



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 3, 2020

TAMIL NADU

- **The Tamil Nadu government – has sanctioned ₹350 crore to modernize and restore the irrigation system of Cauvery sub basin in Budalur and Tiruvaiyaru taluks of Thanjavur district**
- ✓ The state government was seeking loan assistance from NABARD for the implementation of the project
- ✓ The funding will also be used to strengthen Nandan canal in Villupuram district, and construct seven check dams between Bhavanisagar dam and Kalingarayan anicut in Erode district.
- ✓ The government issued separate orders for the works last week.
- ✓ All renovation and modernisation works of the irrigation system are planned to be completed before opening Mettur reservoir on June 12, the customary date for kuruvai irrigation
- ✓ The project is managed by Tamil Nadu Water Resources Conservation And Rivers Restoration Corporation limited
- ✓ The agency will seek financial assistance of ₹3,384 crore from NABARD Infrastructure Development Assistance (NIDA) for extension, renovation and modernisation of irrigation system in the Cauvery sub basin.
- ✓ NIDA will provide 90% loan assistance, while the remaining 10% will be borne by the state
- ✓ Now the state is planning to take up the works in Cauvery sub basin falling in two taluks of Thanjavur at ₹243 crore from its 10% contribution fund.
- ✓ The seven check dams will come up at various locations of Bhavani river and its tributaries over a length of 69km.
- ✓ The proposed artificial recharge structures will be built in Sathyamangalam, T N Palayam, Gobichettipalayam and Anthiyur blocks.

- **The Puducherry government - has announced ₹200 as Pongal gift each to below poverty line (BPL) ration cardholders in the Union territory**

- ✓ There are 1.75 lakh BPL ration cardholders in the UT.
- ✓ Lieutenant governor Kiran Bedi granted approval and sanctioned expenditure of ₹3.49 crore for the scheme.
- ✓ The civil supplies department will deposit ₹200 directly to the bank account of each of the BPL cardholders shortly.
- ✓ Bedi also granted approval for providing a cash equivalent for rice for three-months under the Union territory's free rice scheme to BPL families and above poverty line (APL) families
- ✓ In this regard, the LG had sanctioned expenditure of ₹54 crore to deposit ₹1,900 each into the bank accounts of BPL families and ₹1,000 each into the bank accounts of above poverty line (APL) families

STATES

- **The Karnataka government – has allowed the 24x7 functioning of all shops and establishments in the state from January 3 on all days for a period of three years.**
- ✓ On January 2, the state government notified that all shops, registered under the Karnataka Shops and Establishments Act, 1962, with ten or more employees can remain open round-the-clock.
- ✓ The rule is aimed at boosting employment generation in the state amidst the impact of Covid-19 pandemic.
- ✓ The new rules notified by the Labour Department have barred working of women beyond 8 p.m. on any day in normal circumstances.
- ✓ However, an employer can allow a woman employee to work between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. only after obtaining written consent, subject to providing adequate protection
- ✓ Details of every employee should be exhibited by the employer at a prominent place in the shop or establishment.
- ✓ With this, Karnataka has joined states like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana and Tamil Nadu that allow shops and establishments to remain open round-the-clock.
- ✓ With several companies, especially in the IT sector, functioning 24x7, there has been a demand from the industry and retailers to keep shops and establishments open at night.
- ✓ The move is also seen a part of the ease of doing business initiative of the state government.
- ✓ The government is also hoping that the relaxation of business hours will bring in some revenue to state exchequer.
- **The Punjab government - recently approved the Punjab State Data Policy.**
- ✓ With this Punjab has now become the first state in India to formulate a comprehensive data policy.

- ✓ The data policy aims to track progress of delivery of services and provide citizens access to various services.
 - ✓ The policy will act as a guiding principle for all departments to collect, manage, process and use data for effective, efficient, transparent and accessible service delivery to the citizens of the state.
 - ✓ It will facilitate easy access and sharing of government data.
 - ✓ The policy will also help to collect data that will help in implementing and monitoring the developmental programs, scientific research and managing and mitigating disasters.
- **The Uttar Pradesh Government – has proposed to launch a new scheme, Kisan Kalyan mission**
- ✓ The Kisan Kalyan mission aims to double the farmer income covering all the Assembly constituencies of the state of Uttar Pradesh.
 - ✓ This is to be achieved through campaigns and programmes that create awareness among farmers on how to reduce agricultural loss caused by using fertilizers in a balanced manner.
 - ✓ The mission will also encourage farmers to plan the cultivation of crops according to the market demands.
 - ✓ The mission will act as a unified platform for showcasing initiatives of several state government departments such as Mandi Parishad, animal husbandry, Horticulture, sugarcane food and supply, fisheries and Panchayati Raj.
 - ✓ The mission will provide contemporary information about saving the Rabi crop and preventing the next season crops from damage.
 - ✓ The mission will also distribute Kisan credit cards.
 - ✓ The Kisan Kalyan mission is to deploy the experts of Krishi Vigyan Kendras to share their knowledge on advanced techniques of farming and how to increase income of farmers.
 - ✓ Krishi Vigyan Kendras are agricultural centres that focus on agricultural research in practical and localised setting.
 - ✓ These centres are linked to Indian Council of Agricultural Research.
 - ✓ Further, the mission will also provide 100% coverage to bovine vaccination for foot and mouth disease, eradication of sheep and goat plague, artificial insemination of livestock, distribution of mini kits of oilseeds and pulses, demonstration programmes on micro irrigation and integrated cropping practices
 - ✓ A similar scheme, Kisan Kalyan Abhiyan, is being implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare since 2018
 - ✓ It aims to help farmers in improving their farming techniques.
 - ✓ The Kisan Kalyan Abhiyan has been implemented across 112 aspirational districts in the country.
- **The Assam assembly - recently passed the Assam Ease of Doing Business (Amendment) Bill, 2020.**

- ✓ The bill makes amendments to the Assam Ease of Doing Business Act, 2016.
- ✓ The new bill aims to simplify procedures and bring transparency and efficiency in the system.
- ✓ Under the new amendment Bill, the government has committed to create an investor friendly atmosphere in the state.
- ✓ It has proposed to remove all types of renewal certificate, permissions and licences under the amendment Bill
- ✓ A computerized Central random inspection system is also proposed to be implemented.
- ✓ The Act aimed to streamline the regulatory structures and processes and simplify the procedures related to renew license, certificate, permissions in setting up of enterprises and industries in the state.
- ✓ Assam Bureau of Investment Promotion was established by the Act to oversee the overall supervision and administration of speedy processing of applications.
- ✓ Thus, the act has created a monitoring mechanism and a tracking mechanism to facilitate ease of doing business in the state.

NATIONAL

- **On January 2, the subject expert committee (SEC) - recommended India's first indigenous Covid-19 vaccine, Covaxin for emergency use authorisation (EUA)**
- ✓ With this, the SEC has approved two vaccines - Oxford-Astra Zeneca's Covishield and Bharat Biotech's homegrown Covaxin – for EUA
- ✓ The Drugs Controller General of India is expected to issue final approvals that are likely to be announced on January 3
- ✓ The SEC recommended grant of permission to Bharat Biotech for “restricted use in emergency situation in public interest as an abundant precaution, in clinical trial mode, especially in the context of infection by mutant strains”.
- ✓ Currently, Covaxin is in a clinical trial mode with Phase 3 trials going on
- ✓ Once approved, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, developed alongwith the Indian Council for Medical Research, will be India's first locally-developed and manufactured vaccine against the coronavirus.
- ✓ SII has offered a price of ₹225-250 per dose for the first tranche, whereas Bharat Biotech has offered ₹350
- ✓ Earlier, the SEC had recommended EUA for Serum Institute's Covishield on January 1
- ✓ Covaxin is also a two-dose vaccine like Covishield and can be stored at 2 to 8 degrees.
- ✓ The government will soon place a formal contract or supply order with the manufacturers along with details of supply schedule and locations.
- ✓ The first order is likely to be for 10 crore doses that will be funded through the PM-Cares Fund.

- ✓ Covaxin is the first vaccine to be developed from scratch in India
 - ✓ The entire process of isolation of virus strain from an Indian patient by the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV), Pune, to the formulation, animal studies and human trials was done in the country.
 - ✓ Earlier, India has developed Shanchol, the world's first cholera vaccine
 - ✓ However, the formulation for the vaccine was done by Shantha Biotechnics along with the assistance of a South Korean institute.
- **On January 2, Union health minister Harsh Vardhan - said that the government will provide Covid-19 vaccine free-of-cost to 'most prioritized' beneficiaries during the first two months of roll-out**
- ✓ It includes one crore healthcare workers and two crore frontline workers
 - ✓ A nationwide mock drill to test preparedness for the vaccination drive took place at 286 session sites across 125 districts on the day.
 - ✓ The Minister also said that details are being finalised for inoculation of 27 crore people in the 50-plus age group and those who are younger but have serious co-morbidities.



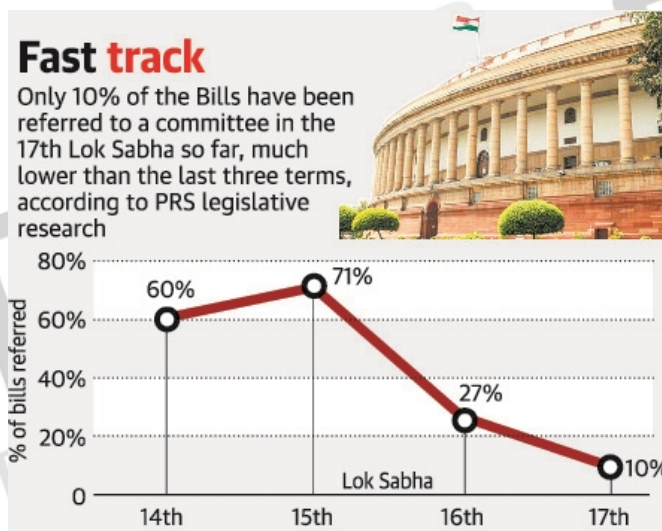
- ✓ The government has already registered over 75 lakh beneficiaries on Co-WIN — the IT platform developed by the Centre to implement the mega vaccination drive.
 - ✓ Besides, around 1,14,100 vaccinators have been trained and sufficient supplies of syringes and other logistics also ensured to begin the vaccination drive.
 - ✓ The government plans to roll out the vaccine within 10 days of the final regulatory approval from the Drugs Controller General of India
 - ✓ The government plans to inoculate 30 crore “priority” population by July.
- **On January 4, Prime Minister Narendra Modi - will dedicate the 'National Atomic Timescale' and 'Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya' to the nation**
- ✓ The PM will also lay the foundation stone of the National Environmental Standards Laboratory on the day.
 - ✓ The Timescale generates IST with an accuracy of 2.8 nanoseconds.
 - ✓ The Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya will support the testing and calibration of laboratories for quality assurance, at par with international standards.

- ✓ The National Environmental Standards Laboratory will provide the certification of ambient air and industrial emission monitoring equipment.
 - ✓ The Prime Minister will also deliver the inaugural address at the National Metrology Conclave via video conferencing on January 4, 2021
 - ✓ The National Metrology Conclave 2020 is being organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, which is entering its 75th year of inception.
 - ✓ The theme of the conclave is 'Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation'.
 - ✓ Union Health Minister Dr. Harsh Vardhan will also be present on the occasion.
- **The Government – proposes seaplane service from Delhi’s Yamuna river-front to Ayodhya and from Mumbai to Shirdi.**

LIKELY ROUTES FOR SEAPLANE SERVICE	
➤ Delhi to Tehri: Srinagar in Uttarakhand and from there on to Badrinath	➤ Mumbai to Lonavala, Ganpatipule & Shirdi
➤ Delhi to Chandigarh and from there to Dalhousie & other places in Punjab & Himachal	➤ Surat to Dwarka, Mandvi and Kandla
	➤ A&N & adjoining islands
	➤ Lakshdweep & adjoining islands

- ✓ In this regard, the Sagarmala Development Company (SDCL) under the shipping and waterways ministry issued an expression of interest (EoI) for the seaplane services
 - ✓ The services were proposed on routes including Delhi’s Yamuna river-front and Ayodhya, Tehri, Srinagar (Uttarakhand) and Chandigarh; Mumbai to Shirdi, Lonavala and Ganpatipule; Surat to Dwarka, Mandvi and Kandla; and within the archipelagos of Andaman and Nicobar and Lakshadweep.
 - ✓ The interested players can also look for other routes, which they find viable.
 - ✓ The routes under this Sagarmala Seaplane Service (SSPS) may be operated under the government’s subsidised ‘Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik’ (UDAN) scheme.
 - ✓ Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the country's first seaplane service between the Statue of Unity near Kevadiya in Gujarat's Narmada district and Sabarmati Riverfront in Ahmedabad on October 31, 2020
- **In a first, Pune’s National Institute of Virology (NIV) - has isolated and cultured the new UK variant of SARS-CoV2 from the clinical specimens collected from UK-returnees**
- ✓ This was announced by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) on January 2
 - ✓ Till now, no other country has reported isolation and culture of the latest UK strain.
 - ✓ Isolation of the virus is the first step towards expediting development of drugs, vaccines and rapid diagnostic kits in the country.
 - ✓ India has reported at least 29 cases of the new coronavirus variants, as on date.

- ✓ From November 25 to December 23, 2020, about 33,000 passengers disembarked at various Indian airports from the UK.
- ✓ All these passengers are being tracked and subjected by states to RTPCR tests to detect Covid-19.
- **The Rajya Sabha - sat for just 33 days in 2020, its lowest-ever tally of sittings in a year.**
- ✓ There are only three other occasions when the sittings were below 50 days in a year.
- ✓ The Budget and the monsoon sessions had to be cut short in 2020 due to pandemic, while the winter session is not yet convened.
- ✓ The Budget session, which was scheduled to have 31 sittings, was cut short after 23 sessions.
- ✓ Similarly, the monsoon session, which was to have 18 sittings, was called off after 10 sessions.



- ✓ There are only three other occasions when the Rajya Sabha met for fewer than 50 sittings in a year — 48 in 1999 and 46 each in 2004 and 2008.
- ✓ The last time the winter session was cancelled was 36 years ago in 1984.
- ✓ In overall parliamentary history, there have been only two other instances in 1979 and 1975 when the winter session was cancelled.
- ✓ As per an analysis by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, the limited number of sittings did not hurt the productivity.
- ✓ During the year 2020, the annual productivity has been 82.7%, the highest annual productivity during the last 11 years
- ✓ A total of 39 Bills have been passed by the House during 2020, including 12 during the Budget session and 27 during the monsoon session.
- ✓ The list of legislation includes the three controversial farm laws

- **The Centre - had recently announced that the benefits of RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) scheme is to be extended to all types of goods**
- ✓ The RoDTEP Scheme was launched in 2020 to boost exports of India in International markets.
- ✓ The scheme has created a mechanism for reimbursement of levies, taxes or duties at central, state and local levels.
- ✓ Prior to the scheme, the reimbursements were not done under any mechanism.
- ✓ It seeks to replace Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS), which was not WTO-compliant.
- ✓ The RoDTEP Scheme will coordinate with the World Trade Organization to reduce the post production transaction costs for the exporters.
- ✓ This will help to boost the production of MSMEs.
- ✓ Also, under the scheme, indirect taxes on exports shall be reimbursed to boost the exports as per WHO norms
- ✓ By replacing MEIS, the RoDTEP Scheme created an automated route for the Input Tax Credit and helping to avoid double taxation.

- **The INS Kiltan - recently arrived at Sihanoukville Port, Cambodia under Mission Sagar III to deliver fifteen tonnes of HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) for flood affected Cambodia.**
- ✓ The relief assistance is to be provided to the National Disaster Management Committee of Cambodia.
- ✓ The SAGAR III mission is part of HADR assistance provided by India to foreign countries.
- ✓ SAGAR refers to Security and Growth for All in the Region.
- ✓ Earlier, under the mission, India sent fifteen tonnes of flood support to Vietnam.
- ✓ The Mission SAGAR II was launched in November 2020.
- ✓ Under Mission SAGAR-II, INS Airavat delivered food aid to Djibouti, Sudan, South Sudan and Eritrea.
- ✓ The Mission SAGAR was launched on May 10, 2020.
- ✓ Under the mission, the INS Kesari carried medical assistance and food items to Seychelles, Mauritius, Maldives, Madagascar and Comoros.

- **The Minister of Railways Piyush Goyal - recently announced that Indian Railways has successfully completed the trial run of new Vistadome tourist coaches.**
- ✓ These coaches were manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory in Chennai.
- ✓ Currently there are 13 Vistadome coaches operating in the country.
- ✓ They are operating in in Araku Valley, Dadar and Madgaon, Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway, Kangra Valley Railway, Kalka-Shimla Railway, Nilgiri Mountain Railway, Matheran Hill Railway.

- ✓ Vistadome coaches are made with see through glass roof tops and wide Windows to offer panoramic view.
 - ✓ The coaches have passenger information system, rotatable seats, automatic sliding doors, white doors for persons with disabilities and a Mini pantry.
 - ✓ The cost of manufacturing each Vistadome coach is about Rs. 4 crores
- **The Government of India - launched the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal and a mobile application recently**
- ✓ The application aims to connect over 3 crore Indian Diaspora spread all over the world.
 - ✓ Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan launched the portal and the mobile App
 - ✓ It will create three-way communication between the Indian Missions (meaning the embassies), external affairs ministry and Indian diaspora.
 - ✓ Till now, the Indian community abroad and the ministry of external affairs have been using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp to communicate during emergencies.
 - ✓ The portal created will enable the registration of Indian diaspora members including PIOs (Person of Indian Origin), NRIs (Non-Resident Indians) and OCIs (Overseas Citizens of India).
 - ✓ The portal will provide useful information to the Indian community such as passport, visa and other consular services.

INTERNATIONAL

- **On January 2, Pakistan - arrested 26/11 Mumbai attacks mastermind and LeT commander, Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi on terror-financing charges**
- ✓ The move is seen as Pakistan's attempt to avoid global terror watchdog Financial Action Task Force's (FATF's) Black Listing of the country

LINKED TO FATF

- Indian authorities see Zaki-ur-Rehman Lakhvi's arrest as intended more to dodge global terror watchdog Financial Action Task Force's (FATF) Black List than to bring the LeT commander to justice
- FATF had kept Pakistan on its Grey List last year mainly due to its failure to address six key items, one of which related to action against UNSC-proscribed terrorists
- FATF due to review Pak's status next month

- ✓ The FATF had acknowledged the significant progress made by the country in addressing issues related to terror-financing and money laundering

- ✓ However, the Paris-based watchdog FATF had still retained Pakistan on its Grey, or Increased Monitoring, List, in October 2020.
 - ✓ This was mainly because of Pakistan's failure to address six important items, one of which related to action against UNSC-proscribed terrorists, in its 27-point action plan to check terror-financing.
 - ✓ The 39-member FATF will review Pakistan's case in February to decide whether or not Pakistan had done enough to comply with these six items.
 - ✓ Lakhvi was designated a terrorist on December 10, 2008 by the U.N. Security Council Sanctions committee for directing the LeT operations in Chechnya, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan and south-east Asia
 - ✓ He was held at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail until he was granted bail, and released by the Lahore High Court in April 2015
- **The Australian Government - recently announced certain changes to its National Anthem "Advance Australia Fair".**
- ✓ The second line of the National Anthem has been changed from 'For we are young and free' to 'For we are one and free.'
 - ✓ The Australian National Anthem, "Advance Australia Fair" was composed by Peter Dodds McCormick in 1878.
 - ✓ It became official National Anthem of Australia in 1984.
 - ✓ According to the critics, the word 'young' imply that the Australian history started only with British colonisation.
 - ✓ This is unacceptable by the indigenous communities of the island nation who till date celebrate Australia Day as Invasion Day.
 - ✓ The Australia Day is celebrated on January 26, which marks the date when the "First Fleet" sailed into Sydney in 1788 carrying troops from Britain.
 - ✓ The indigenous people, referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, contribute to 2.4% of the Australian population.
 - ✓ Prior to "Advance Australia Fair", "God Save the Queen" was the national anthem of Australia.
 - ✓ It was the national anthem in number of Commonwealth realms and British Crown sovereign states that had Elizabeth II as its Head of the state.
- **China - has recently deployed underwater drones called Sea Wing Glider in the Indian Ocean region for naval surveillance.**
- ✓ It can operate for months under the sea, serving long range missions
 - ✓ The Sea Wing Glider Drone is a type of an uncrewed underwater vehicle, which were launched in December 2019.
 - ✓ Apart from Indian Ocean region, China has also deployed the Sea Wing Glider Drone in the Arctic Ocean, South China Sea, East China Sea and other waters of the Western Pacific.
 - ✓ According to the China, a total of 14 Sea Wing Glider Drones have been deployed in the Indian Ocean region for research and development purposes

- ✓ With the help of these drones, the Chinese are gathering oceanography data in the Indian Ocean region.
- ✓ The drones are capable of gathering information such as salinity, seawater temperature, turbidity, oxygen content and ocean current changes.
- ✓ According to Indian government, the Chinese might use these drones to listen to Indian Naval communication and might track Indian Naval ships in the Indian Ocean region, which was against the UNCLOS (United Nations convention for the Law of the Sea).

- **Argentina - recently became the latest Latin American country to legalize abortion**
- ✓ Under the new law, Argentina has legalised abortion up to the 14th week of pregnancy.
- ✓ In India, abortion is legal till 24th week of pregnancy according to medical termination of pregnancy (Amendment) act, 2020.
- ✓ The passage of this law will have huge impact in other Latin American countries.
- ✓ Currently abortions are illegal in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Dominican Republic.
- ✓ In some countries such as Cuba, Uruguay, Guyana, women can request for abortion only in specific cases.
- ✓ The Catholic Church and the Evangelical community in Argentina hold immense power and influence in the country.
- ✓ These communities strongly opposed the concept of abortions and steps taken to legalise abortions.

- **Japan – to join the Five Eyes intelligence alliance network, comprising of five nations namely Australia, Canada, Britain, US and New Zealand.**
- ✓ The Five Eyes network countries were created to respond against the increasing threats by China and North Korea.
- ✓ They are parties to multilateral UK-USA Agreement, which was a treaty of joint cooperation in signals intelligence.
- ✓ The origins of Five Eyes alliance can be tracked to the Atlantic Charter that was issued on August 14, 1941.
- ✓ It set out British and American goals to the world after World War II.
- ✓ In June 2020, the Five Eyes countries signed an Economic Agreement to isolate China.
- ✓ The United States has sought to add three democratic countries - India, South Korea and Japan - in Five Eyes Network.
- ✓ According to the US, their intelligence shall be used for both economic and strategic purposes.

- **The World Health Organization (WHO) - recently launched a Covid-19 mobile application called “WHO COVID-19 App”**

- ✓ The application provides users with the latest updates and notification about the scientific findings on Covid-19.
- ✓ It will provide trusted information from experts at the organisation and regional partners.
- ✓ The application also provides information on how users can protect themselves and their communities from the virus.
- ✓ The application is currently available only in Nigeria.
- ✓ However, the WHO is working with the local stakeholders to make the app available in all countries
- ✓ Earlier, the WHO has launched another mobile application named “WHO Academy COVID-19 Mobile Learning App”.
- ✓ It was developed to enable the health workers expand their life saving skills to battle covid-19.
- ✓ The application provides knowledge resources to support the health workers in caring for patients infected by covid-19
- ✓ The app is available in seven different languages such as English, Arabic, Portuguese, French, Chinese, Spanish, Russian.

DEFENCE

- **The Ministry of Defence - recently signed an agreement with the Bharat Electronics Limited to supply ten LYNX U2 GFCS, a naval gun fire control system.**
- ✓ The system has been designed to accurately track and engage air and surface targets amidst sea by means of tracking radars and control modules.
- ✓ Also, it can generate required target data to predict weapon aiming points using Russian A190, AK176 and AK630.
- ✓ The system has been in service in Indian Navy for more than two decades now.
- ✓ The ten LYNX U2 GFCS being acquired from BEL is to be installed on naval offshore patrolling vessel Talwar and Teg class of ships.
- ✓ The current LYNX U2 GFCS proposed in the contract is of the fourth generation and is completely indigenized.
- ✓ The ten systems are to be purchased from BEL at a cost of Rs 1,355 crores under Buy (Indian) Category.

OBITUARY

- **Senior Congress leader and former Union home minister Buta Singh (86 years) – died at the AIIMS, New Delhi, on January 2**
- ✓ Singh represented Punjab’s Moga and Ropar as well as Rajasthan’s Jalore Lok Sabha constituencies for eight terms between 1962 and 2004
- ✓ The senior Congress leader was in a coma since October last year after he suffered a brain hemorrhage.



- ✓ Singh remained in public service for a long time and served under four prime ministers—Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, PV Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh.
- ✓ He also served as the governor of Bihar.
- ✓ Singh was born in Punjab's Jalandhar district on March 21, 1934
- ✓ Originally from Communist party, Singh was first elected from Punjab's Moga Lok Sabha constituency —which was reserved for the Scheduled Castes (SC) — as an Akali Dal candidate in 1962.
- ✓ He later joined Congress and in 1967 got elected from Punjab's Ropar, the seat he represented until 1984 when he got elected from Jalore in Rajasthan.
- ✓ He was convenor of the All India Congress Committee's (AICC) Harijan cell in 1973-74, after which he became the AICC general secretary in 1978.
- ✓ In 1981, he was made the Chairperson of the Organising Committee for Asian Games, the first major international games to come to India
- ✓ In 1998, he won as an independent candidate but later returned to Congress to be last elected from Jalore in 1999.
- ✓ He lost the seat as Congress candidate in 2004 and then as independent candidate in 2009 and 2014.
- ✓ Singh was instrumental in building and re-building many gurdwaras in the country and abroad, especially the Sri Akaal Takht in Amritsar, after Operation Blue Star in 1984.
- ✓ He was involved in the reconstruction of many gurdwaras in Delhi after the anti-Sikh riots of November 1984.
- ✓ He was closely associated with the then prime minister Indira Gandhi during the Operation Blue Star undertaken by the Army
- ✓ As a minister, he oversaw the reconstruction of the Golden Temple in Punjab's Amritsar following the Army operation.
- ✓ A prominent dalit leader, Singh was involved in choosing the Congress's new poll symbol "hand" after the party split in 1978.
- ✓ In 1974, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi elevated him to the post of Deputy Minister for Railways

- ✓ In 1986, he became the Union home minister in the Rajiv Gandhi cabinet. Under PV Narasimha Rao, Singh served as the Union minister of civil supplies, consumer affairs and public distribution from 1995 to 1996.
- ✓ He was appointed the chairman of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes by Manmohan Singh in 2007, the post which he held till 2010.

