



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 28, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **Greater Chennai Corporation – is planning to install three more incinerators in Chennai, following the success of the one at Manali**
- ✓ The civic body called for tenders to supply, install and commission incinerators in 3 localities - Ambattur, Ayanavaram and Kodungaiyur.
- ✓ These incinerators will be able to process 100 tonnes of non-recyclable dry waste a day.
- ✓ Through these incinerators, non-recyclable dry waste is converted into fly-ash which may be used for making bricks.
- ✓ The incinerator plants are mandated to follow emission standards pertaining to particulate matter, SOx and NOx and other environmental pollutants.
- ✓ Monitoring will be real-time with feeds being provided to Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board.
- ✓ The noise levels should not exceed 85 decibels one metre from the equipment surface.
- ✓ The decision to install incinerators is part of a plan to ensure that fewer amount of waste is sent to the city's dumpyards in Kodungaiyur and Perungudi.
- ✓ Already, the corporation has begun to convert wet, bio-degradable waste into manure at micro-compost centres in the city.
- ✓ Around 5,200 tonnes of waste is generated in Greater Chennai Corporation limits across 15 zones every day.
- ✓ Dry waste is 49% of the total waste generated, while remaining 51% is wet and organic.
- ✓ According to Solid waste management rules, 2016, local bodies must process or recycle the waste.
- ✓ The techniques available for recycling include composting centres, biogas plants, biomethanisation plants and incinerators for dry, non-recyclable waste.

- **On December 28, Ramki Krishnan, an IT professional from Chennai - won the national crossword champion trophy at the grand finale of the eighth edition of Indian Crossword League, IXL 2020.**
- ✓ He has won the contest for the 5th time since its beginning in 2013, including a hat-trick between 2014 and 2016 editions.
- ✓ Shashwat Sinai Salgaocar, an IIM-Ahmedabad student, won the runner-up trophy.
- ✓ Devraj S, a tech startup mentor from Bengaluru, clinched the third position.
- ✓ Extra-C, a Patna-based organization organizes the IXL every year
- ✓ Thirty-eight participants had qualified for the grand finale after nine online weekly rounds hosted between August and November this year.

NATIONAL

- **On December 27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – addressed the nation in the last episode of this year’s “Mann ki Baat” radio broadcast programme.**



- ✓ During his speech, the PM recalled sacrifices made by the Sikh Gurus and their families
- ✓ He referred to the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh’s sons Zorawar and Fateh Singh who were walled alive by the Mughals
- ✓ Paying homage to Guru Gobind Singh’s sons, the Prime Minister said they had held onto their faith even as they saw death closing in on them.
- ✓ This is the third time Modi recalled the Sikh Gurus in recent speeches
- ✓ Earlier, the PM visited Gurudwara Rakabganj in central Delhi to commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur who was cremated there.
- ✓ The PM also recalled Guru Gobind Singh’s mother Mata Gujari, who too had attained martyrdom with her grandchildren.
- ✓ He also spoke about the 10th Guru, who militarised his community and had raised Khalsa warriors
- ✓ **PM Modi also emphasized ‘December 27’ be commemorated as “balidan (sacrifice) day” to honour the Sikh religious leader’s two sons.**
- ✓ **Later, the PM focused on self-reliant India campaign by asking people to maintain an ABC or ‘Atmanirbhar Bharat Chart’ to track how many ‘Made in India’ products they use.**

- ✓ The acronym 'ABC' has been coined by Venkat Murli Prasad from Visakhapatnam, who was quoted by the PM during his address.
 - ✓ In view of people's support for 'vocal for local' campaign, the PM asked manufacturers and industry leaders to ensure that world-class products are made in the country.
 - ✓ The PM had urged people to buy India-made toys in an earlier episode of Mann ki Baat this year.
 - ✓ He also mentioned about the GI tag recognition to Kashmir Saffron, which has led to the spurt in its exports
 - ✓ After obtaining the GI Tag certificate, Kashmiri Saffron was launched in a supermarket in Dubai, the PM mentioned.
- **On December 27, the road transport and highways ministry - extended the validity of driving licence (DL) and other vehicle related documents such as RC, permits and fitness certificate till March 31, 2021.**
- ✓ This will be applicable for documents whose validity expired in February 2020 or would expire by end of March 2021.
 - ✓ This will help citizens in availing transport related services, while maintaining social distancing, as per the Ministry
 - ✓ This was the fourth extension for the validity of documents by transport ministry.
- **India - has asked all airlines informally not to fly Chinese nationals into the country**
- ✓ The decision follows the earlier move of China in stopping Indians from flying into their country
 - ✓ At present, flights between India and China are suspended
 - ✓ However, Chinese nationals are eligible to travel India by flying through a third country with which India has a travel bubble
 - ✓ In addition, Chinese nationals living in air bubble countries in Europe have also been flying to India for work and business purpose.
 - ✓ Over the past weekend, airlines — both Indian and foreign — have been specifically asked not to fly Chinese nationals to India.
 - ✓ At the moment, tourist visas to India were suspended.

➤ While flights between India and China are suspended, Chinese nationals first fly to a third country with which India has a travel bubble and fly to India from there

➤ Over the past weekend, airlines — both Indian and foreign — have been specifically asked not to fly Chinese nationals to India

➤ Some airlines asked the authorities to give them

something in writing so they can cite a reason for denying boarding to Chinese nationals

➤ Almost 1,500 Indian seafarers are stranded in various Chinese ports because China is refusing to allow them on shore, or even to change crew. They can't even come back home

➤ In early November, China suspended entry of foreigners from some countries, including India, due to the pandemic

- ✓ Indian seafarers are stranded in various Chinese ports because China is refusing to allow them on shore, or even to change crew.
 - ✓ This has affected almost 1,500 Indians serving on international flag merchant vessels as they can't even come back home.
 - ✓ Though the target is Australia, whose coal is now banned by China, Indians seafarers are also hit by the Chinese move
 - ✓ In early November, China had suspended the entry of foreign nationals holding valid Chinese visas or residence permits from some countries including India due to the pandemic.
- **India - is likely to get the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine approved for emergency use in next few days**
- ✓ According to Government, the updated data submitted by Serum Institute of India (SII) appears "satisfactory".
 - ✓ Once evaluation of data is complete, the regulator may authorise the usage immediately and not wait till getting the approval from UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
 - ✓ Meanwhile, it is possible that the UK, too, may grant the emergency use authorization for the Oxford vaccine

4.2M SHOTS GIVEN

Covid vaccine doses administered till now	
US	1.9m
China	1m
UK	626k
Russia	440k
Israel	280k
Bahrain	38.9k
Canada	37k

Source: Bloomberg & agencies

- ✓ MHRA is already reviewing the data for the 'Covishield' vaccine developed by Oxford University and pharma major AstraZeneca.
- ✓ The Covishield vaccine is expected to have achieved a vaccine efficacy equal to Pfizer-BioNTech at 95% and Moderna at 94.5%.
- ✓ The government plans to inoculate around 30 crore 'priority' population in the first phase of the vaccination drive that is expected to roll out in the first week of January and end latest by July.
- ✓ This will include healthcare and frontline workers and those at higher risk of infection such as people over 50 years of age and others below 50 years but with severe co-morbidities.
- ✓ Once the availability of vaccine increases, the second phase will be rolled out simultaneously to expand the vaccine coverage

- **Delhi-Dubai and Mumbai-Dubai routes - have now figured among the busiest international routes in the pandemic world.**
- ✓ According to the UK-based air consultancy firm OAG, Delhi-Dubai is ranked at the fifth place and Mumbai-Dubai the 10th busiest air routes this month in terms of seat capacity deployment by airlines.
- ✓ These two have historically been the busiest international routes for India.
- ✓ The busiest international route among all is Dubai-London Heathrow (1.7 lakh seats) followed by Orlando-San Juan (1.6 lakh seats) and Cairo-Jeddah (1.4 lakh).
- ✓ Delhi-Dubai has 1.1 lakh and Mumbai-Dubai over a lakh seats this month, as per OAG.
- ✓ While scheduled international flights remain suspended, foreign travel is currently happening to and from countries with which India has created air bubble and on Vande Bharat mission flights.

ECONOMY

- **The government - to launch a new quarterly employment survey from March next year that will amalgamate two existing surveys**
- ✓ The two existing surveys that will be integrated now includes the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) and the Area Frame Establishment Survey (AFES).
- ✓ The new survey will be the more 'exhaustive' version of the existing enumeration exercises
- ✓ **It is likely to be named as the All India Quarterly Base Establishment Survey (AIQBES)**
- ✓ The new survey is aimed at rectifying the assessment gaps in understanding the real employment situation in the country.
- ✓ The existing surveys had a limited scope in that they only covered a few formal sector establishments and were restricted to covering those that employed more than 10 people.

OBITUARY

- **Father Laborde, French Jesuit priest (93 years)**



- ✓ Father Laborde spent his entire life serving the underprivileged, especially physically challenged children in Howrah, West Bengal
- ✓ He was immortalised as Stephan Kovalski by Dominique Lapierre in his novel — 'City of Joy' — published in 1985, which was later filmed.
- ✓ Last year, Laborde was conferred the Legion d'Honneur, the highest civilian award of France, for his tireless work among the underprivileged.
- ✓ French ambassador, Alexandre Ziegler, had gone to Howrah South Point in Andul, the home that Father Laborde set up, to confer the award.
- ✓ This was the second time that he won the award, the first time he was awarded by the late president Mitterrand.
- ✓ Father Laborde was born in the year 1927 in Paris
- ✓ He completed his studies in philosophy and went on to do his clerical studies at the Prado and became a priest in 1951.
- ✓ Later, he taught philosophy at Prado for eight years and finally in 1965 he came to India.
- ✓ His seminal research work, Relations between Marginal and Integrated Populations in India, under the aegis of the UNESCO, gave him a glimpse of the world of poverty.
- ✓ He worked in Pilkhana for eight years where he set up Seva Sangh Samiti to improve the condition of the slum dwellers.
- ✓ Urged by the late Cardinal L T Picachy, Father Laborde started a rehabilitation home for the poor and physically challenged at Andul under the Nirmala Mata Maria Girja parish.
- ✓ His exemplary work with these children spread across the country and gradually grew into the Howrah South Point with wings across several districts of Bengal.
- ✓ There are several formal and non-formal schools, health centres, mobile dispensaries, mother and child care centres etc., that are set up for the poor people.

REPORT

- **Floods in India during June-October period - caused the loss of highest number of human lives in the entire world**
- ✓ This was revealed by a new global report that analysed 15 most destructive climate disasters of the year 2020
- ✓ Out of the 15 extreme events, nine of them, including two in India, caused damage worth at least \$5 billion.
- ✓ The hurricanes in the US and central American countries was ranked as the most expensive (\$41 billion) in terms of loss to the economy
- ✓ Indian floods, which killed 2,067, caused loss of more human lives than casualties in all other 14 destructive climate disasters put together.

- ✓ Floods in Pakistan which claimed 410 lives figured at second spot followed by the US and central American countries (400 lives lost in hurricanes) at the third position in the list of 15 extreme weather related events.
- ✓ The report, 'Counting the Cost 2020: A Year of Climate Breakdown', prepared by the UK-based nonprofit organisation Christian Aid was released on December 28

10 MOST COSTLY DISASTERS OF 2020

Disaster (Country/Region)	Financial Cost
Atlantic Hurricane (USA & Central America)	\$41 billion
Floods (China)	\$32 billion
West coast fires (USA)	\$20 billion
Cyclone Amphan (India and Bangladesh)	\$13 billion
Floods (India)	\$10 billion
Floods (Japan)	\$8.5 billion
Locust swarms (East Africa)	\$8.5 billion
Windstorms Ciara & Alex (Europe)	\$5.9 billion
Bushfires (Australia)	\$5 billion
Floods (Pakistan)	\$1.5 billion

- ✓ It noted that the cyclone 'Amphan', which struck the Bay of Bengal in May, had caused financial losses valued at \$13 billion in just a few days in India and Bangladesh and resulted in loss of 128 human lives.
- ✓ The report shows five of the ten most costly events took place in Asia.
- ✓ As far as displacement/ evacuation of people due to disasters is concerned, Cyclone 'Amphan' caused displacement of the highest number of people at 4.9 million in India and Bangladesh followed by floods in China (3.7 million) and Japan (3.6 million).

