

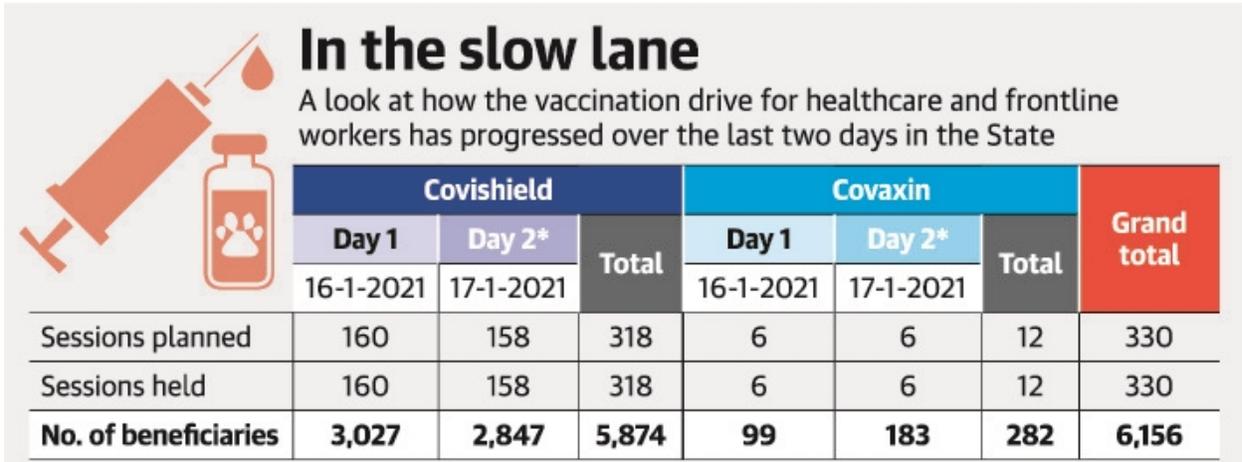


## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS–JANUARY 18, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu State Council of Educational Research and Training (TNSCERT) - has announced that 40% of syllabus as 'optional' for Class X and XII board exam students this year**
- ✓ The government has decided to reopen the schools for these two classes from January 19
- ✓ The council has forwarded the details of 60% prioritized content for Classes X and XII to all schools, so that the teachers can teach them with priority in class.
- ✓ The board exam question papers this year will be entirely based on prioritized content
- ✓ However, students aspiring to clear National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) and Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) must cover 100% of the syllabus
- ✓ In Class X, portions which students either learn in higher classes or ones they already read in lower classes have been removed.
- ✓ A reduction in syllabus was proposed in July last year because the schools were expected to remain shut for a major part of the academic year.
  
- **On January 17, Tamil Nadu – reported the vaccination for 3,030 frontline health workers on second day of state-wise vaccination drive**
- ✓ According to the directorate of public health and preventive medicine, 2,847 health workers took Covishield shots on the second day as against the capacity of 14,460, while 183 were administered Covaxin jab.
- ✓ Highest number of vaccine shots were administered in Chennai (402), followed by Coimbatore (245)
- ✓ Not a single person was administered either of the vaccines in Aranthangi and Perambalur, while Ramanathapuram had just four health workers turning up to take the jab.
- ✓ A total of 6,156 people have been given the vaccine shots in two days, as per the state health department

- ✓ State health secretary J Radhakrishnan took a Covaxin shot at Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Government Hospital (MGMGH) in Trichy on the day

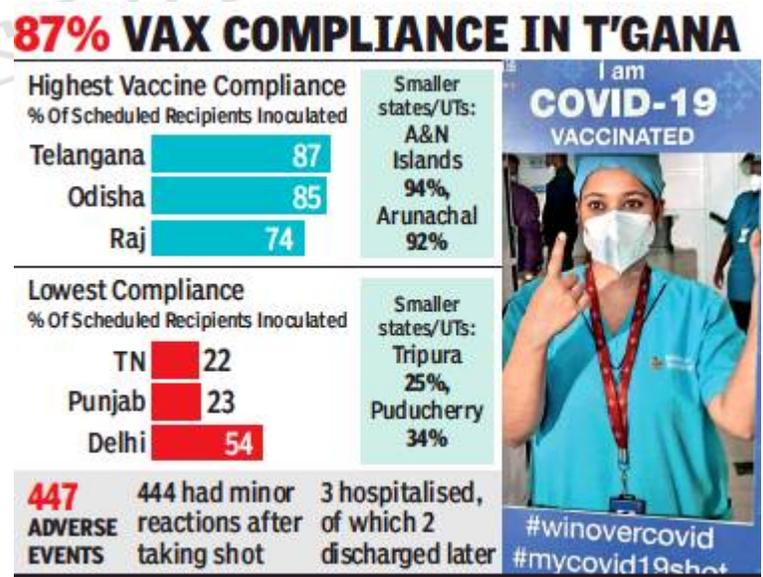


SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE, TAMIL NADU GOVT. DAY 2\* AS OF 6.00 P.M.

- ✓ On the first day, 3,225 people got the first dose of vaccine across the state
- ✓ Among Chennai's neighbouring districts, Kancheepuram witnessed only six vaccine doses being administered, while 43 were given in Chengalpet and 21 in Tiruvallur.

## NATIONAL

- **India – recorded around 64% beneficiaries turnout on first two days of immunisation drive against Covid-19, which was rolled out on January 16**
- ✓ As on January 17, the number of planned beneficiaries stood at 3,16,375, out of which 2,03,800 beneficiaries took the jab



- ✓ Four states — Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Tripura and Puducherry — recorded low turnout of beneficiaries in the range of 22% to 34%

- ✓ Other states reported more than 50% attendance of those who were scheduled for vaccination on January 16 and 17.
  - ✓ Assam, Delhi and J&K reported 54% turnout.
  - ✓ India has registered the highest day one vaccination number in the world — higher than the US, UK and France on day one
  - ✓ States and UTs have been advised to plan vaccination sessions four days a week to minimise disruption of routine health services
  - ✓ Among the better performing states were small ones like Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Arunachal Pradesh with less than 10% absentees, whereas Telangana, Sikkim, Ladakh, Odisha, Lakshadweep and Haryana delivered shots to over 80% registered beneficiaries.
  - ✓ Uttar Pradesh vaccinated the highest number of beneficiaries at 22,644 (71% turnout), followed by AP, Maharashtra and Bihar (60% to 65% turnout).
  - ✓ On January 18, 17,072 beneficiaries were inoculated in 553 sessions across six states
  - ✓ The six states were AP, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Manipur and TN.
  - ✓ India plans to ship doses of Covid-19 vaccine to its neighbours as part of its vaccine diplomacy in a couple of weeks.
  - ✓ The first destinations will be in India's immediate neighbourhood, like Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Maldives and Mauritius.
  - ✓ The first shipments will be sent 'free-of-cost' as a goodwill gesture
  - ✓ Nepal is the latest to ask for Covid-19 vaccines from the government.
  - ✓ The Myanmar government declared it had signed up with Serum Institute for vaccines similar to Bangladesh.
  - ✓ Foreign minister S Jaishankar promised the Sri Lankan leadership that India would make vaccines available to them too.
  - ✓ Brazil's Fiocruz Institute has already signed a deal with Serum Institute.
  - ✓ So have other countries — UAE, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and South Africa among others.
  - ✓ The export decision of vaccines is being undertaken by the inter-ministerial body, National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAC), which includes the foreign secretary, and is headed by Dr V K Paul of Niti Aayog.
- **On January 17, Prime Minister Narendra Modi – flagged off seven trains, connecting Kevadiya, where Statue of Unity is situated, including one from Chennai**
- ✓ The inaugural special train from Chennai to Kevadiya left MGR Central Station in Chennai at around 11.20am.
  - ✓ This will be the second train from Chennai to Gujarat.
  - ✓ The regular services between Kevadiya-Chennai will start on January 20
  - ✓ The Prime Minister also flagged off trains from Varanasi, Dadar, Ahmedabad, Hazrat Nizamuddin, Rewa, Pratap Nagar to Kevadiya and one from Kevadiya to Pratap Nagar.



- ✓ He also inaugurated the Dabhoi-Chandod broad gauge rail line, and Chandod-Kevadiya new broad gauge line.
- ✓ The PM said the world's tallest statue is attracting more tourists than even the Statue of Liberty at New York Harbor in the US.
- ✓ It is estimated, as connectivity improves, about one lakh visitors per day will visit Kevadia.
- ✓ It was the first time in the history of Indian Railways so many trains from different corners of the country were flagged off from one place
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will attend the 47th G7 summit hosted by the UK in June 2021, as a guest.**
  - ✓ The summit is to be held in the popular seaside region of Cornwall during June 11-13
  - ✓ It will also serve as the stage where several world leaders will meet incoming US President Joe Biden face-to-face for the first time.
  - ✓ The G7 — made up of the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the USA and the EU — is the forum where the world's most advanced economies are brought together for high-level discussions.
  - ✓ UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has invited Australia, India and South Korea as guest countries to this year's summit to deepen the "expertise and experience" around the table.
  - ✓ India is to hold the G20 presidency in 2023
  - ✓ The expansion of the informal bloc, under the UK's presidency, to the D10 or Democratic 10, will serve a golden opportunity to showcase UK global leadership post-Brexit.
  - ✓ India is a non-permanent member at the UN Security Council, where the United Kingdom will take over the presidency in February 2021
- **The Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) - recently celebrated its 6th annual day on January 15, 2021.**
  - ✓ CARA was granted the status of statutory body on this day under Section 68 of the Juvenile Justice act, 2015.

- ✓ Central Adoption Resource Authority operates under the Ministry of Women and Child development.
  - ✓ It acts as the nodal body for monitoring and regulating the adoption of Indian children
  - ✓ CARA has been designated as the central authority to deal with intercountry adoption according to the provisions of Hague convention on intercountry adoption, 1993.
  - ✓ India ratified Hague convention in 2003.
  - ✓ The convention protects children against the risks of irregular, illegal and premature adoptions all over the world
  - ✓ CARA mainly deals with the adoption of abandoned and surrendered children through its recognised adoption agencies.
  - ✓ On an average there are 4000 legal adoptions happening in India every year.
- **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh – launched the Aero India-21 mobile application recently**



- ✓ The mobile app will provide all the information related to Aero India 2021.
- ✓ It has features to support the attendees, exhibitors and media of Aero India 21.
- ✓ In view of the pandemic, the 13th edition of the biennial Aero India will be held only on three business days from February 3.
- ✓ The Aero India is a biennial air show held in Bengaluru
- ✓ It is organised by the Defence Exhibition Organisation operating under the Ministry of Defence.
- ✓ This year, the Aero India is being conducted under the theme “Runaway to a Billion Opportunities”.
- ✓ The first edition of Aero India was held in 1996.
- ✓ The Aero India 21 is to be held in line with the Draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy 2020.
- ✓ The Defence Exhibition Organisation was established in 1981.
- ✓ It is responsible for organizing international exhibitions such as DEFEXPO.
- ✓ Currently the size of the Defence industry is Rs 80,000 crores.
- ✓ Of this the contribution of public sector is Rs 63,000 crores and that of private sector is Rs 17,000 crores.

- ✓ The Draft Defence Production and Export Promotion Policy, 2020 aims to achieve a turnover of Rs 1,75,000 crores including exports of Rs 35,000 crores by 2025.
  - ✓ The policy aims to reduce defence imports and boost “Make in India” initiative.
  - ✓ The two defence corridors in the country located in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh are to be targeted by providing additional support.
- **The Ministry of Railways - recently approved a new Iron Ore Policy, which comes into effect on February 10, 2021.**
- ✓ The Iron Ore Policy governs the allocation of rakes and transportation of iron-ore.
  - ✓ The rake allotment system module is to be updated by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).
  - ✓ The policy will provide high priority to the movement of iron-ore for domestic manufacturing activity.
  - ✓ Within the domestic movement, higher priority is to be provided to steel, sponge iron, pig iron, pellet or sinter plant owning customers with private sliding at loading and unloading ends.
  - ✓ Iron ore is the second most important mode of traffic of Indian Railways.
  - ✓ Iron ore and steel together account for more than 17% of total freight loading of Indian Railways (2019-20 data).
  - ✓ The total freight loading of Indian Railways is 1,210 million tonnes.
  - ✓ Of this, 153.35 million tonnes are of iron ore and 53.81 million tonnes are of steel.
  - ✓ The total recoverable reserves of iron ore in India are 9,602 million tonnes of hematite and 3,408 million tonnes of magnetite.
  - ✓ The principal states producing iron ore in India are Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan.

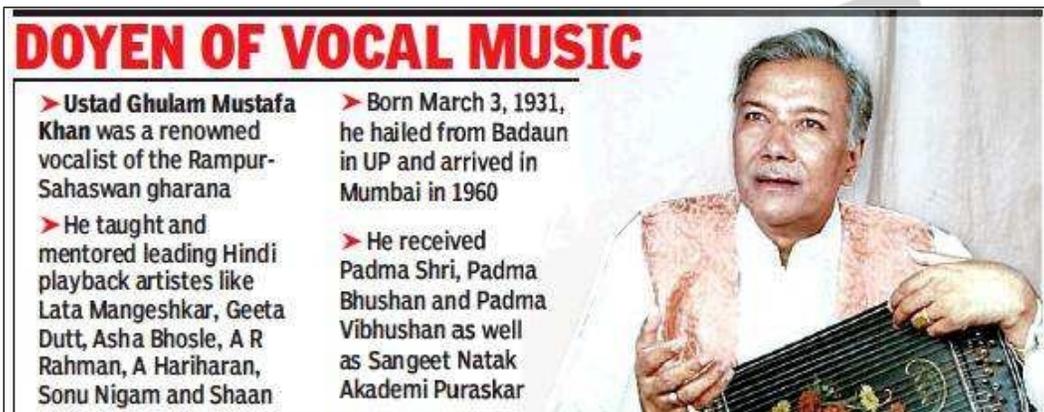
## DEFENCE

- **India - is formally moving ahead to procure 21MiG-29 and 12 Sukhoi-30MKI fighters from Russia, along with upgrades of their existing fleets**
- ✓ The move follows the recent approval of the Cabinet Committee on Security for the production of 83 indigenous Tejas jets.
  - ✓ The RFP (request for proposal) for the 21MiG-29 fighters will soon be issued to Russian state-run defence export arm Rosoboronexport
  - ✓ The acquisition of these MiG-29s at “relatively lower prices” will add to 59 such jets already with the IAF.
  - ✓ The 12 Sukhoi-30MKIs, in turn, will add to the 272 such jets already contracted from Russia for about \$15 billion, with most of them being licensed produced by Hindustan Aeronautics.
  - ✓ The IAF has so far inducted 268 of the original 272 Sukhois, with at least nine of them lost in crashes over the years.
  - ✓ The 83 new Tejas will be inducted in the January 2024-December 2028 timeframe under the ₹46,898 crore deal cleared by the CCS

- ✓ With the progressive phasing out of the obsolete MiG-21s, MiG-23s and MiG-27s, the IAF is down to just about 30 squadrons with 16-18 jets in each squadron, as against the requirement of at least 42 squadrons
- ✓ The remaining four MiG-21 'Bisons' squadrons are also scheduled to retire by 2024.
- ✓ In July 2019, the defence ministry gave the initial nod for acquisition of 21 MiG-29s with the latest avionics and electronic warfare suites, and further upgrade of the 59 existing jets at a cost of ₹7,418 crore.
- ✓ The cost of 12 new twin-seat Sukhois, along with advanced electronic warfare capabilities as well as additional supplies and spares, was estimated to be ₹10,730 crore.

## OBITUARY

### ➤ Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan, legendary classical vocalist



- ✓ Classical singer Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan passed away at age 89 on January 17
- ✓ He has mentored leading singers of the Hindi film industry from Lata Mangeshkar to Geeta Dutt, Asha Bhosle, Hariharan and Sonu Nigam
- ✓ His passing brings down the curtains on an era of master vocalists led by stalwarts like himself, Pt Jasraj and Pt Bhimsen Joshi.
- ✓ During his lifetime he was presented all three Padma awards as well as the Sangeet Natak Akademi Puraskar.
- ✓ He enacted the part of Baiju Bawra for the German film 'Rainmaker'.
- ✓ Khan Sahab lent his voice to no less than 70 documentaries made by the Films Division.
- ✓ His daughter-in-law Namrata Gupta Khan authored his biography, 'A Dream I Lived Alone'