

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-NOVEMBER 6, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- On November 5, Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami - inaugurated the Tamil Nadu Apex Skill Development Centre for Healthcare and the Apex Skill Development Centre for Logistics at Chennai



- ✓ Both initiatives have received the support from the Japan International Co-operation Agency as part of the Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Programme, Phase-II.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Apex Skill Development Centre for Healthcare in Guindy is a joint venture between the Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation and Kauvery Hospital
- ✓ It is aimed at imparting high-end skills training in the healthcare sector.
- ✓ The Apex Skill Development Centre for Logistics at Oragadam is a collaboration between the TNSDC , Logistics Skill Sector Council and TVS Logistics
- ✓ It is aimed at improving skills of workers involved in the logistics sector.

- **On November 5, the Tamil Nadu government - ordered exemption from payment of stamp duty for registration of agreements done by micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for loans taken under the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat scheme.**
 - ✓ The agreements relate to the deposit of title deeds for obtaining loans from banks and financial institutions for the period up to March 31, 2021.
 - ✓ Normally, the registration of such agreements would have carried levy of stamp duty of 0.5% of the loan amount with a maximum of ₹30,000.
 - ✓ The Aatma Nirbhar Bharat scheme aims to provide relief to Covid-19-affected MSMEs
 - ✓ It envisages the provision of loans to the tune of 20% of outstanding loan amounts of such enterprises.
 - ✓ The government also decided to reduce registration fee to 0.1% in respect of the agreements on deposit of title deeds for loans taken by micro and small enterprises.

- **The International Centre for Clean Water (ICCW) at IIT-Madras – signs a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with DG TAKANO, a Japanese firm, to introduce clean water technologies in India.**
 - ✓ Both the agencies will work together on projects and develop innovative products to solve existing societal and environmental challenges in the area of clean and safe drinking water.
 - ✓ DG TAKANO will provide its expertise in cutting-edge Japanese sustainable technologies and support ICCW to collaborate with Japanese companies to develop innovative products and technologies.
 - ✓ It will also hire interns from the institute for research and development in water-related technology.
 - ✓ The projects will be undertaken in the fields of clean water, water treatment and water security
 - ✓ The projects will focus on the implementation of proven technology, field testing of emergent technology, developing new technology, educational training and internship programmes.
 - ✓ The ICCW will also conduct research, testing and validation of various water technology solutions from DG Takano, including the company's water-saving nozzle 'Bubble90', which can save 90% water when attached to a faucet.

- **More than 100 experts from Tamil Nadu and Puducherry - have featured in the top 2% of scientists worldwide, as per a report by Stanford University.**
 - ✓ The report was based on a data-set of one lakh top scientists from 22 main fields and 176 sub-fields.
 - ✓ Based on various indicators, mainly the impact of the scientists in terms of citations of their publications, the Stanford team has identified the world's top 2% scientists.

- ✓ Specialist doctors, researchers and teaching faculty from more than a dozen premier institutions including Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, National Institute of Technology (NIT), Trichy, Christian Medical College (CMC), Vellore, Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT), Madurai Kamaraj University, Bharathiar University and Bharathidasan University in Tamil Nadu, and Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (Jipmer) and Pondicherry University in Puducherry, are ranked among the top 2% list.
- ✓ The list includes N Kumarasamy (virology) from Chennai Antiviral Research and Treatment Clinical Research Site, Jipmer director Rakesh Aggarwal (gastroenterology & hepatology), former Jipmer director S C Parija (tropical medicine) and S A Abbasi (strategic, defence & security studies) from Pondicherry University among others.
- ✓ Kumarasamy is the chief and director of the centre at Voluntary Health Services (VHS) Hospital in Chennai
- ✓ He is an advisor and expert panel member for WHO - ARV treatment guidelines committee and a clinical advisor to Clinton Health Access Initiative.
- ✓ Parija has two patents, authored 16 books and more than 350 papers both in the national and international journals of repute.

STATES

- **On November 5, the Haryana assembly - passed a bill to provide 75% reservation of factory and other blue-collar jobs for local candidates**
- ✓ The new bill is titled 'The Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill, 2020'
- ✓ It is applicable only to new private-sector job openings and, hence, won't affect outsiders already employed in industrial units in the state
- ✓ All jobs with a monthly starting salary of below ₹50,000 come under the ambit of the proposed law.
- ✓ Privately managed companies, societies, trusts, limited-liability partnership firms and jointly ventures based within the state and employing 10 or more people can hire only up to 10% of the approved local quota from one district.
- ✓ Employers are allowed to engage outsiders whenever an adequate number of local candidates with the desired skills, qualifications or proficiency are not available.
- ✓ The penalty for the violation of these provisions range from Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000
- **On November 5, Jharkhand – has withdrawn the “general consent” for the country’s premier investigating agency, CBI, to conduct any new probe within its boundaries without prior permission.**
- ✓ The decision of Jharkhand comes a day after Kerala has announced the similar move to revoke the 'general consent' to CBI

- ✓ The powers vested on CBI were accorded by the then Bihar government in February 1996.
- ✓ Jharkhand is the seventh state where the CBI has to get either a court directive or the government's consent to open an investigation.
- ✓ However, the announcement barring the CBI's entry into the state does not apply to any investigation that is underway.
- ✓ Jharkhand has invoked the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, to prevent the CBI from starting a suo motu investigation into any case within its jurisdiction
- ✓ Besides Kerala and Jharkhand, the other states that have barred the entry of CBI are Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Mizoram and Maharashtra.
- ✓ Earlier, Andhra Pradesh had also prohibited CBI's entry before the Jaganmohan Reddy government restored general consent to the CBI in mid-June last year.

➤ **On November 5, the Calcutta high court - announced a blanket ban on fireworks in Bengal till the end of this month**

- ✓ The division bench of justices Sanjib Banerjee and Arijit Banerjee had also declared all Durga Puja pandals "no-entry zones" to prevent a Covid-19 explosion because of crowding.
- ✓ Earlier, on November 3, the Bengal government had urged all its citizens not to use firecrackers this year in order to prevent a spike in air pollution levels.
- ✓ The court's ban includes "all types of sparklers and similar fireworks".
- ✓ The duration of the ban extends beyond Kali Puja and Diwali to Chhath Puja, Jagadhatri Puja and Guru Nanak's birth anniversary.
- ✓ The court also praised the state for implementing its directives on Durga Puja

NATIONAL

➤ **On November 5, the University Grants Commission – has issued guidelines for the reopening of colleges and universities**

- ✓ Accordingly, the colleges and universities should start the reopening with libraries and laboratories, research scholars, science and technology postgraduates, and final year students
- ✓ For all other students, online and distance learning would continue to be the preferred method.
- ✓ Only institutions outside the containment zones could be reopened
- ✓ The students and staff living in these zones would not be allowed to attend physical classes.
- ✓ Earlier, the Union Home Ministry had given the States permission to reopen schools and colleges from October 15, depending on the local situation.
- ✓ For the Centrally funded institutions, it was up to the head of each institution to take a decision on reopening if they were satisfied with the feasibility of physical classes.

- ✓ All other institutions, whether private or State-funded, must depend on the decision of the respective State governments
 - ✓ Administrative offices, research laboratories and libraries would be the first to reopen, followed by students of all research programmes and postgraduate students in science and technology programmes.
 - ✓ Final year undergraduates may also be allowed to join for academic and placement purposes.
 - ✓ Other students have been encouraged to continue online learning but may visit in small groups for consultation with faculty, after seeking prior appointments to avoid crowding.
 - ✓ Only 50% of the student strength would be allowed on a campus at a time.
 - ✓ All personnel on campuses should wear masks and follow hand-sanitising practices.
 - ✓ The installation of Aarogya Setu app was being recommended wherever possible.
 - ✓ Although the guidelines discourage hostel reopening, they would be permitted so long as there is no sharing of rooms and 14-day quarantines are imposed on the students coming from other locations.
- **Popular messaging platform, WhatsApp - has got the regulatory approval to launch on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in a “graded manner”.**
- ✓ Under the WhatsApp Pay route, it was permitted to have a maximum of 20 million users initially.
 - ✓ So far, the platform was restricted to 1 million users since February 2018, after operationalising the ‘beta’ mode of the UPI.

HAD 1-MN LIMIT FOR OVER 2 YEARS

<p>2018 WhatsApp Pay starts in beta mode on UPI platform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Faces first petition against it in SC over data localisation compliance ➤ Hires Ezetap co-founder & CEO Abhijit Bose as India head 	<p>2020 RBI informs SC it won't allow WA Pay to launch until it is fully compliant over concerns it was still storing some payments data outside India</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WA Pay submits revised data localisation compliance audited by Deloitte
<p>2019 WA suffers Spyware Pegasus attack</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ RBI tells SC WA Pay wasn't compliant with data localisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In June, NPCI informs RBI that WA finally complies with all laws ➤ On Nov 5, NPCI gives green signal to WA to launch on UPI

- ✓ The significant development came on a day when the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), which manages UPI, also said it will implement a 30% cap on total payment volumes through a single third-party payments app from January 1, 2021.
- ✓ For existing third-party apps on UPI, they will get two years to comply till January 2023.
- ✓ For WhatsApp and other future apps on UPI, this will apply from next January.

- ✓ WhatsApp, which has 400 million monthly active users in India, was expected to host significant of users on UPI given its popularity.
 - ✓ As of now, Google Pay and Walmart-owned PhonePe are the UPI leaders, each controlling nearly 40% share on UPI, as of October.
 - ✓ The UPI had clocked 2 billion transactions in a single month for the first time in October.
- **On November 5, the government - removed registration and compliance requirements for IT companies to carry out work beyond traditional office complexes, allowing them to permanently work from any location.**
- ✓ The liberalisation reform measure for Other Service Providers (OSPs) was aimed at giving flexibility and ease to IT/ITeS/BPO companies to work from home
 - ✓ The relaxation was provided by the Department of telecom (DoT) after demands made by IT and tech companies that sought permanent relaxation on working location
 - ✓ Under the OSP guidelines of the DoT, the registration requirement for OSPs has been done away with altogether
 - ✓ Further, the BPO industry engaged in data-related work has been taken out of the ambit of OSP regulations.
 - ✓ Also, requirements such as deposit of bank guarantees for static IPs, frequent reporting obligations, publication of network diagram, penal provisions etc. have also been removed.
 - ✓ Similarly, several other requirements, which prevent companies from adopting 'Work from Home' and 'Work from Anywhere' policies have also been removed
 - ✓ The new changes was announced by the telecom and IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad
- **A total of 24 top private companies, including Tata, Reliance, Mahindra, ITC, ACC, Adani and Dalmia Cement - signed a declaration on climate change by voluntarily pledging to move towards 'carbon neutrality'.**
- ✓ These companies have joined hands with the government to take India towards the path of lower greenhouse gas emissions
 - ✓ The declaration was signed at the India CEO Forum on climate change on November 5



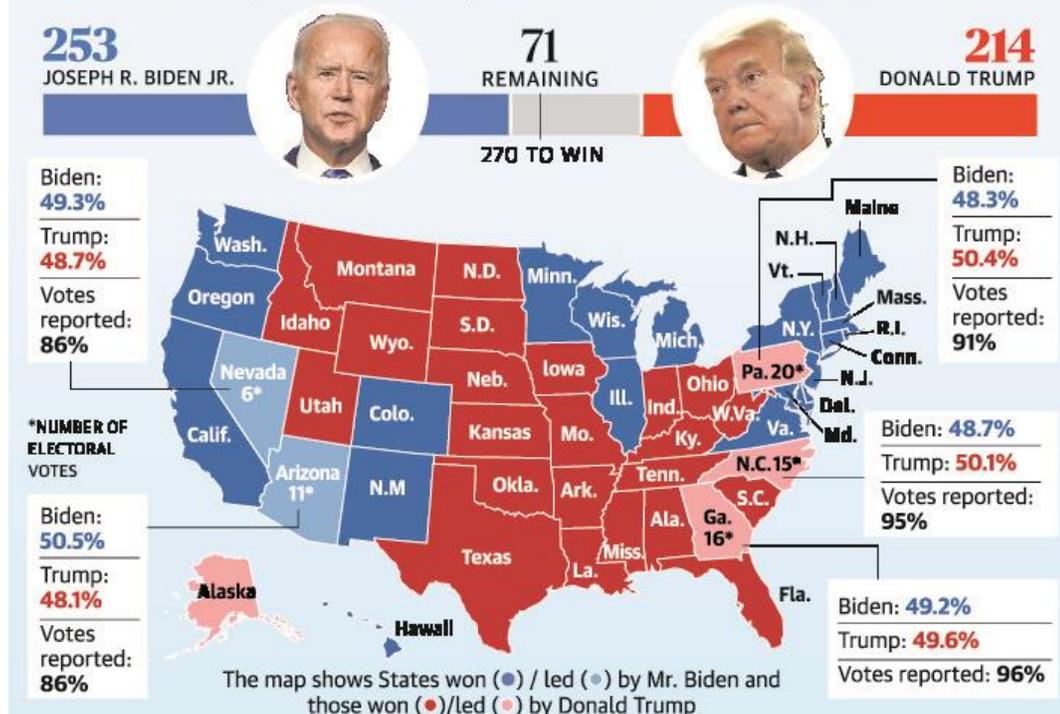
- ✓ Under the initiative, these companies have aligned themselves with India's commitment under the Paris Agreement to collectively take the country to 'net zero emission' goal through nine specific mitigation measures.
- ✓ India has so far not committed to 'net zero emission' target as its national goal
- ✓ Other countries which have already fixed up a target for 'net zero emission' includes China, European Union (EU), Japan and South Korea
- ✓ The nine mitigation measures, listed by the companies, in the declaration include promotion of renewable energy, enhanced energy efficiency, water efficient processes, green mobility, planned afforestation and waste management & recycling.
- ✓ During the event, CEOs and various heads of key industries listed out various clean processes and initiatives they have taken and their agenda towards further decarbonisation post-2020.
- ✓ Under the declaration, the private companies will develop and submit an annual report to the environment ministry, providing qualitative and quantitative information on the contribution of the private sector.
- ✓ India is a signatory to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- ✓ The Paris agreement aims to take collective climate actions to keep the global average temperature rise well below 2 degree Celsius by the end of the century and make best efforts to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.
- ✓ India's post-2020 commitment is called Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), under the Paris Agreement
- ✓ According to NDC, India has three quantitative goals —
 - ✓ reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 33-35% by 2030 from 2005 level;
 - ✓ achieving about 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030 and
 - ✓ creating an additional carbon sink equivalent to 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.
- ✓ The Paris Agreement will be operationalised from January 1, 2021.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The results of US presidential election – is yet to throw up a clear winner, even though Democratic candidate Joe Biden is near the magic mark of 270 electoral votes needed to enter White House**
- ✓ However, incumbent President Donald Trump is planning to commence legal challenges to prevent him from being announced as the winner and demanding a halt to counting of votes.
- ✓ As on date, Biden is having 253 electoral votes, while Trump is having 214 electoral votes, out of the 538 electoral college votes

Finish line in sight

Democrat Joseph R. Biden Jr. was just 17 electoral college votes away from the 270 mark to become the 46th president of the U.S. even as he held narrow leads in Nevada and Arizona. Counting continued in battleground States at the time of going to press



- ✓ If President Donald Trump loses his bid for re-election, it would be the first defeat of an incumbent President in 28 years

DEFENCE

- A special tri-Service combat exercise called “Bull Strike” - was conducted at the remotely-located Teresa Island in the Nicobar group of islands from November 3 to 5.

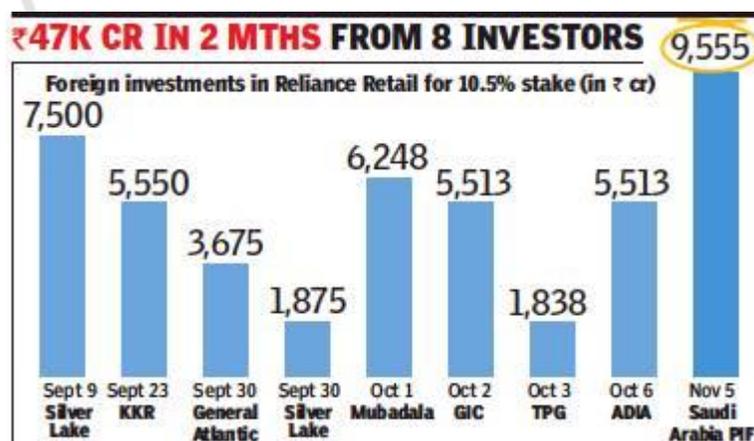


- ✓ The high-voltage exercise was undertaken with assets and manpower from the Army, Navy and IAF as well as Para-Special forces and marine commandos
- ✓ It was conducted by the Andaman and Nicobar Command (ANC), which is the only joint services operational (theatre) command of India

- ✓ The combat manoeuvres included combat free-fall and para-drop from C-130J “Super Hercules” strategic airlift aircraft, special heliborne operations by “Ghatak” platoons of the Army and amphibious landings by warships.
- ✓ The ANC was established as India’s first theatre command in October 2001
- **India’s newly inducted Rafale omni-role fighter jets - are now all set to also get “Hammer” air-to-ground precision-guided weapons**
- ✓ The first consignment of the Hammer (abbreviation of ‘Highly agile modular munition extended range’) weapons is likely to arrive in India from France next month.
- ✓ With a strike range of 20 to 70-km, the Hammer munitions are designed to destroy bunkers, hardened shelters and other targets in all terrains, including the mountainous one in Ladakh
- ✓ IAF has till now inducted eight of the 36 twin-engine Rafale jets contracted in the ₹59,000 crore deal inked with France in September 2016.
- ✓ While the first five fighters had touched down at the Ambala airbase on July 29, the next three reached India on November 4.
- ✓ Three to four jets will reach India every two to three months, as per the delivery schedule.

ECONOMY

- **On November 5, Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund (PIF) – announced its investment of ₹9,555 crore (\$1.3 billion) in Reliance Retail Ventures for a stake of just over 2% stake**
- ✓ The move follows PIF’s earlier investment of ₹11,367 crore in Reliance Retail’s sister company, Jio Platforms, to acquire a 2.3% share in Jio



- ✓ The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will be the eighth investor in Reliance Retail, which has mobilised ₹47,265 crore since September 9.
- ✓ Overall, around 11% of Reliance Retail will be in the hands of foreign investors once all the transactions are concluded.

- ✓ PIF's ₹9,555-crore investment is the biggest external capital commitment received by Reliance Retail.
- ✓ US-based Silver Lake had already proposed to invest ₹9,375 crore in Reliance Retail for a 2.1% stake
- ✓ PIF's investment has assigned Reliance Retail a valuation of ₹4.6 lakh crore (\$62 billion), which is 7% higher than the valuation given by the previous investor Abu Dhabi Investment Authority.
- ✓ It has to be recalled that RIL is going ahead with the ₹24,713-crore acquisition of Future Retail, despite Amazon's objections.

AWARDS

- **Nepal president Bidya Devi Bhandari - conferred the honorary rank of General of Nepali Army to Indian Army chief General MM Naravane**



- ✓ The Indian Army chief was felicitated at a special function held at the Sheetal Niwas, the presidential residence in Kathmandu, on November 5.
- ✓ Naravane was also presented with a sword and scroll during the function.
- ✓ The ceremony was attended by prime minister KP Sharma Oli, Indian ambassador to Nepal Vinay M Kwatra and other senior officials of both the countries.
- ✓ Naravane is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Oli, who is holding the defence portfolio, on the final day of his visit on November 6.
- ✓ The relations between India and Nepal was under severe strain following the recent decision of Nepal to issue a new map showing Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani areas in Uttarakhand as part of its territory
- ✓ Before this, Nepal registered protest against a border road inaugurated by defence minister Rajnath Singh earlier in the year

RANKINGS

- **India – has been ranked at the 196th place with respect to BMI (body mass index).**

- ✓ The normal BMI ranges between 20 and 25, as per a global analysis of data spanning 34 years from 200 countries
- ✓ India's 19-year-old boys and girls have a BMI of 20.1 compared with China, that ranks 88th with its boys having a BMI of 23 and 119th for its girls at 22.2.
- ✓ As BMI is a function of height, the corollary is that Indian teens are also among the shortest in the world.
- ✓ As per the review, India's boys ranked 180th with an average height of 5.46 feet while girls ranked 182th with an average height of 5.06 feet.
- ✓ China's 19-year-old boys today were 8cm taller than they were in 1985, with their global rank changing from 150th tallest in 1985 to 65th in 2019. China's 19-year-olds, on an average, are 5.76-foot tall
- ✓ Chinese girls were 54th on the global chart, with an average height of 5.35 feet.
- ✓ The 20cm difference between 19-year-olds in the tallest and shortest nations represented an eight-year growth gap for girls and a six-year growth gap for boys, said the study's authors.

LOWER BMI, SHORTER INDIANS

10 countries with lowest BMI in 2019 for boys (19-year-olds) Ethiopia (19.2), Niger (19.8), DR Congo (19.9), Senegal (20.1), India (20.1), Timor-Leste (20.3), Bangladesh (20.4), Central African Republic (20.5), Nepal (20.5), Chad (20.6)	10 countries with lowest BMI in 2019 for girls (19) Timor-Leste (19.6), Romania (19.9), India (20.1), Vietnam (20.4), Madagascar (20.4), Sri Lanka (20.6), Cambodia (20.6), Myanmar (20.6), Bangladesh (20.6), Japan (20.6) Normal BMI: 20 to 25
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Country	Mean height (cm)	Rank height	Mean BMI (kg/m ²)	Rank BMI
MALES m²: Height in metres squared				
UK	178.2	39	23.5	60
USA	176.9	47	25.4	16
China	175.7	65	23	88
India	166.5	180	20.1	196
France	178.6	34	22.5	113
FEMALES				
UK	163.9	49	23.8	50
USA	163.3	58	25.4	19
China	163.5	54	22.2	119
India	155.2	182	20.1	198
France	164.5	45	21.7	151

- ✓ The report mentioned highly variable childhood nutrition, especially a lack of quality food, as the reason for stunted growth and for a rise in childhood obesity, affecting a child's health and wellbeing for their entire life.