

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—OCTOBER 29, 2020**

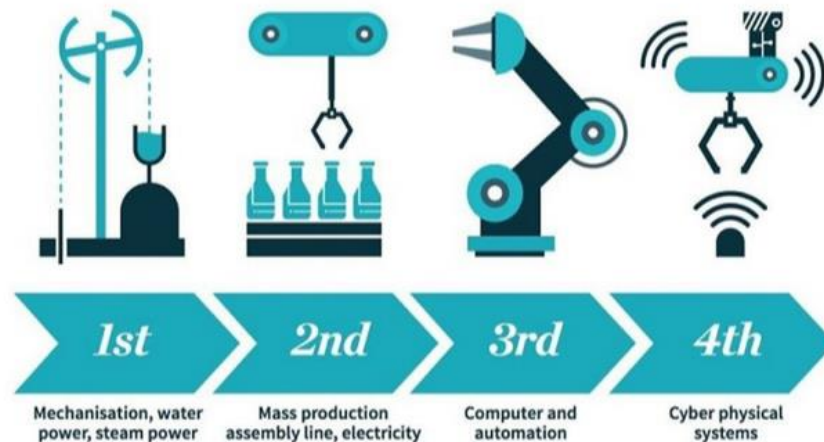
### **TAMIL NADU**

- **The northeast monsoon - officially set in over Tamil Nadu on October 28, following the withdrawal of southwest monsoon from the entire country**
- ✓ The northeast monsoon normally sets in on October 20, with a deviation of six days
- ✓ It provides Chennai 63% (867.4mm) of its annual rainfall, while Tamil Nadu receives 48% (438mm) of its annual rainfall from the northeast monsoon
- ✓ According to South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF), a consortium of meteorologists and hydrological experts from South Asian countries, Chennai and surrounding districts may receive normal rainfall this monsoon, while the southern coastal parts may record below normal spells.
- ✓ Monsoon 2020 withdrew entirely from the country on October 28, marking its most delayed exit in the past four years.
- ✓ This was also the second-most delayed monsoon exit from India since 1975.
- ✓ In 2010, the southwest monsoon withdrew from the entire country on October 29, followed by 2016 when it withdrew on October 28.
- ✓ Also, the monsoons of 2010, 2016 and 2020 mark the most delayed exits from India in the past 45 years, since 1975.

### **NATIONAL**

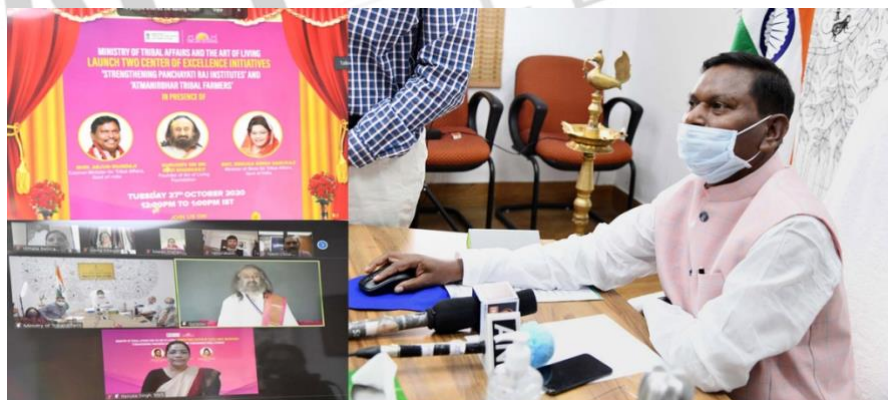
- **IIT Kharagpur and Tata Consultancy Services - have jointly developed a new Industry 4.0 technology.**
- ✓ The new technology aims to promote innovations in advanced manufacturing in order to boost capital goods sector.
- ✓ It was undertaken at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur's centre of excellence with support from the Department of Heavy Industry, Government of India.

- ✓ This technology aims to control the factory operations remotely through cloud-based communication



- ✓ It will also provide real-time quality correction during industrial production using multiple sensors in order to deliver 'standardised' quality output at lesser costs.
  - ✓ This, eventually, reduces batch rejections in the manufacturing sector
  - ✓ The fourth industrial revolution involves using technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), autonomous vehicles and internet of things (IOT) to merge with the physical life of humans.
- **On October 26, the central government - has announced to create a permanent body through legislation to tackle the air pollution and the stubble burning problem in Delhi and NCR states.**
- ✓ The new body will replace the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA) led by Bhure Lal.
  - ✓ Following the announcement, a one-member committee of retired Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B Lokur stands suspended.
  - ✓ Earlier, the Apex court had formed Justice Madan B Lokur committee to look after the steps to tackle stubble burning on October 16, 2020.
  - ✓ Stubble burning is the primary source of the pollution in Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh during winters.
  - ✓ This committee was supposed to be assisted by the chief secretaries of all concerned states to analyse the situation.
  - ✓ Further, the SC, in its October 16 order, stated for the deployment of National Cadet Corps, National Service Scheme and Bharat Scouts and Guides to assist the monitoring of stubble burning in the agricultural fields of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi-NCR.
- **On October 28, the European Commission and the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) - signed an agreement to enhance scientific cooperation and enable Indian social scientists to join research teams in Europe, supported by European Research Council (ERC).**

- ✓ The European Union (EU) and India already cooperate in the field of research and innovation, but this is the first scheme promoting research in social sciences and humanities.
  - ✓ European Union ambassador Ugo Astuto and member secretary of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), an autonomous body under the education ministry, Prof Virendra Kumar Malhotra, signed the arrangement in a virtual mode.
  - ✓ The virtual event was also attended by ERC president ad interim Jean-Pierre Bourguignon and ICSSR chairman and UGC vice-chairman Bhushan Patwardhan.
  - ✓ The initiative will provide opportunities to Indian researchers who are supported by the ICSSR and want to pursue research collaborations with European researchers.
  - ✓ It will benefit principal investigators of research projects, senior fellowship awardees and post-doctoral fellows
  - ✓ More cooperation in research and innovation and in all other areas will be available under the EU next research and innovation programme 'Horizon Europe' (2021-2027).
- **Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Arjun Munda - to launch two Centers of Excellence for Tribal Welfare on October 28, 2020**
- ✓ They will be launched in collaboration between Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Art of Living (AoL).



- ✓ Out of the two centers, the first Center will be engaged in the field of training 10000 tribal farmers in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra on sustainable natural farming
  - ✓ The training would be based on Go-Adharith farming techniques.
  - ✓ It would help farmers in getting the Organic certification.
- ✓ The second Center will be working towards strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions in 5 districts covering 30 Gram Panchayats and 150 villages of Jharkhand.
  - ✓ The initiative would help in creating awareness among elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

- ✓ It will focus on creating awareness about various Tribal Acts and Rules and different welfare schemes available for these tribals.
- ✓ It would also create the youth volunteers among the tribal youths, who will be provided personality development training to develop into 'tribal leaders'

➤ **The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) - will organise a two-day hackathon on circular economy, 'India–Australia Circular Economy Hackathon (I-ACE)' in association with CSIRO on 7th and 8th December 2020**



- ✓ The idea of I-ACE was first suggested during a virtual summit between the Indian and Australian prime ministers on June 4, 2020.
- ✓ I-ACE will focus on to identify and to develop innovative technological solutions by bright-minded students, start-ups and MSMEs of India and Australia.
- ✓ A total of two winners will be announced in the hackathon - comprising one student and one start-up MSME - per theme from each country.
- ✓ The hackathon will create possible solutions for eliminating waste and reusing waste.
- ✓ The hackathon will be organized under four theme:
  - ✓ Innovation in reducing packaging waste.
  - ✓ Innovation in food supply chains avoiding waste.
  - ✓ Creating opportunities for plastic waste reduction.
  - ✓ Recycling critical energy metals and e-waste.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **New prime minister of Japan, Yoshihide Suga - has committed to his country to reach a target of zero emissions of greenhouse gases.**
- ✓ He also committed to achieve a carbon-neutral society by 2050 by a fundamental shift in policy on coal use.
- ✓ Japan is the world's third-largest economy and the fifth-largest emitter of carbon dioxide.
- ✓ Japan had earlier committed only to reduce 80% of its emissions by 2050.

- ✓ Now, it is following European Union that has committed to become carbon neutral by 2050.
- ✓ Under Japan's current Basic Energy Plan, it has aimed to increase the share of renewables to 22% to 24% by 2030 and share of nuclear power to between 20% and 22%.
- **The United Nations - has announced that 50 countries have ratified an international Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) to ban nuclear weapons.**
  - ✓ The historic treaty would enter into force in January 2021.
  - ✓ Honduras has become the 50th country to ratify the treaty.
  - ✓ However, countries like Russia, United States, Britain, France and China who are the major nuclear powers, opposed the treaty.
  - ✓ The NATO allies of the United States also opposed the treaty
  - ✓ Netherlands was the only NATO country that voted in favour of the treaty.
  - ✓ Japan boycotted the conference.
  - ✓ India abstained itself from voting for the treaty.
  - ✓ India stated that it recognises only the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament as the powerful multilateral disarmament forum for negotiation.
  - ✓ The major nuclear powers rejected the treaty saying that it does not have any provision on disarmament and verification.
  - ✓ These countries recognise the old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).
  - ✓ The new treaty TPNW is the first multilateral treaty that strictly urges the countries to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons and condemns the use of nuclear weapon as well.
  - ✓ The earlier treaties, including the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT, impose partial prohibitions only.
  - ✓ The NPT is an international treaty that seeks to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology apart from promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
  - ✓ This treaty was negotiated by the 18-member Committee on Disarmament, which is a United Nations-sponsored organization in Geneva, Switzerland.
  - ✓ It entered into force in 1970.

## **CONFERENCES & SUMMITS**

- **The 10th round of the ministerial level 'UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue' - was held on October 28.**
  - ✓ During the meeting, India and the UK have decided to establish a new annual financial markets dialogue to share expertise, experiences and deepen collaboration between the financial sectors of the two countries.
  - ✓ The dialogue will be led by senior officials from finance ministries of both the countries along with participation from financial regulators and the private sector.



- ✓ The first meeting will take place early next year.
- ✓ Union minister for finance and corporate affairs Nirmala Sitharaman led the Indian delegation, which included representatives from the finance ministry, Reserve Bank of India and Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).
- ✓ The UK delegation was led by Chancellor of Exchequer Rishi Sunak with representatives from the treasury, Bank of England and Financial Conduct Authority.

## AWARDS

- **Victor Banerjee** - has won the “best actor in a secondary role” award for his performance of an aging Christian priest in ‘Josef: Born in Grace’ at the Ontario International Film Festival.



- ✓ The film is set between 1960 and 1980 in the foothills of the Himalayas
- ✓ It narrates the humanist tale of a priest (Father O’Hara) who looks after an alcoholic young man Josef.
- ✓ The film, directed by Susant Misra, also claimed the award for best cinematography (Sudheer Palsane).
- ✓ The 74-year old Banerjee has also acted with legends such as Satyajit Ray (Ghare Baire), David Lean (A Passage to India) and Roman Polanski (Bitter Moon).
- ✓ ‘Josef: Born in Grace’ is adapted from a short story, Joseph, written by Umakanta Mahapatra.

# REPORT

- **The fifteenth Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2020) Rural – was released by the government**
- ✓ The latest edition of the report focused on the learning process, considering the prevailing Covid-19 situation

## Learning hit

Some highlights from the Annual Status of Education Report's September survey:

- 5.3% of rural children aged 6-10 years are not enrolled in school this year, in comparison to just 1.8% in 2018

- Around 20% of rural children did not have textbooks at home by September

- About 70% of rural



children did some learning activity. Of these, only 11% had live online classes

- Less than 36% of rural children received some learning materials or activities from the school.

Almost 75% of such school interaction was via Whatsapp

- ✓ However, the previous editions of the ASER reports focused on learning outcomes
- ✓ This is the first time the survey has been conducted over telephone in September

## THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT (ASER 2020) - RURAL WAVE 1

Sample	Household surveyed	Children reached	Schools surveyed
30 states and UTs	52,227	59,251	8,963

ENROLMENT	
<b>Enrolment in govt schools increased</b> 2018: 64.3% 2020: 65.8%	<b>Enrolment in private schools decreased</b> 2018: 32.5% 2020: 28.8%

DIGITAL DIVIDE		
% households with different kinds of resources Children enrolled in <b>GOVT SCHOOLS</b>		
Smartphone: 56.4%	TV: 56%	Motorised vehicle: 43.5%
% households with different kinds of resources Children enrolled in <b>PVT SCHOOLS</b>		
Smartphone: 74.2%	TV: 71.9%	Motorised vehicle: 64.7%

LEARNING SUPPORT MATERIAL	HIGHLIGHTS
<b>33.5%</b> of all govt school children received materials or activities	➤ About <b>11%</b> of all families bought a new phone since the lockdown began ➤ More than <b>80%</b> of these new phone purchased were smartphones ➤ More than <b>80%</b> children have textbooks for their current grade, <b>84.1%</b> in government schools and <b>72.2%</b> in private schools
<b>40.6%</b> of all private school children received materials or activities	

- ✓ As per the report, 11% of all rural families bought a new phone since the lockdown began and 80% of these were smartphones.
- ✓ Also more children joined government schools than private schools.
- ✓ About 20% of rural children have no textbooks at home, while 33% had done no learning activity at all
- ✓ Further, 70% of the community, including support from family members, came out to help the school support system, since the closure of schools in March 2020
- ✓ Around 56 % households with children enrolled in government schools have smartphones, while 74.2% of households who send their children to private schools have smartphones.
- ✓ The survey cited another example of the existing digital divide, 28.7% of children enrolled in private schools had watched videos or other pre-recorded content online, as compared to 18.3% of government school students.
- ✓ Further, 33.5% of all government school children received learning materials or activities, as compared to 40.6% children in private schools.
- ✓ In fact, in states like Rajasthan (21.5%), Uttar Pradesh (21%), and Bihar (7.7%), less than a quarter of all children had received any materials.

