



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—OCTOBER 13, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

- On October 12, Tamil Nadu government - signed 14 MoUs with various industries to bring ₹10,000 crore fresh investments into the state



- ✓ These agreements are expected to generate employment to over 7,000 persons
- ✓ The MoUs were exchanged, 10 in person and four virtually, in the presence of chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami, industries minister M C Sampath and other senior state government officials.
- ✓ JSW Renewable Energy has committed the maximum investment of ₹6,300 crore in wind and solar power projects spread across five districts – Tuticorin, Tenkasi, Tirunelveli, Ramanathapuram and Tirupur.
  - ✓ JSW Energy is a 4.5GW group, largely focused on thermal and hydro power sectors.
  - ✓ The company is expanding power capacities in the renewable sector, primarily solar and wind power, to achieve a target of 10GW capacity
  - ✓ With the newly signed MoU, the company plans to establish 810MW of renewable energy projects in Tamil Nadu, besides a 50MW captive power plant at the Mettur campus, over the next 2-3 years
  - ✓ This will fetch employment to around 2,400 persons

- ✓ Two leading players Apollo Tyres and Britannia Industries signed MoUs for expanding their existing capacities at Oragadam and Gangaikondan respectively.
  - ✓ While Apollo will invest ₹505 crore for the expansion, Britannia has committed to invest an additional ₹250 crore.
- ✓ Spain's Mantra Data Centres plans to invest ₹750 crore to establish a data park near Chennai
- ✓ Hong Kong-based Aosheng Hitech Ltd (₹200 crore) will manufacture carbon fiber plates.
- ✓ Vans Chemistry, Singapore, has proposed to establish an e-waste management facility at ₹50 crore.
- ✓ Further, Greenbase Industrial Parks, part of Hiranandani group, will invest ₹750 crore to establish an Industrial Logistics Park at Oragadam
- ✓ Other major investors include TPI Composites, USA, which is expanding its wind blade manufacturing capacity at an investment of Rs 300 crore at Sriperumbudur, Li-Energy for EV battery packs, LS Automotive Pvt Ltd, which is investing ₹250 crore for making switches for automobiles and Inox Air Products, which is investing ₹150 crore in a facility for producing liquid oxygen in Hosur
- ✓ Counter Measures Technologies would invest ₹ 51 crore in a project in the Tamil Nadu Defence Industrial Corridor
- ✓ Hyundai Wia, South Korea, will also expand its facility in Sriperumbudur at ₹109 crore
- ✓ During 2020, till September, the State has signed 42 MoUs worth ₹31,464 crore
- **The 2020 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize - will be awarded to Shai Evra of Princeton University, U.S., and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel.**
  - ✓ The annual prize is given for outstanding contributions by individuals, not exceeding the age of 32, in areas of mathematics
  - ✓ Evra's research concerns locally symmetric spaces of arithmetic groups and their combinatoric, geometric and topological structure.
  - ✓ His fundamental work will have major implications even outside mathematics, extending into theoretical computer science
  - ✓ The prize is awarded annually at an international conference in Number Theory, during December 21-22, at SASTRA University in Kumbakonam.
- **Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - have developed a new anti-bacterial and biodegradable food wrapping material**
  - ✓ The new material could store perishable items like fruits, vegetables, meat and paneer fresh for as long as 10 days without the need for refrigeration.
  - ✓ The wrapper was also found to degrade in 21 days making it an alternative to plastic wrappers and reduce plastic waste.



- ✓ Their project won the ‘SITARE- Gandhian Young Technological Innovation Appreciation 2020’.
  - ✓ The material is a flexible film made with a polymeric blend containing starch, polyvinyl alcohol and cyclic beta glucans, a form of carbohydrate
  - ✓ These chemicals are non-toxic and approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), US.
  - ✓ They were coated with antibacterial agents, also approved by FDA for consumption, which includes eugenol, found in nutmeg, cinnamon and basil, chlorogenic acid found in coffee, betanin, the red pigment in beetroot, curcumin in turmeric and gallic acid found in tea leaves and oak bark.
  - ✓ The team has applied for a patent.
- **On October 12, Tamil Nadu – reported 4,879 fresh Covid-19 infections and 62 deaths, taking the cumulative caseload to 6,61,264 cases and death toll to 10,314**
- ✓ The state has 43,747 ‘active cases’ as on date undergoing treatment across various health facilities
  - ✓ Another 5,165 persons were discharged after treatment, taking the total recovered to 6,07,203 persons

<b>AT A GLANCE</b>						
(Data as on Monday)						
Zones	Cases	Death	Active Cases	Case tally	Cured	Toll Total
Chennai region	1,825	29	18,319	2,81,492	2,58,202	4,971
North	589	9	4,220	97,185	91,711	1,254
Central	476	4	3,800	59,382	54,795	787
South	489	6	4,421	1,17,992	1,11,639	1,932
West	1,499	13	12,953	1,02,878	88,557	1,368
Other	1	1	34	2,335	2,299	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,879</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>43,747</b>	<b>6,61,264</b>	<b>6,07,203</b>	<b>10,314</b>

- ✓ The highest number of cases recorded in a day was on July 27, when the state reported 6,993 cases.
- ✓ Chennai, the worst affected district in the state, reported 1,212 cases and 13 deaths.
- ✓ Chennai's neighbours Chengalpet (245), Tiruvallur (229) and Kancheepuram (139) together reported 613 cases.
- ✓ Coimbatore recorded the highest number of cases after Chennai at 393 followed by Salem (304)
- ✓ In the last 24 hours, of 80,162 samples were tested in the State, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 84,02,994.

## STATES

- **On October 12, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan – declared the state's general education sector as 'fully digital'**



- ✓ The state has invested ₹595 crore in the setting up of hi-tech classrooms and labs in over 16,000 secondary and primary schools
- ✓ Under the general education rejuvenation mission of the state, as many as 45,000 classrooms in 4,752 secondary schools have been upgraded to hi-tech classrooms.
- ✓ Similarly, 11,275 primary schools have been equipped with modern lab facilities.
- ✓ The cost of the project was brought down from the original estimate of ₹793.5 crore to ₹595 crore, following the contribution of local bodies and general people.
- ✓ The public contribution to the project is pegged at ₹1,365.5 crore.
- ✓ Apart from this, the Kerala Infrastructure and Technology for Education (KITE) saved at least ₹3,000 crore by way of using free software for two lakh laptops distributed to schools as part of the project

## NATIONAL

- **The population of Gangetic dolphins – has increased to 41 this year from 35 last year, following the conclusion of the recent census of the Gangetic dolphins**
- ✓ There was an increase of four calves and two adults of the dolphins along the river Ganga



- ✓ The census — only one conducted in the entire state — covered the stretch from the Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary (Bijnor Barrage to Garh Mukteshwar) and Ramsar site (Garh to Narora in Bulandshahr) covering 180km of the Ganga.
- ✓ The just concluded census found 10 dolphins in the Ramsar site and 31 in Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary
- ✓ Ganga Mitras (specially trained villagers and contributors to conservation efforts) and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) researchers have conducted the census.
- ✓ Around 600 villagers participated in the conservation awareness campaigns.
- ✓ Last week, on the occasion of National Ganga River Dolphin Day (October 5), a dolphin safari was launched at six locations across the country from here to attract tourists.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced 'Project Gangetic Dolphin' this Independence Day for the conservation of Gangetic dolphins.
- ✓ Gangetic Dolphin was declared the national aquatic animal in 2009.
  
- **On October 12, India – reported 53,082 fresh Covid-19 cases and 696 deaths**
- ✓ This takes the country's cumulative caseload to 71,72,303 and death toll to 1,09,919
- ✓ The situation continued to be alarming in Karnataka, Kerala and Bengal which are yet to see a slowdown in the spread of the virus.
- ✓ Karnataka recorded 7,606 fresh cases which was higher than 7,089 cases registered by Maharashtra.
- ✓ Karnataka became the third state after Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu to cross 10,000 fatalities as 70 fresh deaths took the state's toll to 10,036.
- ✓ Kerala reported 5,930 fresh cases on the day, which was the third highest in the country
- ✓ A total of 9.9 lakh samples were tested on October 11
- ✓ The active cases have now dropped below 9 lakh, after the discharge of 71,559 patients in the last 24 hours

## DEFENCE

- **A flight-test of the Nirbhay land-attack cruise missile - failed due to a technical snag off the Odisha coast on October 12.**

- ✓ The subsonic missile is designed to have a strike range of 1,000km for inducting into the armed forces
- ✓ It has been in the development for over a decade
- ✓ The missile developed “engine trouble” within eight minutes of being launched from the integrated test range on Wheeler Island.
- ✓ After the initial launch with a solid-propellant booster to gain speed and altitude, the missile’s engine failed to attain the requisite power after deploying its smallish wings and tail fins in the second stage.
- ✓ The missile, which was supposed to cruise at a speed of around Mach 0.7 for over 50 minutes during the test, then plunged into the Bay of Bengal.
- ✓ DRDO will conduct a detailed analysis to ascertain the exact reason for the failure
- ✓ The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile jointly developed with Russia has already been inducted in large numbers
- ✓ The range of these missiles is now being extended to 400km from the original 290km

## ECONOMY

- **On October 12, Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman - announced additional allocation of ₹37,000 crore towards capital expenditure**
- ✓ Under the package, a ₹25,000 crore allocation for additional capex will be made available for defence infrastructure, roads, water supply and urban development, provided the equipment is manufactured domestically.
- ✓ There was another ₹12,000 crore support to the states, to be provided in the form of interest-free loans for 50 years, with a rider to be spent by March
- ✓ Under the stimulus package, the government announced incentives to the central government employees, hoping to trigger fresh demand of ₹1 lakh crore to revive economic activity.

<p><b>WHAT'S FOR AAM AADMI...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Central govt staffers can avail <b>interest-free advance of ₹10,000</b> each in form of prepaid RuPay cards</li> <li>➤ To be spent by March 31, 2021 and <b>paid back in 10 instalments.</b> Govt to bear bank charges</li> <li>➤ Staff to also get <b>cash payment in lieu of LTC</b> during 2018-21, along with leave encashment</li> <li>➤ <b>Need to spend 3 times their LTC entitlement</b> to buy cars, fridge, mixers, etc (items which attract 12% or more GST)</li> <li>➤ The LTC Cash Voucher Scheme has the <b>potential to generate a demand of ₹28,000cr</b>, says finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman</li> </ul>	<p><b>...AND CENTRE &amp; STATES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Centre to spend <b>₹25,000cr additional capex</b> for defence infrastructure, roads, water supply and urban development by the end of next March</li> <li>➤ States to get <b>₹12,000cr interest-free 50-yr loan</b> to spend on capital projects</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>“ Today's announcements... are timely moves which will boost consumer spending and sentiment as well as push capital expenditure. These steps will also boost demand</p> <p style="text-align: right;">— PM Modi</p>  </div>
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- ✓ There is a further ₹2,000 crore allocation for states which meet three of the reform criteria announced earlier such as power sector reforms or one nation one ration card related initiatives.
  - ✓ In July, Prime Minister Narendra Modi talked about boosting spending on core sector projects in a bid to spur demand for cement, steel and other inputs, which culminated in these announcements.
  - ✓ However, it did not have measures to address the lack of demand in sectors such as hospitality and tourism.
  - ✓ The Central government and public sector employees were offered an additional capex and leave travel concession (LTC) alongwith festival loan benefits with riders
  - ✓ Separately, a flat ₹10,000 special festival allowance has been announced for all Central employees to be utilised by March 31, 2021, that could be repaid in 10 interest-free instalments.
  - ✓ Similarly, those availing of the LTC benefit need to spend three times their entitlement in purchasing cars, fridge, mixers or vacuum cleaners.
  - ✓ Using “conservative estimates”, the Centre pegged the cost of the LTC cash voucher scheme at around ₹5,675 crore with another ₹1,900 crore coming from state-run banks and companies.
  - ✓ This is estimated to result in demand of around ₹19,000 crore with another ₹9,000 crore expected to come from the states.
- **On October 12, the Reserve Bank of India - rejigged the portfolios of all deputy governors.**
- ✓ Newly appointed Reserve Bank of India (RBI) deputy governor M Rajeshwar Rao has taken charge of key portfolios in the regulation, enforcement, inspection, risk monitoring, communications and legal departments.
  - ✓ Rao was appointed deputy governor in place of N S Vishwanathan who retired three months ahead of schedule on March 31 for health reasons.
  - ✓ Rao, a career central banker, was elevated to the executive director position on November 7, 2016 and was the senior-most among the EDs who interviewed for the position.
  - ✓ The regulation and enforcement portfolio has gained significance after the RBI merged the department of regulations for banking, cooperative banks and NBFCs into one.
  - ✓ B P Kanungo, the senior-most deputy governor from the Reserve Bank of India , will be in charge of coordination, currency management, external investments, government accounts, IT, payments, RTI and forex department.
  - ✓ M K Jain, the deputy governor from the banking industry, will hold the charge of supervision, financial inclusion, HR, corporate strategy and budget department.
  - ✓ Michael Patra, the deputy governor representing the Reserve Bank of India in the monetary policy panel, will continue to be in charge of economic policy &

research, statistics, deposit insurance, financial markets regulation and financial stability.

## AWARDS

- **American economists Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson - have been awarded the 2020 Nobel Prize in economics for their research on improving how commercial auctions work**
- ✓ The duo was honoured “for improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats,” the jury said.



- ✓ The discoveries of Paul Milgrom and Robert Wilson, both of Stanford University, “have benefitted sellers, buyers and taxpayers around the world”, as per the Nobel Committee
- ✓ The winners will share the prize sum of 10 million Swedish kronor (about \$1.1 million or €950,000).
- ✓ The economists explained how bidders seek to avoid the so-called “winner’s curse” of over-paying, and what happens when bidders gain a better understanding of their rivals’ sense of value.
- ✓ Milgrom and Wilson notably came up with formats for selling interrelated items simultaneously.
- ✓ In 1994, US authorities used one of their auction designs to sell radio frequencies to telecom operators.
- ✓ Milgrom and Wilson (with help from Preston McAfee, now at Google) designed an auction format in which all the licenses were sold in one go.
- ✓ That format discourages speculators from buying up frequencies in a specific geographic area and then reselling them to big telecommunications firms seeking to patch together national or regional networks.
- ✓ The auction raised \$617 million — selling frequencies that previously were handed out for virtually nothing — and became a model for countries from Canada to India.
- ✓ The format has also been used to auction off electricity and natural gas.
- ✓ Google was able to adopt the method so quickly and seamlessly and depended entirely on theory developed by Milgrom

- ✓ Last year the honour went to Indiaborn Abhijit Banerjee, French-American Esther Duflo, and American Michael Kremer for their work on alleviating poverty.
- ✓ The award closes the 2020 Nobel season, which saw the most anticipated peace prize awarded to the UN's World Food Programme for its efforts to fight hunger.

## SPORTS

- **The sports ministry – has restored annual recognition of 22 national sports federations (NSFs), including the federations governing shooting, hockey, swimming, cycling, wushu and judo**
- ✓ The granting of recognition was part of the ministry's efforts to bring these NSFs out of their more than three-month long suspension
- ✓ Earlier, the Delhi High Court had suspended their recognition in June for flouting certain provisions of the national sports code.
- ✓ Interestingly, NSFs of three leading disciplines – boxing, athletics and football – have been granted recognition with a rider by the ministry.
  - ✓ They have been recognised till December 31, 2020
  - ✓ The ministry has asked them to hold their AGM for electing the new set of office-bearers as per the provisions of the sports code before the December deadline.
  - ✓ Since they haven't been able to conduct their respective AGMs because of the pandemic, they have been granted only a three month extension.
- ✓ The ministry has also recognised fencing, despite its federation functioning in violation of the sports code on tenure guideline.
- ✓ Others to have been recognised are pencak silat, soft tennis, mallakhamb, atya patya and baseball.
- ✓ Earlier, the ministry had granted recognition to the NSFs of wrestling and weightlifting by submitting an affidavit in the court last week.
- ✓ On September 17, the Supreme Court had ruled that the Centre was not required to seek prior consent of the Delhi high court before granting recognition to various sports federations in the country.
- ✓ The apex court's ruling had come on the ministry's plea against the HC's order, which prohibited the government from granting recognition to NSFs without its consent.

