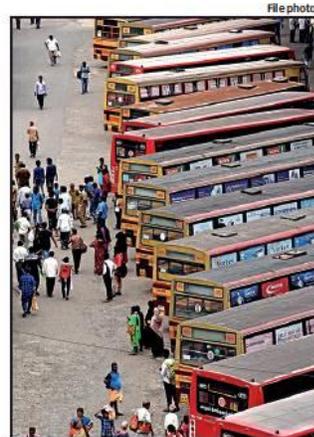


EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAR 11, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government – has relaxed the guidelines for the grant of old-age pension (OAP) to eligible persons**
 - ✓ It has made necessary amendments in this regard to the Tamil Nadu Old Age Pension Rules.
 - ✓ With the amended guidelines, persons having fixed assets valued at less than ₹1 lakh are eligible to get the OAP.
 - ✓ Earlier, the limit for the fixed assets stood at ₹50,000.
 - ✓ The government has also decided to change the guidelines further to make persons who have been allotted a free house eligible for OAP.
 - ✓ These moves are expected to allow more people to avail themselves of the monthly financial assistance of ₹1,000.
 - ✓ Currently, around 31 lakh people benefit from OAP granted by the Tamil Nadu government.

- **The bus passengers in Chennai - can now 'live' track government buses using 'Chalo' app**
 - ✓ The app provides details of nearest bus stops and next five Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) buses scheduled to arrive at any selected stop
 - ✓ It will work in both online and offline modes.
 - ✓ The app will show the source, destination and list of bus stops on a chosen route
 - ✓ The users can also search timings of buses along specific authorized routes
 - ✓ It displays a 'live' map, showing the present location of buses plying on the route, for the sake of users.
 - ✓ By selecting one of the buses, passengers may get to know when it would reach the nearest bus stop (based on GPS).



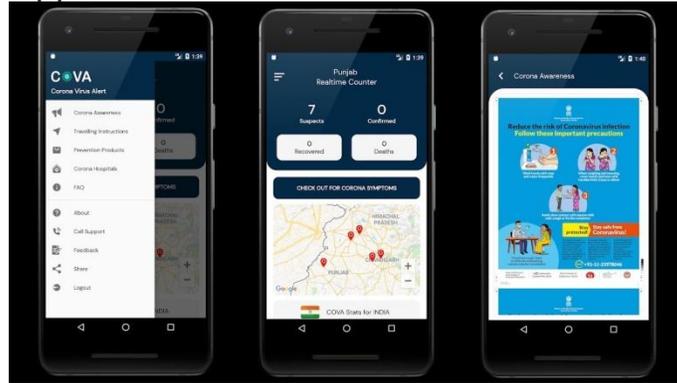
- ✓ To eliminate the confusion regarding the bus route numbers, the app provides the list of bus numbers between any two points
 - ✓ This facility is highly beneficial to passengers as the city transport corporation operates more than 650 routes, thereby eliminating the need to remember the bus route numbers.
 - ✓ The app is a beta version (or test-run) of the soon-to-be-launched government's Locate My Bus App (LAMB).
 - ✓ Currently, more than 90% of the total 3,300 MTC buses were fitted with GPS devices and are brought under the app's ambit.
 - ✓ It will be expanded soon to other buses based on the feedback and response from the public and after fixing internal errors
- **Two major hydroelectric projects in eco-sensitive Nilgiris, which are planned by the state government-run Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Company (TANGEDCO) - are likely to get environmental clearances without the mandatory public hearings.**
- ✓ A central government-appointed sub-committee, which inspected the project site in December 2019, had recommended to the Union Environment Ministry to exempt hearings to avoid further delays and cost overruns.
 - ✓ Recently, this suggestion was accepted by Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), which advises the ministry on eco-clearances.
 - ✓ The projects at Kundah and Sillahalla will have nine powerhouses with a capacity of 735 MW.
 - ✓ Besides this, other components including access tunnels, pressure shafts, and penstocks will be installed to generate power from existing reservoirs (Avalanche and Porthimund) there.
 - ✓ According to Tangedco, the tentative commissioning schedule of the Kundah project is May 2023.
 - ✓ Recently, tenders were awarded for electro-mechanical works and more than ₹200 crore has been allocated for the project in three packages
 - ✓ These hydroelectric projects, worth ₹1,832 crore, were launched in 2007 to ensure continuous supply of electricity and to meet peak power demands of the state grid.

- ✓ However, between 2007 and 2012, not much progress was reported due to the non-availability of funds and surplus power.
- ✓ Later, adequate funds were released in 2012, but the announcement of GST and pending court cases caused further delay.
- ✓ Meanwhile, the validity of the Environmental Clearance (EC) given to the Kundah project expired in 2017
- ✓ So the Union environment ministry told Tangedco to initiate the process of obtaining fresh environment clearance in October 2019
- ✓ The EAC, in response, formed a new sub-committee to inspect the site in December 2019.

STATES

- **The governments of Manipur and Mizoram - have closed their borders with Myanmar and Bangladesh following the threat of the coronavirus.**
 - ✓ The Mizoram government, in addition, has banned the entry of all foreigners to the state as a precautionary measure.
 - ✓ Manipur shares a 380-km border with Myanmar and the three main border gates are located at Moreh.
 - ✓ After the closure of the border gates, all ongoing commercial activities between India and Myanmar have been completely stopped now.
- **Beary - is set to be introduced as an optional third language across state schools from the 2020-21 academic years in the state of Karnataka.**
 - ✓ The Karnataka Beary Sahitya Academy is in the process of creating a textbook for students of Class 6, which will be approved further by the state authorities.
 - ✓ Beary, which traces its origins by around 1,200 years ago to Muslim traders, combines Malayalam and Tulu with a strong Arabic influence.
 - ✓ Written in the Kannada script, the language has portions of Kannada and Tamil as well.
 - ✓ It is the second most spoken language after Tulu in Dakshina Kannada
 - ✓ The Muslim Byari community accounts for an estimated 80% of Tulu Nadu's Muslim population.
 - ✓ The academy has constituted a 13-member committee to develop the contents of the textbook, which will be further scrutinised by a five-member panel.
 - ✓ The Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT) will then finalise the textbook.
 - ✓ The academy will work with DSERT to train teachers to teach the language in Kannada script.
- **The Punjab government - has launched a mobile app called COVA Punjab to cause awareness to general public about corona virus (COVID-19) and its prevention and precautions**

- ✓ In this mobile app, travel related and other preventive measures have been mentioned to avoid the corona virus.
- ✓ The new mobile App can be downloaded from Android or iPhone.



- ✓ The app intends to help people in identifying such symptoms which can help them to identify Coronavirus at early stage.
- ✓ Through the App, people will also get information about the Special Nodal Officer for Corona in the nearest hospital and district.

NATIONAL

- **The report of the Parliamentary Committee on Petroleum, headed by BJP member Ramesh Bidhuri - was tabled last week in the Parliament**
- ✓ The report points to the gap between the continuing use of kerosene and the government's claim of 97% LPG coverage nationwide
- ✓ As per the report, only 3 States and 5 Union Territories have become kerosene-free, though the government met the target of eight crore LPG connections under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana on September 7, 2019
- ✓ Only three States — Haryana, Punjab and Andhra Pradesh — and the Union Territories of Delhi, Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry have become kerosene-free.
- ✓ The 97% coverage has been calculated on the basis of the number of households — it stands at 2,850.5 lakh as on February 1 this year — and the domestic LPG consumers, at 2,772.2 lakh.
- ✓ Following the 97% coverage, the allocation for the scheme has been cut down by 58% from ₹2,724 crore during 2019-20 to ₹1,118 crore during 2020-21.
- ✓ As per the ministry, the scheme was no longer running, and the present allocation was meant to meet the arrears in the reimbursement of expenditure.
- ✓ Karnataka, Telangana, Haryana, Nagaland, Bihar, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh and Puducherry have gone for a voluntary cut.
- **The Technology Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC) - launched Vigyan Jyoti in order to encourage women to take science as their career**
- ✓ The scheme was announced on the eve of International Women's Day.

- ✓ Under the Scheme, around 500 selected qualified women are to be provided opportunities to attend science camps at leading institutions like NITs and IITS
 - ✓ The Vigyan Jyoti was launched in October 2019 by the Central Government to promote STEM Education among girls.
 - ✓ STEM refers to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.
 - ✓ TIFAC was formed as a registered body in 1988 under DST (Department of Science and Technology)
- **The Union Cabinet - recently approved the proposal to set up major port at Vadhvan in Maharashtra.**
- ✓ The centre has sanctioned Rs 65,545 crores for the project.
 - ✓ The proposed port will handle 16,000 to 25,000 TEUs per day.
 - ✓ The Mundra port and JNPT port are the two largest container handling ports in India.
 - ✓ A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) will also be formed in association with Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust.
 - ✓ The SPV will establish connectivity, construct breakwater and develop other port infrastructure.
 - ✓ The Vadhvan port has a natural port of 20 metres, making it ideal to handle bigger vessels.
- **The Ministry of AYUSH - released digital platform called AYUSH GRID**
- ✓ The grid contains details of facilities associated with AYUSH hospitals and laboratories and promotes traditional health care.
 - ✓ There are more than 12,500 AYUSH centres in India.
 - ✓ The “AYUSH GRID” platform aims to digitize entire AYUSH sector.
 - ✓ Earlier, the Ministry has launched AYUSH Hospital Information Management System, Yoga locator application, Tele-medicine, case registry portal and bhuvan application
 - ✓ These projects are to be linked with AYUSH GRID at later stages.
 - ✓ Apart from the GRID, the Ministry of AYUSH has also developed National Ayurveda Morbidity Codes.
 - ✓ These codes classify diseases described in Ayurveda.
 - ✓ In the first phase of the initiative 4 disease conditions have been identified namely Kasa, Kushtha, Jwara and Shwasa.

COMMITTEES

- **The Union Government - has formed a committee for the implementation of Kisan Rail.**
- ✓ The committee will have representatives from the Railway and Agriculture Ministries to work out the modalities of the scheme.

- ✓ It will look into the creation of a cold supply chain for the perishable goods, including milk, fish and meat, by initiating express and freight trains with refrigerated coaches
- ✓ This information was provided by Railway Minister Piyush Goyal in a written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha last week.
- ✓ The Kisan Rail scheme was proposed by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her presentation of the Union Budget 2020-21
- ✓ The scheme will be set up through a public-private-partnership (PPP) arrangement.
- ✓ The Kisan Rail will include refrigerated coaches in Express and Freight trains.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The Indian scientists - have developed a special 'bi-luminescent' safety ink that can help in counterfeiting documents such as passports, packing fake medicines and counterfeiting currency notes.**
- ✓ This ink shows two colours when exposed to the light of a certain frequency.
- ✓ It has been developed by scientists from the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi and the Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research, Ghaziabad.
- ✓ Appearing white in normal light, it turns into red when ultraviolet light is applied at a frequency of 254 nanometers.
- ✓ Similarly, when ultraviolet light is switched off, it emits a green colour.
- ✓ It emits red color at a frequency of 611 nanometers and green color at a frequency of 532 nanometers due to exposure to ultraviolet light.
- ✓ The red colour emission is attributed to the fluorescence and the emission of green color is due to the phosphorescence effect.
- ✓ At present, a pack of one kilogram has been delivered to Bank Note Press (BNP), Dewas and Security Printing Meeting Corporation of India Limited (SPMCIL), New Delhi.

ECONOMY

- **According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Chinese billionaire Jack Ma, founder of e-commerce major Alibaba Group - has replaced Mukesh Ambani, Chairman of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) as the richest man in Asia.**
- ✓ Ambani's current net worth stands at \$41.8 billion, while that of Jack Ma is \$44.5 billion
- ✓ Globally, Ambani is the 19th richest man just behind Jack Ma
- ✓ Mukesh Ambani lost USD 5.8 billion in net worth as RIL's share prices crashed at the stock market due to the Coronavirus epidemic and fall of oil prices

MONDAY MAYHEM SINGES RIL

➤ Corona virus fears erased \$5.8bn off Ambani's Fortune

➤ Jack Ma with \$44.5bn networth is richest man in Asia

➤ Oil plunged the most in 29 years on Monday as Saudi Arabia and Russia vowed to pump more in a struggle for market share

➤ Reliance Industry shares plunged 12% on Monday, the most since 2009, extending this year's decline to 26%

➤ Other affected by global slump were Wildcatter Harold Hamm, whose fortune was cut almost in half to \$2.4 billion as was oil magnate Jeff Hildebrand who lost \$3bn



- ✓ The shares of Reliance Industries (RIL) recorded its worst fall in around 10 years on March 9 as it fell to a low of ₹1,094.95 per share
- ✓ Energy markets crashed heavily on March 9 with oil prices across variants plunging around 30%, the biggest fall since the 1991 Gulf War.
- ✓ The RIL also lost the crown of the company with the highest market capitalisation in India to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).
- ✓ At the end of trade on March 9, the market capitalisation of RIL stood at ₹7.05 lakh crore, while that of TCS was ₹7.40 lakh crore.
- ✓ Ambani controls almost 42% of RIL

SPORTS

- **Mohun Bagan – secured the I-League Championship title with four games to spare at the Kalyani stadium in Kolkata**



- ✓ Papa Diawara of Bagan, named as the player of the match, scored the lone goal in the game against Aizawl FC.
- ✓ Kibu Vicuna of Spain became the first foreign coach to guide Bagan to the coveted title.
- ✓ The victory took the Bagan team to an unbeatable 39 points from 16 matches, handing them their second I-League title and the first since 2014-15 season.
- ✓ With the win, Bagan equals Dempo SC's record of five NFL/I-League titles.
- ✓ Bagan emerged victorious in NFL in 1997-98, 1999-2000, 2001-02 and I-League in 2014-15, 2019-20
- ✓ The Bagan team also matched Dempo's feat (in 2009-10) of winning the title with four matches remaining.
- ✓ Dempo has three I-League and two NFL crowns
- ✓ Bagan are likely to be handed the trophy after their final home match against Real Kashmir on April 4, likely to be held at Salt Lake Stadium.

- ✓ Bagan will play in the ISL from next season, having being acquired by ATK this year
- ✓ The title ensures Bagan a place in AFC Cup group stage next year.
- **Legendary M C Mary Kom (51kg) and World No.1 Amit Panghal (52kg) - bagged bronze medals at the Asian Olympic Qualifiers at Amman, Jordan on March 10.**
- ✓ Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) and Pooja Rani (75kg) also secured Bronze medals in the event
- ✓ However, Vikas Krishan (69kg) and Simranjit Kaur (60kg) advanced to the final with impressive victories to bag atleast a silver medal
- ✓ All the six boxers have already secured their place to the Olympic Games by making the semifinals
- ✓ Six-time World Champion Mary Kom lost to China's Chang Yuan, a former Youth Olympics champion, in a split1-4 verdict.
- **Shivpal Singh - became the second Indian javelin thrower after Neeraj Chopra to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.**



- ✓ The 24-year-old from Varanasi achieved a distance of 85.47m at the ACNW League event held at Potchefstroom, South Africa on March 10.
- ✓ Shivpal had bagged silver at Asian athletics championships in Doha last year and followed that up with gold at the Military World Games in Wuhan.
- ✓ He had narrowly missed the Olympic qualification mark — set at 85m — at SAG in December last year.
- ✓ During that event, he had managed 84.43m to finish with silver.

