



## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – JANUARY 4, 2021

### TAMIL NADU

- **The state school education department – is planning to impart Python programming training to the newly appointed computer science teachers at government schools**
- ✓ The move is aimed at teaching coding skills to government school students
- ✓ School education department has introduced Python programming to higher secondary syllabus and students will get 300 hours training in the programme.
- ✓ 300 newly appointed teachers will be participating in the online bootcamp on problem solving using Python for 12 days from January 6 to 22
- ✓ It will be organised by the school education department
- ✓ Each day, the teachers will attend two hours of live classes and six hours of practical classes.
- ✓ By learning Python, students will get exposure to web developing, data analysis, artificial intelligence, machine learning and scientific computing.

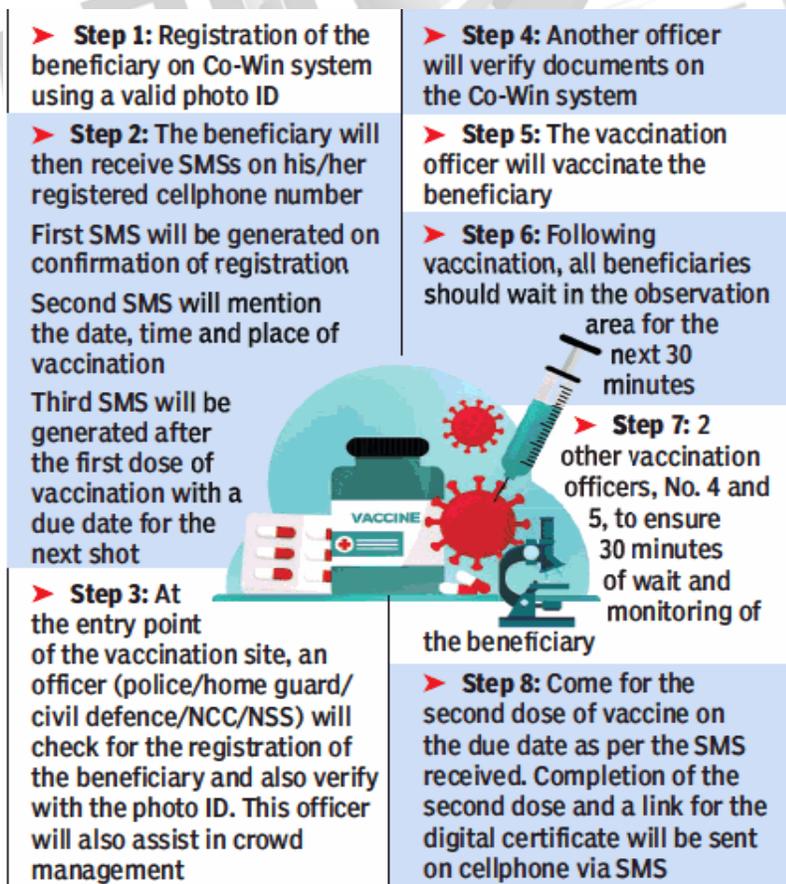
### STATES

- **On January 3, Delhi government's Department Of Art, Culture, And Language - set up and notified Tamil academy to promote Tamil language and culture in New Delhi.**
- ✓ Ex-MCD councillor and current member of Delhi Tamil Sangam, N Raja, was appointed as the vice-chairman of the academy.
- ✓ His appointment was cleared by Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also holds the charge of the art, culture and language department
- ✓ The newly created Tamil Academy will organise Tamil language classes, give new awards and conduct cultural events to promote and recognise literary works in Tamil.
- ✓ The Delhi government already runs Sanskrit, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Hindi, Maithili and Bhojpuri Academies

- **The Assam government - will soon provide financial assistance to schoolgirls and college students so that they attend their classes regularly.**
- ✓ According to state education minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, girl students are entitled to get ₹100 every day they attend school.
- ✓ The government has also decided to deposit in the bank accounts of undergraduate and postgraduate students ₹1,500 and ₹2,000, respectively, by this month end so that they can use the money to buy books.
- ✓ The government has also given motorbikes to girl students who passed last year's Class XII state board examination in the first division.

## NATIONAL

- **On January 3, the Drugs Controller General of India - announced emergency use approval for the Pune-based Serum Institute of India's Covishield developed by Oxford University and Astra Zeneca, along with Bharat Biotech's Covaxin**
- ✓ Among the two vaccines, Covishield is likely to be the first vaccine to be used in India in the drive against Covid-19
- ✓ For Covaxin, the emergency use authorisation is in clinical trial mode which means that the recipients will be monitored similar to those persons taking part in the trial.



- ✓ The crucial Phase III trials of the indigenous vaccine, Covaxin and Covishield is currently underway
- ✓ It was the first indigenous Covid-19 vaccine to be developed in the country in association with ICMR (Indian council of Medical Research).

**Inoculation campaign**  
A look at a select list of COVID-19 vaccines that have been approved for full/emergency use in different countries



Manufacturer	Efficacy	Storage	Status
Oxford University-AstraZeneca	Upto 90%	2-8 degree Celsius	Approved for restricted emergency use in India and emergency use in U.K.
Bharat Biotech-ICMR	Unknown	2-8 °C	Approved for restricted use in emergency situation in India
Pfizer-BioNTech	95%	-70 °C	Approved for full use/emergency use in several countries
Moderna	94.50%	-20 °C	Approved in Canada; emergency use in U.S.
Gamaleya Research Center	91.40%	-18 °C	Early use in Russia, emergency use in Belarus and Argentina
CanSino Biologics	Unknown	2-8 °C	Limited use in China
Vector Institute	Unknown	2-8 °C	Early use in Russia
Beijing Institute of Biological Products	79.34%	2-8 °C	Limited use in China
Sinovac Biotech	>50%	2-8 °C	Limited use in China
Sinopharm	Unknown	2-8 °C	Approved in China, U.A.E. and Bahrain

- ✓ Covaxin may be introduced in the vaccination programme a little later
  - ✓ Vaccination is likely to be launched simultaneously in most states
  - ✓ Serum Institute will supply Covishield to private individuals, hospitals and companies as early as March 2021
  - ✓ Initially, the Institute will only supply to the government and will not export the vaccine.
  - ✓ The approval was based on a recommendation by a Subject Expert Committee which deliberated for two days on granting approvals to the vaccines.
  - ✓ The government has already registered over 75 lakh priority beneficiaries on Co-WIN — the IT platform developed by the Centre to implement the mega vaccination drive
  - ✓ Depending on vaccine availability, beneficiaries will be called for inoculation on specified dates in a phased manner.
  - ✓ The government is planning to inoculate 30 crore “priority population” with anti-Covid vaccine by July 2021
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi - is to dedicate the Kochi-Mangaluru Natural Gas Pipeline to India on January 5, 2021.**
- ✓ The 444-km pipeline is designed to carry natural gas from the Liquefied Natural Gas regasification terminal at Kochi to Mangaluru.
  - ✓ In its way, the pipeline will pass through Ernakulam, Palakkad, Thrissur, Malappuram, Kannur, Kozhikode and Kasaragod districts.

- ✓ Around 8 districts are to benefit from the Rs 5,750 crore pipeline project, which was launched in 2009.
  - ✓ The main junction of the pipeline is at Koottanad, at which the pipeline bifurcates towards Bengaluru and Mangaluru.
  - ✓ The pipeline, built by GAIL, is expected to fulfil the gas demand of 80 to 90 million cubic metres of gas per annum.
  - ✓ It has the capacity to transport 12 million metric standard cubic metres of natural gas per day
- **The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) - announced that all edible refined oils, vegetable fat spreads, Vanaspati, margarines, Bakery shortening and mixed fat spreads can contain only 3% or less trans fats from January 2021**
- ✓ By January 2022, this limit is to be further reduced to 2%.
  - ✓ The cap on trans fats, from the current permissible limit of 5%, was notified through an amendment to the Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations.
  - ✓ In 2011, India first passed a regulation that set a TFA limit of 10% in oils and fats, which was further reduced to 5% in 2015.
  - ✓ The maximum limit has been introduced because the World Health Organisation has called for global elimination of trans fat by 2023.
  - ✓ The trans fats are created artificially during the partial hydrogenation process of vegetable oils.
  - ✓ Consumption of trans fats results in coronary heart diseases.
  - ✓ India has the highest burden of heart diseases due to high trans-fat in the world.
  - ✓ According to REPLACE annual report of World Health Organisation that was released in September 2020, more than 40 countries have implemented the “Best practice policies to eliminate trans fats”.

REPLACE					
REVIEW	PROMOTE	LEGISLATE	ASSESS	CREATE	ENFORCE
dietary sources of industrially-produced trans fats and the landscape for required policy change	the replacement of industrially-produced trans fats with healthier fats and oils	or enact regulatory actions to eliminate industrially-produced trans fats	and monitor trans fat content in the food supply and changes in trans fat consumption in the population	awareness of the negative health impact of TFA among policy-makers, producers, suppliers, and the public	compliance with policies and regulations

- ✓ The best practice policies limit trans fats to 2% or less.
- ✓ REPLACE refers to six areas of actions that are aimed at eliminating trans fats
- ✓ It was launched by the World Health Organisation in 2018.
- ✓ The REPLACE package serves as a roadmap for countries to implement actions to reduce and eliminate industrially-produced trans fats
- ✓ According to the World Health Organization, approximately 5.4 lakh deaths take place each year globally because of the intake of industrially produced trans fatty acids.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **The US Congress - passed the 'Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act' for Pakistani Women by a voice vote on January 1, 2021**



- ✓ It seeks to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women to receive higher education under a merit and needs-based programme.
- ✓ The bill was passed by the House of Representatives in March 2020 and needs the approval of President Donald Trump to become a Law
- ✓ As per the bill, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will award at least 50% of scholarship under a Pakistan-based higher education scholarship programme to Pakistani women between 2020 and 2022.
- ✓ The bill also requires USAID to consult with and seek investments by the Pakistani private sector and Pakistanis residing in the United States to improve and expand access to education programmes in Pakistan.
- ✓ The act makes it mandatory for the USAID to brief the US Congress about the details of scholarships provided under the programme every year.
- ✓ The USAID has so far awarded more than 6000 scholarship to the young women of Pakistan since 2010.
- ✓ The proposed bill seeks to expand this scholarship programme
- ✓ On October 10, 2014, Malala shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Indian children's rights activist Kailash Satyarthi for her "struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education".
- ✓ Malala is a Pakistani activist for female education, who is also the youngest Nobel Prize Laureate.
- ✓ On July 12, 2013, Malala spoke at the United Nations to call for worldwide access to education on her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday, which was hailed as Malala Day.

- ✓ In October 2012, Malala was shot in the head by Pakistani Taliban gunman on her way home from school.
- ✓ USAID is an interdependent agency of the United States that is responsible for administering foreign aid.
- ✓ It is one of the largest aid agencies in the world with a budget of \$27 billion.
  
- **China - has revised its National Defence Law, expanding the power of its armed forces, headed by President Xi Jinping**
- ✓ It comes into effect from January 1, 2021
- ✓ The new Law allows the President to mobilise military and civilian resources to defend its national interests both at home and abroad.
- ✓ It significantly weakens the role of the State Council, China's cabinet headed by Premier Li Keqiang, in formulating military policy.
- ✓ The new Law provides decision making powers to the Central Military Commission (CMC), which is the overall high-command of the two million-strong People's Liberation Army (PLA)
- ✓ For the first time, 'disruption' and protection of 'development interests' have been added to the legislation as grounds for mobilisation and deployment of armed forces
- ✓ The legislation also specifically focuses on the need for building a nationwide coordination mechanism for the mobilisation of state-owned and private enterprises to take part in research into new defence technologies.
- ✓ Xi, 67, has emerged as the Communist Party of China's most powerful leader after its founder Mao Zedong
- ✓ He is holding the posts of CPC general secretary, head of the military besides the presidency with prospects of a life-long tenure.
  
- **Japanese researchers - are planning to launch wooden satellites by 2023 to avoid the problem of space debris**
- ✓ These satellites are made of wood, which will burn up without releasing any waste in space when they plunge back to the earth after completing its service or stops functioning.
- ✓ The wooden satellites are being designed by the Sumitomo Forestry and Kyoto University.
- ✓ The Sumitomo Forestry is a 400-year-old wood working company of Japan.
- ✓ They will experiment different types of wood in extreme environments in space
- ✓ All the satellites that re-enter the earth atmosphere burn and create tiny Alumina particles, which float in upper atmosphere for many years
- ✓ According to European space agency, there are 128 million pieces of debris in the orbit that has the potential to damage 'live' satellites.
- ✓ According to World Economic Forum there are more than 6000 satellite circling the earth with 60% of them being de-functional.

- ✓ Therefore, potential damages to live satellites will increase due to these de-functional satellites
- ✓ It has to be recalled that a very tiny piece of space debris collided with the International Space Station in 2006 and removed a chip of the heavily reinforced window.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY

### ➤ World Braille Day – January 4



- ✓ The day is observed every year by United Nations and other international organizations
- ✓ It seeks to create awareness of the importance of Braille method as a means of communication for the blind people.
- ✓ The day is celebrated on January 4 because the day marks the birthday of Louis Braille, the creator of Braille system of writing, in France in 1809.
- ✓ The first World Braille Day was celebrated in the year 2019
- ✓ Braille is the representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots.
- ✓ The dots represent the letters and numbers and mathematical, musical and scientific symbols as well.
- ✓ India adopted the uniform Braille codes for different languages in the year 1951.
- ✓ The country had set up the first ever Braille plant called Central Braille Plant in Dehradun.
- ✓ In 1954, Central Braille press was established to produce Braille appliances.
- ✓ The press manufactures simple equipment such as Braille slate, stylus and arithmetic Braille slate.

