

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DEC 26, 2018

TAMIL NADU

- **Department of Geology and Mining – is planning to prepare ‘Digital maps’ to earmark the exact boundaries of leased mining area – through Differential Global Positioning system (DGPS)**
 - ✓ The initiative will help to check ‘online’ the violations in mines, quarries etc.,
 - ✓ These maps will be uploaded ‘online’ for public to check the correct demarcation of leased areas meant by mining and related activities
 - ✓ Currently, Mining Surveillance System (MSS) using satellites is being employed - to alert authorities about any mining activity within 500 metres of an existing lease
 - ✓ Apart from this, Field Measurement Book (FMB) is also used manually to measure boundaries
 - ✓ In Tamil Nadu, mining is carried out on 92,625 hectares with nearly 85,000 hectares used to mine major minerals like lignite, limestone, graphite, magnesite and garnet and around 3,460 hectares used for granite alone, categorized a minor mineral

- **Greater Chennai Corporation – is executing a new ‘web based system’ to control the mosquito breeding in the city**
 - ✓ It had installed high accuracy handled devices at various canals in the city to locate the sites of breeding
 - ✓ The data sourced would be converted into a real-time image and sent to the head office
 - ✓ The respective officials would soon visit the breeding sites for necessary action

- **Kilpauk Medical College Hospital – to inaugurate the state’s first ‘Breast screening Clinic’ in January 2019 – to detect and treat breast cancer and other breast diseases**
 - ✓ It has been set up at a cost of Rs 5 crore



- ✓ In June 2017, a Rs 3.2 crore, 3D Mammogram, a new breast imaging procedure, was installed at the hospital
- ✓ KMC becomes the second hospital to have the facility in entire southeast Asia
- **Periyakulam Police Station, Theni district – ranked at 8th place in the ‘Best Police station – Top 10’ ranking released by Rajnath Singh, Union home minister on December 20**



- ✓ The list, prepared by the Intelligence Bureau (IB), was announced in the 3-day Inaugural Session of the DGPs or IGP's Conference in Gujarat
- ✓ In the rankings released earlier in January 2018, the R S Puram Police station in Coimbatore was ranked at the Top most Police Station in the country with the K4 Police station in Anna Nagar, Chennai ranked at 4th place

SCHEMES

- **Uttarakhand – launches ‘Atal Ayushman Uttarakhand Yojana’**



- ✓ Under the scheme, every household in the state will be able to avail medical treatment of up to Rs 5 lakh annually
- ✓ All households have been included under the scheme, covering 1,350 critical diseases across 23 lakh households

STATES

- **Maharashtra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis – launched the ‘Bharat Ratna Atal Bihar Vajpayee International Schools’ in Mumbai**



- ✓ They were inaugurated on the occasion of 94th birth anniversary of the late Prime Minister

- ✓ The state government had set up these schools with an aim to achieve higher education standards for students in rural areas
 - ✓ These schools are affiliated to the Maharashtra International Education Board
 - ✓ Initially, 13 Zilla Parishad Schools will join the curriculum in the students' mother tongue
 - ✓ The curriculum was drafted by a team of experts such as Vijay Bhatkar, Anil Kakodkar, Swaroop Sampat, Achuyt Palav and many others
 - ✓ The curriculum for Classes I to III have been prepared now, while for higher classes it will be introduced later.
- **Haryana Chief Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar – renames the Child Care Institutes run in the state as ‘Jagannath Ashrams’**
- ✓ He said that it would be appropriate to give a single name to all, as all these Child Care Institutions have a similar goal of all-round development of the children

NATIONAL

- **Union Government – has set aside Rs 300 crore for the implementation of the ‘National Clean Air Programme’ for the FY 2018-19 and 2019-20**

BY 2024, POLLUTION CUT BY 30%

| | |
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| NATIONAL CLEAN AIR PROGRAMME (NCAP) | BUILD CAPACITY BY SETTING UP: |
| Cities to be covered: 102 | 1 National emission inventory |
| GOAL: To meet annual average ambient air quality standards | 2 Air Information Centre for data analysis |
| MID-TERM (5 YEARS) TARGET: Reducing air pollution by 20-30% by 2024, taking 2017 as base year | 3 Source apportionment studies |
| HOW: Through city-specific air pollution abatement action plan | 4 Guidelines for indoor air pollution |
| INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT AGENCIES: World Bank, German development agency (GIZ), AFD (French funding agency), Swiss Development Corporation, Bloomberg Philanthropies | 5 Rural monitoring stations |

- ✓ The programme aims to tackle air pollution in a comprehensive and time-bound manner in 102 cities across the country
- ✓ The initial studies have been already initiated to measure hazardous particulate matter (PM 10 and PM 2.5) in 6 major cities – Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Pune and Kanpur

- **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology - had released draft 'Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines [Amendment] Rules), 2018' on December 24, 2018**
- ✓ Highlights of the Draft rules
- ✓ Social media platforms to end the complete encryption system and remove any “unlawful content” for the sake of the country’s security
- ✓ As per the rules, an intermediary is defined as any platform that has more than 50 lakh users in India or is in the list of intermediary as notified by the government. Hence, social media platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram among others, fall within the definition of intermediary

What the Amended Rules Propose

Cos have to **trace and report origin** of messages within **72 hours** of receiving a complaint from law enforcement agencies

Will have to **disable access within 24 hours** to content deemed defamatory or against national security and under other clauses of Article 19 (2) of the Constitution

Such info and associated records will have to be **preserved for 180 days**

Platforms with more than **5m users** must have **registered entity** in India under Cos Act

They will have to appoint a nodal officer in India to deal with law enforcement agencies on a **24x7 basis**

Cos also must **send communication to users ONCE a month** about their privacy policies

Platforms must **deploy tools to identify and remove** or disable public access to unlawful information or content

Under watch

Some key suggestions in the IT [Intermediaries Guidelines (Amendment) Rules] 2018

- Provide info sought by any government agency within **72 hours**
- Enable tracing the originator of information on the platform
- Disable access to unlawful acts within **24 hours of being notified**
- Deploy automated tools to identify and disable access to unlawful content
- Report cyber security incidents with the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team

- ✓ The intermediaries must publish their privacy policy for the user of the computer resource to check and mandates that no such platform would “host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, information, that is grossly harmful, harassing, blasphemous, definitely obscene, pornographic, disparaging,” etc
- **Ministry of Power and New & Renewable energy – to introduce ‘Smart and Prepaid’ meters for Electricity – within the next 3 years**
- ✓ These meters are efficient, loss-reducing and enhance the ease of bill payments
- ✓ On a pilot basis, the prepaid meters are being deployed in Uttar Pradesh as part of the Saubhagya scheme
- ✓ This was announced by R K Singh, Minister of Power and New & Renewable energy
- **Government – extends ban on the import of Milk products from China – until April 23, 2019**
- ✓ The ban was primarily imposed due to the concerns about the presence of melamine in some of the milk consignments from China
- ✓ Melamine is a toxic non-edible chemical used for making plastics and fertilizers

- **India Ports Global Limited Company – takes over the operations at the Shaheed Behesti port at Chabahar, Iran**
- ✓ This was agreed during the 1st meeting of the follow-up committee for implementation of the trilateral Transit agreement between India, Afghanistan and Iran
- ✓ Chabahar port in the Sistan-Balochistan province of Iran's southern coast is easily accessible from India's western coast
- ✓ India had invested and developed the port for easy access to Iran, Afghanistan and other central asian countries - avoiding the Pakistan route

- **Patna Zoo – closes 'indefinitely' after the death of 6 peacocks in the zoo**
- ✓ The death of peacocks between December 16 and 24 was due to the infection of H5N1 virus, as per the confirmation from 'National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases' in Bhopal
- ✓ The zoo would be re-opened after the completion of immunization and disinfection

INTERNATIONAL

- **Italy's Mt Etna erupts in Sicily – from a new fissure**



- ✓ At least 100 tremors were reported within a three-hour span on December 24, including a magnitude 4.3 seismic shake
- ✓ The last major eruption of the 3,330-metre-high volcano was in 1992
- ✓ Mt Etna is Europe's highest and most active volcano
- ✓ It has been named a 'Decade Volcano' by the United Nations and added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites

➤ **Japan – announces withdrawal from the International Whaling Commission (IWC) by June 30, 2019 – to resume commercial whaling from July 2019**



- ✓ As a result, Japan will stop hunting whales from the Antarctic Ocean and Southern Hemisphere for scientific research — and will start commercial whaling within Japan’s territorial sea and its exclusive economic zone
 - ✓ As per a report, Japan joining with Norway and Iceland which had already defied IWC, have killed 38,539 whales under the name of ‘Research’ and sold them commercially
 - ✓ The International Whaling Commission was established in December 1946 to conserve and manage the world's whale population
 - ✓ In 1982 the IWC adopted a moratorium (Suspension) on commercial whaling, which was opposed by Japan, Russia and some other countries
- **Thailand – becomes the 1st South east Asian country – to approve the medicinal use of Marijuana**
- ✓ However, the penalty for its recreational use, up to 5 years in prison for possession, would still remain in place
 - ✓ Only the people authorized by the government will be allowed to plant or possess marijuana
 - ✓ Medical users will be required to have a prescription or medical marijuana identification card for accessing the pot
 - ✓ Marijuana can be useful in treating a wide range of conditions, including glaucoma, epilepsy, chronic pain and the side effects of chemotherapy
 - ✓ In the United States, California became the first state to legalize medical use in 1996 followed by 32 other states to legalise it
 - ✓ It has been approved for medicinal use in Canada and Britain recently

➤ Iraq – officially declares ‘Christmas’ as a National Holiday



- ✓ Previously, Christmas Day had been designated as a Religious break only for the Iraqi Christian community
- ✓ Iraq is a 95% Muslim country with 66% Shia and 29% Sunni communities
- ✓ It has around 3,00,000 Christians in the country

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

➤ International Gita Mahotsav 2018 - concluded in Kurukshetra, Haryana (December 7-23)



- ✓ It is celebrated to commemorate the origin of ‘Srimad Bhagwat Gita’
- ✓ Mauritius - Partner country
- ✓ Gujarat - Partner state
- ✓ This year, an International Gita Seminar (Dec 13-15) was conducted as part of the Mahotsav
- ✓ The event has been organized by the Government of Haryana along with Kurukshetra Development Board and North Zone Cultural Centre, Patiala
- ✓ Next year, Mauritius would host the Gita festival in February 2019

PERSONALITIES

- Nilanshi Patel, a 16-year old girl from Modasa in North Gujarat – enter the Guinness World Records – with the longest hair at 170.5 cm (5 feet 7 inches)



- ✓ The record was currently held by 17-year old Keito Kawahara who had 155.5 cm hair

DEFENCE

- Sagar Tara, a new coastal research vessel (CRV) – was launched to help the scientists conduct studies in Indian Ocean Region (IOR) – at the Titagarh Wagons Ltd Shipyard near Kolkata



- ✓ The CRV will be available to Chennai-based 'National Institute of Ocean Technology' for studies
- ✓ The new CRV is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and laboratories for shallow water operations - to study sea pollution, manage coral reefs, testing of underwater technology, tsunami early warning systems and environmental indexing of ships along the Indian coast
- ✓ CRV Sagar Tara is around 43 m in length and can accommodate 20 people
- ✓ It will be ready for operations by February after the trials

- ✓ It is one of the two CRVs – other is Sagar Anveshika manufactured at the Titagarh Shipyard – which will replace Sagar Paschimi and Sagar Purvi in the Navy's fleet
 - ✓ Sagar Anveshika will be launched by April/May 2019
 - ✓ Sagar Tara and Sagar Anveshika are identical ships – one meant for east coast and another for west coast
 - ✓ Sagar Purvi, commissioned in 1996, was used to measure water conductivity, temperature and density
 - ✓ Sagar Paschimi, also commissioned in 1996, was damaged heavily during cyclone Hud Hud in October 2014
- **Indian Coast Guard – operate 2 new Hovercrafts near Sir Creek in Kutch**



- ✓ It had recently inaugurated a HoverPort in Gujarat's Jakhau – to prevent infiltration from the Pakistan side in the Sri Creek area
- ✓ Sir Creek area in the Kutch district of Gujarat is a contentious area between India and
- ✓ Pakistan, which also saw the 1965 war between both the countries
- ✓ The area is used to infiltrate into India by the Pakistanis
- ✓ A Hovercraft is an amphibious vehicle that can travel in any surface at the speeds up to 50-60 kmph

ECONOMY

- **The National Anti-Profiteering Authority – imposes a fine of Rs 383 Crore to Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) - for failing to reduce the maximum retail price (MRP) of products after last year's GST rate cut**
- ✓ The company kept the product's price unchanged even after the Government reduced the GST for several items to 18% from 28% on November 15
 - ✓ HUL has been ordered to put 50% of the amount – Rs 191 crore – in the central Consumer Welfare Fund (CWF) and the balance in the similar funds of 35 states and Union territories

➤ **Reserve bank of India – announces the cooling period norms - for its retired top officials**

- ✓ As per the new guidelines, if an official joins as a Director of the company's board, he/she would have to wait for a period of 1 year from the date of retirement
- ✓ Similarly, any retired official intending to take over the position of CEO or Chairman of any company would have to wait for 3 years

AWARDS

➤ **Late music composer, Laxmikant Shantaram Kudalkar and playback singer Usha Timothy – to be conferred with Mohammed Rafi Lifetime Achievement Award and Mohammed Rafi Award respectively**



- ✓ The awards were instituted by the NGO Spandan Arts
- ✓ Laxmikant (of Laxmikant-Pyarelal combination) composed music for about 635 Hindi movies from 1963 to 1998, before passing away in 1998
- ✓ Usha Timothy, a famous Bollywood singer, has sung in several languages including Hindi, Malayalam, Punjabi, Bhojpuri and Marathi

OBITUARY

➤ **Sulagitti Narasamma, a Padma Shri awardee mid-wife (98 years)**



- ✓ Narasamma, a traditional mid-wife assisted thousands of rural women from Karnataka to deliver children free-of-charge
- ✓ She was honoured with the National Citizen's award in 2013 and honorary doctorate in 2014 from Tumkur University
- ✓ She was also presented with 'The Vayoshreshtha Samman', Lifetime achievement award – by the then President, Pranab Mukherjee
- ✓ Narasamma has assisted in more than 15,000 deliveries in the last 70 years

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ Siddha Day – December 26



- ✓ Every year Sage Agathiar's birthday is being observed as Siddha Day and it falls on 26 December 2018
- ✓ Sage Agathiyar is considered as the first Siddhar in the line of "18 Siddhars" and called as "Father of Siddha Medicine"
- ✓ Agathiyar was born in the month of Markazhi (மார்சுழி) in Aayilyam (ஆயில்யம்) birth star
- ✓ The day is observed since last year, 2017

