

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEB 9, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- Tamil Nadu – to set up centres for women under the ‘Mahila Shakti Kendra scheme’ in 14 more districts soon.



Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme

- ✓ These centres will serve as one-stop support point to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development, employment, digital literacy, health, and nutrition.
- ✓ They will come up in Salem, Chennai, Cuddalore, Virudhunagar, Perambalur, Villupuram, Namakkal, Tiruvannamalai, Trichy, Thiruvallur, Ariyalur, Thanjavur, Theni and Vellore.
- ✓ These centres will also support the Centre’s ‘Beti Bachao Beti Padhao’ scheme, aimed at providing education and welfare services to girls in every district.
- ✓ Each centre will coordinate among the local administration, state government and the Union ministry of women and child development for implementing women-centric programmes.
- ✓ A centre will consist of three members who will work with the local bodies and panchayats.
- ✓ Their activities will be supervised by the district’s collector.
- ✓ The funding for the scheme will be shared by the Centre and state in the ratio of 60:40.

- ✓ After the setting up of these 14 centres, the other centres in the remaining districts will be set up by next year
- **The Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) - has planned the city's second urban forest under the Japanese miyawaki method in Rayala Nagar in Valasaravakkam**



- ✓ The project was started by P Benjamin, TN minister for rural industries in presence of GCC commissioner G Prakash on February 8
- ✓ The forest will be set up in ward 155 in a 10,000sqft area, where-in 6,000sqft would be used for 762 tree saplings planted at a distance of 1m.
- ✓ At least 45 different varieties of trees will be planted.
- ✓ This is the second miyawaki forest that will be set up in the city.
- ✓ The first one has been initiated in Kotturpuram, beside the MRTS station.

STATES

- **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, Jagan Mohan Reddy - inaugurated the first Disha Police Station in Rajamahendravaram on February 8**
- ✓ Later, he launched the Disha mobile application at the Adikavi Nannayya University in the State
- ✓ The first-of-its-kind police station will deal with crimes against women.
- ✓ The Andhra Pradesh Government has also announced to inaugurate 18 Disha Police Stations by the end of February 2020.
- ✓ The state had sanctioned ₹26 crore for setting up 13 special Disha courts.
- ✓ It has also set up Forensic laboratories at a cost of ₹31 crore at Tirupati and Visakhapatnam for speedy investigation of the Disha cases



- ✓ Every police station will have 26 to 47 police officers
 - ✓ These Disha police stations will act as upgraded versions of existing women police stations
 - ✓ The stations have been allocated fund of 30% of special allowance.
 - ✓ The stations are established under Disha act, 2019.
 - ✓ In December 2019, the Andhra Pradesh Government passed the Disha Bill, 2019.
 - ✓ The bill intends to complete investigation of cases related to crimes against women within 7 to 14 days.
 - ✓ It also prescribes death penalty for such crimes under Section 376 of IPC (Indian Penal Code).
 - ✓ Also, the act punishes crimes against children with 10 to 14 years of imprisonment
- **Loudspeakers at mosques and temples in western Uttar Pradesh - will now make announcements to popularise state government's latest scheme — UP Kisan Asan Kisht Yojana**
- ✓ The move aims to facilitate maximum registrations for the state government's UP Kisan Asan Kisht Yojana in all 14 districts under its jurisdiction
 - ✓ The scheme helps tube well owners to pay their bills in easy instalments without interest.

NATIONAL

- **The Union Cabinet - has approved the introduction of the Indian Institutes of Information Technology Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020.**
- ✓ The bill proposes to declare five IIITs at Bhopal, Surat, Bhagalpur, Raichur and Agartala in Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode as Institutions of National importance.
 - ✓ With this, the total number of IIITs that have been declared as institutions of national importance increases to 25.
 - ✓ With the declaration, these institutions will now have the power to award degrees and use the categorisation of B.Tech, M.Tech or Ph.D. degree

- ✓ These five institutes are already functioning as societies, registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.
 - ✓ Out of the 20 existing IIITs, 15 IIITs are already covered under the IIIT (PPP) Act, 2017 and 5 institutes (IIITDM Kurnool, IIITM Gwalior, IIIT Allahabad, IIITDM Jabalpur and IIITDM Kancheepuram) were included under the IIIT Act, 2014
 - ✓ The 5 IIITs in Gwalior, Jabalpur, Kancheepuram, Allahabad and Kurnool were set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
 - ✓ This means that complete funding for the institute comes from the Centre with no private parties are involved
 - ✓ The Union Cabinet had approved the scheme of setting up 20 new IIITs in Public Private Partnership (IIT PPP) mode in November 2010.
- **The Union Cabinet - gave in-principle approval for the establishment of a new major port on the 'Landlord Model' at Vadhavan, Maharashtra.**
- ✓ The Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust will act as the lead partner in developing the port.
 - ✓ As per the terms of the project, all business activities will be done by private developers under the PPP model.
 - ✓ The development of the Vadhavan port will enable to handle world's largest container ships of 16,000 to 25,000 TEU capacities.
 - ✓ As per the centre's estimate, the total cost of Vadhavan Port project is about Rs.65, 544.54 crores.
 - ✓ Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) is the largest port in India and the 17th largest container port in the world
 - ✓ **List of 12 Major Ports in India**

| Sl. No. | Port Name | Location |
|---------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Kolkata-Haldia Port | West Bengal, Eastern Coast |
| 2 | Visakhapatnam Port | Andhra Pradesh, Eastern Coast |
| 3 | Kandla Port | Kutch, Gujarat, Western Coast |
| 4 | Jawaharlal Nehru Port | Mumbai, Maharashtra, Western Coast |
| 5 | Paradip Port | Odisha, Eastern Coast |
| 6 | Kamarajar Port Limited | Chennai, Tamil Nadu, Eastern Coast |
| 7 | Mormugao Port Trust | Goa, Western Coast |
| 8 | Cochin Port | Kerala, Western Coast |
| 9 | New Mangalore Port | Mangalore, Western Coast |
| 10 | Chennai Port | Tamil Nadu, Eastern Coast |
| 11 | V.O.Chidambaranar Port | Tuticorin, Eastern Coast |
| 12 | Mumbai Port | Mumbai, Western Coast |

- ✓ It is ranked 28th in the world and has a traffic of 5.1 million TEUs (Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units).
- ✓ India will join the top 10 container port countries in the world after the development of the Vadhavan port
- **Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay - presented the 'World Heritage City' certificate to the Pink City – Jaipur on February 05, 2020.**



- ✓ Minister of Urban Development Shanti Dhariwal received this award in a ceremony held at Albert Hall.
- ✓ Earlier, the government of India sent a proposal in August 2018 to declare Pink City as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- ✓ Jaipur is known for its palaces, architecture, forts, reflecting Mughal, Persian and Hindu designs
- ✓ There are 37 World Heritage Sites in Rajasthan
- ✓ The tag of World Heritage City promotes domestic and international tourism, strengthens the local economy besides providing employment to the people.
- ✓ The objective of this UN certification program is to select and preserve such places of the world which are important for humanity in terms of world culture.
- ✓ UNESCO World Heritage Sites are selected by the World Heritage Sites Committee
- ✓ UNESCO provides financial assistance to such sites under certain circumstances.
- ✓ According to the official website of UNESCO, there are 6 cultural and 4 natural criteria for the selection of a world heritage site.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **The Supreme Court - has ruled that states need not allocate a quota for SC, ST or OBCs in government jobs and that there is no fundamental right to claim reservation in promotions in its verdict on February 7**

'NOT A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT'

➤ On Sept 5, 2012, Uttarakhand decided to fill up all posts in government services without providing reservations to SC/STs. Uttarakhand HC struck down the notification and directed the government to provide quota

➤ Uttarakhand argued that Article 16(4) and 16 (4-A) of Constitution are merely enabling provisions and there is no fundamental right to claim reservation. The SC agreed and reversed HC order

WHAT SUPREME COURT SAID

“There is no fundamental right which inheres in an individual to claim reservation in promotions

— Supreme Court

- ✓ A bench of Justices L Nageswara Rao and Hemant Gupa observed this in a case on the validity of Uttarakhand government's September 5, 2012 decision to fill up all posts in government services in the state without providing reservations to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
- ✓ The Uttarakhand high court had cancelled the notification and had directed the government to provide reservation as per law.
- ✓ The SC bench upheld the September 5 notification now and reversed the HC judgment.
- ✓ However, the SC said, if the states wish to exercise their discretion and make such a provision to provide reservation, the state has to collect quantifiable data showing inadequacy of representation of that class in public services
- ✓ Article 16(4) and 16 (4-A) of the Constitution enable provisions of reservation
- ✓ Article 16(4) and 16(4-A) empowers the state to make reservation in matters of appointment and promotion in favour of SCs and STs “if in the opinion of the state they are not adequately represented in the services of the state”

INTERNATIONAL

- **A 60-year-old American woman - has died of the new coronavirus in Wuhan, capital of Hubei, indicating the first confirmed non-Chinese death of the illness in China**
- ✓ The death toll in mainland China rose to 722 on February 8
- ✓ It is expected to outscore the 774 deaths recorded globally during the 2002-2003 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.
- ✓ The number of cases stood at 34,800 globally as of February 8.
- ✓ Two deaths have been reported outside — in Hong Kong and the Philippines.
- ✓ Both victims were Chinese nationals.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- India and African nations - adopted the 'Lucknow Declaration' during the first India-Africa Defence Minister's Conclave on February 6, 2020.



- ✓ The conclave was held on the sidelines of the 11th edition of the biennial defence exhibition, DEFEXPO India 2020.
- ✓ The declaration was adopted in the presence of Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his counterparts from 12 African nations and heads of delegations from 38 other African countries.
- ✓ The leaders recalled India's contribution to defence and security in Africa, acknowledging the humanitarian assistance and various measures rendered by the country
- ✓ The first-ever field training exercise 'AFINDEX' between both the sides was held earlier in March 2019.

PERSONALITIES

- Niket Dalal, a 38-year-old from Aurangabad - created history by becoming the first completely visually-challenged athlete to finish an Ironman triathlon on February 7



- ✓ Dalal completed the gruelling Ironman 70.3 — consisting of a 1.9 km swim, a 90 km bicycle ride and a 21.1 km run — with the help of sighted companion, Arham Shaikh
- ✓ Shaikh is the youngest Indian to finish the 5000 km coast-to-coast cross-country race in the U.S
- ✓ Dalal and Shaikh completed the race in 7 hours and 44 minutes, with 46 mins to spare.
- ✓ They stood second in their category of physically disabled athletes
- ✓ They were the first Indian team to finish a Ironman 70.3 triathlon.
- ✓ Dalal, a professional speech therapist, participated as part of a team from the Pune-based PowerPeaks Athlete Lab
- ✓ Dalal has been a State-level swimmer and has participated in and won many sea swimming competitions.
- ✓ He took up cycling as a sport last year and completed the grueling Manali to Khardungala cycling expedition in August 2019.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Pangolin, the most trafficked mammal of Asia - was identified as the carrier of the coronavirus by the researchers of China**



- ✓ According to researchers, the outbreak that killed around 636 people in China has started from a market in Wuhan city through Pangolin.
 - ✓ Earlier in 2002-03, when the SARS outbreak occurred, the virus transferred to humans from civet (a mammal).
 - ✓ Civet is prized in China for its flesh
 - ✓ The sale of Civet was outlawed in China following SARS epidemic.
 - ✓ There are 8 species of Pangolins all over the world, which are listed under threatened in IUCN red list.
 - ✓ Pangolins have the highest protection under CITES and hence their international trade has been banned.
- **The temperature in northern Antarctica – records 18.3°C, a likely heat record on the continent best known for snow, ice and penguins.**
 - ✓ The reading was taken on February 6 at an Argentine research base, called Esperanza

- ✓ Also, this year, Antarctica's Marambio site registered the highest temperature for the month of February since 1971.
- ✓ Thermometers there recorded 14.1°C, above the previous February 2013's record reading of 13.8°C.
- ✓ Antarctica is among the fastest-warming regions on the planet, with the Antarctic Peninsula, warming particularly quickly
- ✓ Average temperatures on the continent have risen almost 3°C over the past 50 years.
- ✓ The previous record of 17.5°C was set in 2015.

DEFENCE

- **Bandhan, a technology transfer ceremony – was held at DefExpo 2020, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh**



- ✓ During the ceremony, the DRDO transferred 15 licenses developed by it to 17 industries.
- ✓ The transfer of technologies were in the field of laser technology, electronics, armaments, material science, naval systems, combat vehicles, sensors and aeronautics
- ✓ In the year 2019, around 114 technologies were transferred.
- ✓ As part of the agreement, the UP state government has allocated land in the Defence Corridors for the private sectors to build defence industries.
- ✓ The Union government is encouraging private firms to increase their defence production in order to increase the overall defence exports
- ✓ So far, the DefExpo has launched 13 products, 71 MoUs and 18 transfer of technologies.
- ✓ More than 200 agreements have been signed.
- ✓ The Uttar Pradesh Government alone has signed 23 MoUs of worth Rs 50,000 crores

ECONOMY

- **The Reserve Bank of India - announced that it will create a Digital Payment Index by July 2020.**

- ✓ The index will monitor the digital payments and reflect on its penetration in the country.
- ✓ RBI has also planned to introduce classification in the index.
- ✓ The classification will include rural, urban and semi-urban geographies.
- ✓ The major factors that are influencing digital growth in India includes low data tariffs, rise in videos and widespread use of OTT (Over-the-top) platform

AWARDS

- **President Ram Nath Kovind - conferred the International Gandhi Awards for Leprosy on February 6**
- ✓ The awards were presented to Dr NS Dharmashaktu in the individual category and the under the institutional category.



- ✓ The award was constituted by the Gandhi Memorial Leprosy Foundation, which was founded in 1950.
- ✓ Mahatma Gandhi was a big crusader against leprosy and he carried great compassion for patients with leprosy
- ✓ In 2019, Yohei Sasakawa of Japan was honoured with the Gandhi Peace Prize for his efforts to eliminate Leprosy in India and work towards the welfare of leprosy patients.
- ✓ In 2018, the Indian government had recognized Damodar Ganesh Bapat with Padma Shri in 2018 for his work with Leprosy patients in Chhattisgarh.

SPORTS

- **G Sathyan - became the first Indian table tennis player to sign up for Japan's top-tier T-League for the 2020-2021 season.**



- ✓ The Tamil Nadu star will be representing Okayama Rivets in the league
 - ✓ The league will start from September this year.
 - ✓ Earlier, Sathiyar had played for German club Grünwettersbach in the Bundesliga for more than two years
 - ✓ T-League, which started two years back, has become one of the most sought-after leagues in the world
 - ✓ It has witnessed the participation of several top ranked players, including world No.5 Tomokazu Harimoto and former world No. 4 Jun Mizutani.
 - ✓ Apart from the Japanese paddlers, world No. 6 Lin Yun-Ju of Chinese Taipei and 20th-ranked Lee Sangsu of South Korea will also take part in the league.
 - ✓ India's TT team failed to qualify for the Tokyo Games
 - ✓ Sathiyar, ranked at World No. 30, is currently taking all efforts to make it to men's singles event of the 2020 Olympics.
- **Dronacharya awardee Pullela Gopichand – was named by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) among the recipients of the International Olympic Committee's 2019 Coaches Lifetime Achievement Award in the male category.**



- ✓ Gopichand is the first Indian coach to be bestowed with this honour.
- ✓ The 2001 All England champion took up coaching in 2004 after injuries shortened his playing career.
- ✓ He was appointed as the Chief Coach of Indian badminton team in 2006.
- ✓ Within a couple of years he started producing exceptional results with Saina Nehwal, who became the first Indian girl to win Grand Prix and Super Series titles.
- ✓ The initial big success in Gopichand's career was when Saina Nehwal won the Commonwealth Games gold in 2010 and the Indian team won several medals at that event.
- ✓ In 2012, Saina became the first Indian badminton player to bag bronze at Olympics under the guidance of Gopichand.
- ✓ The very next year, his another protégé, 16-year old PV Sindhu became the first Indian girl to win a World Championships medal when she won a bronze.
- ✓ Sindhu repeated that feat in 2014 and also became the first shuttler to clinch silver at the Olympics in 2016.

- ✓ With Sindhu's feat, Gopichand achieved a rare honour of having coached two players who won Olympic medals in India.
 - ✓ In 2019, Sindhu won the World Championships title as well.
 - ✓ Even in men's singles, shuttlers like Kidambi Srikanth, Sai Praneeth and Parupalli Kashyap excelled on the world stage under the guidance of Gopichand.
- **Australia - was presented the ICC Women's Championship trophy on February 8**



- ✓ It had retained it by taking a winning lead in the eight-team ODI competition played from 2017 to 2020.
- ✓ The team under the leadership of Meg Lanning, has now won both editions after ensuring a winning lead in the 2017-2020 championship.

RANKINGS

- **India - was ranked at 40th position out of the 53 economies, as per the International IP (Intellectual Property) Index released recently**
- ✓ The Index has been released by the Global Innovation Policy Centre (GIPC) of the US Chamber of Commerce
 - ✓ This year, India scored 16.22 in Intellectual Property Index.
 - ✓ India's score has shown improvement by 7% as compared to the previous year
 - ✓ In 2019, India was at 36th rank, improving from 44th position in 2018.
 - ✓ It was the highest gain for any country in 2019.
 - ✓ With a score of 42.66, US is ranked first followed by UK, Sweden, France, Germany and Ireland to complete the Top 5.

