



- ✓ This has been revealed in the latest report titled 'Global SO₂ emission hotspot database' by global environmental NGO, Greenpeace.
- ✓ The report involves the analysis of National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (Nasa) OMI (Ozone Monitoring Instrument) satellite data, to identify major pollution hotspots and their sources.
- ✓ According to the report, India is the world's largest emitter of deadly SO₂ generated from human activities
- ✓ India is found to be contributing more than 15% global anthropogenic SO₂ emissions, chiefly generated from coal-fired power plants and oil refineries
- ✓ Globally, Russia's Norilsk smelter complex is the largest single SO₂ emission hotspot
- ✓ Of the total SO₂ emissions detected by the satellite, 60% was found to be human-made with coal burning, oil refining and smelting being major contributors.
- ✓ The SO₂, being a reactive pollutant, reacts with other air pollutants to form sulfate particles and makes a significant part of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) which has the largest public health impact
- ✓ In December 2015, the Union environment ministry had set a deadline for installing flue-gas desulfurization technology to remove SO₂ emissions at coal-fired power plants, which has been now shifted from 2017-2022.

REPORT

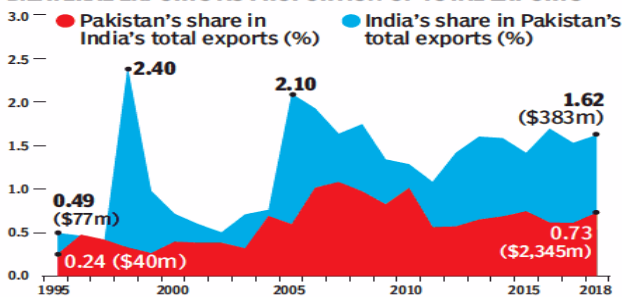
Why Pakistan stands to lose big in trade war with India

On August 9, Pakistan formally suspended trade relations with India in response to the revocation of the special status of Jammu & Kashmir. In 2018, according to data collated by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, bilateral trade between India and Pakistan was worth \$2.8 billion, of which \$2.3 billion was India's exports to and \$500 million its imports from Pakistan

1 Pakistan is more dependent on India for its exports

Pakistan's dependence on India is slightly higher than India's on its neighbour. India's exports to Pakistan are 0.73% of its total exports while India accounts for 1.62% of Pakistan's exports

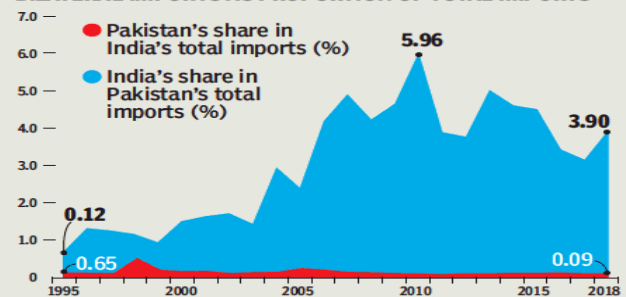
BILATERAL EXPORTS AS PROPORTION OF TOTAL EXPORTS



2 Pakistan's imports from India are five times India's imports from Pakistan

When it comes to imports, India is even less dependent on Pakistan. In 2018, Pakistan accounted for 0.09% of India's total imports. India constitutes 3.9% of Pakistan's total imports

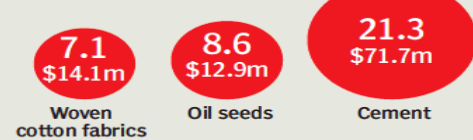
BILATERAL IMPORTS AS PROPORTION OF TOTAL IMPORTS



3 One-fifth of India's cement imports come from Pakistan

Cement is the only good with a significant chunk coming from Pakistan. No other commodity imported from Pakistan is more than 10% of India's total imports

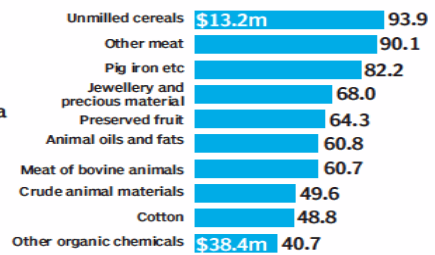
PAKISTAN'S SHARE IN INDIA'S TOTAL IMPORTS (%), TOP 3 GOODS



4 Pakistan is hugely reliant on India for 40 commodities

For 40 commodities, Pakistan's imports from India constitute more than 10% of its total imports. For 17 of these goods, more than one-fourth of Pakistan's imports come from India. These commodities are likely to become costlier in Pakistan

INDIA'S SHARE IN PAKISTAN'S TOTAL IMPORTS (%), TOP 10 GOODS



5 Trade ban could hit exporters in both India and Pakistan

While an import ban will push up domestic prices, an export ban can hurt domestic producers, who may struggle to find new markets. Pakistan is a big market for India's animal oils and cotton

PAKISTAN'S SHARE IN INDIA'S TOTAL EXPORTS (%), TOP 3 GOODS



6 For 26 goods, more than 10% of Pak's exports go to India

There are 13 commodities for which more than one-fourth of Pakistan's total exports go to India and the ban will badly impact its domestic producers

INDIA'S SHARE IN PAKISTAN'S TOTAL EXPORTS (%), TOP 10 GOODS



Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; Graphic: Karthic R Iyer

Pakistan's actions have backfired before

After the **Pulwama terror attack in February** and the **Balakot strike**, Pakistan closed its airspace to Indian flights in retaliation

Though the closure was meant to stifle flights to and from India, it ended up hurting Pakistan considerably

While airlines lost time and money on rerouting flights, Pakistan lost millions in overflight fees earned when planes pass through foreign airspace

About 400 flights a day avoided Pakistani airspace, resulting in losses of \$100 million since the closure, which was lifted on July 12