



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – NOVEMBER 19, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government - has initiated steps to restructure the Tamil Nadu Industrial Investment Corporation (TIIC).**
- ✓ The move is part of government's efforts to revive the economy by boosting the industrial sector
- ✓ The corporation was established under the Companies Act in 1949
- ✓ It was functioning as the first State-level development financial institution for boosting industrial development.
- ✓ The government's decision followed the recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee
- ✓ The committee studied the impact of the Covid-19 on the State's economy and submitted its report to Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami in September.
- ✓ According to the committee's report, the TIIC "can be restructured and strengthened to expand lending to industries by infusing capital of ₹1,000 crore over three years".
- ✓ Recently, the TIIC had floated a tender to finalise a consultancy firm for undertaking a study for its restructuring.
- ✓ The TIIC provides financial assistance to micro, small, medium, large scale industrial units and service sector projects.
- ✓ The Rangarajan Committee has also recommended developing integrated townships with social infrastructure facilities in the major 'growth centres'
- ✓ It had also stressed the need for developing a comprehensive plan to provide industrial housing facilities in all industrial clusters through the Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund.

- **Greater Chennai Corporation – has proposed to construct Rs 50 crore green building to host an innovation think tank at its headquarters**
- ✓ The proposed think tank will analyze its data and propose solutions to civic problems.



- ✓ The new posts of data officer and innovation officer were also approved by the Chennai Smart City Limited's board meeting held at Ripon building on November 18.
 - ✓ The civic body had data on various aspects of the city as it had conducted many studies using experts from IIT-Madras and NGOs.
 - ✓ These data ranges from variety of topics on traffic, usage of corporation infrastructure, utilities, lakes, greenery and other amenities
 - ✓ The data officer is to maintain and update this data, while the innovation officer has to use this data and come up with solutions for various problems.
 - ✓ The GCC is planning to appoint more interns to study the city's data and suggest solutions
- **A new ecological park – is proposed to come up on the eastern sides of the Korattur lake in Chennai**



- ✓ GST and Central Excise, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry zone is funding development of the park by allocating Rs16 lakh under the Swachtha Project.
- ✓ The work on the development of the park spread over 29,200 sqft will be completed within three months and it will be supervised by the GST authorities
- ✓ The park will be landscaped with saplings of native trees along with ornamental seats and a yoga stage.
- ✓ The eco-park will prevent encroachments in the lake area and serve as a recreation facility for the residents.
- ✓ The project will also serve to preserve the water body.

- ✓ The PWD took up restoration of Korattur lake earlier this year and has planted saplings with help from voluntary organisations.
- ✓ This is the first time that a central government organisation is funding a proposal by the state department for developing an ecological park.
- ✓ The lake, which was once a sprawling waterbody, covering 1,000 acres, had shrunk to just 600 acres due to encroachments

STATES

- ✓ **On November 18, Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan - announced a first-of-its-kind 'Cow cabinet', combining together six departments functioning under five ministers**
- ✓ The cabinet will work towards the conservation, promotion and welfare of the cow cattle in the state
- ✓ The Animal Husbandry, Forest, Panchayat and Rural Development, Revenue, Home and Farmers' Welfare Departments would be part of the Cabinet.
- ✓ The group's first meeting is scheduled for Gopashtami on November 22 at a cow sanctuary in Agar Malwa, 210km from Bhopal

TO HAVE 6 MINISTRIES

- Six ministries – animal husbandry, agriculture, forests, panchayat, home and revenue – to be part of the cow cabinet
- It will work towards conservation and welfare of cows. First meet on Nov 22 at Agar Malwa 'cow sanctuary'

“ BJP believes there are three means of contentment – Gita, Ganga and Gaumata. That inspired the decision to form a gau cabinet
 –N Mishra, MP home minister

- ✓ The cow sanctuary in Agar Malwa — Kamdhenu Gau Abhayaranya— came up in 2017 during Chouhan's third term as CM at a cost of ₹32 crore.
- ✓ It is spread across 472 hectares in Salaria village of Agar Malwa, and can accommodate over 4,000 cows.
- ✓ The shelter is for cows that are old, diseased or no longer give milk.
- ✓ According to the Anti-Cow Slaughter Act, 2004, the transportation of cattle is not allowed in the state without obtaining special permission
- ✓ In 2019, the Madhya Pradesh government amended the act to provide a jail term of six months and a fine of Rs 25,000 to Rs 50,000 for those who were convicted of committing violence against cows.
- ✓ Around 20 states in India currently have laws to regulate cow slaughter

- ✓ The states such as Assam, Kerala, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland and West Bengal have no restrictions on cow slaughter.
- **The Kerala government - has tied up with the CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) for a genome survey in the strains of SARS-CoV-2**
- ✓ This will enable a better understand of the genomic variation in the strains of SARS-CoV-2 in the State
- ✓ The study, commissioned on November 11, will collect 100 samples from 14 districts every month, for three months.
- ✓ The exercise is a follow-up of a pilot study conducted by the same group of scientists in Kozhikode
- ✓ The study pointed out that the outbreaks in the State were less due to international expatriates and more due to reduced monitoring of inter-State movement once the restrictions were eased.
- ✓ The genome sequencing uses an approach called 'NextGen' sequencing
- ✓ Using this approach, individual genomes can be simultaneously analysed, rare variations picked up and occasionally, SARS-CoV-2 missed by the gold standard RT-PCR test is also detected.
- ✓ For the genome sequencing project, the State has budgeted ₹68 lakh funding.
- ✓ The United Kingdom and Australia are the other countries that have employed genome sequencing to map the outbreaks.
- ✓ As per the earlier pilot study, virus samples sequenced from Kerala belonged to the A2a clade, which is predominant in India, within which there were three clusters.
- ✓ The largest one had genomes from Odisha, while the second cluster's ancestry was traced to Maharashtra and the third from Karnataka.
- ✓ The study also revealed four novel genetic variants and 89 variants that were specific to Kerala and not reported from elsewhere in the country.
- ✓ It has to be recalled that Kerala recorded the first cases of Covid-19 in India

NATIONAL

- **The Indian Railways - has fixed the target of March 2025 to eliminate 2,429 manned level-crossings on all the four arms of the Golden Quadrilateral rail network and its diagonal routes**
- ✓ The exercise, aiming safety and operational speed on crucial networks, will involve a budget of around ₹41,200 crore.
- ✓ This is one of the priorities of the railways' "Vision 2024" plan
- ✓ The plan specially aims to increase freight loading to 2,024 million tonnes in the next four years by developing infrastructure.

- ✓ The plan includes increasing average speed of trains and electrifying more tracks in the next four years besides other works, which would require nearly ₹2.2 lakh crore.
- ✓ According to the vision document, 1,186 level crossings are to be replaced by rail over bridges, another 1,223 by road under bridges and the rest 20 by diversion.
- ✓ The document also specifies that 58 super critical and 68 critical projects have been identified for budget allocation.
- ✓ The super critical projects of total 3,750km will be completed by December 2021 except two projects which will be completed by March 2022.
- ✓ Similarly, 68 critical projects of total 6,918km will be completed by March 2024.
- ✓ Considering that coal will continue to have significant share in the railways freight basket, additional 20 coal projects of cumulative length of 2,350km will be completed by March 2024.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **The Supreme Court – held that it is mandatory to get the consent of concerned state government for a CBI probe in their respective jurisdictions as per the principle of federalism**
- ✓ The verdict was pronounced by a SC bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar and B R Gavai on November 18
- ✓ The Judges referred to Section 5 and 6 of Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act to make it mandatory for the states to provide their consent for the CBI probe
- ✓ These sections of the DSPE Act regulates the functioning of the CBI
- ✓ The verdict comes after the withdrawal of general consent for CBI to probe fresh cases by eight non-BJP states
- ✓ Punjab was the last state to withdraw the general consent granted to the CBI.

SEVERAL STATES HAVE WITHDRAWN NOD

<p>➤ Referring to Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, the Supreme Court says though the Centre can extend its powers and jurisdiction beyond UTs to a state, it is not permissible unless the latter consents</p> <p>➤ The top court's verdict comes after several non-BJP states – including Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand – have withdrawn general consent for CBI probe</p>		<p>➤ Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan had accused the central agencies of using the gold smuggling case as a cover to “destabilise” his govt with “jurisdictional overreach”</p>
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- ✓ The others are Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram.
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh was among the first to withdraw consent, but the incumbent CM Jagan Reddy restored it soon after coming to power.

- ✓ Delhi Special Police Establishment Act was created through an executive order of the Government.
- ✓ CBI is not a statutory body and it functions under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions of the central government.
- ✓ It is exempted from the purview of Right to Information Act.

INTERNATIONAL

- **New Zealand Police - have introduced a hijab into their official uniform to encourage more Muslim women to join**



- ✓ New recruit constable Zeena Ali is the first member to wear it.
- ✓ Zeena was inspired to join the police to help the Muslim community after the Christchurch terror attack last year in which 51 people were killed at two mosques.
- ✓ Now, she will not only graduate as a police officer, but will become the first in New Zealand to wear a police-issued hijab as part of her uniform
- ✓ Other countries forces such as the Metropolitan Police in London and Police Scotland offer the option of a uniform hijab.
- ✓ In the UK, the Metropolitan Police approved a uniform hijab in 2006 with Police Scotland following in 2016.
- ✓ In Australia, MahaSukkar of Victoria Police wore a hijab in 2004.
- ✓ Born in Fiji, Zeena moved to New Zealand with her family as a child.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On November 18, the drugmaker Pfizer Inc - said that its coronavirus vaccine was 95% effective and had no serious side effects**
- ✓ This is the first set of complete results from a late-stage vaccine trial of Pfizer, which showed that the vaccine prevented mild and severe forms of Covid-19
- ✓ The vaccine was also found to be 94% effective in older adults, who are more vulnerable to developing severe Covid-19 and who do not respond strongly to some types of vaccines.

- ✓ Pfizer developed the vaccine with its German partner BioNTech
 - ✓ It is now planning to apply to the Food and Drug Administration for emergency authorisation “within days”
 - ✓ If the FDA authorises the two-dose vaccine BNT162b2, Pfizer has said that it could have up to 50 million doses available by the end of the year, and up to 1.3 billion by the end of next year.
 - ✓ About half of its supply will go to the United States this year, or enough for about 12.5 million people — a part of the US population of 330 million.
 - ✓ Americans will get the vaccine for free, under a \$1.95 billion deal the government reached with Pfizer for 100 million doses.
 - ✓ Pfizer and BioNTech’s trial included nearly 44,000 volunteers, half of whom received the vaccine, while the other half received a placebo shot of salt water.
 - ✓ Out of 170 cases of Covid-19, 162 were in the placebo group, and eight were in the vaccine group.
 - ✓ Out of 10 cases of severe Covid-19, nine had received a placebo.
 - ✓ The vaccine’s efficacy was found to be consistent across age, race and ethnicity.
 - ✓ The most common serious adverse event was fatigue, with 3.7% of volunteers reporting tiredness after they took the second dose.
 - ✓ Two percent of volunteers reported a headache after the second dose, while older adults reported fewer and milder side effects
 - ✓ Pfizer also has agreements with the EU, Germany and Japan where distribution could begin next year.
 - ✓ However, the Pfizer shot has to be stored at ultra-cold temperatures of -70 degrees Celsius.
 - ✓ It can, however, be kept in a normal fridge for up to five days, or up to 15 days in a thermal shipping box.
 - ✓ Days earlier, Moderna Inc released preliminary data for its vaccine, showing 94.5% effectiveness.
 - ✓ Both the vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer) are developed with the new messenger RNA (mRNA) technology
 - ✓ Moderna and Johnson & Johnson have said they hope to start testing the vaccine in younger patients soon.
- **Researchers - have developed a new combination of nanomaterial for rechargeable lithium ion batteries that can improve performance and enhance life.**
- ✓ The lithium ion batteries are widely used in electronic gadgets like smartphones and laptops and electric vehicles
 - ✓ A team from IIT Madras and International Advanced Research Centre for Powder Metallurgy and New Materials (ARCI) at IIT-M Research Park, developed the combination.
 - ✓ The composite of molybdenum trioxide nanobelts and single walled carbon nanohorns showed high energy storage capacity and better cycle life.

- ✓ The composite is developed for anode in a battery
 - ✓ Molybdenum is used to make parts of aircraft, missiles and as an alloying agent in steel
 - ✓ Carbon nanohorns belong to the carbon nanomaterial family that includes carbon nanotubes and graphene.
 - ✓ A lithium ion battery is made up of an anode, cathode, separator, electrolyte and two current collectors - the positive and negative
 - ✓ The collectors are charged and discharged by lithium ions moving between anode electrodes, made of graphite, and cathode electrodes, made of nickel-based material.
 - ✓ The use of carbon nanohorns enhances the lithium storage capability of molybdenum trioxide nanobelts by improving its conductivity.
- **Isro's ambitious first-ever crewless/unmanned flight under Gaganyaan project – has been postponed till the end of 2021**
- ✓ The flight was originally planned for this year and then pushed to the first half of 2021 due to Covid-19
 - ✓ Isro will also launch a second crewless flight, now scheduled for 2022 before commencing its human mission.
 - ✓ As part of the unmanned flight, Isro plans to send an indigenously developed humanoid.
 - ✓ Last week, Isro flagged off the first human rated S200 motor case for Gaganyaan's first crewless mission.
 - ✓ The high thrust solid propellant strap-on boosters—S200— play an important role in the human rated GSLV MkIII.
 - ✓ Isro's heavy lift launcher, GSLV MkIII— identified for the Gaganyaan Mission—is in the process of being human-rated.
 - ✓ The human rating of the S200 motor case is considered as successful industry collaboration.

DEFENCE

- **On November 18, the Navy - received the first of four new P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft from the US at its air station in Goa.**



- ✓ The other three P-8Is, ordered under the \$1.1 billion contract signed with the US in July 2016, will be delivered next year
 - ✓ These four P-8Is will be based at INS Hansa in Goa for the western seaboard
 - ✓ Already, eight such aircrafts acquired are deployed at INS Rajali in Arakkonam (Tamil Nadu) for the eastern zone.
 - ✓ These aircrafts, packed with radars, electro-optic sensors and weapons to attack submarines, are basically meant to monitor the Indian Ocean Region
 - ✓ However, India has been extensively using the P-8Is to track movements and buildups of Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh as well.
 - ✓ The first eight Boeing manufactured P-8I aircrafts were inducted by the Navy under a \$2.1 billion deal signed in January 2009.
 - ✓ These aircrafts are loaded with Harpoon Block-II missiles, MK-54 lightweight torpedoes, rockets and depth charges to 'attack' enemy submarines
 - ✓ The P-8Is have a maximum speed of 907kmph and an operating range of 1,200 nautical miles to undertake extensive maritime surveillance and intelligence-gathering missions.
- **For the first time in its history, the Indian Military Academy (IMA) - performed a pipping ceremony before the final passing out parade (POP).**
- ✓ Usually, the pipping ceremony is held immediately after the POP when family members formally put the stars on a cadet's uniform marking his transition from cadet to officer.
 - ✓ The deviation from tradition was done on the special request of the Vietnamese embassy for three cadets from Vietnam so that they could be brought back to their country under the Vande Bharat Mission.



- ✓ The ceremony was presided over by Lt Gen Harinder Singh, who has recently taken over as the 50th commandant of the IMA.
- ✓ The pipping ceremony was conducted for the three Vietnamese cadets of the autumn term 2020 at Chetwode Building on November 18
- ✓ The cadets are among the 208 foreign trainees from 11 friendly countries currently undergoing training at the IMA
- ✓ The IMA is expected to hold its POP for autumn term on December 12.

SPORTS

- **National champion and gold medal winner in Federation Cup senior athletics championship, hammer thrower Anita - has been provisionally suspended by the National Anti-Doping Agency (Nada) for failing a dope test — for increased testosterone level.**
- ✓ Delhi-based Anita's suspension period started from October 22.
- ✓ Anita was tested in-competition during the 23rd Federation Cup meet in NIS Patiala in March last year, where she had won gold with a throw of 59.43m.
- ✓ Anita had also won silver medals at two different athletics meets the Indian Grand Prix (GP) in Patiala and All India Police athletics championship in Panchkula.
- ✓ The sample of Anita was collected by the Nada DCOs more than 19 months ago
- ✓ However, the result arrived less than a month back from Qatar's Doha laboratory.
- ✓ The delay in announcing the results is attributed to the fact that the athlete's sample was tested for the Isotope Ratio Mass Spectrometry (IRMS) procedure.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **World Toilet Day – November 19**



- ✓ The day is observed every year by the agency, United Nations-Water and several other international organizations
- ✓ Theme 2020 - Sustainable Sanitation and Climate Change
- ✓ The observance of the day aims to create awareness about the good sanitation practices to prevent diseases
- ✓ According to the United Nations, more than 673 million people still practice open defecation, while more than 4.2 billion live without safe sanitation.
- ✓ According to WHO, 58% of diarrhoea cases are caused due to unsafe water, poor hygiene practices and poor sanitation.
- ✓ The celebrations of the day help in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6, which is, “Clean Water and Sanitation for all”.
- ✓ The SDG 6.2 particularly focuses “Ending Open Defecation”.
- ✓ The first world Toilet Day was celebrated in 2012.
- ✓ Since 2016, same theme is being used for both World Water Day and World Toilet Day.

- ✓ The themes are selected based on the World Water Development Report, released by UN-Water.
- ✓ United Nations Water, established in 2003, is an interagency mechanism that coordinates efforts of international organizations working on water and sanitation.
- ✓ In India, the Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, is to present “Swachhata Puraskar” under the Swachh Bharat Mission on World Toilet Day virtually this year.
- ✓ India is currently implementing Phase 2 of Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin.
- ✓ It focuses on solid and liquid waste management and sustenance of open defecation free concept.

REPORT

- **The Climate Transparency Report 2020 of the G20 nations – was released by a coalition of 14 global think-tanks, including TERI, on November 18**
- ✓ As per the report, India is the only country among G20 nations which is on track to meet the targets set under the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2015
- ✓ However, the top three emitters — China, the US and the European Union – and the other G20 leading and emerging economies of the coalition are still far from achieving their targets.
- ✓ India is the only “2°Celsius warming goal compatible” country, as per the climate action tracker
- ✓ Though China has declared that it will be carbon neutral by 2060, it is in the ‘highly insufficient’ category
- ✓ Earlier, in 2018, UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report showing how the 2°Celsius goal would be devastating for the globe.

THE G20 REPORT CARD

Five highest-ranked G20 countries in terms of deaths from extreme weather events (1999-2018)

A: Annual average deaths
B: Deaths per million inhabitants

Country	A	B
Russia	2,939	20.3
France	1,122	18.1
Italy	997	16.9
Germany	537	6.6
India	2,925	2.5

Five highest-ranked G20 countries in terms of economic losses from extreme weather events (1999-2018)

C: Annual average losses (\$ million, calculated using purchasing power parity)
D: Losses per unit of GDP (%)

Country	C	D
US	51,580	0.35
India	14,009	0.26
China	35,272	0.25
Australia	2,431	0.25
Mexico	3,002	0.17

Status of G20 countries’ climate action targets under Paris Agreement

Country	Evaluation
India	2°C compatible
China	Highly insufficient
US	Critically insufficient
Russia	Critically insufficient
EU	Insufficient

Source: Climate Action Tracker

- ✓ The 2°Celsius goal aims to keep the global average temperature rise within 2°Celsius by 2100 from the pre-industrial level

- ✓ It was assessed that drought and heavy rainfall risks would be much higher at the 2°Celsius mark than at 1.5 °Celsius.
- ✓ In fact, no country other than India has 1.5°Celsius aligned renewable energy targets.
- ✓ The report has been released ahead of the G20 summit
- ✓ Saudi Arabia will host the G20 leaders' summit virtually on November 21-22 due to the coronavirus pandemic
- ✓ As per the report, G20 countries had lost around 2.20 lakh lives and suffered economic losses of \$2.6 trillion due to extreme weather events in 20 years during 1999-2018.
- ✓ India reported the second highest annual average deaths (2,925) after Russia (2,939) during the period
- ✓ In economic terms, extreme weather events caused loss of \$14 billion annually in India.

