

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—NOVEMBER 8, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- Tamil Nadu - has topped the Union ministry of Jal Shakti's National Water Awards in the 'best state' (normal) category for the year 2019.
- ✓ The state has been recognised for its commendable work in the field of conservation and management of water resources

THE TOPPERS

WINNERS OF NATIONAL WATER AWARDS 2019	
Best state Tamil Nadu (1st)	Sasthavinathur, Tuticorin (1st)
Best districts in revival of river (South zone) Vellore (1st) and Karur (2nd)	Best urban local body Madurai corporation (2nd)
Best district in water conservation (South zone) Perambalur (2nd)	Best research/innovation/adaptation of new technology for water conservation Hari Kuppuswamy, ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore (1st), T Pradeep, IIT Madras, (2nd) and Va Tech Wabad Limited, S Kolathur, Chennai (3rd)
Best village panchayat (South zone)	



- ✓ Maharashtra and Rajasthan bagged second and third prizes respectively in the best state (normal) category.
- ✓ Mizoram topped the best state (special) category.
- ✓ The awards will be presented during the second National Water Awards 2019 distribution ceremony, scheduled for November 11 and 12 on a virtual platform.
- ✓ The award is presented by the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation.
- ✓ The construction of 100 checkdams and anicuts, the stabilisation of the command area to the extent of 2.85 lakh hectares through 'Kudimaramathu' scheme and the

coverage of over 2 lakh hectares through micro-irrigation are among the factors considered for the recognition of the state

- ✓ The Ministry's awards are presented in 16 categories, including best State, best district, best village panchayat, best urban local body, best research/innovation/new technology and best education.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu has taken up the restoration of water bodies under the traditional method of kudimaramath at a budget of Rs. 1,433 crore in the last five years
- ✓ Under the scheme, over 6,000 works have been taken up, which includes maintenance of supply channels, canals, tanks and shutters.
- ✓ The state performed well in implementation of irrigation and water supply schemes such as check dams, micro irrigation and in increasing irrigation coverage.
- ✓ The state has built 160 check dams so far and is on a mission to build more check dams at a budget of Rs.1000 crore during 2019-20
- ✓ A new fifth reservoir at Thervoy Kandigai in Tiruvallur district, linking two tanks, is nearing completion to substitute the four other reservoirs to meet Chennai's water needs.
- ✓ Now ready for commissioning, the reservoir will have a storage capacity of 500 million cubic feet.
- ✓ The state has set up a 'water resources conservation and river restoration corporation' exclusively to develop schemes and access funding from agencies on the lines of Road Development Corporation.
- ✓ It has implemented Athikadavu Avinashi groundwater recharge and drinking water scheme, costing Rs 1,652 crore, to revive the drought-hit areas of Coimbatore, Tirupur and Erode districts
- ✓ Further, the state has diverted flood surplus water from Mettur to the dry tanks in Sarabanga basin in Salem district through lift irrigation
- ✓ Improvements to the irrigation systems in Cauvery basin, Kattalai high level canal, Rajavoikkal and Noyyal river system have also been taken up by the state.
- ✓ The state is planning to commence the Cauvery-Gundar river linking project soon for which Rs 700 crore has been allotted.
- ✓ Vellore district bagged the first place in the 'best districts in revival of river' category, while Karur bagged the second place in the same category
- ✓ Perambalur came second in the water conservation category.
- ✓ The Sasthavinathur village panchayat, Thoothukudi, stood first in the water conservation category
- ✓ Vellore district got recognition for replenishing Naganadhi river with the help of community, especially women self-help groups.
- ✓ For this project, geo spatial technologies were used in identifying the sites for artificial recharge structures and check dams were done with gabion structures
- ✓ Madurai Corporation bagged the second place in the 'Best urban local body' category

- ✓ It had restored Panaiyur channel to take water from Vaigai river to Vandiyur Mariamman Teppakulam.
- **Tamil Nadu school education department - has decided to split the higher secondary syllabus into two — prioritized syllabus and optional syllabus for Classes XI and XII.**
- ✓ The move has been necessitated considering fewer working days available in 2020-21
- ✓ Accordingly, teachers will have to compulsorily teach the topics coming under priority category while they would guide the students to do 'self-study' for portions under optional category.
- ✓ The portions to be moved to optional category is yet to be finalized by the department
- ✓ Around 30% of portions in the syllabus may be made optional for students for this year.
- ✓ Now, subject experts are finalising total hours needed to cover the topics in both categories to prepare the timetable.
- ✓ The Tamil Nadu government announced that schools for Classes IX to XII will reopen from November 16.
- ✓ As of now, the board exams to Classes X, XI and XII will likely be postponed to June 2021.
- ✓ Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) and state boards in states like Telangana and Gujarat have cut 30% of syllabus for Class X and XII in view of the Covid-19 lockdown.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu school education department also announced that it would omit up to 40% of lessons for Classes I to X.
- ✓ But, the omitted lessons have not been released so far.
- ✓ Students at primary and middle school level may also get work sheets for self-learning.

NATIONAL

- **On November 7, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - announced that the one rank one pension scheme of armed forces has completed 5 years after launch.**
- ✓ The government has disbursed Rs 42,700 crores to more than 20.6 lakh ex-servicemen in the last five years.
- ✓ As per the scheme, uniform pension of 50% of the last drawn salary is given to the retiring defence personnel irrespective of their rank and the length of service.
- ✓ The Armed personnel who retired on or after June 30, 2014 are covered under the scheme.

- ✓ The concept of rank pay was introduced in 1986 as per the recommendations of the fourth Central Pay Commission.

रक्षा मंत्रालय
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OROP

UNWAVERING COMMITMENT FOR WELFARE OF EX-SERVICEMEN (1/2)

- The long pending demand for OROP implemented after four decades
- The historic decision to implement OROP was taken on 7th Nov. 2015, benefit effective from 1st July 2014
 - ◆ Armed Forces Personnel retired up to 30th June 2014 were covered
- Uniform pension to those retiring in the same rank with the same length of service regardless of their date of retirement

- ✓ The one rank one pension scheme was defined by the 10-member committee headed by Bhagat Singh koshyari, which had submitted its report in 2011
- ✓ One Rank One Pension scheme fixes a uniform pension to the armed forces personnel who are retiring in the same rank with same length of service, irrespective of their date of retirement
- **On November 7, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) - announced that it will start providing Malaria outbreak forecast from next monsoon.**
- ✓ Also, it has announced that India has increased its high performance computing facility.
- ✓ The country has expanded the existing capacity of 10 petaflop to 40 petaflops.
- ✓ The IMD recently studied the phenomenon of occurrence of malaria and its relation with rainfall in the city of Nagpur
- ✓ According to the world Malaria report, India accounts to 85% of global Malaria burden, majority of them being reported from the central and Eastern part of the countries.
- ✓ This is mainly because these States have dense forests, tribal areas and hilly regions.
- ✓ The states reporting more cases of Malaria include Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and the North Eastern states such as Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

- ✓ India had around 4 lakh malaria cases in 2008, which has declined to 2.08 million in 2008.
 - ✓ According to the National Health portal, India is the only country to show progress among all the other hardest hit Malaria countries.
 - ✓ Malaria vaccine is branded as Mosquirix and was approved by the European medicines agency in 2015.
 - ✓ But, it was not approved in India and no vaccine has so far been tried in India against malaria.
 - ✓ Malawi is a first country chosen to roll out the vaccine, followed by Ghana and Kenya.
- **The road transport ministry - has made it mandatory for all four wheelers and bigger vehicles to have a valid FASTag for renewal of third party insurance from April 1.**



- ✓ Moreover, the FASTag has also been made mandatory for all commercial vehicles — cars and above — for renewal of fitness certificate from January 1.
 - ✓ Any violation in this regard can attract a penalty of ₹300 to ₹500.
 - ✓ All four wheelers and above sold after December 2017 come with factory-fitted tags from the dealers
 - ✓ The FASTag initiative is aimed at ensuring that the payment of user fees reaches 100% at toll plazas through electronic means and vehicles pass seamlessly.
- **On November 4, the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Narendra Modi - approved the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and Israel in the field of Health and Medicine**
- ✓ The agreement seeks to exchange and train medical doctors and other professionals, thereby sharing expertise and exchange information related to medical devices and pharma products
 - ✓ Further, both the countries will mutually assist in setting up health care facilities and promote research in the field of medicine

- ✓ The countries will also encourage their representatives to participate in seminars, workshops, symposia and conferences.
 - ✓ To fight Covid-19 pandemic, Indian and Israeli researchers are collaborating to develop a testing kit that will produce results in less than 30 seconds.
 - ✓ To improve Tuberculosis screening capabilities in rural areas, the Health Net Global of Apollo hospitals and Zebra Medical vision of Israel will receive \$4.9 million from India-Israel Industrial Research and Development and Technological Innovation Fund.
 - ✓ Recently, on November 2, 2020, the foundation stone was laid to build a Centre of Excellence for Vegetables in Khetri, Assam.
- **On November 4, the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi - approved the MoU signed between India and UK in the field of medical product regulation.**
- ✓ The MoU was signed between United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
 - ✓ The agreement will ensure mutual collaboration in matters relating to medical products registration.
 - ✓ Both the countries will exchange information regarding the good practices and exchange information on safety, imports and exports
 - ✓ The researchers in the field will also participate in seminars, symposia, scientific and practical conferences
 - ✓ In 2010, India and UK signed Civil Nuclear Cooperation Declaration to promote facilitation of cooperation in nuclear field.
 - ✓ In 2017, Access India Programme was launched with the help of UK India Business Council to help the SMEs of UK export more to India.
 - ✓ India and UK celebrated '2017' as the "UK-India Year of Culture" commemorating the 70th Independence year celebrations.
- **On November 4, the Union Cabinet chaired by PM Modi - approved the Memorandum of Understanding signed between India and UK in the field of Information Communication Technologies and Telecommunications**
- ✓ The MoU was signed between Department of Digital, Media and sports of UK Government and Ministry of Communications of India.
 - ✓ It will strengthen bilateral cooperation between the countries in the field of telecommunications.
 - ✓ The major areas of cooperation identified includes spectrum management, ICT regulation, telecommunication standardisation, testing and certification, wireless communication, security in the use of telecommunication and technological development in Internet of Things, Cloud Computing, Big Data, etc
 - ✓ In 2019-20, the bilateral trade between the countries stood at \$15.5 billion.
 - ✓ UK is a significant partner of India in terms of FDI after Mauritius and Singapore, which are ranked first and second respectively.

- On November 4, the Prasar Bharati and Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-Informatics - signed a Memorandum of Understanding.



- ✓ Under the MoU, all the 51 DTH education channels will be available as DD co-branded channels to all DD Fresh Dish viewers
- ✓ The 51 DTH channels includes Swayamprabha, E-Vidya for Class 1 to 12, DigiShala, Vande Gujarat, etc.
- ✓ The channels are to provide quality educational programmes to rural and remote households.
- ✓ These services are to available free of cost for all the viewers 24/7.
- ✓ SWAYAM is Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)
- ✓ It was launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (now Ministry of Education).
- ✓ The main aim of SWAYAM is to ensure that every student in the country gets access to best quality education at affordable cost.
- ✓ The SWAYAM Prabha scheme is being implemented by the Ministry of HRD.
- ✓ It offers 32 high quality education channels providing quality learning resources to remote areas where internet facility is not available.
- ✓ The DTH channels under the programme uses GSAT-15 satellite programme for telecast.
- ✓ DigiShala is a TV channel launched by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to promote cashless transactions.
- ✓ The channel will inform citizens about digital payment options through step by step demos using UPI, e-wallets, USSD and Aadhaar-enabled payment system and cards.
- ✓ The channel is available in English and Hindi.

INTERNATIONAL

- On November 7, the United Arab Emirates - announced a major overhaul of the country's Islamic personal laws, allowing unmarried couples to

cohabitante, loosening alcohol restrictions and criminalising so-called “honor killings”.

- ✓ The reforms aim to boost the country’s economic and social standing and “consolidate the UAE’s principles of tolerance”
- ✓ The announcement follows a historic U.S.-brokered deal to normalise relations between the UAE and Israel, which is expected to bring an influx of Israeli tourists and investment.
- ✓ It is called the “Abraham Accord”.
- ✓ The proposed changes include scrapping penalties for alcohol consumption, sales and possession for those 21 and over.
- ✓ The decrees announced would take immediate effect.
- ✓ Earlier, individuals needed a government-issued license to purchase, transport or have alcohol in their homes
- ✓ The alcoholic liquor and beer are widely available in bars and clubs in the UAE’s luxuriant coastal cities.
- ✓ Another amendment allows for “cohabitation of unmarried couples,” which has long been a crime in the UAE.
- ✓ In a move to better “protect women’s rights,” the government said it also decided to get rid of laws defending “honor crimes,” which was a widely criticised tribal custom.

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **On November 5, the Government of Bangladesh - signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Serum Institute of India for priority delivery of 3 crore Covid-19 vaccine doses.**



- ✓ The COVISHIELD Vaccines was developed by AstraZeneca and University of Oxford.
- ✓ According to the agreement, around 1.5 crore people will be vaccinated with the expected delivery, as each person requires two vaccine doses.
- ✓ Currently there are three Covid-19 vaccines under trial in India.
- ✓ They are the Russian Vaccine called Sputnik V, Oxford University Vaccine called COVISHIED and the COVAXIN jointly developed by Indian Council of Medical Research and Bharat Biotech.

- ✓ India is a part of the COVAX Facility of the GAVI Alliance, which aims to provide Covid-19 vaccines to all countries.
- ✓ GAVI refers to 'Global Alliance for Vaccines'
- ✓ The Government of India has planned to store Covid-19 vaccine using the Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (EVIN)
 - ✓ The indigenously developed EVIN system will perform real time tracking of vaccines stocks.
 - ✓ It also monitors the temperature of the cold chain and strengthens immunization supply chain system.

COMMITTEES

- **The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting – has proposed to set up a committee to review the existing guidelines of Television Rating Agencies.**
- ✓ The committee has been formed with four members under the chairmanship of CEO of Prasar Bharti, Sashi Shekar Vempati.
- ✓ The other three members of the committee include Rajkumar Upadhyaya (Executive Director of C-Dot), Dr Shalabh, Professor of Statistics from IIT Kanpur and Professor Pulak Ghosh of Decision Sciences Centre for Public Policy.
- ✓ The Committee is mandated to carry out an appraisal system and examine the TRAI recommendations that are being notified time to time.
- ✓ TRP is Television Rating Point, which is the data that shows how many people are watching a channel.
- ✓ It also provides other data such as socio-economic categories of people watching a channel, number of times or hours or days people watched the channel.
- ✓ The Mumbai Police in October 2020 busted a racket of fraudulent manipulation of Television Rating Points that involved three channels including Republic TV of Arnab Goswami.
- ✓ The BARC (Broadcast Audience Research Council) calculates TRP by installing BAR-O meters in over 45,000 empaneled households, since 2015.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **On November 5, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - chaired the Global Investor Roundtable Conference.**



- ✓ The conference witnessed the participation of twenty of the world largest Sovereign Wealth Funds and pension, who are owners to total assets of more than \$6 billion.
 - ✓ The main focus of discussion at the conference was about the vision of India in becoming a 5 trillion USD economy.
 - ✓ The conference was organised by National Investment and Infrastructure Fund and Ministry of Finance.
 - ✓ It provided a common platform for the decision makers and investors from financial market regulators and the central government.
 - ✓ The investors from major economic regions of the world such as Europe, US, Japan, Australia, Singapore and the Middle East participated in the conference
 - ✓ The participants of the conference stressed that India should give priority to Artificial Intelligence.
- **The Election Commission of India – organised a three-day International Virtual Election Visitors Programme, meant for foreign election organizations and management bodies, from November 5**
- ✓ Over 40 countries, including Australia, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, participated in the programme.
 - ✓ Apart from these countries the international organizations such as International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance), Association of World Election Bodies and International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) also participated in the programme.
 - ✓ The main objective of conducting the programme is to provide unique overview of SVEEP programme.
 - ✓ It is a flagship programme of Election Commission of India.
 - ✓ The SVEEP programme focuses on voter education and spreads awareness about voter literacy.
 - ✓ The programme is designed based on the cultural, socio-economic and demographic profile of the country.
 - ✓ Also, ECI shared its knowledge and technology being implemented in conducting elections.
 - ✓ Earlier, similar programmes were launched during 2014 Lok Sabha elections, followed by February-March 2017 state assembly elections and 2019 Lok Sabha elections
- **On November 5, the first India-Nordic-Baltic Conclave - was held through video conference.**
- ✓ India was represented by External Affairs Minister S Jai Shankar in the meeting
 - ✓ The conclave was jointly hosted by Ministry of External Affairs and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
 - ✓ It focused on clean technologies and renewable energies, Artificial Intelligence, supply chain logistics and block chain led transformation.



- ✓ The Nordic Baltic Eight includes the countries - Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Latvia, Iceland, Norway, Lithuania and Sweden.
 - ✓ The Baltic States are Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, which are located in the Baltic sea
 - ✓ Among these three Baltic states, Lithuania has high expertise in LASER technology.
 - ✓ Latvia is linked by an ancient route called “The Amber Way”, which was earlier used to transport amber from the coastal regions of Baltic Sea and North Sea to the Mediterranean Sea.
 - ✓ Estonia is home to NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence.
 - ✓ The countries, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Iceland are the Nordic countries.
 - ✓ The first India-Nordic Summit was held in 2018, which was focused on security, climate change and economic growth.
- **On November 5, the fourth high level meeting of India-OPEC Energy Dialogue - was held virtually.**



- ✓ India was represented by the Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan in the meeting
- ✓ The dialogue is being held since 2015.

- ✓ During the dialogue, India highlighted Covid-19 induced disruptions of oil supply and urged OPEC to address the anomalies prevalent in differential crude oil prices fixed by the OPEC members for different regions.
 - ✓ In 2019-20, India imported \$92.8 billion worth oil from OPEC countries to become the third largest oil consumer in the world
 - ✓ Recently, Ecuador withdrawn its membership from OPEC, after rejoining it in 2007
 - ✓ In 2018, Qatar left OPEC.
 - ✓ The OPEC was created at Baghdad Conference in 1960 with its headquarters located at Vienna, Austria.
 - ✓ There are 14 member countries in OPEC consisting of Iraq, Iran, UAE, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Algeria, Gabon, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Ecuador, Angola and Venezuela.
- **On November 5, the India-Indonesia fifth joint working group on coal - was held through video conference.**



- ✓ During the meeting, the countries discussed on Indian Coal Policy reforms, commercial mining of coal in India and coking coal exploration.
- ✓ India is currently looking for opportunities to import more coal from Indonesia, as the coal prices have fallen greatly there recently due to the pandemic.
- ✓ Indonesia is the third largest coal producer in the world, accounting for 40% of world coal exports.
- ✓ Till 2020, India imported 128.7 million tonnes of coal from Indonesia.
- ✓ India holds fourth largest coal reserves in the world.
- ✓ Still, India imports more than 250 million tonnes of coal from other countries.
- ✓ South Africa is the largest coal supplier to India followed by Australia.
- ✓ Recently, the government has decided to privatise the coal mines to domestic coal production based on revenue sharing.
- ✓ Also, coal bed methane extraction rights have been auctioned and coal gasification has been incentivised

PERSONALITIES

- **Mumbai-born Sonia Mudbhatkal – has become the first Indian producer to get a Tony award nomination in the US**
- ✓ Sonia was nominated for ‘best play’ for ‘The Sound Inside’, a drama she co-produced with Jeetendra Sonar, Chitra Mete and award-winning Hollywood producer John Hart.
- ✓ The play, which is a psychological thriller focusing on a writer’s life and the writing process, has also been nominated across five other categories
- ✓ The nominated categories are - ‘best original score (music and/or lyrics) written for theatre’, ‘best performance by an actress in a leading role in a play’, ‘best lighting design of a play’, ‘best sound design of a play’ and ‘best direction of a play’.
- ✓ This year’s Tony awards, which recognise excellence in live Broadway theatre, were scheduled to be held in June but will now be announced online.
- ✓ ‘The Sound Inside’ had its Broadway debut in October 2019
- ✓ Sonia runs film, theatre and longform production company Continuum Media in Los Angeles and has previously worked in several motion pictures.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **On November 7, the Indian space research organisation (Isro) - successfully launched PSLV-C49 carrying 10 satellites, including earth observation satellite EOS-01, at Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.**



- ✓ This is ISRO’s first mission in 2020 after the Covid-19 pandemic induced lockdown affected the launch of 10 missions planned by the agency.
- ✓ Out of the 10 satellites launched, 9 are international satellites from USA, Luxembourg and Lithuania
- ✓ After lift off, PSLV, in its 51st flight injected its primary payload EOS-01, an earth observation satellite, into a 575km circular orbit followed by nine foreign satellites.

- ✓ EOS-01, previously called Risat-2BR2, has an all-weather X-band radar, intended for applications in agriculture, forestry and disaster management support.
 - ✓ It is the third of the three-spacecraft constellation, with the others being RISAT-2B and RISAT-2BR1, launched in 2019
 - ✓ As the satellite uses radar imaging, it is unaffected by clouds, fog or lack of sunlight and can monitor urban landscape, forest land and imaging agricultural land.
 - ✓ The nine foreign satellites includes –
 - ✓ R2 satellite from Lithuania, which is a technology demonstration,
 - ✓ four Kleos (KSM-1A/1B/1C/1D) satellites from Luxembourg for maritime applications and
 - ✓ four Lemur (Lemur-1/2/3/4) satellites from the US meant for multi-mission remote sensing application.
 - ✓ The PSLV rocket that was used for the launch is a new variant, which does not become a waste after putting the satellite in the orbit
 - ✓ Instead, the fourth stage of the rocket can be used as an orbital platform for the other onboard instruments for atleast six more months
 - ✓ Isro has planned three more launches with three different rockets in the coming months.
 - ✓ It includes PSLV-C50 carrying CMS-01, first developmental flight of new vehicle SSLV carrying EOS-02 and GSLV F-10 carrying EOS-03.
 - ✓ In January 2020, ISRO sent communication satellite GSAT-30 from French Guiana using an Ariane rocket.
 - ✓ Isro had already postponed the Aditya L1 mission and the unmanned Gaganyaan, which was a precursor planned to India's first Human space Flight
- **On November 5, the Defence Research Development Organization - test fired the advanced version of Pinaka rocket successfully in Chandipur, Odisha.**



- ✓ The advanced version replaces the current version of Pinaka Mk-1 system that is deployed along the borders of Pakistan and China.

- ✓ The Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher system, also called the “Shiva’s bow”, can fire 12 rockets in 44 seconds.
 - ✓ One single battery of Pinaka system consists of six launch vehicles, which are linked with network-based systems and radar.
 - ✓ The enhanced version has been designed to achieve longer range as compared to the earlier version.
 - ✓ The Pinaka Mark-1, currently being used by the Army, has a range of 38 km.
 - ✓ On the other hand, the current tested version, enhanced Pinaka Mark-1 has a range of 45 km.
 - ✓ The Pinaka Mk-II has a range of 60 km and the Guided Pinaka system has a range of 75 km.
 - ✓ The Guided Pinaka has an integrated control, navigation and guidance system, which is guided by the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System.
 - ✓ The rockets tested were manufactured by the Economic Explosives Limited, Nagpur.
 - ✓ DRDO had transferred the technology to the manufacturer.
 - ✓ The test was tracked by instruments such as Electro-Optical Tracking System and radars.
 - ✓ Pinaka was developed as an alternate to the Russian Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher System called “Grad”.
 - ✓ It was first used in Kargil war.
 - ✓ On October 23, the Indian Navy demonstrated the launching of the missile by INS Prabal
 - ✓ The Indian Navy test fired an anti-ship missile from INS Kora in Bay of Bengal on October 30.
- **On November 6, China - launched 13 satellites in a single Long March 6 carrier rocket successfully.**



- ✓ Of these 13 satellites, 10 were from Argentina.
- ✓ This is the biggest launch of foreign satellites by the country.
- ✓ This was the 351st satellite launch of the Long March series.

- ✓ China has been launching the Beidou series of navigational satellites to end the reliance of US for GPS systems.
- ✓ The last satellite of the Beidou system was launched on June 23, 2020.
- ✓ China is planning to construct a permanent Chinese space Station by 2022.
- ✓ Tianwen-1 is the mars mission of China, which is expected to arrive at Mars in 2021 and was launched in July 2020.

DEFENCE

- **On November 4, Bangladesh and United States - held a joint Naval Exercise CARAT at Chittagong.**



- ✓ CARAT refers to 'Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training'
- ✓ Due to COVID-19 pandemic, certain events of the exercise are to be held virtually.
- ✓ It includes Maritime Domain Awareness, Replenishment at Sea training, legal regulations at sea and aviation best practices of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.
- ✓ This is the first year the exercise is supported by United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime and the Bali Process Regional Support Office.
- ✓ CARAT is a series of annual bilateral military exercise conducted by the US Pacific fleet with countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Brunei, Indonesia, Philippines, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Thailand.
- ✓ Even though the focus of the exercise is mainly on ASEAN, it is also held with non-ASEAN members such as Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- ✓ This year, Bangladesh was the second country to hold the exercise after Brunei.
- ✓ CARAT Brunei was held in South China sea between October 5 and October 9, 2020.

APPOINTMENTS

- **Indian diplomat, Vidisha Maitra - has been elected to a key UN committee which controls the financial and budgetary purse of the world body.**



- ✓ Maitra was India's candidate for the only post in the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) from the Asia Pacific Group.
- ✓ The other candidate was from Iraq.
- ✓ India has been a member of the committee since its inception in 1946.
- ✓ The committee is one of the most coveted in the United Nations system as it controls the financial and budgetary purse of the UN.
- ✓ The ACABQ performs several functions including the examination of the budget submitted by the UN Secretary-General to the General Assembly and advising the Assembly on administrative and budgetary matters referred to it.
- ✓ Members are elected by the General Assembly on the basis of broad geographical representation, personal qualifications and experience and serve for a period of three calendar years.
- ✓ Members serve in a personal capacity and not as representatives of member-states.
- ✓ Maitra is a career diplomat with the Indian Foreign Service and currently posted as First Secretary in Permanent Mission of India to UN in New York.
- ✓ She has extensive work experience in strategic policy planning and research, formulation and implementation of development assistance and infrastructure projects, defence acquisition matters, international taxation issues, investment and trade promotion

INTERNATIONAL DAY

- **National Cancer Awareness Day - November 7**
- ✓ The day is observed to create awareness about early detection of cancer
- ✓ It was first observed in 2014.



- ✓ It coincided with the birth anniversary of scientist Marie Curie, who won the nobel prize for discovering radium and plutonium.
- ✓ She was the first woman to win Nobel prize.
- ✓ Marie Curie died as she was exposed to large amounts of radiation.
- ✓ Cancer is the second leading cause of death according to the World Health Organization.
- ✓ More than 18 million cases of cancer were reported in 2018, out of which 1.5 million were in India alone.
- ✓ In 2018, around 0.8 million people died in India due to cancer and around 9.5 million died globally.
- ✓ The World Cancer Day is observed on February 4 by the World Health Organization and several other world organizations.

US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS – AN UPDATE

- **Democratic candidate Joe Biden – is all set to become the 46th President of the United States, defeating incumbent U.S. President Donald Trump**
- ✓ His Oath of Office will be administered by the Chief Justice of Supreme Court
- ✓ He will be the oldest president when he is expected to take charge on January 20, 2021
- ✓ Biden's running mate, Kamala Devi Harris, a U.S. Senator from California, will become the first woman and the first Indian and African-American Vice-President of the country.
- ✓ Kamala was born to Shyamala Gopalan, a biologist who immigrated to California from Chennai.

- ✓ The 77-year old Democrat and his running mate, mixed-race Indian American Kamala Harris, were projected as winners in the US presidential election by various media outlets

TRUMP 3RD PREZ TO LOSE ELECTION SINCE WW II

A look at how the 2020 election broke new ground

Joe Biden, 78, will be the oldest US president when he begins his term. He will also be the oldest outgoing president whether he serves one term or two

Donald Trump is the first president to lose his reelection since George HW Bush lost to Bill Clinton in 1992. Trump is the third sitting president since the Second World War to lose an election, the others being Carter and Bush Sr, and only the ninth in US history:

Kamala Harris is the first woman and first person of colour to become the US vice president. Her husband, Douglas Emhoff, will be the country's first "Second Gentleman" – up to this point, the president's wife has been referred to as the First Lady, and the vice president's wife as the Second Lady

1 John Adams (Federalist), Prez in 1796, lost re-election in 1800
2 Martin Van Buren (Democratic), Prez in 1836, lost in 1840
3 Grover Cleveland (Democratic), Prez in 1884, lost in 1888
4 Benjamin Harrison (Republican), Prez in 1888, lost in 1892 (to Grover Cleveland)
5 William Taft (Republican), Prez in 1908, lost in 1912
6 Herbert Hoover (Republican), Prez in 1928, lost in 1932
7 Jimmy Carter (Democratic), Prez in 1976, lost in 1980
8 George Bush Sr (Republican), Prez in 1988, lost in 1992

➤ Biden will be the 15th vice president to serve as president but only the sixth to reach the White House after an election as opposed to the resignation, natural death or assassination of a sitting president.

➤ Nearly 160 million people voted in 2020, the highest total number of voters in US history. Biden also received the most total votes at nearly 75 million

and counting, surpassing Barack Obama's record tally of 69.5 million in 2008.

➤ At an estimated 66.4%, voter turnout reached the highest since the 1900 election saw 73.7% of eligible voters turn out.

➤ 43 of US' 50 states reported turnouts higher than in 2016, preliminary data says. The battleground states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida

and North Carolina all saw turnouts that were more than 5 points higher than the 2016 figure.

➤ The election saw a record number of mail-in and early in-person votes – 101.4 million – making up two-thirds of the total turnout.

➤ 24 years since Arizona had gone with a Democratic candidate before it voted Biden this year.

- ✓ A prolonged counting of votes showed him with an insurmountable lead to take him past the 270 votes out of 538 electoral college votes needed to win the presidency.
- ✓ The turnout in this year's elections — expected to be over 70% — is the highest in decades, with Biden receiving about 74 million votes, the highest in history, and Trump receiving 70 million, the second highest in history.
- ✓ In its 244 years of mostly white male dominance, the US had 45 men (44 white and one, Barack Obama, of mixed race) as president, and 48 vice-presidents (all white men).
- ✓ Trump will remain president till noon of January 20, when the term of the new presidency comes into effect
- ✓ The election results make Trump the first one term president since 1990

- ✓ Joe Biden served as the 47th Vice President during Obama administration between 2009 and 2017
- ✓ He had also served as the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.
- ✓ In 2009, during the Great Recession, he oversaw the infrastructure spending of America.
- ✓ Joe Biden has been a strong supporter of India-US relations
- ✓ In 2006, as a Senator, Biden pushed other Democrats to back India-US Civil Nuclear Deal.
- ✓ In 2016, the US and India signed LEMOA, Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement, which is the first of the three foundational pacts that US signed with its defence partner.
- ✓ The Obama-Biden administration named India as “Major Defence Partner”.

