

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – DECEMBER 4, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **An all-woman police station at Suramangalam in Salem city - has been rated as the second best-performing police station in the country for the year 2020.**
- ✓ Nongpok Sekmai police station in Thoubal district of Manipur was ranked as the country's best police station on the annual ranking list released by the Union Home Ministry.



- ✓ The Suramangalam station was ranked at the second place based on handling of cases and complaints, and maintenance of station premises and case records.
- ✓ According to Home minister Amit Shah, a vast majority of the shortlisted police stations are located in small towns and rural areas.
- ✓ Further, the Top 10 police stations were also located in rural areas and small towns.
- ✓ The rating of police stations was done on the basis of data analysis, direct observation and public feedback.
- ✓ The parameters considered for short-listing the police stations in the initial stage of the survey included property offences; crimes against women; crimes against

weaker sections; and missing persons, unidentified found persons and unidentified bodies.

- ✓ The last 3 parameters were introduced this year.

Rank	State	District	Police Station
1	Manipur	Thoubal	NongpokSekmai
2	Tamil Nadu	Salem City	AWPS-Suramangalam
3	Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang	Kharsang
4	Chhattisgarh	Surajpur	Jhilmili (Bhaiya Thana)
5	Goa	South Goa	Sanguem
6	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	North & Middle Andaman	Kalighat
7	Sikkim	East District	Pakyong
8	Uttar Pradesh	Moradabad	Kanth
9	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	Khanvel
10	Telangana	Karimnagar	Jammikunta Town PS

- ✓ Kharsang police station in insurgency-hit Changlang district of Manipur was ranked at the third place
 - ✓ Overall, a total of 16,671 police stations participated in the annual ranking this year
 - ✓ The Other seven top police stations were from Jhilmili of Chhattisgarh, Sanguem of South Goa, Kalighat of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Pakyong of Eastern Sikkim, Kanth of Uttar Pradesh, Khanvel of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Jammikutna Town Police Station of Telangana.
 - ✓ The annual ranking of the police stations is being done since 2015.
- **The renovated National Art Gallery at the Government Museum in Egmore – is set to reopen in January 2021**



- ✓ The heritage sandstone building constructed by the British in 1909 was being restored since 2015
 - ✓ The Gallery will have some 'unique' relics that were used by the royals in Tamil Nadu and portraits of Mughal emperors.
 - ✓ The renovated museum will feature artefacts used by the royal dynasties in the state such as Marathas of Thanjavur and the Nayaks in south Tamil Nadu.
 - ✓ It includes pooja items, mirrors and soap boxes made of ivory and metal that were used by rulers around 300 years ago.
 - ✓ The National Art Gallery will also have painting collections including those belonging to the Mughal period such as portraits of Emperor Babur and Shah Jahan.
 - ✓ The number of portraits of British officials including governors general, who were displayed before the gallery was closed for renovation, is likely to be limited.
 - ✓ Before the renovation, the National Art Gallery had a range of art collections such as paintings of eminent artists in India from various art schools on display.
 - ✓ An exclusive gallery has been devoted to Raja Ravi Varma's paintings.
- **On December 3, 10 newly appointed district judges – were sworn in as additional judges of the Madras high court**
- ✓ Chief Justice Amreshwar Pratap Sahi administered oath of office to them in a ceremony that was streamed live on the court's YouTube channel.
 - ✓ The High Court also witnessed only the second instance in the history of Indian judiciary that a husband-wife couple - Justice Murali Shankar Kuppuraju and Justice Thamilselvi T Valayapalayam - has taken oath together.



- ✓ The first such couple to be appointed high court judges on the same day were Justice Vivek Puri and Justice Archana Puri, who were sworn in judges of the Punjab and Haryana high court last year.
- ✓ In yet another feat, the Madras high court became the HC with the highest number of women judges in the country, 13, when four more women judges joined on December 3.
- ✓ Besides the couple, G Chandrasekharan, A A Nakkiran, Sivagnanam Veerasamy, Ilangovan Ganesan, Ananthi Subramanian, Kannammal Shanmuga Sundaram, Sathikumar Sukumara Kurup, and Manjula Ramaraju took oath on the occasion.
- ✓ All the 10 judges have been elevated from the subordinate judiciary of Tamil Nadu.

- ✓ With these appointments, the sitting strength of judges in the court increased from 53 to 63, as against the sanctioned strength of 75.
 - ✓ Of the new appointees, Justice Murali Shankar and Thamilselvi are the youngest and they would serve the high court for 10 years if appointed as permanent judges after two years
- **Chennai-based Sri Ramachandra Institute of Higher Education and Research (SRIHER) - signed a memorandum of understanding with Industrial Waste Management Association recently**
- ✓ The MoU seeks mutual collaboration on hazardous waste management and facilitate academic and research exchange between the two organisations.
 - ✓ Further, the students of SRIHER will get opportunities through industry internships in the areas of environmental health
 - ✓ The agreement is expected to develop specialized skills amongst graduates to deal with the requirements of meeting national environmental health and safety standards.
 - ✓ The MoU was signed by vice chancellor of SRIHER P V Vijayaraghavan and president of IWMA K Baskaran
- **S Balamurugan, a production assistant at the educational multimedia research centre (EMRC) of Pondicherry University - has bagged a national award for his film, 'Bat Woman: Night Warriors 2.'**
- ✓ The film won the Silver Beaver award under the 'Interface' category
 - ✓ It will be presented at the 10th National Science Film Festival of India (NSFFI) hosted by the Vigyan Prasar, Department of science and technology and Tripura state council for science and technology.
 - ✓ The 24-minute film highlights the work of Dr Juliet Vanitharani, who is researching on conservation of bats and habitats of endangered forest bats in Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve in the southern part of the Western Ghats.



- ✓ The film focuses on the techniques involved in capturing bats on film, use of bat detector, software to analyse the species information, etc.
- ✓ It provides unique information about *Latidens Salimalii*, the endemic and endangered rare mega bat species of the southern Western Ghats.

- ✓ The film also aims at making people aware of the bat species in general and their contribution to mankind.
- ✓ The prize carries a trophy, a certificate and a cash prize of ₹1lakh.
- ✓ Balamurugan is a postgraduate in electronic media with 15 years experience in film making and video production
- ✓ He had earlier received the Gold Beaver award for 'The Night Warriors' in 2013 and Bronze Beaver award for 'Mobile Solar Power' in 2014 from Vigyan Prasar.
- ✓ The NSFFI, a national-level annual event, attracted more than 350 films from across the country

NATIONAL

- **The Centre - offered to consider eight amendments to the contentious farm reform laws, amidst the ongoing farmer agitation in New Delhi**

POINTS OF DISCORD

Concerns raised by the farmers' unions during the talks with the Centre while insisting on repeal of farm laws:

<p>1 Laws on 'agri market' and 'contract farming' will enable big private companies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To have control over crop purchasing ➤ To set up private agriculture markets and dictate prices ➤ To control supply and prices of inputs for agriculture ➤ To control the storage, cold storage and transport of crops ➤ To monopolise food processing ➤ The new laws will end the regulated 'mandi' system 	<p>to gain at the cost of farmers</p>
<p>2 Amendment in the Essential Commodities Act will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Allow hoarding and black marketing ➤ Expose the entire rural and urban poor to agri giants and private food corporations 	<p>4 Law on contract farming will put farmers' ownership of land at risk as the Act provides for debt instruments to be operational alongside the contract with companies which will have their own recovery mechanisms</p>
<p>3 Agri-business firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters and large retailers for farm services will manipulate market situation</p>	<p>5 Farmers cannot protect their interests while exposed to giant traders in the name of 'freedom of choice'</p>
	<p>6 Law makes SDM court the final authority for dispute resolution (farmers say they should be allowed to approach higher courts)</p>
	<p>7 It's unfair to punish farmers for stubble burning under new ordinance on air quality management without providing them with economically viable solutions</p>
	<p>8 Proposed Electricity (Amendment) Bill will force farmers to make payment upfront at the rate decided by private power companies</p>

- ✓ After over seven hours of discussion, the fourth round of talks between the Centre and farmer leaders ended without taking any decision on December 3
- ✓ The Centre had also offered assurances to the agitating farmers that the minimum support prices (MSP) for farm produce would not be discontinued.
- ✓ Tens of thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, have completely or partially sealed multiple entry points on Delhi's borders with Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for the eighth straight day

- ✓ Their demands are to scrap the three laws, which they fear will end the MSP regime, and to create a new law guaranteeing MSPs.
- ✓ They also want the government to stop slapping large fines on farmers for burning stubble and to withdraw the Electricity Bill, 2020, which could affect power subsidies for farmers.
- **As of November 30, India - was leading the world in the number of “confirmed Covid-19 vaccine doses” for which orders have been placed, with “concluded contracts to get 1.6 billion doses”.**
- ✓ India is followed by the European Union at the second place and the US at third place.
 - ✓ The EU will get 1.58 billion doses and the US will get more than a billion doses, provided all the vaccine candidates they have struck deals to buy prove efficient in trials and are certified for use.
- ✓ Union health minister Harsh Vardhan had said in November that India was in talks with vaccine makers to get up to 500 million doses by July-August 2021.
- ✓ India has made deals for three global vaccine candidates upon them being ready and certified for use, while the EU and the US have struck deals with six vaccine developers.
- ✓ Canada and the UK have each struck deals for more than 350 million doses of vaccines each from seven developers.
- ✓ The analysis doesn't include China and Russia, both of which have their own vaccine programmes for citizens.
- ✓ India will be getting 500 million doses of the Oxford University vaccine from AstraZeneca, one billion from the US company Novavax Inc and 100 million doses from Russia's Gamaleya Research Institute, which has developed Sputnik-V.
- ✓ While Pune-based Serum India of Institute will manufacture the Oxford vaccine, Hyderabad-based Dr Reddy's Laboratories has tied up for trials of Sputnik-V in India.

WHO'S BUYING FROM WHOM

Makers	India	EU	US	Canada	UK	Total
Oxford Univ	500m	400m	500m	20m	100m	1.5bn
Novavax	1bn	NA	110m	76m	60m	1.2bn
Gamaleya	100m	NA	NA	NA	NA	100m
Sanofi-GSK	NA	300m	100m	72m	60m	532m
Pfizer-BioNTech	NA	300m	100m	20m	40m	460m
Moderna	NA	160m	NA	56m	5m	221m

Source: Duke University's Launch & Scale Speedometer | Figures rounded off

- ✓ Besides these, a domestic vaccine candidate by Bharat Biotech entered Phase 3 trials on December 2.

- ✓ Considering the requirement of two doses of vaccination, India would need 2.6 billion doses to cover its entire population
- ✓ Globally, around 200 Covid-19 vaccine candidates are moving forward through the development and clinical trial processes, and more than 10 candidates are already in Phase 3 large-scale trials
- ✓ **On December 2, the UK became the first country to approve a Covid vaccine, from Pfizer, for emergency use.**
- ✓ Overall, High-income countries currently hold a confirmed 3.8 billion doses, upper-middle-income countries hold 829 million doses, and lower-middle-income countries hold more than 1.7 billion doses.
- ✓ These details were revealed by the latest analysis of contracts for global vaccines by Duke University
- ✓ The findings are part of an analysis by the university's global health innovation centre, which is tracking Covid-19 vaccine pre-purchase deals across the world under the "Launch and Scale Speedometer" project.
- ✓ As per the study, the Oxford-AstraZeneca candidate is on top of the table, with 17 countries signing deals to procure 2.5 billion doses.
 - ✓ This is followed by the US' Novavax, which had deals for 1.3 billion doses of its vaccine as of November 30, while Sanofi-GSK has deals for 732 million doses.
 - ✓ The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has deals for 646 million doses.
- ✓ Overall, 19 vaccine makers have confirmed deals for 7.1 billion doses of vaccines cumulatively.
- ✓ Overall, seven vaccine makers together have confirmed contracts to supply 6.2 billion doses of vaccines to a pool of around 20 countries
- ✓ Another 12 vaccine makers together have deals for about 0.9 billion doses of vaccines.
- ✓ While Oxford has already claimed a 70% efficacy against the virus after its Phase 3 trials, Novavax's candidate is set to enter late-stage trial this month.
- ✓ Of the 1.3 billion doses that Novavax has contracts for, 1 billion are from India and the remaining from the US and Canada.
- ✓ Globally, five countries/regions — India, the EU, US, Canada and UK — account for 69% of the 7.1 billion doses for which confirmed contracts exist.
- ✓ While these countries will get 4.9 billion doses between them, 32 other countries that have signed deals will see 2.2 billion doses distributed among them.

SUPREME COURT VERDICT

- **On December 3, the Supreme Court - held that lottery, gambling and betting are taxable under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Act.**
- ✓ The court held that lottery, betting and gambling were "actionable claims" and came within the definition of 'goods' under Section 2(52) of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017.

- ✓ A three-judge Bench led by Justice Ashok Bhushan said the levy of GST on lotteries did not amount to “hostile discrimination” in the 87-page judgment.
- ✓ The court said State regulation, including taxation in one form or other, on lottery, betting and gambling, had been in existence for decades.
- ✓ Justice Bhushan was responding to arguments made by Skill Lotto Solutions and other lottery agents that lottery was not ‘goods’ and GST on it was illegal.

INTERNATIONAL

- **The US Senate - has unanimously passed a bill (referred to as S. 386) or the ‘Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act’, handing a big relief to thousands of Indians stuck in a green card backlog**



- ✓ The bill eliminates the 7% country cap for employment-based immigrant visas
- ✓ In addition, it also increases the per-country cap on family-based immigrant visas from the present 7% of the total of such visas available in a particular year to 15%.
- ✓ Employment linked green cards have an annual quota of 140,000 per year, which remains unchanged.
- ✓ As per a recent study done by CATO Institute, the job-based green card backlog from India (EB-2 and EB-3 skilled category) has reached 7.41lakh in April 2020, with an expected wait time of 84 years.
- ✓ S. 386, as passed by the Senate, sets down transition rules by reserving a percentage of EB-2 and EB-3 green cards for individuals who are not from India and China - the two countries with the largest backlog in these categories
- ✓ The move is aimed at avoiding individuals from these countries dominating allocation once the country-caps are lifted.

PERSONALITIES

- **HCL Technologies chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra, with a net worth of ₹54,850 crore - tops the Kotak Wealth Hurun list of India’s wealthiest women.**



- ✓ Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw occupies the second place with a net worth of ₹36,600 crore.
 - ✓ In the third spot is Leena Gandhi Tewari of the Mumbai-headquartered pharmaceuticals firm USV, with a net worth of ₹21,340 crore.
 - ✓ The list of 100 richest women is based on their estimated net worth as on September 30.
 - ✓ The cumulative wealth of those on the list is ₹2,72,540 crore.
 - ✓ The threshold for the ranking was a net worth of ₹100 crore.
 - ✓ The 2020 edition of the report focuses exclusively on women who play an active role in their family business, entrepreneurs and professionals.
 - ✓ There are 31 self-made women in the list and among them Shaw is at the top spot, followed by Radha Vembu of Zoho (sister of Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu) with a net worth of ₹11,590 crore
- **Fifteen-year-old Indian-American Gitanjali Rao, a “brilliant” young scientist and inventor - has been named by TIME magazine as the first-ever ‘Kid of the Year’ for her “astonishing work” as a Scientist and Inventor**

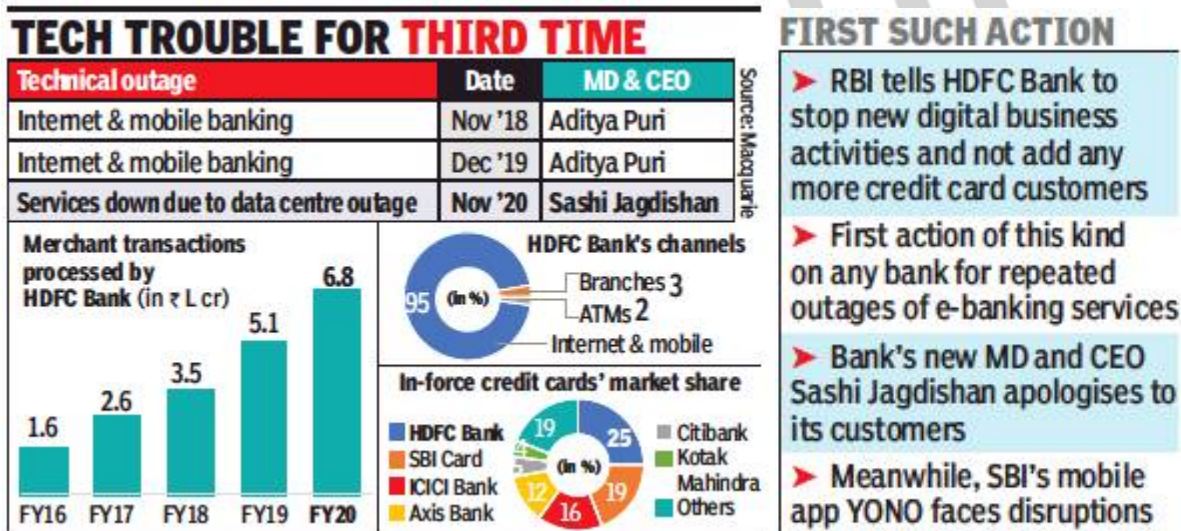


- ✓ The work of Gitanjali focused on using technology to tackle issues ranging from contaminated drinking water to opioid addiction and cyberbullying.
- ✓ Gitanjali was selected from a field of more than 5,000 nominees.
- ✓ She was interviewed by actor and activist Angelina Jolie for the TIME special.

- ✓ Gitanjali spoke about her various ongoing projects, which included an inexpensive, accurate and easy way to help detect bio-contaminants in water, like parasites.
- ✓ She is also working on a product that helps to diagnose prescription-opioid addiction at an early stage based on protein production of the mu opioid receptor gene.
- ✓ Gitanjali has also created the app Kindly, which is able to detect cyberbullying at an early stage, based on artificial-intelligence technology.

ECONOMY

- **In an unprecedented move, the Reserve Bank of India - has directed HDFC Bank to stop launches of new digital business activities under its Digital 2.0 programme and not to add anymore new credit card customers**
- ✓ The move follows repeated outages in the bank's internet banking/ mobile banking/ payment utilities over the past two years
- ✓ The regulator has also ordered the board of the country's largest private lender to examine the lapses in its electronic payment system and fix accountability.



- ✓ The action against HDFC Bank is the first time that the central bank has sought to penalise a bank by restricting business, rather than imposing a financial penalty, which is often a small amount.
- ✓ This is seen as an indication that RBI has taken serious cognisance of the outage of banking services at HDFC Bank
- ✓ The bank recently faced outages all over the country due to a power failure that occurred in its primary data centre in November 2020.
- ✓ The HDFC Bank accounts for a third of the country's payments and has been classified as a 'systemically important bank'
- ✓ Under the digital 2.0 initiative of the bank, it had planned to move the customers from a single transaction to meet all financial needs such as insurance, trading, investment, etc., through technology

- ✓ HDFC Bank was the first bank in the country to come out with 10 second digital loan.
- ✓ It was also working in new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Robotic Process Automation and blockchain

AWARDS

- **On December 3, Ranjitsinh Disale - became the first Indian to win the annual Global Teacher Prize worth \$1 million for his plans to support teacher innovation**



- ✓ The 32-year-old zilla parishad primary school teacher from Pairteewadi village in Solapur, Maharashtra plans to create a peace army of students from the world over.
- ✓ Disale announced to share half the prize money with his fellow finalists.
- ✓ Disale will get the money in 10 instalments over the next 10 years.
- ✓ He was selected from more than 12,000 nominations and applications from over 140 countries around the world.
- ✓ Ten teachers across the globe were shortlisted in November, and Disale was announced the winner in London on December 3
- ✓ According to the Global Teacher Prize website, it's the first time in its six-year history that the winner has shared the prize money with the other finalists, resulting in them receiving just over \$55,000 each.
- ✓ From his share of the prize money, Disale will dedicate 30% to a teacher innovation fund and the rest to his project 'Let's Cross the Borders', which connects young people from India and Pakistan, Palestine and Israel, Iraq and Iran and the US and North Korea.
- ✓ For the past three years, over six weeks, students have conversed with peers from other countries to interact and learn about their conflicts, understand similarities, build empathy and compassion and suggest solutions for peace.
- ✓ The impact of his interventions has been that there are now no reported teenage marriages in the village and 100% attendance of girls at the school.

- ✓ The school was also awarded Best School for the district in 2016, and 98% of students achieved their expected learning outcomes before completing the school year.
- ✓ Having started his career as a teacher in 2009, Disale was among the first to introduce QR codes to encourage learning among girls from the tribal community.
- ✓ Disale has redesigned all the textbooks of Classes I to IV for better comprehension, along with unique QR codes that embedded audio poems, video lectures, stories and assignments in the language of Kannada
- ✓ Soon after, the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) decided to adopt this for textbooks across the country.
- ✓ The government had named Ranjitsinh Disale 2016 Innovative Researcher of the Year.
- ✓ He also won the National Innovation Foundation's Innovator of the Year award in 2018.
- ✓ The Global Teacher Prize recognizes 'one' teacher who has made an outstanding contribution to the profession as well as to highlight the important role played by the teachers in society.
- ✓ It is announced by the Varkey Foundation in partnership with UNESCO since 2014

SPORTS

- **Soccer great Cristiano Ronaldo - scored his 750th career goal during Juventus' 3-0 win over Dynamo Kyiv in the Champions League game.**



- ✓ The 35-year-old football sensation has scored 450 goals for Real Madrid, 118 for Manchester United, 102 for Portugal, 75 for Juventus and five for his first club, Sporting
- ✓ Cristiano Ronaldo made his professional soccer debut in 2002
- ✓ Ronaldo, along with Lionel Messi, Mohammad Salah and Robert Lewandowski, is among the candidates shortlisted for this year's Best FIFA Men's Player Award.
- ✓ The game was also the first time that a female referee – Stephanie Frappart – took charge of a Champions League match.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ Indian Navy Day – December 4



- ✓ The Indian Navy Day is celebrated every year to commemorate Operation Trident.
- ✓ The operation Trident was launched by the Indian Navy during the India-Pakistan war of 1971 to attack Karachi Harbour.
- ✓ Theme 2020 - Indian Navy Combat Ready, Credible and Cohesive
- ✓ The Operation Trident was launched in the night of December 4, 1971
- ✓ This follows the attack of Pakistan onto the Indian airbases in the evening of December 3
- ✓ Three high speed missile boats namely Nirghat, Nipat, Veer were dispatched towards the Karachi port.
- ✓ During the attack, Indian Navy destroyed the fuel storage tankers at Pakistan Naval headquarters located in Karachi.
- ✓ The Indian Navy also attacked four Pakistani boats and killed 500 Pakistani Naval personnel.
- ✓ For the first time India deployed an anti-ship missile during the India Pakistan war of 1971.
- ✓ The operation Trident was followed by operation Python, which was launched to counter the manoeuvres' of Pakistan Navy
- ✓ Earlier during the British rule, Indian Navy Day was celebrated on October 21, coinciding with the Royal Navy's Trafalgar Day.
- ✓ The Indian Navy was founded in 1612 in order to protect the British merchant ships.

PFIZER'S VACCINE CHALLENGE – A REPORT

WHY BRINGING PFIZER SHOT TO INDIA IS AN ICEBOX CHALLENGE

-75°C is so cold that car batteries freeze, tyres crack and fall apart, and even some grades of steel shatter. It is also the temperature at which the world's only properly tested and approved Covid vaccine needs

