

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—OCTOBER 28, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Greater Chennai Corporation – will be setting up ‘Smart poles’ with an alarm button at 1,600 locations across Chennai by mid-2021**
- ✓ These ‘Smart poles’ will send a message to the nearest police station and produce a loud ‘hooting sound’ to alert people around, when activated by a woman or child in distress



- ✓ The ₹100 crore needed for setting up these poles would be provided from the central government’s Nirbhaya fund.
- ✓ The Greater Chennai Corporation has named such areas ‘safe zone clusters’ and is shortlisting agencies to install and operate them for three years.
- ✓ These will come up in all the zones in corporation limits.
- ✓ The civic body and the police have identified locations where women and children are vulnerable to crime, such as shopping districts and beaches, to set up the smart poles.
- ✓ The smart poles would have surveillance cameras and cameras with fisheye lenses.

- ✓ Once the alarm button is pressed, the cameras with fish-eye lenses will start clicking pictures.
- ✓ As soon as the alarm is raised, a police patrol vehicle would also be sent to the spot.
- ✓ The surveillance cameras fitted to the smart pole would have 4G connectivity enabling the GCC and the police to get live feed whenever required.
- ✓ Every pole would also have an illumination of 40 Watts, which would be different from other street lights to help quickly identify a 'safe zone cluster' in an emergency.

STATES

- **Uttar Pradesh - secured the top rank in all the categories of the PM SVANidhi Scheme by approving the highest number of loans so far.**
- ✓ The categories include sanction, applications and disbursements of loans.
- ✓ Under the scheme, more than 6.22 lakh applications were received and 3,46,150 were already given by the state.
- ✓ Seven cities from the State are also ranked at the top level among other cities in disbursing the loans
- ✓ It includes Lucknow, Varanasi, Aligarh, Allahabad, Ghaziabad, Gorakhpur and Kanpur.
- ✓ On October 27, PM Modi will be distributing more than 300,000 loans under the PM SVANidhi scheme.



Empowering Street Vendors with PM SVANidhi Scheme

Salient Features

-  **Loan tenure of 1 year** on working capital
-  **Interest Subsidy at 7% p.a.** on timely repayment, paid quarterly
-  **Monthly cash-back incentive up to ₹100** on digital transactions
-  **Higher loan eligibility** on timely/early repayment of the first loan
-  **Covers urban local bodies** across the country



Dated: 27 October, 2020

- ✓ The PM SVANidhi scheme was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2020 to help street vendors in rural, urban and semi-urban areas amidst the Covid-19 pandemic
 - ✓ Under the scheme, Street vendors are provided with the capital loan of Rs.10000 at subsidized interest rates
 - ✓ The scheme, implemented by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), will help around 50 lakh street vendors
 - ✓ Recently, the State Bank of India portal was integrated with PM SVANidhi Portal under Application Programming Interface
- **On October 27, Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan - announced the floor price for 16 varieties of vegetables.**



- ✓ Thus, Kerala becomes the first state in the country to fix a floor price for vegetables.
- ✓ The scheme comes into effect from November 1.
- ✓ Generally, a base price is provided for pulses and food grains, and not for perishables such as fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ The floor price will be 20% above production cost.
- ✓ Even if the market price drops below floor price, the produce will be procured at floor price from farmers.
- ✓ The produce will be graded according to quality.
- ✓ The scheme would benefit a farmer with a maximum of 15 acres of vegetable cultivation per season.
- ✓ They can register on the agriculture department's registration portal after insuring the crop to get the benefit of the floor price.
- ✓ The registration for the scheme is set to start from November 1.
- ✓ The scheme also envisages setting up the entire supply chain process, including cold storage and refrigerated vehicles to transport the produce.
- ✓ The procurement will be done through 300 outlets of the agriculture department and 250 sales points of the primary agricultural societies.
- ✓ The price difference will be credited to the accounts of farmers who sell through the societies

- **Chhattisgarh - has become the second Congress-ruled state, after Punjab, to pass a bill to enact its own farm laws to “protect” its farmers from the Centre’s agri-reform laws.**
- ✓ The newly amended Act is called ‘Chhattisgarh Krishi Upaj Mandi Act’
- ✓ One of the key provisions of the Act is to ensure that farm produce isn’t sold below MSP in mandis or elsewhere.
- ✓ The amendment bill was passed by voice vote after a seven-hour debate on October 27.
- **Rajasthan – is all set to become the first state in the country to legalise wearing masks in public places to prevent the spread of Covid-19.**
- ✓ This was announced by the state chief minister Ashok Gehlot, while addressing a video conference on October 26
- ✓ The Chief Minister said that a bill to make it mandatory to wear masks will be tabled in the forthcoming assembly session beginning from October 31

NATIONAL

- **On October 27, the home ministry - listed 18 terrorists based in Pakistan as ‘designated terrorists’ under Schedule 4 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act**
- ✓ The list includes key 26/11 attack conspirators, Indian Mujahideen brass and Dawood Ibrahim aides wanted for the 1993 Mumbai blasts
- ✓ The key names added to Schedule 4 of UAPA includes
 - ✓ Syed Salahuddin, Hizbul Mujahideen chief
 - ✓ Abdul Rauf Asghar, Jaish-e-Mohammad No.2.
 - ✓ Rauf Asghar, the key conspirator behind the 2001 Parliament attack and, more recently, the Pulwama terror attack
 - ✓ Syed Salahuddin, Hizbul Mujahideen chief and head of United Jihad Council
 - ✓ Chhota Shakeel, Dawood aide wanted in 104 criminal cases
 - ✓ Riyaz Bhatkal, founder of Indian Mujahideen, who is wanted for a series of bomb blasts across the country between 2008 and 2010
 - ✓ Sajid Mir, one of the main planners behind the 2008 Mumbai siege
 - ✓ Yousuf Muzammil Butt, commander of LeT operations in J&K
 - ✓ Abdur Rehman Makki, LeT chief Hafiz Saeed’s brother-in-law and head of LeT political affairs
- ✓ Mir and Makki were earlier designated as ‘specially designated global terrorists’ by the US.
- ✓ The Schedule 4 was added to the UAPA in August 2019 as part of the central government’s ‘zero tolerance’ approach to terror.
- **The Ministry of Home Affairs – has nullified 11 previous land laws in the Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir**

- ✓ It had notified the new rule, called the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Adaptation of Central Laws) Third Order, 2020
- ✓ As per the new rule, any person from outside Jammu and Kashmir can now buy land in the Union Territory
- ✓ Till now, only the permanent residents and residents with domicile certificate are 'exclusively' eligible to buy land in the erstwhile J&K state
- ✓ The phrase — 'permanent resident of the state' — in the Jammu and Kashmir Development Act that deals with disposal of land in the Union Territory has been omitted from Section 17 of the law, allowing non-residents to buy land in the UT.
- ✓ However, the latest amendments do not allow transfer of agricultural land to non-agriculturists.
- ✓ But, some exemptions in the Act enable transfer of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The Government of Bangladesh - recently launched 'No Mask No Service' Policy.**
- ✓ Under the new policy, no services will be offered to the people who are not wearing masks.
- ✓ Further, no person will be able to enter any office without the masks
- ✓ All offices in the country were asked to install a notice board saying "No Mask No Service".
- ✓ Russia has agreed to sell Sputnik V vaccine, which is under trial, to Bangladesh
- ✓ Further, the UK will provide equal access of the Oxford vaccine, called the COVISHIELD, to Bangladesh once it is ready for use.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **US Defence Secretary Mark T Esper and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo - met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and defence minister Rajnath Singh in New Delhi on October 27**



- ✓ India and the US signed the fourth and the last foundational agreement 'Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for GeoSpatial Cooperation (BECA)' to exchange geospatial intelligence among them

- ✓ At the third '2+2' meeting between foreign and defence ministers, India and the US signed five agreements
- ✓ The other three foundational pacts signed earlier are - The General Security of Military Information Agreement' (GSOMIA), The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) and The Communications, Compatibility and Security Arrangement (COMCASA)
- ✓ Countering China's Belt and Road Initiative, India and the US will undertake joint projects in the Indo-Pacific region.
- ✓ The signing of COMCASA in 2018 and BECA now, has paved the way for India to acquire armed drones like Reapers or Predators for long-range precision strikes against hostile targets on land and sea.
 - ✓ The Indian armed forces have been pushing for the acquisition of 30 'hunter-killer' weaponised Sea Guardian or MQ-9 Reaper drones
 - ✓ Out of these drones costing around \$3 billion, the purchase of six drones is fast-tracked now amidst the ongoing military confrontation with China
- ✓ The COMCASA allows India access to advanced military platforms with encrypted and secure communications and data links like the armed drones.
- ✓ The BECA provides for real-time exchange of geospatial intelligence through advanced satellite imagery, topographical and aeronautical digital data for long-range navigation and pinpointed strikes against enemy targets.
- ✓ Defence minister Rajnath Singh described the signing of BECA, after the military logistics pact LEMOA in 2016 and COMCASA in 2018, as "a significant achievement".
- ✓ The General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was signed in 2002, while a follow-up extension agreement - Industrial Security Annex (ISA) – was later signed in 2019.
- ✓ Earlier, the first two 2+2 ministerial dialogue between India and the US were held in New Delhi in September 2018 and in 2019 in Washington D.C.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) - will launch the first satellite of this year from Sriharikota in the first week of November**
- ✓ On November 6, the PSLV-C 49 rocket will lift off with an earth observation (surveillance) satellite Risat-2BR2 and 10 foreign commercial satellites from the first launchpad
- ✓ The space agency is keeping November 7 and 8 as two days of backup launch dates in case of any delay
- ✓ This will be Isro's first satellite launch, amid the Covid-19 pandemic, since March.
- ✓ Risat-2BR2 is an advanced series of the earth observation satellite whose synthetic aperture radar (SAR) has an all-weather and day-and-night observation capability.

- ✓ It can also see through clouds to further boost the military's surveillance capability from space.
- ✓ Besides its surveillance role, Risat-2BR2 will also be used for civil applications like in agriculture, forestry, soil moisture, geology, coastal monitoring and flood monitoring.
- ✓ Soon after the PSLV-C49 mission, Isro is targeting to launch PSLV-C50 mission carrying GSAT-12R communication satellite in December.
- ✓ The agency is also planning the much awaited first demonstration test of its new rocket Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) or mini-PSLV by December.
 - ✓ The test on the SSLV motor is scheduled for November.
 - ✓ The SSLV is basically a vehicle-on-demand made especially for satellite customers.
 - ✓ It will have a threestage engine rocket all powered by solid fuel.
 - ✓ The mini-launcher can be assembled in just 3-5 days as compared to 30-40 days for a normal-size rocket.
 - ✓ The 34-metre rocket will have a lift-off mass of 120 tonnes and will have the capability for multiple satellite launches at different orbits.
 - ✓ An SSLV can carry a maximum of 500 kg payload to the low earth orbit (LEO) and 300 kg to the sun-synchronous orbit (SSO).
 - ✓ The first commercial SSLV has already been booked for carrying an American payload.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ World Polio Day – October 24



- ✓ The day is observed globally to highlight the global efforts towards polio-free world and to encourage the use of vaccines to eradicate the viral disease
- ✓ Theme 2020 - A win against Polio is a win for Global Health.
- ✓ Polio is currently prevalent only in three countries - Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria - across the world
- ✓ There were just 17 cases reported with Polio in 2017, as against 3,50,000 cases in 1988
- ✓ The Global Polio Eradication Initiative was launched in 1988 by the World Health Assembly to eradicate polio worldwide.

- ✓ Out of the 3 known strains of Polio - Type 1, 2 and 3 - Type 2 and 3 were wild polio virus and eradicated in 1999 and 2012
- ✓ India received polio free certification from the WHO in 2014.
- ✓ There are two types of vaccine - Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) and Injectable Polio Vaccine (IPV) – to prevent Polio myelitis

➤ **Vigilance awareness week – October 27 to November 2, 2020**



- ✓ The week is celebrated to create awareness about the commitment towards promotion of probity and integrity in public life through citizen participation
- ✓ Theme 2020 - Satarak Bharat, Samridh Bharat (Vigilant India, Prosperous India)
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated National Conference on Vigilance and Anti-Corruption on October 27
- ✓ It was organized by the Central Bureau of Investigation
- ✓ The conference was held under the theme of 'Vigilance Awareness Week'

