

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JAN 1, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- The Kavalan mobile app – has reached a download of 1 million in the state



- ✓ The recent increase in the download of the app followed the call to the Public by Tamil Nadu Director general of police J K Tripathy to install the app to help police respond to SOS calls.
- ✓ According to police, at least 9.4 lakh android smart phone users in the state have installed the app, while about 60,000 iPhone users have downloaded it on their phones
- ✓ As per the data provided by police, Chennai tops the download list with about 1.60 lakh users of the app, followed by Coimbatore district, including the city, with 45,000, Kancheepuram with 40,000 and Tiruvallur with 35,000 users.
- **Tamil Nadu's cities and major towns – did not figure in the Top 20 in both quarters in the Swachh Survekshan League 2020 rankings.**
  - ✓ The best-ranked city/town of the state was Madurai, which was placed 27th in the first quarter in the greater than 10 lakh population category.
  - ✓ However it fell down to the 32nd spot in the second quarter.
  - ✓ Coimbatore and Chennai were ranked behind Madurai, at 31<sup>st</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> position respectively, in the first quarter in the same category.
  - ✓ Both these cities had also dropped to the 34th and 43rd rank, respectively, in the second quarter.

- ✓ In the category of cities with a population of between 1 and 10 lakh, Tiruchi was ranked 38 in the first quarter.
  - ✓ But the city slipped to 56th rank in the second quarter.
  - ✓ Other towns and cities that found a place in the top 100 in the first quarter includes Kumbakonam (48), Salem (77), Vellore (83), Tambaram (84) and Pallavaram (91).
  - ✓ But except Pallavaram, which subsequently dropped to the 76th spot, the other cities/towns did not figure in the top 100 in the second quarter.
  - ✓ **St. Thomas Mount Cantonment**, which secured the **Top** position among 60 Cantonment Boards across the country in the first quarter, ended with the 24th rank in the second quarter.
  - ✓ The Wellington Cantonment, which was ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the first quarter, was ranked at 10th in the second quarter.
  - ✓ Swachh Survekshan League 2020 is being conducted for 3 different quarters — April-June, July-September and October-December 2019, with 2000 marks allocated for each quarter.
- **The Tamil Nadu government – has decided to undertake a study to assess the pollution caused by Micro-plastics in coastal areas, estuaries and lakes.**
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board will fund the study.
  - ✓ The study will be done by the Environment Management Agency of Tamil Nadu through the Suganthi Devadason Marine Research Institute in Thoothukudi for a period of 3 years, between 2019-20 and 2021-22
  - ✓ A fund of Rs 81.20 lakh has been allotted for the study
  - ✓ The results of the planned study would help to collect baseline data on the status of Micro-plastics in these areas to chalk out further remedial action
  - ✓ The presence of Micro-plastics in the environment is considered a 'global' issue with environmental, economic and health implications.
  - ✓ Micro-plastics can also alter the physical conditions of marine habitats, leading to irreversible damage to the ecosystem.

## STATES

- **The Kerala assembly - passed a resolution on December 31 demanding that the Centre withdraw the Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 immediately**
- ✓ Thus, Kerala becomes the first state in the entire country to oppose the law legislatively
  - ✓ According to the Kerala Government, the CAA act contradicts the basic principles of Constitution.
  - ✓ All members of the serving LDF and the opposition UDF supported the resolution moved by chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the special session of the state assembly.

- ✓ Kerala has already put 'on hold' all the activities in connection with the National Population Register (NPR) considering the apprehension among people that it will lead to the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
- ✓ Earlier, the Parliament had passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2019 on December 11, 2019
- ✓ The bill aims to amend the Citizenship Act, 1955, thus allowing Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Christians and Parsi fleeing religious persecution from countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh to obtain Citizenship in the country.
- ✓ The Citizenship (Amendment) bill was first introduced in 2016.

➤ **Kerala – announces ban on single-use plastics from January 1, 2020**

- ✓ The state has banned 19 types of plastic materials, which includes Plastic carry bags, trays, disposable glasses, bottles, straw, plates, cups, cooling film, bowls, flask, sheets for food parcelling, spoon, juice packet, PVC flex materials and plastic containers for parceling
- ✓ The move is part of the ambitious effort to secure Green certification for 9 key tourist destinations in the State by 2021.
- ✓ With the ban in force, Kerala Tourism is targeting to announce Kumarakom as the first plastic-free tourist destination in the State in January 2020

## NATIONAL

➤ **Indore city in Madhya Pradesh - was ranked India's Cleanest City for the fourth time in a row among cities with over 10 lakh population as per the quarterly Swachhta survey rankings released.**

- ✓ In this category, Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh) was ranked second in first quarter results (April-June) of Swachh Survekshan League 2020, while Rajkot (Gujarat) secured the second spot in second quarter (July-September) rankings.
- ✓ Jamshedpur in Jharkhand has topped the cleanliness rankings for two consecutive quarters among cities with 1 lakh to 10 lakh population
- ✓ In this category, New Delhi stood at second position in the first quarter, but later slipped to sixth position in the second quarter and was replaced by Chandrapur in Maharashtra at second place in the second quarter
- ✓ Kolkata and Howrah stood at the bottom of the rankings among 49 cities with population of more than 10 lakh, as West Bengal did not participate in the nationwide exercise.

Top 20 Cities in >10 Lakh Population Category					
Quarter 1			Quarter 2		
Rank	State	ULB	Rank	State	ULB
1	MADHYA PRADESH	INDORE	1	MADHYA PRADESH	INDORE
2	MADHYA PRADESH	BHOPAL	2	GUJARAT	RAJKOT
3	GUJARAT	SURAT	3	MAHARASHTRA	NAVI MUMBAI
4	MAHARASHTRA	NASHIK	4	GUJARAT	VADODARA
5	GUJARAT	RAJKOT	5	MADHYA PRADESH	BHOPAL
6	MAHARASHTRA	PIMPRI CHINCHWAD	6	GUJARAT	AHMEDABAD
7	GUJARAT	AHMEDABAD	7	MAHARASHTRA	NASHIK
8	MAHARASHTRA	NAVI MUMBAI	8	MAHARASHTRA	GREATER MUMBAI
9	UTTAR PRADESH	ALLAHABAD	9	UTTAR PRADESH	ALLAHABAD
10	MAHARASHTRA	VASAI VIRAR	10	UTTAR PRADESH	LUCKNOW
11	CHANDIGARH	CHANDIGARH	11	MADHYA PRADESH	JABALPUR
12	MAHARASHTRA	PUNE	12	MAHARASHTRA	PUNE
13	MAHARASHTRA	GREATER MUMBAI	13	MADHYA PRADESH	GHAWLIOR
14	UTTAR PRADESH	VARANASI	14	MAHARASHTRA	PIMPRI CHINCHWAD
15	UTTAR PRADESH	KANPUR	15	MAHARASHTRA	NAGPUR
16	UTTAR PRADESH	LUCKNOW	16	MAHARASHTRA	KALYAN DOMBIVALI
17	MAHARASHTRA	KALYAN DOMBIVALI	17	MAHARASHTRA	VASAI VIRAR
18	CHHATTISGARH	RAIPUR	18	ANDHRA PRADESH	VIJAYAWADA
19	ANDHRA PRADESH	VISAKHAPATNAM	19	UTTAR PRADESH	VARANASI
20	ANDHRA PRADESH	VIJAYAWADA	20	GUJARAT	SURAT

- ✓ In the first quarter Sursand (Sitamarhi) and Harnaut (Nalanda) in Bihar came last, during the second quarter Kurdemukh in Karnataka and Bedangpet in Telangana finished last in the list of cities with the population of 1 lakh to 10 lakh.

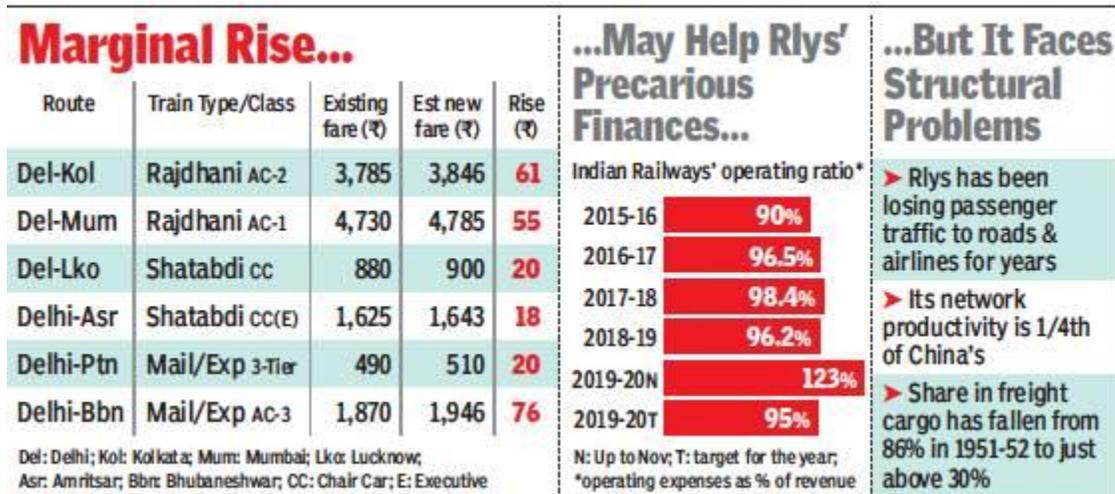



**Top 20 Cities in 1-10 Lakh Population Category**

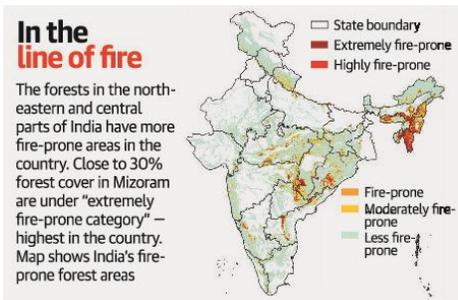
Quarter 1			Quarter 2		
Rank	State	ULB	Rank	State	ULB
1	JHARKHAND	JAMSHEDPUR	1	JHARKHAND	JAMSHEDPUR
2	DELHI	NEW DELHI (NDMC)	2	MAHARASHTRA	CHANDRAPUR_M
3	MADHYA PRADESH	KHARGONE	3	MADHYA PRADESH	KHARGONE
4	CHHATTISGARH	BILASPUR	4	UTTAR PRADESH	LONI (NPP)
5	MAHARASHTRA	KOLHAPUR	5	CHHATTISGARH	AMBIKAPUR
6	CHHATTISGARH	KORBA	6	DELHI	NEW DELHI (NDMC)
7	MADHYA PRADESH	PITHAMPUR	7	ANDHRA PRADESH	ONGOLE
8	HARYANA	ROHTAK	8	MADHYA PRADESH	PITHAMPUR
9	HARYANA	BAHADURGARH	9	KARNATAKA	MYSORE
10	MAHARASHTRA	MIRA-BHAYANDAR	10	MAHARASHTRA	MIRA-BHAYANDAR
11	MAHARASHTRA	SOLAPUR	11	MADHYA PRADESH	SAGAR
12	MAHARASHTRA	PANVEL	12	GUJARAT	GANDHINAGAR
13	ANDHRA PRADESH	TIRUPATI	13	MADHYA PRADESH	DEWAS
14	GUJARAT	GANDHINAGAR	14	MAHARASHTRA	KOLHAPUR
15	CHHATTISGARH	RAJNANDGAON	15	CHHATTISGARH	BILASPUR
16	CHHATTISGARH	RAIGARH	16	MAHARASHTRA	PANVEL
17	CHHATTISGARH	AMBIKAPUR	17	MAHARASHTRA	LATUR
18	MADHYA PRADESH	KHANDWA	18	CHHATTISGARH	RAJNANDGAON
19	ANDHRA PRADESH	TENALI	19	PUNJAB	BATHINDA
20	PUNJAB	BATHINDA	20	MAHARASHTRA	BARSHI

- ✓ The report was released by Urban affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri on December 31 in New Delhi
- ✓ Interestingly, even in the overall ranking of all cities and towns, Indore emerged as the cleanest during both rounds of the survey.
- ✓ This year a total of 4,372 cities participated in the league, which included municipal areas with population in the range of less than 25,000 and over 10 lakh
- ✓ The rankings, being conducted in a league format for the first time, were divided into three quarters (April to June, July to September and October to December 2019) and different categories based on the population of the various cities.
- ✓ The Government has launched the Swachh Survekshan League to ensure that municipal authorities continue taking concrete steps to improve sanitation round the year
- ✓ It is carried out by the Quality Council of India (QCI).
- ✓ A national-level survey of cleanliness of cities will begin from January 4, leading to the final Swachh Survekshan 2020 rankings.
- ✓ It was first conducted in 2016 covering 73 cities
- **In its first fare hike in five years, the Railways - announced an increase in passenger charges on December 31, but did not touch suburban train fares and its season tickets**
- ✓ The increase would be effective from January 1, 2020,

- ✓ The Railways expects to generate an additional ₹2,300 crore annual revenue with an increase in the range of 1 paise - 4 paise per km for different classes of travelers



- ✓ According to an official statement, the increase in fare is 1 paise per km for ordinary non-suburban classes (second class ordinary, sleeper class ordinary, first class ordinary) and 2 paise per km for mail/ express trains in non-AC class (second class mail/ express, sleeper class mail/ express, first class mail/ express).
- ✓ The hike per km for all AC tickets across trains will be 4 paise applicable for Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Duronto, Vande Bharat, Tejas, Garib Rath, Antodaya and Jan Shatabdi trains
- ✓ The operating ratio has increased to 121% till November-end during the current fiscal year as compared to 113% in the same period in 2018-19.
- ✓ This has necessitated the increase, considering revenue shortfall during this fiscal (up to November-end) was close to ₹20,000 crore
- ✓ Operating ratio is the amount spent to earn ₹100, a higher ratio indicating poor financial health of the enterprise.
- ✓ The last fare revision was done by the Railways in 2014-15.
- **About 21.40% of forest cover in India - is susceptible to forest fires, as per the 2019 report by the Forest Survey of India (FSI)**
- ✓ The forests in the north-eastern region and central India were found to be the most vulnerable, as per the report
- ✓ The findings are released based on a study carried out by the FSI along forest fire points identified across the country from 2004 to 2017.



- ✓ The forest fire points (FFP) identified during the 13 year period adds up to 2,77,758
  - ✓ According to the report, 'extremely' fire prone areas account for 3.89% of total forest cover, 'very highly' fire prone areas account for 6.01% and 'highly' fire prone areas for 11.50%.
  - ✓ Together, these three categories account for 21.40 % of the forest cover in the entire country.
  - ✓ The total number of alerts issued for each state based on the available data from November 2018 to June 2019 were 29,547
  - ✓ Mizoram, a small State, recorded the highest number of fire alerts (2,795).
  - ✓ The seven States of the north-eastern region accounted for 10,210 fire alerts, which make up about one-third of alerts in the country.
  - ✓ While the overall green cover has increased in the country, it has decreased in the north-east, particularly in Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland
  - ✓ Central Indian States also recorded a high number of forest fire alerts, with Madhya Pradesh accounting for 2,723 alerts, Maharashtra 2,516, Odisha 2,213 and Chattisgarh 1,008 alerts between November 2018 to June 2019.
- **The Railways – has renamed the 'Railway Protection Force' (RPF) as 'Indian Railway Protection Force Service'**
- ✓ It has been accorded organised Group A status, as per the order issued by the Railways
  - ✓ On July 10, the Cabinet approved grant of Organised Group 'A' status to the RPF
  - ✓ The status gives the Railway personnel the financial benefits being enjoyed by officers in other government cadres.

## **CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

- **Minister of State for Tourism Prahlad Patel – will represent India at the inauguration of 'Visit Nepal 2020', the largest economic diplomacy initiative of Kathmandu.**
- ✓ The initiative aims to open Nepal's tourism economy and generate investment for infrastructure development and also develop the tourism sector
  - ✓ The inauguration is expected to be attended by Ministers and diplomats from at least 40 countries that will include high-level delegations from India and China.

- ✓ As part of the initiative, India, Nepal and China will hold the first-ever trilateral tourism expo in February 2020.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 2014 visit had mentioned the link between the Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu and the Vishwanath temple in Varanasi announcing the plans to connect both countries through the Hindu tourism circuit
- ✓ Similarly, Chinese Premier Xi Jinping during his October 11 visit announced plans to build road links and infrastructure with Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha.

## DEFENCE

- **The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) - has been newly created in the Defence Ministry**
- ✓ General Bipin Rawat, who will take charge as the new Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) on January 1, will be heading it.
- ✓ The CDS will also function as a Secretary in the Defence Ministry
- ✓ Under the new guidelines announced by the government last week, the CDS will function as the Principal Military Adviser to the Defence Minister and the Permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.
- ✓ The CDS will have a new peak cap, shoulder rank badges, belt buckle and a new car flag.
- ✓ The DMA will be the fifth department in the Ministry after the Department of Defence, the Department of Defence Production, the Department of Defence Research and Development and the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.
- ✓ Under the guidelines, the DMA would deal with the armed forces, the integrated headquarters of the Ministry, comprising the Army, Naval and Air and defence staff headquarters, the Territorial Army and works relating to the triservices and procurement exclusive to them, except capital acquisitions.

## ECONOMY

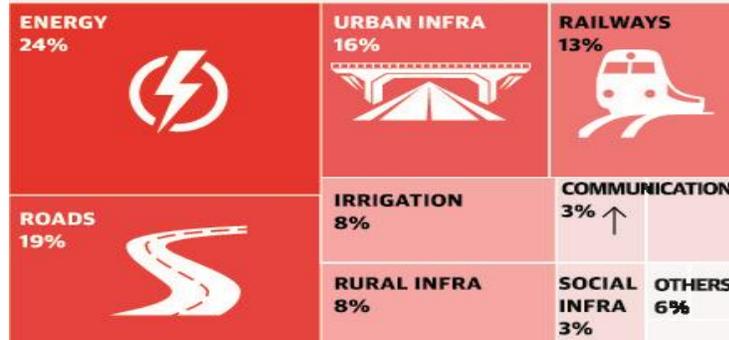
- **Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman - outlined plans to invest more than ₹102 lakh crore in infrastructure projects by 2024-25**



- ✓ The Finance minister released a report of task force on 'National Infrastructure on Pipeline (NIP) 2019-2025' on December 31
- ✓ The Centre, the States and the private sector will be sharing the capital expenditure in a 39:39:22 formula

## A new infra push

The break-up of expenditure for select sectors in the ₹102 lakh crore infrastructure projects announced by the Centre:



During fiscals 2020 to 2025, sectors such as energy, urban, railways and roads accounted for close to 70% of the projected infrastructure investments in India

- ✓ This will be a significant increase over the last 6 years, when the Centre and the States together spent only around ₹51 lakh crore on infrastructure.
- ✓ During the Independence Day speech this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced plans to invest ₹100 lakh crore in modern infrastructure.
- ✓ India needs to spend the same amount, of about Rs. 100 lakh crore, to achieve a GDP of \$5 trillion by 2024-25.
- ✓ A task force of senior bureaucrats, chaired by Economic Affairs Secretary Atanu Chakraborty, had identified ₹102 lakh crore worth of projects in 18 States as part of a National Infrastructure Pipeline.
- ✓ The investment is phased over a six-year period, including the current financial year.
- ✓ The plan calls for a massive ₹13.6 lakh crore investment in 2019-20, even though only ₹10 lakh crore was invested in 2018-19 and ₹10.2 lakh crore in 2017-18.
- ✓ The IMF projected India's growth rate at 6.1% in 2019 and the World Bank projected India's growth rate at 6% in 2019.

