

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 30, 2019

TAMIL NADU

- ◆ **The Tamil Nadu government - has unveiled a plan to set up five mini-desalination plants of one million litre capacity each**

HIGH-FIVE ON SHORELINE Representational image

Location Kasimedu, Thiruvottiyur, Triplicane, MRC Nagar, Thiruvanmiyur	
Population to be served 1 lakh people per plant	
Estimated Cost ₹120 crore	
Where 1 km from shoreline	
Size To come up on an area of approximately 1 sq.km	
Cost ₹55 to ₹75 per kilo litre	
Deadline Within 6 months	

- ✓ The plants, costing ₹120 crore, will start operation at Kasimedu, Thiruvottiyur, Triplicane, MRC Nagar and Thiruvanmiyur within the next six months
- ✓ Since these plants are small, they don't require much space or infrastructure
- ✓ However, clearances from central and state pollution control board and coastal regulation authorities are a must.
- ✓ The proposal is likely to get the government's nod soon and will be announced on the floor of the assembly.
- ✓ As of now, Metrowater is dependent on Chembarambakkam, Cholavaram and Red Hills reservoirs that are almost dry
- ✓ Veeranam water supply scheme, quarries and borewells, and 100MLD desalination plants at Nemmeli and Minjur are the other sources of water to the city

◆ **Tamil Nadu – unveils its first draft Urban Housing and Habitat Policy, suggesting reduction of stamp duties from 11% to 7% to make dwelling units affordable**

- ✓ At present, at 11% the state has the highest collective stamp duty and registration fee in the entire country.
- ✓ It further recommended discounts on properties that are registered jointly or exclusively in the name of women.
- ✓ Earlier, the state government revised the guideline value by 33% but increased the registration fee by 3% matching the revenue to its exchequer.
- ✓ The draft policy prepared by an international agency looks at a range of issues related to land and infrastructure availability, planning, housing finance, housing project development, providing access to structurally safe dwelling units for each household in the state
- ✓ As per the draft policy, emphasis has been given to special housing schemes such as hostels and 1 BHK units for single working women to be promoted and developed near IT parks and industrial zones.
- ✓ Women should be involved at all stages from planning, designing, constructions and maintenance of housing projects particularly in SHG and slum upgradation projects
- ✓ Government shall create GIS-based land bank for affordable housing with detailed inventory of the land parcels including all spatial, ownership and infrastructure attributes

◆ **The Tamil Nadu government - has released ₹ 109 crore to tackle the severe drinking water crisis in most parts of the State.**

- ✓ The sum, sourced from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), was sanctioned and released through a G.O. issued on May 28 for implementing various drinking water projects across the State
- ✓ While ₹ 37.5 crore has been earmarked for augmenting and streamlining drinking water supply to Chennai and adjoining areas through Metrowater, ₹ 56.05 crore and ₹ 16.32 crore have been allocated to the Commissionerate of Municipal Administration (CMA) and the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board (TWAD), respectively
- ✓ The allocation of funds from the SDRF to various drinking water supply agencies followed a notification issued on March 7 by the Revenue and Disaster Management Department that 24 districts, including Chennai, Madurai, Tiruchi and 38 blocks in seven other districts, had been hit by drought.
- ✓ The Chief Minister also reviewed arrangements for water supply.

◆ **LKG and UKG classes - are finally set to begin in anganwadis functioning in middle school campuses across the State from June 3.**

- ✓ The State government had proposed to start kindergarten classes back in December 2018 itself, when it planned to put a Montessori-based system in place.
- ✓ As a pilot project, the classes will begin in 2,381 anganwadis across the State and cover 52,933 children
- ✓ The Samagra Siksha Abhiyan will kickstart training programmes from June 6 where master resource persons will be initially trained and they will in turn, train teachers in 32 districts.
- ✓ Montessori experts, teachers and early educators who were part of framing the pre-school syllabus will be involved in this exercise
- ✓ Students will be given uniforms, footwear, educational materials such as books, crayons and will stand to receive a completion certificate at the end of two years.

◆ **The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) - launched the third of its six planned Space Technology Incubation Centres (S-TIC), at National Institute of Technology-Tiruchi on May 29**



- ✓ The S-TIC will enable start-ups to build applications and products that could be used in future space missions.
- ✓ The first and second such centres are functioning out of NIT-Agartala and NIT-Jalandhar.
- ✓ Three more centres will be opened in Rourkela, Nagpur and Indore.

◆ **Pregnancy and Infant Cohort Monitoring and Evaluation (PICME) - is a project implemented by the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine**

- ✓ It is mandatory for pregnant women to register themselves on the PICME website
- ✓ This registration helped track and monitor pregnant women.
- ✓ After delivery, it also monitors the vaccination status of the baby

STATES

◆ Karnataka – plans to send a proposal to the Centre to increase legal age for tobacco consumption from 18 to 21 in the state

- ✓ At present, the minimum age for smoking tobacco in Karnataka is 18 as per The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 (COTPA)
- ✓ As per the recent Global Adult Tobacco Survey 2 (GATS 2), the starting age for tobacco consumption was 19.8 years
- ✓ The state is also planning to increase fines for violations pertaining to tobacco sale and consumption from ₹200 to ₹1,000
- ✓ It seeks to enhance the fine for smoking in public places from ₹200 to ₹500

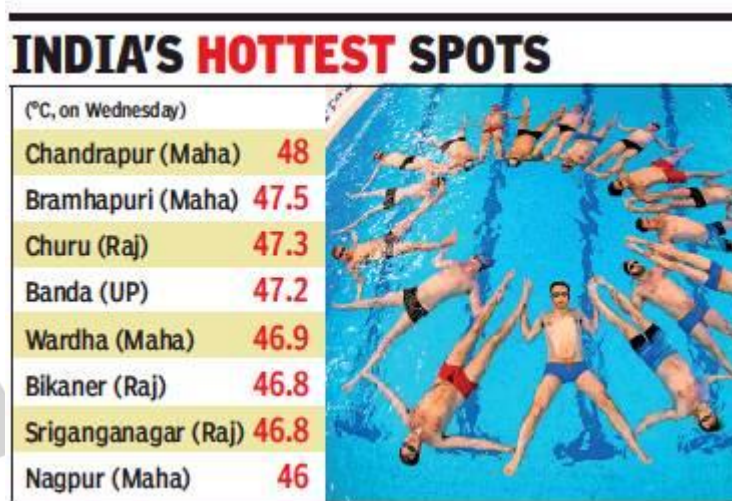
NATIONAL

◆ The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) and the Indian Air Force (IAF) - have signed an MoU for astronaut selection and training for the ambitious Gaganyaan mission, scheduled for 2022



- ✓ From the IAF's side, the Bengaluru-based Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) will lead the selection and training of astronauts.
- ✓ The signing of MoU will kick-start the process of selection — which will take 12-14 months — following which training will begin
- ✓ While most of the basic training will happen in India, Isro is looking for foreign help for advanced training
- ✓ ISRO has suggested that eventually 10 candidates be trained for the space travel.
- ✓ But only three astronauts will be involved in circling the Earth for about seven days from a distance of 400 km

◆ **Heatwave warnings - were issued in as many as 16 of the 36 meteorological subdivisions in the country for May 29, while 15 subdivisions were alerted for possible heatwave on May 30.**



- ✓ This heatwave spell is among the strongest this summer and is expected to continue till June 2 in several parts of the country, including Vidarbha, the worst hit region
- ✓ Chandrapur in Vidarbha recorded this summer's highest temperature in India so far, with the mercury touching a blistering 48°C on May 29.
- ✓ According to India Meteorological Department data, the highest ever May temperature in Chandrapur is 48.3°C, recorded on May 16, 1912
- ✓ Banda in Uttar Pradesh's Bundelkhand region was the hottest town in north India, recording 47.2°C on May 29
- ✓ IMD's colour-coded warnings show the subdivision in red till May 30, the only region marked in that colour.
- ✓ A "red alert" is an indication for authorities and other stakeholders to "take action" regarding an extreme weather event.
- ✓ Orange is a "be prepared" alert, while yellow means "be updated".

◆ **Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president Naveen Patnaik and senior BJP leader Pema Khandu - were sworn in as the Chief Ministers of Odisha and Arunachal Pradesh on May 29**



- ✓ Naveen Patnaik took the oath for the fifth consecutive term in Bhubaneswar.
- ✓ Patnaik and his ministerial colleagues were administered the oath of office and secrecy by Governor Ganeshi Lal.
- ✓ In Itanagar, Pema Khandu was sworn in as the first Chief Minister of an elected BJP government
- ✓ He became the 10th Chief Minister of the state after Governor B.D. Mishra administered the oath of office and secrecy to him
- ✓ His father, Dorjee Khandu, was the fifth CM of the state
- ✓ Pema Khandu took interest into politics after the death of his father in a helicopter crash eight years ago
- ◆ **The World Bank - agreed to provide development policy loan of \$250 million as the first tranche for the Rebuild Kerala Initiative on May 29**
 - ✓ The World Bank's commitment was made after three days of tripartite negotiations among the Kerala government, Department of Economic Affairs of the Union government, and the World Bank officials in New Delhi.
- ◆ **Eighty-four out of the 102 cities - have submitted proposals to reduce toxic particulate matter levels by 20%-30% by 2024**
 - ✓ As per the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) launched in January this year, 102 most polluted cities in the country have been tasked with reducing PM (particulate matter) 10 and PM 2.5 levels by 2024
 - ✓ For achieving the NCAP targets, cities would be expected to calculate the reduction in pollution, keeping 2017's average annual PM levels as the base year

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- ◆ **The Supreme Court - suggested to the high courts on May 29 not to grant anticipatory bail to those who default on the goods and services tax (GST)**
 - ✓ On May 27, the SC has upheld the Telangana high court's decision not to grant bail to such defaulters.

- ✓ A Vacation Bench led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justice Aniruddha Bose asked the government to address the court on the issue
- ✓ A division bench of the Telangana HC had on April 18 upheld the authority and power of the commissioner of the central goods and services tax (CGST) to arrest those accused of violating the CGST Act, 2017
- ✓ As per the CGST Act, GST violations are recognized as a cognisable offence and provide power to the GST commissioner to arrest a person on the basis of “reasons to believe” that a person has committed the offence under Section 132 of the CGST Act.
- ✓ The Bench scheduled the case for hearing before a three-judge Bench.

DEFENCE

◆ **Army - enforces a price cap on four-wheelers bought from the subsidized Canteen Stores Department (CSD)**

PRICE LIMIT

- **Officers will be able to buy cars worth up to only ₹12 lakh, excluding GST, through CSD route from June 1**
- **Other ranks will be able to buy a car of up to 1,400cc, not exceeding ₹5 lakh, once during service and once after retirement**
- **While overall car sales dipped in 2018-2019, sales through CSD rose over 20%**

- ✓ It has also restricted their purchase to only once in eight years for serving and retired officers.
- ✓ A person can save from ₹50,000 to upwards of ₹1.5 lakh, depending on the fourwheeler purchased through CSD, because the government gives 50% rebate on the GST on them after reduced prices are negotiated with the automobile manufacturer.

APPOINTMENTS

- ◆ **Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal, Birender Singh Dhanoa – takes over as the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC)**



- ✓ He replaces the outgoing Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Sunil Lanba
- ✓ ACM Dhanoa will be the Chairman of the COSC with effect from May 31

SPORTS

- ◆ **Manu Bhaker - finished fourth and clinched a Tokyo 2020 berth in the women's 10m air pistol final at the Munich World Cup**

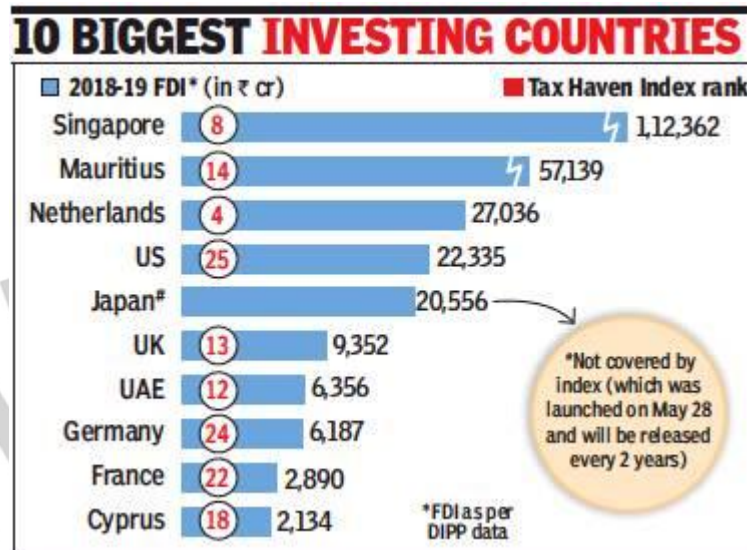


- ✓ Manu's quota is India's seventh in individual events and first in women's 10m air pistol
- ✓ Since India has already won a quota in men's air pistol event, Manu's quota will enable the country to field a mixed team at the Tokyo Games.

- ✓ Manu, will also be eligible to shoot in the 25m pistol event, since only Rahi Sarnobat has won a quota in that event and only two shooters can represent the country in one event.
- ✓ India now have seven individual quotas, but the country can have shot at 12 medals. Apurvi Chandela (10m air rifle), Anjum Moudgil (10m air rifle, can also shoot in 50m rifle 3position), Saurabh Chaudhary, Abhishek Verma (10m air pistol), Divyansh Singh Panwar (10m air rifle), Rahi Sarnobat (25m pistol, can also shoot in 10m air pistol) and Manu Bhaker (10m air pistol, can also shoot in 25m air pistol)

RANKINGS

- ◆ **The first ever ‘Corporate Tax Haven Index’ – was released on May 28 by the Tax Justice Network (TJN)**



- ✓ It has identified the UK with its network of British overseas territories — such as British Virgin Islands, Bermuda and Cayman Islands — as the largest enabler of corporate tax avoidance.
- ✓ These three island countries topped the index, while the UK itself was ranked at 13. Netherlands and Switzerland were placed at 4 and 5 respectively.
- ✓ TJN, an independent research based international network, estimates that \$500 billion is dodged each year in tax by multinationals by use of a network of favourable tax countries.
- ✓ The index covers 64 countries, which are ranked based on a ‘corporate tax haven’ score. Some of the popular countries, through which FDI is routed into India, featured among the top 25 countries in this index.
- ✓ According to TJN, 52% of the world’s corporate tax avoidance risks can be attributed to the top 10 countries in the index

