



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 1, 2020

### TAMIL NADU

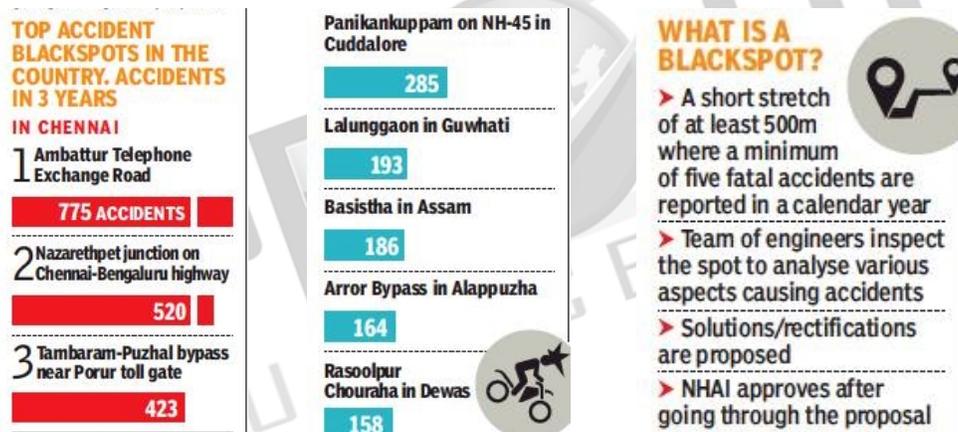
- On November 30, the Tamil Nadu government - announced reopening of final year undergraduate classes in colleges/universities, including arts, science, technical, engineering, agriculture, fisheries and veterinary institutions, from December 7.
- ✓ The government had also permitted the reopening of hostels to accommodate students.

#### WHAT'S UNLOCKED

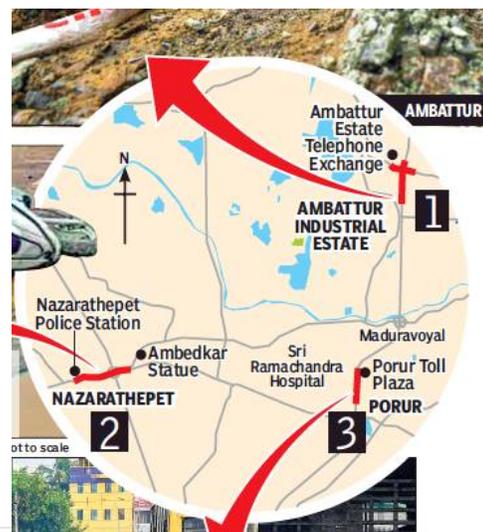
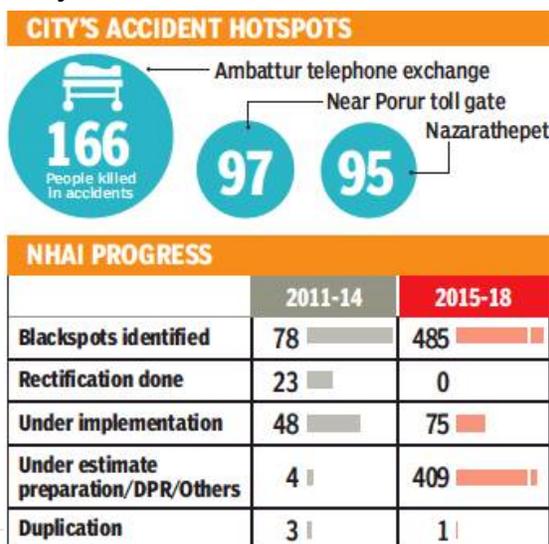
- Beaches open from December 14
- Tourist places also open to visitors
- Exhibition halls for business-to-business purposes allowed
- E-registration still on for those coming from other states, except Pondy, AP & Karnataka
- No international air travel, except for purposes allowed by Union home ministry

- ✓ Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami extended the lockdown in the state till the midnight of December 31, 2020 alongwith the announcement of certain relaxations, except in containment zones.
- ✓ Medical and allied colleges will also reopen for undergraduate and postgraduate courses from December 7.
- ✓ However, the classes for the students admitted for the academic year 2020-21 are allowed only from February 1, 2021
- ✓ Social, political, entertainment and religious gatherings are allowed in closed spaces with a maximum of 50% of the seating capacity or with a cap of 200 people from December 1 to December 31.

- ✓ However, permission would be required from the commissioner of Greater Chennai Police, and that of collectors in respective districts.
  - ✓ The State government also allowed the reopening of exhibition halls but only for business-to-business purposes.
  - ✓ Swimming pools are allowed to reopen but only for sports training.
  - ✓ Tourist spots would also be allowed to function.
  - ✓ Only those domestic and international air traffic routes permitted by the Union Home Ministry would be allowed to operate.
- **India's top three deadliest accident blackspots – are located in Chennai, as per the Union Road Transport Ministry's accident report 2019.**
- ✓ The 500-metre stretch of Chennai-Thiruvallur High (CTH) Road near Ambattur Telephone Exchange tops the list with the reporting of 166 deaths occurring in 755 accidents in the past three years.
  - ✓ Every minute, around 70 traffic violations occur at the main traffic signal there, as per the data.



- ✓ The Tambaram Bypass near the Porur Toll gate took the second spot followed by the Nazarethpet junction on the Chennai-Bengaluru highway in Poonamallee.
- ✓ As many as 943 accidents and 192 deaths occurred in these two stretches in three years.



- ✓ The government recently set up accident trauma centres near these locations and this resulted in fewer deaths in 2020
  - ✓ Tamil Nadu recorded a 10.5% drop in road accidents in 2019 compared to 2018, as per the official data.
  - ✓ However, with 57,228 crashes, the state topped the country for the third consecutive year.
- **The Tamil Nadu government - has approved ₹16 crore as revolving fund for paying the fees of MBBS and BDS students admitted under the 7.5% reservation for government school students.**
- ✓ In this regard, Health secretary J Radhakrishnan issued a government order on November 30.
  - ✓ This follows announcements by chief minister Edappadi K Palaniswami that the state government would bear the cost of education of these students.
  - ✓ According to estimates by the Director of Medical Education (DME), the tentative cumulative cost of fees and other charges to be paid by these students for the first year would be ₹15.85 crore.
  - ✓ This fund will be utilized for 209 students admitted to MBBS courses in government medical colleges, six in government dental college and 104 in self-financed medical colleges and 80 in dental colleges.
  - ✓ The revolving fund would be operated by the Tamil Nadu Medical Services Corporation Ltd.
  - ✓ The government would also take action to help students avail of benefits of scholarships and educational assistance under various eligible categories
  - ✓ Last month, the Tamil Nadu government announced a 7.5% quota for government school students in medical and dental seats.
  - ✓ To avail the quota benefit, the students would have studied in government schools from Class VI-XII and also cleared NEET.
  - ✓ Accordingly, more than 300 MBBS seats in government and self-financing medical colleges would now be available for students from government schools.
- **The Directorate of non-formal and adult education – had recently launched a new scheme ‘Karpom Ezhthuvom Iyakkam’**
- ✓ The initiative aims to provide literacy to illiterate ‘aged’ people
  - ✓ At present, 712-odd people in Adavathur panchayat in Trichy district were encouraged by government school teachers to get back to learning.



- ✓ Under Puthiya Vayathu vanthor kalvi thittam – an adult literacy programme, illiterates above the age of 15 are identified in every village and trained to put their signature besides being taught to read and write.
- ✓ A state-level training was held in this regard at Bishop Heber College in Trichy for teachers last month
- ✓ It was followed by another training session for 16,244 volunteers to train illiterate people.
- ✓ Close to 800 such people were identified in Manikandam block alone in Trichy who will be trained at 40 learning writing centres for the next three months.
- ✓ School management committee and parents teachers association in each of the government schools were involved in the process of identifying people who cannot read or write.
- ✓ Data in the anganvadi centres and NREGA records was used to identify such people.
- ✓ A centre with minimum 20 people was formed and the formal classes began from November 30.
- ✓ At the end of training, those who qualify the test will be given certificates from National Institute of Open Schooling.

## NATIONAL

- **India – has proposed to set up an apex committee, comprising members from its 13 key ministries - to coordinate actions for achieving its goals under the global climate deal.**
- ✓ The Paris Agreement on Climate Change will officially come into force from January 1, 2021
- ✓ The apex body will also function as a national authority to regulate carbon markets in India under the Paris Agreement in post-2020 period.
- ✓ Its role will include issuing guidelines for carbon pricing and market mechanism to offset carbon footprints of emitters.
- ✓ A gazette notification was issued by the environment ministry on November 27 in this regard
- ✓ It enlists 16 functions for this body which will have power to issue directions under Section 5 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, to industries or any entities for compliance on cleaner practices in sync with India's goals.
- ✓ The 17-member committee will be headed by environment secretary R P Gupta
- ✓ The committee comprises India's key climate negotiator and additional secretary in environment ministry, Ravi Shankar Prasad as its vice-chairperson
- ✓ The committee will define responsibilities of the ministries concerned for fulfilling India's 'nationally determined contribution' (NDC) pledges
- ✓ It will also receive periodic updates to monitor, review and revisit climate goals to meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement.

- ✓ Further, the committee will also develop programmes and policies, if required, to make India's domestic climate actions compliant with its international obligations.
- ✓ The Paris Agreement was approved by 195 countries in 2015
- ✓ It aims to minimise the threat of climate change by keeping an average global temperature rise this century well below 2 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to make efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degree Celsius.
- ✓ As part of its contribution to the collective global efforts, India has three quantitative goals, which includes
  - ✓ reduction in the emissions intensity of GDP by 33-35% by 2030 from the 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 of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **US President-elect Joe Biden - is set to nominate 50-year-old Neera Tanden, an Indian-American, as the budget director in a finance team that will also be dominated by women.**



- ✓ Tanden currently leads the liberal think tank 'Center for American Progress' in Washington DC, which is a public policy research and advocacy organisation.
- ✓ Her nomination will have to get through the Senate Budget Committee, which Sanders will chair if Democrats gain control of the Senate.
- ✓ Daughter of immigrant parents from India who divorced when she was only five, Tanden was brought up by her mother.
- ✓ She went to Yale Law School and volunteered on the Dukakis campaign in 1988, making her a contemporary of Harris.
- ✓ Tanden also worked as Hillary Clinton's legislative director when Clinton was a Senator

- ✓ Tanden will be only the third woman to be nominated to head the Office of Management and Budget
- ✓ She will be the first Indian-American, or any minority woman to be named for the position.
- **On November 29, President-elect Biden - announced an all-female team to head the White House communications office for the first time ever.**



- ✓ He is also expected to name Cecilia Rouse, a Princeton University economist, as chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, with economists Jared Bernstein and Heather Boushey serving as the other members.
- ✓ Former Federal Reserve chair Janet Yellen was picked as treasury secretary last week
- ✓ **Separately, Biden named a seven-women, all-female White House press team**
- ✓ It will be led by Kate Bedingfield, his campaign communications director who will serve as the White House communications director.
- ✓ Jen Psaki, a longtime Democratic spokeswoman, will be his press secretary.
- ✓ Senior advisor to the Biden-Harris campaign Symone Sanders will be vice-president-elect Kamala Harris' chief spokeswoman
- ✓ Harris's communications director will be Ashley Etienne, a senior adviser to Biden's campaign who served as a communications director to Nancy Pelosi.
- ✓ Karine Jean-Pierre, a longtime Harris aide who was her chief of staff on the Biden-Harris campaign, will be the White House principal deputy press secretary.
- ✓ Elizabeth Alexander, a former press secretary to Biden, will communications director for first lady Jill Biden, and Pili Tomar, will the deputy White House communications director.
- ✓ Cecilia Rouse, who is African American, would be the first woman of color to chair the Council of Economic Advisers.

- ✓ Yellen will be the first female treasury secretary in the country's history going back to Alexander Hamilton in 1789.
- ✓ In the White House comm team, Karine Jean-Pierre and Pili Tobar, both are of Haitian and Guatemalan origin respectively.
- ✓ It has to be recalled that women voted 57-42 for the Biden-Harris ticket.
- **On November 30, the drugmaker Moderna – is all set to apply to the FDA to authorise its coronavirus vaccine for emergency use.**
  - ✓ The first injections may be given as early as December 21 if the process goes smoothly and approval is granted
  - ✓ Moderna's vaccine is found to be 94.1% effective among a study of 30,000 people
  - ✓ The vaccine was also found to be 100% effective at preventing severe disease from the coronavirus
  - ✓ The company was "on track" to produce 20 million doses by the end of December, and 500 million to a billion in 2021.
  - ✓ Each person requires two doses, administered a month apart
  - ✓ Accordingly, 20 million doses will be required for vaccinating 10 million people.
  - ✓ Moderna is the second vaccine-maker to apply for emergency use authorization after Pfizer, which submitted its application on November 20 after reporting 95% efficacy rate
  - ✓ The vaccines developed by both Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech use a new technology called synthetic messenger RNA (mRNA) whereas others, such as Britain's AstraZeneca, are using more traditional methods.
  - ✓ AstraZeneca has announced an average efficacy rate of 70% for its shot
- **On November 30, Merriam-Webster - announced "pandemic" as its 2020 word of the year.**
  - ✓ The web searches for pandemic on March 11 were 115,806% higher than lookups experienced on the same date last year.
  - ✓ Dictionary.com on also declared "pandemic" as its word of the year

## **APPOINTMENTS**

- **Retired IAS officer (Uttarakhand cadre) Utpal Kumar Singh - will be the new Lok Sabha secretary general in the rank and status of cabinet secretary with effect from December 1.**
  - ✓ Singh will succeed Snehlata Srivastava
  - ✓ He has served in the central and state governments in various capacities in diverse sectors.
  - ✓ He was posted as secretary in Lok Sabha secretariat.



- ✓ His tenure as Uttarakhand chief secretary for more than two-and-a-half-years provided momentum in policy formulation and management across all sectors of the state and economy.
- **Sandeep Kataria, who is at present Bata India’s CEO - has been elevated as global CEO of the company with immediate effect.**
- ✓ The 49 year old Kataria replaces Alexis Nasard, who is stepping down after almost five years in the role.
- ✓ This is the first time in Bata’s 126-year history that an Indian will lead the firm.
- ✓ An engineer from IIT-Delhi and a gold medallist of the 1993 PGDBM batch at XLRI, Kataria has 24 years of work experience at Unilever, Yum Brands and Vodafone in India and Europe.
- ✓ Kataria joined Bata India as CEO in 2017.

### **SHOEMAKER’S GLOBAL FOOTPRINT**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sandeep Kataria is an alumnus of IIT-Delhi &amp; XLRI-Jamshedpur</li> <li>➤ The 49-year-old has held top sales and marketing posts at Yum! Brands, KFC, Pizza Hut and Taco Bell</li> <li>➤ Spent over 17 years at consumer goods giant Unilever</li> <li>➤ Before Bata India, was at Vodafone India as chief commercial officer</li> <li>➤ Joined Bata in July of 2017, becoming president of India region 2 years later</li> </ul>	<p><b>About Bata</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Founded in 1894, the Lausanne-based Bata claims to be world’s leading shoemaker by volume</li> <li>➤ It is a family-owned business catering to more than 1mn consumers daily</li> <li>➤ Bata has 5,300 stores, and produces locally in 23 company-owned manufacturing facilities across 5 continents</li> </ul>
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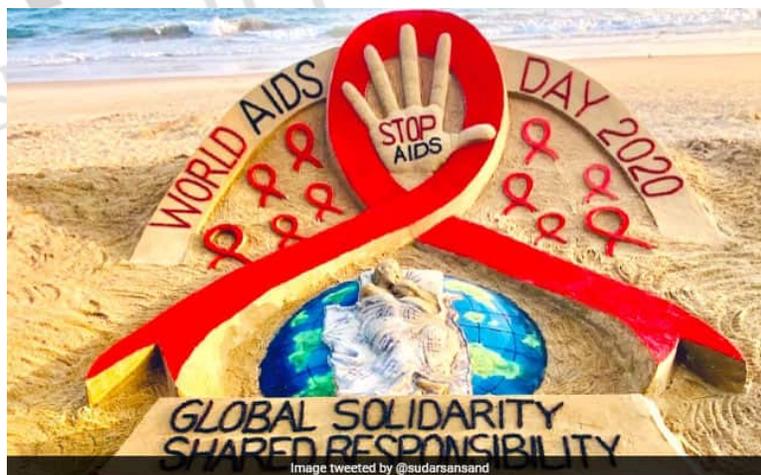


- ✓ Kataria is in distinguished company of other Indian heads of global organizations, which include Satya Nadella of Microsoft, Sundar Pichai of Alphabet, Ajay Banga of Mastercard, Arvind Krishna of IBM, Laxman Narasimhan of Reckitt Benckiser, Ivan Menezes of Diageo and Vasant Narasimhan of Novartis.
- ✓ India is the top market for the Switzerland-headquartered footwear major.
- ✓ Under Kataria’s leadership, Bata India doubled its profits and ran campaigns like ‘Surprisingly Bata’, to revamp the brand’s image, targeted at younger consumers.

- ✓ Bata India posted a net profit of ₹327 crore on revenues of ₹3,053 crore in 2019-20.
- ✓ Founded in 1894 by Tomas Bata, a Czech entrepreneur, Bata is one of the world's leading shoemakers.
- ✓ A family-owned business, Bata sells more than 180 million pairs of shoes annually in 5,800 stores and produces locally in 22 Bata-owned manufacturing facilities across five continents.
- ✓ Bata operates in more than 70 countries and has 35,000 employees.
- ✓ In India, Bata is the largest footwear retailer, selling about 50 million pairs every year and serves 120,000-plus customers every day.
- ✓ The brand sells footwear, accessories and bags across brands such as Bata, Hush Puppies, Naturalizer, Power, Marie Claire, Weinbrenner, North Star, Scholl, Bata Comfit and Bubblegummers, to name a few.
- ✓ Recently, Bata had launched new channels such as Bata Chat Shop, Bata Home Delivery and Bata Store-on-wheels for neighbourhood communities.
- ✓ India is the second largest global producer of footwear after China, accounting for 10% of the annual global production of 22 billion pairs.
- ✓ The Indian footwear market is estimated at ₹600 billion as of FY2020 and expected to reach around ₹720 billion by FY23.
- ✓ India's consumption of footwear is third largest after China and the USA at 2.2 billion pairs.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY

### ➤ World AIDS Day – December 1



- ✓ The day is celebrated every year to create awareness against the spread of HIV infection
- ✓ The first World AIDS Day was observed in 1988
- ✓ It is one of the 11 official Global Public Health campaigns of World Health Organisation.
- ✓ The Other 10 campaigns are - World Blood Donor Day, World Health Day, World Immunization Week, World No Tobacco Day, World Tuberculosis Day, World

Malaria day, World antimicrobial awareness week, World Hepatitis Day, World Patient Safety Day and World Chagas Disease Day

- ✓ Theme 2020 - Global Solidarity and Shared Responsibility
- ✓ The AIDS Awareness week is observed every year during the last week of November
- ✓ The first AIDS Awareness Week was celebrated in 1984 in San Francisco.
- ✓ According to the National AIDS Control Organisation, around 2.14 million people live with AIDS in India as of 2017.
- ✓ India is home to the third largest population of persons with AIDS in the world after South Africa and Nigeria as of 2018.
- ✓ To fight the disease, the government had set up National AIDS Control Organisation in 1992, which functions under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

